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# Racial Influences on the Practices of Organizing Spaces of Sociability: Experiences of Black Brazilian Women

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this research was to understand racial influences on the practices of organizing spaces of sociability by Black Brazilian women. We discuss practice-based studies (PBS) and racial studies, based on Black feminist, emphasizing race as the basis of organizational practices, especially in organizational spaces in which sociability is a central dimension of their constitution. The qualitative research was carried out in a city located in the state of São Paulo, Brazil, from May to July 2019, through observations of spaces of sociability and in-depth interviews with seven Black women living in the place under study. As a result of the research, we present three theoretical propositions about how Black women resist the racism that shapes sociability in organizations; the (1) ethical, (2) esthetic, and (3) controversial break of the silencing of Black bodies in the social relationships that form organizational spaces. This process occurs through the occupation of these spaces by Black women, also through the fight against racism in affective–sexual relationships, and through the anti-racist educational practice that Black women establish in their organizational sociabilities. Finally, as a contribution to gender studies in management, we stress that organizational sociabilities are characterized by practices that are racially gendered, and the reciprocal actions of Black women's organizational sociabilities emerge as ethical–political practices that disrupt the dominant paradigm of whiteness as the ethical subsidy of tacit norms in organizations.

## 1 | Introduction

The influences of race on the constitution of organizational spaces are still an incipient topic in organizational studies (Lescoat 2021; Teixeira 2021), although it is already recognized as an essential social phenomenon to discuss, especially in countries that were formed from the enslavement of Black people, such as Brazil (Teixeira et al. 2021). The field of practice-based studies (PBS), by highlighting everyday life in organizations in its analyses (Daskalaki and Fotaki 2024; Courpasson 2017), has shown the relevance of discussing race as a category of organizational analysis, given that this social phenomenon is the basis for the constitution of contemporary Western society, and, as such, of organizations (Santos and

Oliveira 2020). Considering organizations as racialized spaces (Bento 2022), racializations take place in practices, the reason why PBS has emphasized the need for a debate between practices and race (Santos and Oliveira 2020).

Although several studies have stressed that race influences organizing (Zhang 2017; Gist 2018), they have not yet shown how organizing practices are constituted from a racialized perspective. This theoretical and empirical gap is the focus of this study. We consider practices to be the ways of doing things (Certeau 2002) in everyday life that form organizations. Thus, organizational practices would be our way of making our collectivities. Based on Certeau's (2002) argument, practical arrangements of organizations can be configured strategically,

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when they produce their own places that capitalize on time and space for their reproduction, as well as tactically, to the extent that at times they resist what is being strategically put in place in everyday life. One of the categories that influences political games in everyday life is race. Defined as a category that organizes ways of speaking, representations and social practices that socially differentiate social groups (Hall 1999), race can establish forms of social organization (Lewellen and Bohonos 2021; Almeida 2019), based on power relations that produce axes of domination and subordination.

According to Almeida (2019), it is the format of axes of domination and racial subordination that configures racism, which is characterized by establishing a system of discrimination that has race as its constituent element. This not only results in the production of disadvantages but also privileges, depending on our collective racial belonging (Almeida 2019). Racism produces specificities in relation to how society organizes itself collectively and thus it can establish discriminatory practices that are unique to organizational spaces.

In Brazil, this process can be examined in relation to the Black population. After 133 years of the abolition of slavery for this social group in the country, which lasted for almost 350 years, inequalities between Blacks and Whites persist in all dimensions of social life (Gonzalez 2020a, 2020b). According to data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics [IBGE] (2025), approximately 56% of Brazilians are Black, and this population's average monthly income is 59% of a White person's. Even when they hold the same position and have the same professional training, Blacks are generally paid less than Whites (IBGE, 2025). When we articulate the category of race with gender, we see that this Brazilian reality becomes potentially violent for Black women. Data from IBGE (2025) show that Black women's income is 48% of the average salary of White men in Brazil, and this social group of women is most affected by cases of femicide and gender violence.

In this sense, the field of Black feminist studies in the country (Gonzalez 2020a, 2020b) has denounced the need both to recognize this violence against Black women in Brazil and to understand the processes of their insubordination in the face of these structures of oppression (Bairros 1995). One of the strategies used historically in this process is sociability (Freitas 2016). It is understood as relationships of social interactions established between people in which recognition as an existence becomes an important element in the constitution of the fabric of these relationships, and they are constituted beyond consanguineous ties because it is the collective experiences that weave these networks, whether vertical or horizontal (Freitas 2016). Therefore, race and gender, are elements that constitute and mediate sociability, as they are social categories that determine the recognition of existence, and they structure these relationships vertically or horizontally.

Considering that organizational spaces of sociability are spaces where the reciprocity of social relationships between subjects can show how racial dynamics are constituted, these spaces become important objects of organizational analysis. In this study, we have chosen these organizations as empirical object of analysis, based on the processes of racialization of their spaces

from the perspective of Black women. So, in a society like Brazil's, structured by racism, how are organizational practices established based on racial dynamics, considering the assumption of reciprocity that characterizes organizational sociabilities?

Therefore, the aim of this research was to understand racial influences on organizational practices of spaces of sociability by Black Brazilian women. Qualitative research was carried out in a city located in the state of São Paulo, Brazil. The demographic predominance is White people; approximately 78% of residents self-identify as white, and 21% self-identify as Black or Brown (IBGE, 2025). The research was carried out between May and July 2019 with non-participant observations and in-depth interviews with seven Black women, totaling 720 min of conversations. The materials produced were analyzed using an interpretive technique (Minayo 2006).

As a result of the research, we show three theoretical propositions that demonstrate how Black women resist the racism that shapes sociability, especially from the ethical, esthetic and controversial break of the silencing of Black bodies in the social relationships that constitute organizational spaces. This process occurs through (1) occupation of sociability spaces by Black women, (2) confrontation of racism in affective–sexual relationships, and (3) educational practice established by Black women in their organizational sociabilities.

In addition, the results of the research advance the debates on organizational practices in contexts marked by racial inequalities by highlighting the disarticulation of the sociability of women belonging to minority racial groups as a strategy for reproducing racism and sexism in organizational spaces. We are talking about sociability here, and not just coexistence, because sociability in organizational spaces is characterized by the establishment of reciprocity in social relations (Fantinel 2012). If forms of sociability imply forms of organization, dismantling forms of sociability for Black women imply dismantling forms of resistance to the reproduction of racism and sexism simultaneously in organizational spaces.

Another aspect that has advanced the literature is our presentation of how Black women resist attempts to dismantle their organizational sociability. Considering resistance as a set of compossible practices, Black women highlight the possibilities of their existence in conjunction with nonhierarchical practices. In other words, they constitute themselves from their self-definitions (Collins 2000) and not from parameters established by the “other”, sexism and racism. In theoretical terms, we argue that organizational sociabilities are characterized by practices that are racially gendered, and that the reciprocal actions of Black women's organizational sociabilities emerge as ethical–political practices that disrupt the dominant paradigm of whiteness as the ethical subsidy of tacit norms in organizations.

This article is structured in five sections, in addition to these initial considerations. In the next section, we present the theoretical framework, discussing organizational practices, race and organizational sociabilities. Next, we discuss the design of the research field, describing how the empirical study was conducted. In the fourth section, we present the results of the field

research, followed by the section in which we discuss the theoretical contributions of this research. The sixth section is dedicated to conclusions.

## 2 | Theoretical Framework

In order to develop the theoretical framework, we first present the discussions of PBS from the perspective of Certeau (2002). Then our emphasis is on how racial discussions are inserted into these debates on practices in the organizational context, highlighting contributions from Black feminism. Finally, we discuss how sociability can be understood as a racialized social phenomenon in organizations.

### 2.1 | Organizational Practices, Sociability, and Race in Brazil

In the field of Practice-Based Studies (PBS), organizational analyses have emphasized the social nature of organizational processes (Cozza and Gherardi 2023; Dean and Sykes 2022; Feldman and Orlikowski 2011), with the thought of Michel de Certeau frequently mobilized as a central theoretical reference. Certeau (2002) points out that social life is constituted by the relations of forces that weave networks where the circumstances of doing in everyday life are inscribed and delimited. He argues that these actions constitute logic of action, practices. Practices suggest how and what we use in everyday life, which is given to us every day. We appropriate them to name places, tell stories or reintroduce different mobilities of interests and pleasures into what is established (Certeau 2002). Ortmann and Sydow (2018) argue that, from this perspective it is necessary to consider the “silent productions” of social subjects in everyday life, when creative capacity becomes more evident.

So as to understand this creative process, Certeau (2002) presents two types of practice: strategic and tactical. Although strategic practices are characterized by the capitalization of time and space to say who the subjects of self-knowledge and power, belonging, and everyday life are, tactics have the analytical capacity to fragment, because by acting on occasion and not capitalizing, they do not aim to standardize (Certeau 2002). For this reason, Courpasson (2017) points out that Michel de Certeau's proposition of strategic and tactical analysis enables us to understand the dialectics of everyday life in organizations.

Dey and Teasdale (2016) point out that the discussions on tactics proposed by Certeau (2002), in terms of organizational analysis, propose the possibility of the existence of tactical mimicry in the spatial and temporal dynamics of resistance, considering that strategic practices tend to homogenize the ways in which organizations act. For this reason, rather than reinventing, social subjects have the creative potential to confront organizational strategies.

Certeau (1985) stresses three elements that characterize practices: esthetic, ethical, and controversial. The esthetic character is expressiveness, the style of using what is imposed and the specificity of putting an order into practice (Certeau 1985). It

concerns the singularities of using a particular context, a particular space and time relationship, such as going to a supermarket. When going shopping, people think about what they have or do not have at home, compare prices, so that, on this occasion, the practice of buying is constituted (Certeau 1985). The ethical nature of these practices show refusal to be identified with the established order (Certeau 1985). This refusal of the law of facts makes room for the will to create something. It is the historical will to exist through the transformation of the imposed order (Certeau 1985). Certeau (1985) highlights the controversial nature of practices in the defense of life. If practices are part of a context of permanent conflict of power relations, the controversial nature of practices demonstrate the means used to defend oneself against the strongest (Certeau 1985).

The capitalization of time and space results in the production of places, which can take the form of places of power (Certeau 2002). The main characteristic of these places is their stability and the exercise of their power in relation to others, which allows us to consider that this process will always be relational (Certeau 2002). Practices also escape this logic of capitalizing on space and time relations (Certeau 2002). When this happens, their effect is to produce spaces that are constituted by transience, resistance and incoherence in relation to the relations of knowledge and power that they themselves delimit in society (Certeau 2002).

This dialectic analysis of social life explains how different social categories are practiced in the constitution of organizational spaces. If the imposed order determines the places to which these social categories belong, when they are practiced, they can reconfigure the political games of everyday life. Race is one of the social categories that exemplifies and explains this dynamic, since it is one of the main social categories that differentiate us and organize us socially in terms of our sociability.

According to Simmel (2006), sociability is characterized as a specific form of sociation or ways in which individuals organize themselves to satisfy different interests. These interests can be conscious, unconscious, lasting, temporary or even ephemeral (Simmel 2006).

Sociations have forms and contents that do not necessarily have a linear relationship of constitution (Simmel 2006). The forms of sociation make it possible for their contents to be socially materialized (Simmel 2006). However, forms can be freed from their contents and exist on their own. This is when sociability is constituted (Simmel 2006). It happens when social activities take place for the purpose of interaction. In other words, it is a kind of ideal form of sociation in societies.

If sociability is a form of sociation with an end, contents are the interests, the materialities, which guide and constitute sociations (Simmel 2006). Therefore, society would be the result of different forms of sociation (Simmel 2006). In addition, the contents of sociations show the sociates feeling of “being together” (Simmel 2006). It is this content that prevents people from presenting a blasé personality in the face of social life situations, in other words, indifferent behavior in the face of social dynamics (Simmel 2006).

Fantinel (2016) emphasizes the importance of understanding the dynamics of sociability in organizations, especially in spaces where this social phenomenon is central to their constitution, since interactive bonds are essential for organizations to happen. Based on an ethnographic study carried out in a café in the city of Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, the author proposes the concept of organizational sociability as reciprocal actions between individuals that materialize in interactive, representative and symbolic relationships inside and outside organizational spaces, influenced by management processes (Fantinel 2012).

Sociability in organizational spaces is characterized by experiences provided by the practices of this space, which enables it to establish reciprocity in social relations (Fantinel 2012). This experience of sociability would be so striking, from the point of view of interaction, representations and symbolism, that it would influence daily life beyond the day-to-day organization. Thus, organizational practices produce sociability, just as forms of sociability can cause forms of organization.

The point is that if gender and race are social categories that constitute the ways in which we relate socially, the spaces of sociability are practiced based on gendered and racialized dynamics (Nascimento et al. 2016). Nascimento et al. (2016) suggest that spaces of sociability are also configured as spaces of segregation and resistance, as they are produced for specific groups and specific experiences in these organizations. They result in a process of segregation because by seeking form from the content of equals—for example, social class, gender, or race—they compose spaces not only of sociability but also of segregated sociability, including racial segregation. For this reason, practices of sociability in organizations should be analyzed from the point of view of their dynamics, which intersect social categories such as gender and race, given their ethical (social structure), esthetic (social expression), and controversial (resistance to social cleavages) dimensions.

Escobar's (2010) research, for instance, explains how organizational sociabilities of Black people have had an important place in Brazilian history as a strategy for combating racism in the country. Black social clubs were the spaces of leisure and resistance for the enslaved Black population in Brazil, since it was these organizations that, for example, raised funds to pay for the freedom of enslaved Blacks (Escobar 2010).

Considering the context of racism in Brazilian society, organizational sociability of the Black population also provided the basis for constituting racial literacy in this group (Escobar 2010), considering that Black cultural, intellectual, and scientific production was not considered as the basis for the structuring of Brazilian institutions, such as universities (Gomes 2017). In Black organizational sociability there were “ruptures in the systems of representations, derived from the condition of slavery and through which groups of Black men and women oriented themselves, by specific dispositions, in their apprehension of the world and of knowledge” (Moysés 1995, 54). Sociability also entails resistance.

In Brazil, discussions on race and organizational practices have been based on contributions from the field of Black feminism. Studies such as Cardoso et al. (2025) discuss the experiences of

women in their scientific careers, showing how gender experiences structure asymmetries in working with science, which are marked by a lack of institutional support, inflexibility of programs, and mental and physical exhaustion. A study by Cerqueira Da Silva and Pereira De Castro Casa Nova (2025) highlights how the “glass ceiling” phenomenon is present in Brazilian accounting academia and is expressed in barriers specific to the area. According to the researchers, these barriers emerge in processes of closing, which block the path of Black women who aim to succeed in prestigious academic spaces, regardless of their level of qualification.

In terms of research practices, Oliveira (2018) calls attention to the importance of deconstructing the myth of the asexual and nonracialized ethnographer, pointing out that research in the organizational field cannot be thought of based on the neutrality of the researcher in fieldwork. For instance, race relations that structure societies influence the ways in which organizational ethnographies are conducted. Thus, race is not just an object of organizational analysis, but a constitutive element of scientific know-how. And for Black women, resistance occurs not only as a theoretical category of analysis but also as a form of existence in the world.

Resistance can also be seen as an action of reciprocity when presence in certain spaces can reconfigure social relationships. In order to discuss how these dynamics of organizational practices and race shape spaces of sociability, we will discuss the contributions of Black feminist studies. We aim to understand this process in the field of management and its specificities in the Brazilian context, where this research was carried out. This becomes relevant for organizational analysis, given that we will discuss the importance of debating gender from its many intersections with different social categories. In the context of this research, it is related to the racial debate in the Brazilian context.

## 2.2 | Race, Gender, and Class as Categories in the Constitution of Organizations: Contributions of Black Feminism to Organizational Analysis

From a sociological point of view, race is a category for understanding how we organize ourselves socially (Hall 1999) because it systematizes processes of social differentiation based on elements that have materialized in our daily lives, such as skin color or hair texture. In this respect, Hall (1999, 63) states that race is a category that organizes our ways of speaking, representing and of the discursive and material production of differences in terms of physical categories, such as skin color and hair texture, as well as the symbols that differentiate us socially (Hall 1999).

These discussions explain how, historically, societies structured based on a process of racial segregation of the Black population still present race as an element in the organization of social, economic, and organizational dynamics and, therefore, become an object of analysis in management processes. In Brazil, race is a relevant category for thinking about everything from the occupation of jobs to the institutionalization of emotional

relationships. According to the data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics [IBGE] (IBGE, 2025), although the Black population represents approximately 56% of Brazilians, and the White population 43%, the average monthly income of a White person in the country is on average 58% higher than that of a Black person. If we associate the gender category with these discussions, Black women are one of the social groups that has the lowest average monthly income in Brazil, which is 36% of the average monthly income of a White person (IBGE, 2025).

Such dynamic of gender and race also takes place in other dimensions of social life. According to IBGE data (2025), Black women support 60% of the poorest households in Brazil, having an average monthly income of up to 1 minimum wage. Consequently, it is possible to see that the intersection between gender, race, and class has structural effects on our society, given that Black women are a social group that has lower incomes, and this income is responsible for providing for the poorest Brazilian families and homes. Therefore, there is no way to talk about race without talking about gender in this context. Our social relations are gendered, since they are constituted by the constitutive gender dynamics.

Almeida (2019) corroborates these discussions by stating that, in addition to gender, one of the systems of oppression that structure Brazilian society is racism against the Black population. According to the author, racism is characterized as “a systematic form of discrimination based on race, which manifests itself through conscious or unconscious practices that culminate in disadvantages or privileges for individuals, depending on the racial group to which they belong” (Almeida 2019, 25).

An important aspect to consider in this debate is the intersection of race and gender, and the gendering of social relations based on their racial intersections. In the field of Black feminism, this debate is called intersectionality. Intersectional theory was conceptually systematized in the 1980s by Kimberlé Crenshaw, in the United States, in the context of Black feminist discussions about oppression. Crenshaw (2002) considers that intersectionality systematizes the structural dynamics of the axes of domination and subordination of social categories that produce discriminatory systems, which produce inequalities.

Accordingly, adopting an intersectional approach to discussions means a position that considers how different social categories intersect, producing different positions within social structures and the social structures themselves. It considers the specificities in the constitution of different social groups without disregarding how the broader social context is based and structured on the interlocutions between these different specificities. The central idea of intersectional discussions is to deconstruct silences, as Kilomba (2019) points out, and to emphasize the importance of feminist reflections. They demonstrate that human experiences are marked by simultaneous intersections of social categories that show articulated forms of inequality. Patriarchy does result in the gendering of inequalities, but the social positions they occupy tell us much more about the intersections of these genderings with other social categories (Kilomba 2019). Thus, we cannot talk about the existence of a

universal woman, but of women socially marked by different intersections of inequalities.

Gonzalez (2020a, 2020b) points out that being a Black woman in Brazil means to be an object of triple discrimination (of race, gender, and social class) due to the different types of oppression suffered by this population. According to Collins (2016), oppression characterized by systematic presence of unjust situations over a long period of time in which one social group subject's other groups to conditions of submission. It results in the impediment of access to different types of resources, material or symbolic, produced by society. Gonzalez (2020a, 2020b) states that Black women are oppressed in terms of social class because they are subjected to a process of reinforcement of subordination and inferiority in labor relations that mark the structuring of the racial and sexual division of labor. Given an effect of the period of black enslavement in the country, as workers they are considered objects of economic and sexual exploitation:

Exploitation of Black women as sexual objects is something that goes far beyond what Brazilian feminist movements, usually led by White middle-class women, think or say. For example, there are still “ladies” who try to hire beautiful young Black women to work in their homes as maids; but the main aim is for their young children to be able to “initiate” themselves sexually with them. (Needless to say, the salary of a maid is extremely low.). We have yet another example of the economic–sexual over-exploitation we talked about above, as well as the reproduction/perpetuation of one of the myths disseminated since Freyre: that of the special sensuality of Black women.

(Gonzalez 2020a, 2020b, 52).

Despite empirical evidence on how race, gender and class structure Brazilian society, there are still few studies that highlight how this intersectionality is relevant to thinking about organizations. The silencing of discussions on race, social class and gender in organizational studies, according to Proudford and Nkomo (2006), show that although we know that there are gender and racial differences, little is discussed or known about the mechanisms that perpetuate and sustain these differences. The researchers argue that, since the 1990s, there has been little progress in these debates in organizations, something that needs to be done today (Gouvea and Oliveira 2020). The question that arises is why we have silenced this discussion.

In the Brazilian context, Conceição (2009) states that this denial of race in organizational studies shows how this debate has been faced by Brazilian society historically. The author mentions the myth of racial democracy and adds that racism was understood as an individual attitude, which could be addressed, in organizational terms, through management practices (Conceição 2009).

However, one of the theoretical gaps that this articulation between practices, organization and intersectionalities presents is

precisely in relation to organizational spaces where sociability is one of the central categories of their constitution (Fantinel, 2016). Discussions on intersectionalities contribute to these reflections by stressing how the articulations between different categories of oppression constitute the forms of sociation or sociability in organizations. This is because when we understand the dynamics of racism and sexism in Brazil (Gonzalez 2020a, 2020b; Almeida 2019), we observe how the content of our “ways of doing things”, or our practices, can be characterized as racially gendered social interactions. According to Gonzalez 2020a, 2020b, from an organizational point of view, it results in organizational sociabilities as forms of sociability of gendered domination of race, and also in forms of sociability of gendered-racial resistance, when we analyze how Black women position themselves in this process.

Thus, from the point of view of intersectionalities, sociabilities can be understood as gender-racial sociability practices, whose hierarchical content is the result of the specificities of sexism and structural racism that constitute us socially. In the field of organizational analysis, it is observed in one of the stereotypes produced in relation to Black women in this intersection of gendered-racial inequalities: the domestic worker.

Domestic workers area is a professional group of approximately 6 million people working in Brazil, 65% of whom are Black women (IBGE, 2025). In addition, 21% of Black Brazilian women are domestic workers (IBGE, 2025). This work is characterized by labor activities carried out continuously in the homes of individuals or families. These activities are characterized by preparing meals, cleaning and caring for the house, clothes and shoes, for example (Brazil 2024). During the period of Black enslavement in Brazil, domestic work was carried out predominantly by enslaved Black women known as “*mucamas*” in the homes of slaveholders, families that were hegemonically White. After the abolition of slavery in the country, the activity continued to be carried out predominantly by this population, and White families continued to be the predominant group favored by this service. In other words, the dynamics of gender and race hierarchies in the sexual division of labor continued to be reproduced with the same slave logic, as discussed by Black feminists in the field of intersectional studies.

For this reason, when we analyze social practices in the Brazilian context, they must be observed from their ethical (the structure of gender and race), esthetic (racially gendered expression), and controversial (resistance to racially gendered cleavages) intersectionalities, paraphrasing the Certeauian dimensions of social practices. In order to discuss this process, in the next section of this article, we present how we conducted a field study with Black women in the Brazilian context.

### 3 | Methodological Procedures

The descriptive qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln 2005) was carried out in a city located in the state of São Paulo, Brazil. It was founded in the early twentieth century and home to European immigrants, particularly of Italian origin, who arrived in the country to escape the war on the European continent and

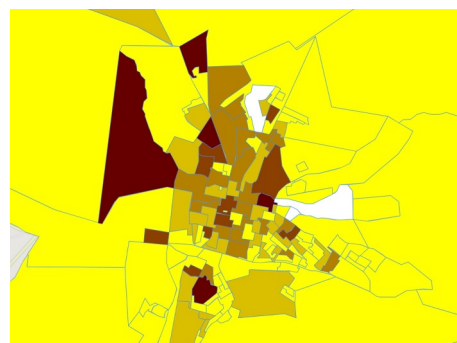
as a way of implementing the National Whitening Policy promoted by the Brazilian state (Gonzalez 2020a, 2020b). The aim of this policy was to reduce the number of Black people in the country by whitening the cultural practices that constituted Black people a society, which in fact happened in the town under study. Currently, 78% of its population self-identify as White and 21% as Black (IBGE, 2025).

The city also has a high racial dissimilarity index (Mariani et al. 2018), as presented in Figure 1. This index analyzes spatial segregation based on the race/color indicator. Based on a delimited interval between 0 and 100, it compares the presence of different social groups distributed in small areas (census tracts) in relation to the total demographic composition of the city (Mariani et al. 2018). For example, if a city has 10 census tracts and is made up of 90% Whites and 10% Blacks, the RDI will be 100 if all the Blacks are concentrated in just one tract and all the Whites in the others, and 0 (zero) if all the census tracts have the same composition as the city (in this case, 90% Whites and 10% Blacks) (Mariani et al. 2018).

In Figure 1, the gray lines represent the divisions of the census tracts. The closer to brown the greater the concentration of Black people, and the closer to yellow, the greater the presence of White people. Out of the 33 census tracts inhabited in the city, 11 of them, or 33%, showed a disproportion in geographical occupation between Black and White people in relation to the city's general demographic data. It shows significant levels of racial dissimilarity, considering the tendency for the city to be organized according to racial criteria.

Table 1 describes the percentages of racial occupations in the census tracts of the city surveyed. We call attention to census tracts 1, 2, 5, 6 and 8, which have more than 90% White occupancy and only tract 21 has equal percentage of Blacks and Whites.

We chose two data collection techniques to produce empirical material for the research: nonparticipant observation and in-depth interviews with Black women living in the area. We felt that combining these two techniques would be more appropriate regarding linking narratives of the research participants with the researcher's experiences with the object of analysis in this study. Thus, it was possible to provide a perspective of validity and reliability of the research, taking into account assumptions of qualitative research based on coherence and



**FIGURE 1** | Occupation in the city based on racial criterium. Source: IBGE (2025). [Colour figure can be viewed at [wileyonlinelibrary.com](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com)]

**TABLE 1** | Racial demography of the city.

Census tract	% Black	% White	Census tract	% Black	% White
1	7.96	<b>90.79</b>	18	10	89.83
2	6.94	<b>92.66</b>	19	25.84	73.39
3	10.42	87.20	20	43.98	56.01
4	13.61	86.38	21	<b>50.29</b>	<b>49.55</b>
5	8.52	<b>91.17</b>	22	12.33	87.66
6	7.19	<b>92.32</b>	23	30.39	69.60
7	16.33	83.41	24	25.08	73.63
8	7.80	<b>90.88</b>	25	—	—
9	38.41	61.58	26	18.57	81.42
10	29.82	69.98	27	20	80
11	24.02	75.97	28	18.55	80.75
12	24.16	75.83	29	29.18	68.52
13	33.03	66.83	30	47.76	52.23
14	24.37	74.52	31	20	80
15	13.15	86.43	32	26.39	72.72
16	13.08	86.50	33	23.12	76.73
17	12.03	87.41	34	21.88	78.11
			35	—	—

Source: Adapted from IBGE (2025).

triangulation of sources, as highlighted by Ullrich et al. (2012). These authors consider that validity in qualitative research refers to the process of coherence and precision with which the descriptions of the research data are presented, whereas reliability is linked to the consistency of the analysis and the critical reflexivity of the researcher. For this reason, the use of observations and field diaries were considered appropriate both in terms of broadening the sources of data and in terms of materializing the researcher's reflexivity in the field.

Nonparticipant observations were carried out between May and July 2019 by one of the authors of this article, whom we will call Luísa. The researcher traveled to the city where the study was carried out in the first week of May 2019 and visited the organizational spaces of sociability. These spaces were in census tract 1, in which more than 90% of the resident population self-identify as White, and census tract 21, which had an equal percentage of Black and White residents. At the same time, she monitored the city's main events on a page in a digital platform, festive activities and places where people congregated, so that she could identify where the most social interaction took place among residents. Such experiences were recorded in field diaries, totaling 20 diaries with 152 pages of descriptions of 27 events observed. A script was used to guide observations, having the following guiding principles: identifying the racial composition of the organizational spaces surveyed, characterizing organizational sociability and identifying social intervention practices of Black women in these localities. Then the main spaces of sociability were identified: the church square, a nightclub, and 3 bars.

In order to extend upon the research data produced, in-depth interviews were also carried out. The in-depth interviews were conducted with seven self-identified Black women living in the locality. Throughout the study we use the term Black women, as this category is widely discussed for naming the social group participating in the research.

The criteria used to select the study participants were: (1) self-identifying as Black women over the age of 18, which is the civil age majority in Brazilian law, (2) living in the city surveyed, (3) occupying the organizational spaces of sociability selected by the researcher, (4) developing social practices of sociability in the locality surveyed, and (5) formally accepting to participate in the study by signing a consent form freely and informed, as recommended by the research ethics committee of the institution to which this research project was linked.

Study participants were selected from the non-participant observations made by Luísa. So as to access these women, we first searched on social networks for events that occupied public spaces in the locality being researched, such as parties; and, by accessing these virtual events, we identified two Black women who took part in organizing these activities, who were initially interviewed for the research. We asked them to indicate Black women who could take part in the study, based on the previously established criteria. As a result, seven women were interviewed, as we show in Table 2, totaling 720 min of interviews. The names used to refer to them are fictitious, and excerpts from the transcripts of the speeches of some of the interviewees were used in the work, rather than all of them. We

**TABLE 2** | Black women interviewed during the study.

Name	Age	Time of residence in the city	Professional activity	Marital status
Patricia	26	12 years	Student	Single
Carla	26	26 years	Public servant	Single
Angela	24	24 years	Educator	Single
Nilma	18	15 years	Student	Single
Juliana	34	34 years	University teacher	Single
Joice	36	36 years	General services assistant	Single
Carolina	25	25 years	Public servant	Single

Source: From the survey (IBGE-Institu and to Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística 2019).

opted to use narratives that were more descriptive and more detailed in the social expressions of the object of study. We also restricted the description of more specific social categories about these women to avoid characterizing their individualities, considering the ethical criteria of the research.

The interview script that guided data collection had three axes of discussion: race and racism, occupation of spaces of sociability, and social interactions. These three axes were divided into 10 questions, which began by asking the women interviewed to name their race, since race, gender, social class, and place of residence were the criteria defined for participation in the study. The research results were analyzed using three-stage interpretive technique (Minayo 2006).

The first phase of materials analysis was a comprehensive reading to identify the thematic categories that emerged from the fieldwork, which mediated the empirical materials produced by the observations and in-depth interviews. The second phase was recognizing descriptive elements that form the themes under analysis and, finally, highlighting the meanings of these elements articulated with the theoretical categories of the research. Minayo (2006) argues that in this phase we make empirical descriptions dialog with theoretical assumptions. We consider narratives of the interviews and field diaries from their contexts, relating them to evidence of fieldwork observations, so that it is possible to relate the empirical to the theoretical. Thus, this analytical path allowed building three thematic categories, which were the basis for making theoretical propositions to contribute to the management field. We will present them in the next section.

## 4 | Research Results

The results of the research were organized into three thematic categories, based on the practices identified: racial occupation of spaces of sociability, racialization of affective–sexual relationship practices and practices of breaking with racial segregation. The names of each thematic category were inspired by the lyrics of the song “Fio de prumo” (Criolo 2017). It refers to greetings to Exú, the Orixá who in African religions is responsible for opening the paths so that we can occupy the spaces we pass through, as well as our forms of sociability in the world.

### 4.1 | “Laroyê, Bará! Open a Smooth Path for Me to Pass”: The Racial Occupation of Spaces of Sociability

The square of the Mother Catholic Church is the main space for sociability in the town under study. Going to the square is referred to by the local population as “*rolê na praça*” (field diary, May 18, 2019), and “*rolê*” in this context is a slang that means hanging out or going for a walk in the square. Its location is in the central region of the city, a place with the smallest demographic population of Black people. According to Patricia’s account, the racial dynamics of occupying this space becomes evident (interview conducted in June 2019):

[...] when you cross the center of the square, there seem to be more people. The people in the center are Black and they’re frowned upon. Unfortunately, people give a sidelong glance, you know [a side-eye]? It’s in the center of the square because there’s the church and there’s like a corridor in the middle.

If, from a racial point of view, racism is as a system of oppression (Almeida 2019) that produces physical and symbolic places (Certeau 2002) for Blacks and Whites, the *rolê*, according to Nascimento et al. (2016), is configured as a practice of space in the city square. Strategically, the operationalization of racism in everyday life appropriates this form of resistance, which is the occupation of space, to determine where Black people should be. This type of organizational sociability (Fantinel 2016), that is, reciprocal action in social relationships, has a segregated form and gendered-racial content, with reciprocity mediated by relations of power and resistance.

In addition to this corridor, another practice that demonstrates the organization of this space of sociability is the consumption of alcoholic beverages. The groups in the square have as habit bringing thermoses with drinks to consume there (field diary, 26 May 2019). Men consumed beers and women consumed distilled beverages such as vodkas. However, it was clear that Black women consumed more beers than drinks, just like White women. This dissociation of forms of sociability was due to the price of drinks, according to interviewees’ accounts, which was also observed by the researcher. As beer was cheaper than spirits, Black women consumed more beer. Black men also consumed more beer. “The brands of beers consumed by the

Black population were the cheapest, in this particular club” (Ângela, interview conducted in June 2019). So, in the mornings following the “*rolê* in the square”, the gendered-racial criterion of occupying the space of the place became evident, based on the solid waste produced by the sociability and discarded in the square. On one side there were cans and bottles of more popular beers, where Black women were present, and on the other, cans and bottles of more expensive beer, as well as the waste from distilled spirits, which marked the occupation of the space by White people.

In this practice of organizing the space of sociability it is observed is that the consumption of cheaper beer is a way of resisting the attempt to silence the presence of Black women in this context. If the form (Simmel 2006) of this sociability is the consumption of products, the content (Simmel 2006) of this form is produced from an economic dimension. This is what Simmel (2006) points out when he says that form and content can be dissociated. In the case of the practice of beer consumption, it organizes space based on the economic criterion that stresses the gender and racial belonging of the interactions in each place of the square.

As Roque (2003) argues, resistance cannot be considered a purely reactive phenomenon, especially when it comes to the sociability of Black people (Sousa 2020). It is necessary to consider resistance as an act of permanence of compossibles (Roque 2003). In this sense, the occupation of the square and consumption in and of the space become elements of appropriation for Black women based on their material conditions of existence, such as the cost of the beer consumed by this population. Although an ordinary practice, being in the square is configured as a daily way of opposing the Brazilian nation-state, whose project was to dismantle Black coexistence in public spaces (Sousa 2020). Black existence becomes so marked in this space that it also occurs in the composition of artifacts.

In addition to these traces of artifacts that mark racial places in the space, Patrícia describes how places are constituted in this locality that interacts with other spaces. The “racial corridor” described by Patrícia ends near the entrance to the city’s club, where themed dances take place. Ângela points out that on these days the racial dynamics are even more evident, as white people attend these parties, whereas the Black population stays around the entrance to the club. Ângela also points out that Black women, like herself, enter it knowing that they don’t belong there: “you feel the energy there. That you don’t belong there” (Ângela, interview conducted in June 2019). This energy is produced by the gazes, which Patrícia referred to and demonstrated throughout the interview, and which Luíza also perceived on her body with some singularities:

I arrived at the city square at 11p.m., as I had agreed with Lucas, Patrícia’s friend, to do the famous *rolê*, before we went to the party that was going to take place at the club. Lucas was accompanied by three other friends. As I was the only Black woman in the group, their discomfort was evident when I tried to pay for any expenses. At the party, I realized how the city’s occupation logic was reproduced in that space.

In a triangular shape, the darker-skinned young people stood against the walls of the club. While people of lighter skin occupied the central parts of the venue (Field diary, July 26, 2019).

The “*rolê*” practice in the square has in its esthetic character (Certeau 1985) a style of resistance that is the content of the reciprocity of racialized sociability in the face of the strategic aesthetics of “side” to produce an experience of not belonging to the space. It is systematized in a bodily knowledge (energy) that is not intelligible from the point of view of the spoken word. The ethical character of the practice (Certeau 1985) of the *rolê* concerns the bodily refusal of not belonging. The controversial character (Certeau 1985) perceived by the researcher occurred when she paid for the drinks, especially the drinks. As discussed, beer was the most popular drink among Black women due to the price of this product. By adopting a consumption pattern of White women, Luíza broke the pact of sociability in terms of gender and racial hierarchy, since she distanced herself from the stereotype of a Black woman produced in the context of the club (of beer consumption and choosing what to drink).

This process exemplifies debates on intersectionality, in which Crenshaw (2002, 177) emphasizes the importance of “capturing the structural and dynamic consequences of the interaction between two or more axes of subordination”. An ordinary practice of Luíza during the fieldwork, such as buying a specific type of product, caused collective discomfort, as it showed the production of subordination of Black women in terms of gender, race, and class in the context analyzed.

As Gonzalez (2020a, 2020b) argues, oppressions that mark Black women in Brazil aim to produce and reproduce their bodies as objects of economic and social exploitation. By occupying a place in which she is not an object of pleasure, but the subject of her will, which includes socializing from places other than objectification, one of the effects is “discomfort” produced especially in White men. Because resistance implies doubling the force of action, as Roque (2003) discusses, by producing the world from compossibles. Compossible is everything that exists and works together with the other (Roque 2003). In other words, for the world to be a field of possibilities for compossibles, sociability practices need to involve building with the other.

One of the major issues in this dynamic, as discussed by Gonzalez (2020a, 2020b) and Collins (2016), is that racial oppression results in the understanding that the White person’s other, the Black person in this case, is not constituted from the same ontological composition of existence due to the system of racial oppression and domination that structures societies marked by racial exploitation, such as Brazil’s. It considers the White person as a reference of humanity, as in the capitalist system. The ontological composition of Black women in systems based on racial, gender, and race oppression, such as Brazil, is one of non-humanization because they are not White men. This is why there are “discomforts” with Black women, whose compositions are not made up of elements of this condition of subalternity, but of resistance, of existing by remaining in organizational spaces. And it is the presence of Black people that reconfigures

the organization of social interactions in organizations, which will be discussed in the next section of this article.

#### 4.2 | “Double the Strength of the Arms, I am Going Alone”: The Racialization of Affective–Sexual Relationship Practices

Another practice identified as organizing spaces of sociability is affective–sexual relationships. It was important to analyze this practice because, as Certeau (1985) argues, the ethical character of practice is evidence of our will to exist. This will to exist is related to existing with someone, as an esthetic of this existence. Regarding Certeau’s (1985) controversial nature of practices, recognizing differences and combating inequalities, would it be possible to break with the logic of racial segregation in the organizational spaces analyzed so far in affective–sexual relationships? This is the reflection in this section of the paper.

During observations in the social spaces, no interracial relationships were identified (field diary, July 27, 2019). Love relationships with public exposure occurred predominantly between White people and heterosexuals. When Luísa asked the interviewees about this perception, they pointed out that none of their friends had been in affective–sexual relationships with Black people, nor did they recognize these possibilities in their circle of friends:

It’s hard for someone to come and say: I want to be with that boy who’s black! I think he’s gorgeous, you know? It’s usually the white guy with the light eyes, right? I don’t think I’ve ever seen it. In my group of friends, I’ve never seen it. Sometimes people think [black people] are beautiful, but not for relationships. That’s very sad [...] and it would be new, to say the least [if one of their friends dated a black person]

(Patrícia, interview conducted in June 2019).

None of the women interviewed noticed the presence of Black couples in their social spaces. Carla (interview conducted in mid-2019) said that she had already had a relationship with a White person. However, her mother-in-law told narratives contrary to the relationship, stating in public that “bad work was black work” (Carla, interview conducted in May 2019).

We could understand that organizational sociabilities in public spaces resonate with private lives of social subjects and empirical evidence produced through the fieldwork shows it in the spaces analyzed. There is a tendency toward the structural reproduction of sexism and racism, as pointed out by IBGE (2025), in which Black women are the ones who least institutionalize affective–sexual relationships in our society, unlike White people, who are the social group that has the most affective–sexual relationships with each other. Considering Fantinel’s (2016) argument that sociability implies processes of interactions, representations and meanings, the practice of love relationships shows racialized social interactions and representations of the search for love with White-skinned people that

signify the silencing of the Black presence in the daily lives of the social subjects living in the locality under study:

I arrived at the bar with Rodrigo, who is male and white, a friend of Patrícia and Ângela. There were about 20 tables seating an average of four people each. There was predominance of white women, there were no lack people at any of the tables, except the one we were at. Rodrigo ordered a beer and we chatted. Some people who knew Rodrigo, who is from the city, came up to the table to say hello. I felt like I was in a non-place. All the couples were like Patrícia, Ângela and Carla had described. We left and went to the church square (*rolé*) and then to a well-known nightclub in the area. The queue at the entrance to the nightclub indicated that it was very busy. In the queue, I had the same perception I had at the bar we were before. As they said, affectionate and loving-affective relationships reproduce the hegemonic logic of the ideology of whitening materialized in the production of the body and in the constitution of affections between people. I felt alone as I did on the first day of the research when I tried to contact men I knew who lived in the city to carry out the study, and I was unsuccessful. I remembered Carla saying that she couldn’t imagine her friends being around Black women. Would people be willing to give up their racial privileges in the field of affection as well?

(field diary, July 26, 2019).

This dynamic of race in the practices of affective and affective–sexual relationships in spaces of sociability has already been discussed, for example, by Castro (2010), Alves (2011), and Pacheco (2013). Castro (2010), in a study of Black women in the city of Salvador (BA), shows how the remnants of enslavement of the Black population produced an absence of the construction of Black bodies as a locus for loving affections. Alves (2011) identified that the non-recognition of Black women in the “affective market” results in situations of humiliation and loneliness for this social group. A racial educational process based on the affective dimension was pointed out as an alternative for thinking about how to change this racial dynamic of segregation in affective–sexual relationships (Alves 2011). In a study by Pacheco (2013), Black women are also the social group having the highest number of women without a steady partner and with emotional instability compared to women from other racial groups.

The affective–sexual dimension of Black women’s sociability becomes an important element of organizational analysis, as it helps to understand the refusal of Black women to be conditioned as an object of economic–sexual exploitation (Gonzalez 2020a, 2020b). By highlighting that Black women are oppressed because the structuring of the racial and sexual division of labor objectifies these bodies, affectivities that are not marked by hierarchies, domination and exploitation are considered atypical in our society. So much so that the interviewees say they cannot imagine

their White friends establishing other types of connections with Black women than the typical ones, in other words, exploitation and objectification of Black female bodies.

Gonzalez (2020a, 2020b) also points out that the economic and sexual overexploitation of Black women in Brazil is what produces sensuality as a product of exploitation and hierarchical exchange in the labor market. In this sense, the example of the figure of the “mulata”, which has been established as an image of control (Collins 2016) over these bodies. When these women by resist this process as producers of other work relationships no longer based on the sexual element as a compositional element of social relationships, subjects who try to place them in these places of subordination and economic–sexual overexploitation are no longer able to build sociable relationships with them. In the interviewees’ perception, for these subjects there are no possibilities of non-hierarchical compossibles in terms of race, gender, and social class with Black women.

Therefore, affective–sexual relationships can enable aggregation and compossibilities that whitening policies have tried to eliminate from Black sociability. It becomes important because Black women, as well as their bodies, establish organizational practices in which affectivity is no longer about economic and sexual overexploitation. In other words, for Gonzalez (2020a, 2020b) we cannot talk about affective–sexual relationships without discussing the economic condition of Black women’s lives. After all, the way we produce our working relationships also structures the way we relate to our feelings.

Practices of constituting affective–sexual relationships could be constituted with an ethical character of refusal of the imposed order of economic–sexual exploitation of bodies, an esthetic of resistance to specific forms of socialization based on a hegemonic ideal of who occupies the affective–sexual place in these relationships and as a material way of fighting daily against racism. However, as observed in spaces of sociability, as well as in other research carried out on the subject, practices of affective–sexual relationships tend to reproduce the process of racial segregation observed in public spaces. Therefore, affections are racially gendered in societies such as Brazil, marked by social hierarchies. Intersectional analyses enables evidencing inequalities and the dynamics of oppression structured in their daily forms, such as displays of affection. For this reason, discussions on intersectionalities produced in the field of feminism have important analytical potential in debates on gender in management, as they present the most ordinary forms of gender oppression and their intersectionalities based on contextual singularities.

### 4.3 | “Take Care of Me as I Go to Greet You”: Practices of Breaking With Racial Segregation

Another practice used by Black women is recognition. Carla (interview conducted in May 2019) says that one of the worst things that racism does in everyday life is to be in a social space and “hear the person compliment her friend and then turn to you and be silent”. From these experiences, Carla adopted the

strategy of praising other Black women. So, when she arrives in these spaces and identifies a Black woman, she praises her as a way of reinventing these existences.

This was a practice carried out a lot by Black women during the field research. Even for Luíza on social media, establishing a form of reciprocity in these social relationships, as presented in studies on sociability (Fantinel 2016). Another way interviewees said they resist and reconfigure the organizational practices of their spaces of sociability is education.

In the field of Black feminism, education is understood as a process of recognition. hooks (2017) explains recognition as related to the process of people recognizing that they are agents with active capacity in a pedagogical process; in other words, education is not characterized as the transmission of knowledge but as a process of becoming a subject in the world based on the recognition of one’s own existence. Therefore, in educational terms, bodies do not go unnoticed, as they are our existence in the world, which overcomes the Cartesian version of the separation between body and mind in the constitution of rationality.

Thus, from the point of view of intersectionalities, education implies recognition of becoming a subject in the world. For the Black women taking part in this study, it results in the intersection of cultural practices in the educational process, since gender and race must be considered from the point of view of social, historical, and cultural dynamics. Education for gender-racial relations implied a debate on religions of African origin and their intersectionality with the religious practices of the Brazilian colonial process based on Judeo-Christian traditions. In Brazil, this religious syncretism can be seen in the religious practices of Umbanda or candomblé (Schmidt 2024). Patricia (interview conducted in June 2019), for example, considered the strategic use of her religion, Umbanda, as an important educational practice for gender and race relations. It is a religious practice marked by the strong presence of Black women, and it is also marked by strong practices of racism and religious sexism:

People look at us with a judgmental eye. Once we’re walking on a dirt road and there was something there: oh, guys, for God’s sake, look at that beer over there. It’s out of this world. [...] I try to talk to people to direct their thinking. Once I caught a friend talking to each other. I was arriving at the place and they were talking about me [about how Umbanda wasn’t something of God or sacred]. I caught them and told them it wasn’t the right way to talk about it. I wasn’t hurt by what they were saying, nor did I feel sorry. But it’s not supposed to be that way, you know. Because it is a religion.

Talking about racism is a tactical practice that can reconfigure the interactions of the forms and contents of the sociations that guide sociability on certain occasions. In the religious context, it means adopting narratives of the organizational sociabilities of the *terreiros* in other spaces of sociability. It is configured both as resistance and as strategies to produce a place that has not yet

been constituted in the city surveyed: the place of African matrix religions. According to the interviewees, there are no *umbanda* or *candomblé terreiros* (Schmidt 2024) in the town under study. In all the spaces visited, we only saw artifacts from Christian religions, such as crucifixes, even at the entrance to the town, where there is an image of a Catholic saint.

Another important aspect of this form of socialization is the image of Black women (Collins 2000). Ângela (interview conducted in June 2019) says she is afraid that her friends will consider her to be persecutory because she questions them on racial issues, including during *rolês*. She says that she has already questioned her friends about the need to observe whether Black people are present and where they are in these spaces of sociability. However, this discussion is something that still needs to be part of the education of the senses from an anti-racist perspective, since they are unable to perceive the non-existence of Black people in spaces of power and decision-making in the city, nor do they realize that by saying that religious practices of African origin, such as *Umbanda*, are not of God, they are practicing and reproducing racism against the Black population in Brazil.

According to the interviewees, when the subject of race is brought up in narratives in spaces of sociability, this practice is perceived as something *heavy* for non-Blacks. During the fieldwork, Luísa was also challenged by this narrative. When commenting in one of the social spaces with a White person, she was constantly interrupted or silenced in her speech on the grounds that discussing racial issues in social relationships was too *heavy* (field diary, May 15, 2019). This is what discussions about sociability say about the possibility of articulating content and form. The segregated form in terms of gender and race of space was present in the content of the narratives of social relationships, for instance. Talking about the existence of gender and racial discrimination in our society was considered *heavy* by the White men who preferred not to discuss it or not to discuss it because they felt *bad* or *embarrassed* by this kind of report. For them not to feel this way, it was necessary to silence this type of subject.

The main forms of strategic resistance for Black women is occupation of spaces, social relationships with other Black women, as well as education. Gomes (2017) mentions precisely this process as characteristic of what would be an educating Black movement, having these practices constituted in social spaces, including sociability. And this is what the Black women interviewed produce in social spaces of sociability in the city researched: an educational process of race relations through their experiences of life and existence.

As Escobar (2010) points out, Black organizational sociabilities played an important role in resisting the enslavement of Black people in the country. In addition to these organizations fighting against racial discrimination, they broke the pattern of the White racial domination system of imposing impossibilities on the creation of permanent ties with the Black population. This even occurred in relations between mothers and daughters/children, when Black women and children were prevented from living together as a family while still in the puerperium, either because their newborns were ripped from them, kidnapped and

sold as merchandise by the enslavers, or because the breast milk of enslaved Black women was given to the children of the enslavers, the vast majority of whom were White cis men (Pinto and Resende Júnior 2021).

Black social spaces in the city under study play an important role in racial literacy (Escobar 2010). The Black women interviewed, by occupying spaces of sociability and establishing social relationships as an educational practice for race relations, reconfigure the practices of organizing spaces of sociability by ethically refusing to identify with the process of silencing Black bodies in these spaces. They occupy places where the logic of economic and sexual exploitation of their lives is reproduced. Aesthetically, Black women produce other organizational sociabilities based on the recognition of racial segregation as an agenda for established social relationships. In controversial terms, they show possibilities of establishing recognition of their existence and combating inequalities, calling attention to the racism of affective–sexual relationships in the contexts in which they live, for instance.

## 5 | Discussions

The first aspect to consider as a conclusion to this work is its contribution to the field of gender studies. Based on the debates in the field of Black feminism, we highlight the importance of considering the concept of intersectionalities for organizational analyses. This is because this concept enables the understanding that we are made of and crossed by different social categories which, when intertwined, constitute different forms of oppression that must be understood intersectionally, so that it is possible to identify their unique experiences. Then it is possible to understand in a more complex and sophisticated way how different social categories potentiate structures of inequality. In the Brazilian case analyzed in this study, sociability practices have evidenced how Black Brazilian women suffer from a triple system of oppressions (race, gender, and class) that place them as objects of economic and sexual exploitation in the country (Gonzalez 2020a, 2020b).

When we talk about gender, work, and organizations, the Brazilian case contributes to this field of study by highlighting how organizational sociabilities are characterized by practices that are racially gendered in ethical, esthetic, and political terms. The use of the hyphen is necessary because this process is intersectional. As gender is produced, race is produced and social class is produced. For this reason, this analytical process has its foundations in the field of Black feminism and intersectionality, since this concept provides an understanding on women from the specificities of their lives and contextual experiences. Therefore, the theoretical propositions presented here, as well as the arguments, can be thought about and reflected on in contexts other than just Brazil.

We present as contribution to theories in the field of management the disarticulation of organizational sociabilities of women belonging to racial minority groups, one of the strategies used to reproduce racism intersected with sexism in organizations. We argue that it happens because organizational sociabilities of

Black women are made of practices of resistance that constitute a set of compossible practices through which Black women express possibilities of their existence based on nonhierarchical logics.

Regarding singularities of lives and experiences of organizational sociability characterized by practices that are racially gendered in ethical, esthetic and political terms in the case studied, we have systematized these singularities into three thematic categories. Considering the first thematic category of analysis we discuss in this article—racial occupation of spaces of sociability—we demonstrate how such spaces are segregated along gender-racial lines. An effective ethical character of the organizing practices in these spaces of sociability would be refusal to maintain this segregation. For the Black women interviewed, the practice of “*rolés*” shows how our sociabilities can be (re)organized based on the gender-race criterion without necessarily being segregated. This is possible because resistance is one of its main compossible elements (Roque 2003).

The *rolés in the square*, for instance, end up constituting an anti-racist educational practice insofar as they become a basis for reflection with social subjects on issues of segregation because implicit in their dynamics is resistance to the silencing of the presence of Black women in these spaces. When the interviewees say that they encourage their social circles to reflect on the question “How many black people are there here?” (field diary, July 25, 2019), this question is configured as a practice of breaking with the established order. From the point of view of space management practices, in terms of public policies, the municipal administration could, for example, incorporate in the main church square Black cultural practices as a way of raising awareness of the issue of racism and structural sexism.

Thus, *the first theoretical proposition* resulting from this research is the understanding that gender-racial influences on the ethical character of the practices of organizing spaces of sociability result in the constitution of reciprocal actions of non-silenced black resistance. The reciprocal actions of Black women’s sociability, when not silenced, emerge as ethical-political practices that break with the dominant paradigm of whiteness as the ethical subsidy of tacit norms in organizations (Carbado and Gulati 2000), such as the ways of occupying organizational spaces, as observed in this study, which has racial segregation as its foundation. Such actions also break with the political subsidy of whiteness by mobilizing affective and collective networks to activate alternative ways of producing value, belonging and sociability that escape the metrics of organizational performance (S. M. Nkomo 2011) based on the logic of reproducing values of racial domination. Therefore, it becomes clear that, for Black feminism, the concept of resistance, is not just a reactive phenomenon imbricated with power relations but is configured as an ethical action of new forms of sociability in organizational practices.

In this way, the theoretical frameworks of management are broadened by recognizing the ethical dimensions of historically marginalized populations as the foundation for new organizational epistemologies (Munshi and Kurian 2005) and gender epistemologies (Acker 1990), given that these dimensions are constitutive of normative ways of articulating organizational

practices. This implies the recognition of organizational practices as practices of gendering and racialization and the need for research in management that discusses how such practices can be established to contribute to breaking down racial hegemonies in different social contexts, such as contributing to discussions on affirmative action policies in the organizational context. Certainly, the scientific field of Business Administration would not be able to do this on its own, but it can guide discussions and proposals that enables the development of another project for society that does not have racial segregation as its constituent element. From an ethical point of view, the field of Black feminism sets us the challenge of thinking about social categories from their compossible fields and not from their causal relationships between one social category and another.

In relation to debates on the practice of affective–sexual relationships in social spaces, as discussed by Fantinel (2012), organizational sociabilities, despite being related to the need of “being together” in social spaces, can be established in a superficial way, without sharing personal life, and affective–sexual relationships are one of these forms of sharing. The interviewees said that none of their friends had ever flirted with, dated, or married a Black person. According to Patrícia’s account, if this were to happen, which Ângela is skeptical about, it would be new. Therefore, *the second theoretical proposition* we put forward in this research is that the racial influences on the esthetic character of practices of organizing spaces of sociability can be reproduced in the dynamics of the constitution of affective–sexual relationships that do not produce Black women as objects of economic–sexual exploitation.

Stressing the esthetic nature of organizational practices means proposing to broaden the scope of organizational analysis by recognizing how racial markers inform symbolic and affective forms of belonging in organizations (S. Nkomo 1992). Notions of organizational aesthetics are shifted from the field of consumption and imagery to an understanding of the possibilities of ethics in work relationships and organizational ties (hooks 1992). The esthetic character of organizational practices presents ways of inventing a rehumanization that no longer has racial segregation as a way of producing affective bonds in organizations. Dynamics of segregation in spaces of sociability can be both produced and/or reproduced in these relationships, and their constitution can be configured as a practice of refusing the established order, which also shows the ethical character of their constitution. The anti-racist struggle also implies politics of affections, as it contributes to the possibilities of breaking with the dynamics of economic and sexual exploitation of Black women (Gonzalez 2020a, 2020b). In relation to the field of studies on gender, work, and organizations, it is necessary to consider the need for an education of affections in the Black feminist sense. It is hooks’s (2017) proposition when she tells us that education refers to a process of becoming a subject in the world, breaking with the dimension of potentialization of inequalities. Effectively, it means looking at and allowing oneself to be affected by women without reinforcing gender, race, and class stereotypes.

The third thematic category resulting from this study highlights the practices of breaking down racial segregation. One practice listed in this process is discussing religion. Talking about and

practicing their religion of African origin in everyday life is the form used by interviewees for an anti-racist educational process. One point to highlight is Ângela's question as to whether she is being persecutory by practicing these places in this way, since talking about racism in organizational spaces of sociability tends to be considered *too heavy* at these times, especially for White men. Therefore, *the third theoretical proposition* that we present is the understanding that gender-racial influences on the controversial nature of practices of organizing spaces of sociability result in the constitution of strategic practices for educating the attention and affections of social subjects. This has an impact on the recognition of racial inequalities and on the collective fight against situations in everyday life that enable the reproduction of structures of oppression. In terms of impacts on organizational research, this proposition could result in studies on how practices awaken and educate White managers regarding racism and sexism in organizations.

The education of attention and affect, as proposed by authors such as Ingold (2001) and Ahmed (2004), allows us to understand how social subjects learn to perceive, feel, and position themselves ethically in the face of power asymmetries and racialized and gendered norms that structure organizational environments. Affections can thus be understood not just as the object of organizational management techniques, but as an arena for symbolic and material dispute for dignity, recognition, and social transformation in the context of racial and gender segregation at work.

From the point of view of management practice, the results of this study show that not only public spaces but also private spaces of sociability can adopt measures to fight gender-racial inequalities, such as incorporating cultural practices that promote rupture of the racial segregation that marks the country. Therefore, we hope that the discussions presented in this research can be considered in future studies as a practice for denouncing and combating sexism and racism, especially regarding what Gonzalez (2020a, 2020b) calls the economic and sexual exploitation of Black women. Considering that the city researched is predominantly White, research in contexts with a predominantly Black population or which have a more even demographic composition can cast light on other strategies and tactics that have been developed to break with structural racism in Brazil in everyday life. There is also the need to develop studies on whiteness and organizational studies (Gouvea and Oliveira 2020) to understand processes of White racialization comprehending how configurations of racial privileges are constituted in organizations, as well as organizational sociabilities based on logics of gender-racial supremacism.

## 6 | Conclusions

The aim of this study was to understand racial influences on the organizational practices of spaces of sociability by Black Brazilian women. To this end, we used a theoretical basis the debates on practices in practice-based studies (PBS), according to the propositions of Michel de Certeau, with discussions from the field of Black feminist studies, especially those that address intersectionalities of gender, race and class. Based on such

theoretical dialog, it was possible to show how everyday organizational practices are crossed by ethical, esthetic, and controversial dimensions, which tension racialized normative structures present in organizations.

The research was conducted using a qualitative approach, with nonparticipant observation techniques and in-depth interviews with seven Black women in a city in Brazil whose majority is White. The data were analyzed using an interpretive technique, according to Minayo (2006), which allowed for the construction of three theoretical propositions about resistance to racism in organizational contexts of sociability. It resulted in the understanding that organizational sociabilities are characterized by practices that are racially gendered, with reciprocal actions of Black women's organizational sociabilities emerging as ethical-political practices that break with the dominant paradigm of whiteness as the ethical subsidy of tacit norms in organizations.

The main findings show that Black women's organizational practices materialize in the active occupation of public spaces, in confronting the racialization of affective-sexual relationships and in the construction of anti-racist educational practices, often mediated by religions of African origin. These practices, mostly tactical, according to the Certeauian perspective, are forms of resistance that disrupt the paradigm of whiteness as the dominant ethical, esthetic, and political norm in organizations.

Theoretically, the research contributes to organizational studies by demonstrating that organizational sociabilities are not neutral, but racially gendered, having race as structuring dimension of organizational practices. The study also proposed theoretical advances in organizational analysis by presenting an understanding of resistance as compossible practices and not just as a reactive practice, discussing other possibilities for understanding ways of producing life and belonging and affection in organizations.

These contributions broaden the debates on diversity, equity, and inclusion in management by recognizing the need for epistemologies based on historically marginalized organizational experiences, such as those of Black women. Finally, they point to the urgent need for organizational policies, whether public or private, to consider the effects of racialization and intersectionality as structuring forms of sociability and organization.

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## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

## Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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