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The Trajectory of a Black Female Student in Higher Education: Foreignness, (Dis)Belonging, and Psychological Suffering

A Trajetória de uma Estudante Negra na Universidade: Estrangeiridade, (Im)Pertinências e Sofrimento Psíquico

La Trayectoria de una Estudiante Negra en la Universidad: Extranjeridad, (Im)Pertinencias y Sufrimiento Psíquico

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Abstract: This article analyzes the experience of a Black female student in a Law program at a private university in Fortaleza, Ceará, focusing on manifestations of racism and their effects on subjective constitution. It is based on the assumption that racism in the university context operates not only through explicit discriminatory practices, but also through subtle mechanisms of intellectual delegitimization and symbolic exclusion. The objective is to understand how these dynamics affect the academic trajectory and produce feelings of non-belonging, foreignness, and psychological suffering. This is a qualitative, interpretative study based on a semi-structured interview, analyzed through a hermeneutic-psychoanalytic approach articulated with critical race studies. The results show that the participant is subjected to a constant need to prove her intellectual capacity, revealing the persistence of processes of dehumanization and epistemicide within the university. These experiences produce significant subjective effects, including distress, desire to give up, and isolation, while also mobilizing strategies of resistance and self-affirmation. It is concluded that, although universities have expanded access, they still reproduce racial structures that compromise the permanence and recognition of Black students, demanding the implementation of effectively anti-racist institutional practices.

Keywords: racism; university; psychological suffering; Black woman; epistemicide.

Resumo: Este artigo analisa a experiência de uma estudante negra no curso de Direito de uma universidade privada em Fortaleza, Ceará, com foco nas manifestações de racismo e seus efeitos na constituição subjetiva. Parte-se do pressuposto de que o racismo, no contexto universitário, opera não apenas por meio de práticas discriminatórias explícitas, mas também por mecanismos sutis de deslegitimação intelectual e exclusão simbólica. O objetivo consiste em compreender como essas dinâmicas incidem sobre a trajetória acadêmica e produzem sentimentos de não pertencimento, estrangeiridade e sofrimento psíquico. Trata-se de uma pesquisa qualitativa, de natureza interpretativa, baseada em entrevista semiestruturada, cuja análise foi orientada por uma perspectiva hermenêutico-psicanalítica, articulada aos estudos críticos sobre raça. Os resultados evidenciam que a participante é submetida a uma lógica de prova constante de sua capacidade intelectual, revelando a persistência de processos de desumanização e epistemicídio no interior da universidade. Tais experiências produzem efeitos subjetivos significativos, incluindo angústia, desejo de desistência e isolamento, ao mesmo tempo em que mobilizam estratégias de resistência e afirmação. Conclui-se que a universidade, embora amplie o acesso, ainda reproduz estruturas raciais que comprometem a permanência e o reconhecimento de estudantes negros, exigindo a implementação de práticas institucionais efetivamente antirracistas.

Palavras-chave: racismo; universidade; sofrimento psíquico; negritude; epistemicídio.

Resumen: Este artículo analiza la experiencia de una estudiante negra de la carrera de Derecho de una universidad privada de Fortaleza, Ceará, centrándose en las manifestaciones de racismo

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y sus efectos en la constitución subjetiva. Se parte del supuesto de que el racismo, en el contexto universitario, opera no solo mediante prácticas discriminatorias explícitas, sino también a través de mecanismos sutiles de deslegitimación intelectual y exclusión simbólica. El objetivo consiste en comprender cómo estas dinámicas inciden en la trayectoria académica y producen sentimientos de no pertenencia, extranjeridad y sufrimiento psíquico. Se trata de una investigación cualitativa, de naturaleza interpretativa, basada en una entrevista semiestructurada, cuyo análisis estuvo orientado por una perspectiva hermenéutico-psicoanalítica articulada con los estudios críticos sobre raza. Los resultados muestran que la participante es sometida a una lógica de prueba constante de su capacidad intelectual, lo que revela la persistencia de procesos de deshumanización y epistemicidio dentro de la universidad. Tales experiencias producen efectos subjetivos significativos, entre ellos angustia, deseo de desistir y aislamiento, al tiempo que movilizan estrategias de resistencia y afirmación. Se concluye que la universidad, aunque amplía el acceso, todavía reproduce estructuras raciales que comprometen la permanencia y el reconocimiento de estudiantes negros, lo que exige la implementación de prácticas institucionales efectivamente antirracistas.

Palabras clave: racismo; universidad; sufrimiento psíquico; negritud; epistemicidio.

1. Introduction

The presence of Black people in Brazilian higher education, although expanded in recent decades by policies that democratized access, remains traversed by structural tensions that reveal the persistence of racial hierarchies within universities (Ristoff, 2014). More than a neutral space for the production and circulation of knowledge, the university is a field of symbolic disputes in which historical forms of racial exclusion, delegitimization, and violence are renewed (HOOKS, 2013; MBEMBE, 2014).

This article investigates the trajectory of a Black woman studying Law at a private university in Fortaleza, Ceará, whose academic experience is marked by recurring episodes of racism, intellectual disqualification, and psychological suffering. Such experiences are understood not as isolated events, but as expressions of a structural logic that organizes racial relations in Brazil and directly affects the subjectivation of Black students.

Through a qualitative and interpretative approach, this study aims to analyze how racism manifests in everyday university life and the subjective effects arising from these experiences, with emphasis on feelings of non-belonging and foreignness and on the constant need for intellectual validation. It also seeks to understand how these experiences connect with historical processes of dehumanization of the Black population, especially the denial of their status as epistemic subjects.

The theoretical framework articulates three main axes: (i) critical studies of race and racism, especially W. E. B. Du Bois's (1999) notions of the color line and double consciousness; (ii) contributions from Brazilian social theory regarding structural racism and epistemicide; and

(iii) fundamental psychopathology and psychoanalysis, as fields that help explain the effects of racism on the subject's psychic constitution.

Regarding Du Bois's (1999) contribution, his proposition that “the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line” indicates that racial relations are a structuring axis of modern social dynamics. This proposition remains current because racial belonging continues to operate as a marker of inclusion and exclusion in different social spheres, including the university. Du Bois also describes double consciousness as the condition of “always looking at one's self through the eyes of others,” a particularly useful concept for understanding the constant self-assessment and vigilance experienced by Black students in academic contexts.

On this basis, the research problem may be formulated as follows: how does racism in its contemporary forms affect the university experience of a Black female student, producing intellectual delegitimization, foreignization, and psychological suffering? The problem involves not only identifying discriminatory practices but also understanding the symbolic and institutional mechanisms that sustain permanent suspicion about the intellectual ability of the Black subject.

The state of the art shows important advances in understanding racism in higher education, especially regarding access and persistence policies. Nevertheless, significant gaps remain in the analysis of Black students' subjective experiences, particularly when connected to the psychic dimension of suffering and subtle forms of intellectual delegitimization. Many studies predominantly adopt structural or quantitative approaches that, while fundamental, tend to underestimate the micropolitical effects of racism in everyday academic life.

A relevant theoretical impasse also persists: while part of the literature emphasizes racism as an objective social structure, another strand privileges its subjective and experiential dimension without consistently articulating the two. This article is situated precisely at that point of tension and proposes an analysis integrating racism's structural dimension with its effects on the subject's psychic constitution.

The relevance of this research is therefore justified by three main reasons. First, it deepens the debate on racism in higher education by shifting the focus from access to the experience of persistence and its subjective implications. Second, it offers a theoretical-analytical articulation between racial studies and psychoanalysis, still little explored in Brazilian literature. Finally, by centering the narrative of a Black woman, the study challenges the processes of invisibilization and silencing that have historically marked knowledge production about the Black population, affirming the legitimacy of her experience as a source of knowledge.

Thus, this article seeks not merely to describe an individual trajectory but to show how universities continue to maintain devices that reiterate the condition of the Black subject as a foreigner in their own land—a condition that, far from being merely symbolic, has concrete effects on existence, mental health, and the possibility of recognition as a subject of knowledge.

2. Theoretical Framework

Understanding the experiences of Black people in higher education requires moving away from analyses that treat racism as an episodic event and toward an approach that recognizes it as a constitutive structure of social relations. In this sense, racism is not limited to explicit discriminatory practices; it is a historical device that produces subjectivities, knowledge, and hierarchies, affecting both bodies and the ways in which a subject is recognized as human. This perspective allows us to understand that the university, far from being a neutral space, belongs to a tradition of knowledge production marked by racial exclusion, in which the Black population has systematically been positioned as an object rather than a subject of knowledge.

The dehumanization of the Black population is one of the central axes of this process. As Frantz Fanon analyzes, racism operates through the construction of a regime of visibility in which the Black subject is captured by a logic that reduces them to the condition of a body, denying their symbolic and intellectual dimension. For Fanon (2008), the Black person is constantly addressed by a gaze that fixes them in a position of radical otherness, producing a split between being and being-perceived. This split is not merely external; it is internalized, producing lasting effects on the subject's psychic constitution, as the subject begins to experience the self through an externality that delegitimizes it.

This logic of dehumanization is directly connected to what Sueli Carneiro calls epistemicide, understood as the systematic denial of the cognitive and intellectual capacity of the Black population. For Carneiro (2005), epistemicide is not limited to rendering Black intellectual production invisible; it involves denying Black people the very status of subjects of knowledge. It is therefore a mechanism that reaches the core of what defines the human in modern societies: the capacity to think, produce, and legitimize knowledge. In this sense, contemporary racism not only excludes but continually questions the legitimacy of Black presence in spaces of knowledge production, such as the university.

This dynamic resonates with W. E. B. Du Bois's analysis in his formulation of double consciousness, according to which the Black subject undergoes an experience of splitting and

is compelled to perceive the self through the gaze of the other. Du Bois (1903) describes this condition as the experience of “measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity.” This formulation is particularly useful for understanding the experience of Black students in academic environments, where validation of intellectual performance often depends on external confirmation shaped by racialized criteria.

From this perspective, racism can be said to operate as a technology of permanent suspicion that falls especially on the intellectual status of the Black subject. Unlike other forms of exclusion that are limited to restricting access, epistemic racism calls into question the subject's very capacity to produce knowledge. In everyday university life, this process appears through seemingly ordinary practices—such as the repeated questioning of academic performance—that nevertheless reactivate a long tradition of intellectual delegitimization of the Black population.

This tradition is intrinsically linked to the historical constitution of Western modernity, which was structured through racial classifications that ranked peoples and forms of knowledge. As Achille Mbembe (2014) argues, racism is one of the central devices of modern rationality, operating as a mechanism for the differential distribution of humanity. In this context, knowledge production is not neutral; it is traversed by power relations that determine who may speak, about what, and under what conditions.

In Brazil, this logic is connected to a specific historical process marked by the formal abolition of slavery without the corresponding social inclusion of the Black population. The absence of structural inclusion policies resulted in deeply racialized social spaces, among which the university stands out. In this setting, the presence of Black subjects not only challenges the established order but also exposes mechanisms of exclusion that often operate invisibly.

It is at this point that the notion of foreignness becomes analytically central. As Catherine Koltai (2000) explains, the foreigner is not only someone who comes from outside, but someone who, even while belonging to a territory, is symbolically displaced. This condition is produced through the relationship with the other, in which the subject is constantly referred to a place of non-belonging. For Black students, this foreignness appears in the experience of occupying a space that is formally accessible but does not fully recognize them as belonging to it.

This condition is intensified by the dynamic Du Bois (1999) describes as “the veil,” a metaphor for the symbolic separation between the white world and the Black world. The veil not only prevents mutual recognition but also produces a distorted form of visibility in which the Black subject is seen but not recognized in their fullness. This partial visibility is crucial for

understanding the experience of Black students, who are often noticed but not legitimized as members of the academic space.

From a psychoanalytic perspective, this experience can be understood as a process of subjective constitution traversed by an Other that does not recognize the subject in their singularity. According to Sigmund Freud (1914), the constitution of the ego is deeply tied to recognition by the other. When such recognition is denied or distorted, effects may arise in the form of psychological suffering, anguish, and feelings of inadequacy.

In this sense, racism can be understood as an operator that directly interferes with processes of subjectivation and produces specific forms of suffering. As Reis Filho (2005) argues, racism is not only a social phenomenon but an element inscribed in the subject's psychic economy, leaving marks that cross the relationship with the self and the world. These marks may appear as feelings of non-belonging, a constant need for validation, and difficulty recognizing oneself as a legitimate subject.

The articulation among racism, dehumanization, and subjectivation shows that the experience of Black students at university cannot be reduced to individual difficulties or occasional discrimination. It is an experience structured by historical power relations that produce concrete effects in people's lives. In this context, the university appears as an ambiguous space: while it offers possibilities for social mobility and recognition, it reproduces practices that reaffirm exclusion and delegitimization.

This ambiguity is expressed with particular intensity in the intellectual sphere. On the one hand, entering university represents access to a space of knowledge production; on the other, that same space may operate as a site of constant testing, where the Black subject is repeatedly called upon to demonstrate their ability. This demand is not neutral but is traversed by a history of dehumanization that associates Blackness with intellectual incapacity.

Thus, analyzing racism in higher education requires an approach that articulates historical, social, and psychic dimensions, recognizing that exclusion occurs not only institutionally but also in the subjective constitution of individuals. Integrating these dimensions makes it possible to understand the effects of racism more broadly and, consequently, to devise strategies that go beyond expanding access and address effective conditions of permanence and recognition.

This theoretical framework therefore supports the analysis proposed in this article by showing that, when racism targets the intellectual status of the Black subject, it produces not only exclusion but a specific form of suffering marked by foreignness and the constant need for

validation. It is a complex phenomenon that requires equally complex approaches capable of articulating different fields of knowledge in order to understand its multiple dimensions.

3. Materials and Methods

This research is a qualitative case study of an exploratory and interpretative nature, guided by an effort to understand the meanings the participant assigns to her experiences in the university context. The approach is grounded in the tradition of qualitative case studies discussed by authors such as Stake (1995; 2005), which privileges an in-depth understanding of situated phenomena. This methodological choice is justified by the need to grasp the subjective, symbolic, and affective dimensions involved in experiences of racism, which cannot be captured by quantitative instruments and require close attention to the singularity of narratives.

As is typical of qualitative case studies, the empirical corpus was constructed from a semi-structured interview with a Black female student regularly enrolled in the Law program of a private institution in Fortaleza, Ceará. The participant was intentionally selected in view of her academic trajectory and the relevance of her experiences to the research objectives. The interview was conducted so as to encourage her free expression and addressed themes such as educational trajectory, experiences of racial discrimination, institutional relations, subjective impacts, and coping strategies.

After the interview, the material was transcribed in full, preserving the fidelity of the participant's statements, and submitted to an initial floating reading followed by a hermeneutic-psychoanalytic interpretative analysis. This procedure consisted of identifying recurrent cores of meaning and discursive elements that reveal tensions, silences, and significant repetitions, and articulating them with the adopted theoretical framework.

Data analysis was not guided by predetermined closed categories, but by a dialectical movement between the empirical material and theoretical contributions, allowing meanings to emerge from the dialogue between narrative and theory. The process sought to understand not only the explicit content of the statements but also their effects of meaning, considering racism as a phenomenon that operates both socially and in the subject's psychic constitution.

Regarding ethical aspects, the participant's anonymity and the confidentiality of the information were assured, and her identity was preserved throughout the text. Participation was voluntary and based on free and informed consent, in accordance with the ethical principles governing research involving human beings.

It is acknowledged that this analysis is traversed by the researcher's position, whose theoretical references, ethical-political stance, and subjective implications guide the reading and interpretation of the empirical material. Far from undermining scientific rigor, this position is assumed as a constitutive part of an interpretative approach in which knowledge is produced through the relationship between the researcher and the object of study. Thus, the analysis does not claim neutrality; it is situated and committed to making its assumptions explicit and maintaining theoretical-methodological coherence.

The singular character of the study is a limitation, since it is a case study centered on the experience of a single participant in a specific context—a Law program at a private institution in Fortaleza, Ceará. This scope does not permit statistical generalizations, but it does enable an in-depth, situated understanding of the dynamics analyzed.

The results should therefore be understood in their analytical and interpretative dimension, contributing to the expansion of theoretical debate and the problematization of similar experiences in other contexts. The interpretation produced here is not regarded as unique or definitive, but as one among other possible readings, historically and theoretically situated.

The methodological path adopted thus enabled the construction of rich empirical material capable of supporting an in-depth analysis of the experiences reported and connecting them to the structural and subjective dimensions of racism in the university context.

4. Results and Discussion

Analysis of the participant's narrative shows that her experience at university cannot be understood as a set of isolated episodes of discrimination, but as the manifestation of a structured regime of racialization that simultaneously affects the body, knowledge, and subjectivity. From her first response, when she states that “being a Black woman [...] means trajectories of arduous struggles,” the participant does not merely describe a social condition; she inscribes her existence in a field of forces in which race and gender operate together, producing a continuous experience of confrontation. It is therefore a situated awareness that recognizes racism not as an exception, but as a regularity.

This dimension becomes even clearer when the participant describes the need to “affirm every day [...] that I am the best.” This statement reveals one of the central findings of the study: in the university, contemporary racism is not limited to direct exclusion but operates as a permanent demand for overperformance. The Black subject is not merely invited to participate, but repeatedly required to prove their legitimacy. This process can be understood through W.

E. B. Du Bois's (1999) notion of double consciousness: the participant not only performs her academic activities but simultaneously watches herself being watched, anticipating the other's judgment and organizing her performance in response to that gaze.

Accordingly, the examination episode in which her competence is questioned despite receiving the highest grade is not trivial; it is a concrete reactivation of the epistemicide described by Sueli Carneiro (2005). The professor's surprise concerns not only the grade but the fact that it was achieved by a Black body. The public demand that she answer “live” reveals a logic of verification that is not universal but selectively imposed on certain bodies. The knowledge produced by the student is not immediately recognized as legitimate; it must be authenticated. What is at stake is therefore not only knowledge, but the right to be recognized as a knowing subject.

This dynamic illustrates what Frantz Fanon (2008) describes as the capture of the Black subject by a gaze that fixes them in a position of exteriority. The participant is not only a student; she is constantly reminded of her status as the “other” within academic space. This is forcefully expressed when she states that being a Black woman at university “is not very different from being a Black woman outside the university.” The statement destabilizes the idea of the university as a neutral or meritocratic space and indicates that the same structures of racialization operating outside are reproduced within it.

Accounts of institutional difficulties, especially in enrollment, service at the registrar's office, and the operation of the Legal Practice Center, reveal the structural dimension of racism. Recurrent situations in which the participant is prevented from accessing available openings, publicly humiliated, or passed over for service reveal a pattern, not an exception. Racism appears here as a diffuse institutional practice operating through micro-decisions that, when accumulated, significantly affect the academic trajectory.

These experiences can be understood in light of Achille Mbembe's (2014) analysis of the differential distribution of humanity. By being systematically deprioritized, ignored, or subjected to additional obstacles, the participant is positioned in a place of lesser value, where her time, presence, and demands are not accorded the same legitimacy as those of her white peers. This is a form of violence that is not explicit but operates through the unequal management of opportunities and access.

The low number of Black students—only three throughout the entire degree—intensifies the experience and produces racial isolation that reinforces the condition of foreignness. The analysis can here be connected to Catherine Koltai's (2000) notion of the foreigner, in which the subject is placed in a position of symbolic non-belonging. The participant is at the

university, but is not fully recognized as part of it. This non-belonging is not merely a subjective perception; it is continually produced by institutional practices and everyday interactions.

This condition is directly connected to Du Bois's (1999) metaphor of “the veil,” as the participant moves through a space in which she is seen but not recognized in her fullness. She is perceived as a presence, but not as belonging. This mismatch between visibility and recognition is one of the central elements of the suffering reported.

The psychological effects of these experiences become explicit when the participant reports “illness, the desire to give up, and to throw away everything I had already achieved.” Racism appears here not merely as a social structure but as an experience that crosses the body and subjectivity. The lack of institutional support, especially during her final undergraduate project, intensifies this suffering and reveals a particularly critical dimension: institutional abandonment as a form of violence.

From a psychoanalytic perspective, this experience may be understood as the failure of the institutional Other to provide recognition and symbolic support. The university, which should operate as a space of validation and guidance, appears in this account as an authority that refuses, silences, and abandons. This produces helplessness that is translated into anguish, despair, and the desire to give up.

Yet it is precisely at this point that another relevant finding emerges: the construction of strategies of resistance. By stating that she developed a “sense of activism, struggle, and resistance” and decided “not to accept ‘no’ as an answer,” the participant reveals an active process of subjective reconfiguration. This resistance does not eliminate suffering, but allows it to be worked through and transformed into a driving force for action.

This movement can be understood as an attempt to reinscribe herself in a space that denies her. By insisting on remaining, the participant not only resists individually but also challenges the very structure that excludes her. It is a form of agency that, although produced under adverse conditions, reveals the subject's power in the face of attempts at delegitimization.

Finally, the absence of institutional spaces for discussing racism reveals a structural dimension of the problem: silencing. By stating that “we never had a space,” the participant points to the absence of institutional mechanisms for listening and recognition. This silence is not neutral; it maintains inequalities by preventing experiences of racism from being named, shared, and collectively confronted.

The data therefore show that racism in the university context studied operates on multiple levels: as intellectual delegitimization, an institutional obstacle, a producer of psychological suffering, and a mechanism of foreignization. At the same time, they show that,

under these conditions, the Black subject mobilizes complex strategies of resistance that articulate confrontation, self-affirmation, and persistence.

The main finding of this research is thus that, by targeting the Black subject's status as an intellectual, racism produces a specific experience of being at university: an experience marked by the constant need to prove oneself, feelings of non-belonging, and the production of suffering, but also by the construction of forms of resistance that challenge and place pressure on the established order.

5. Final Considerations

This research aimed to analyze the experiences of racism lived by a Black female student in the Law program of a private institution, seeking to understand, through critical and psychoanalytic frameworks, the effects of those experiences on her academic trajectory and subjective constitution. Analysis of the participant's narrative showed that racism in the context studied does not appear as a set of isolated episodes, but as a structure organizing institutional practices, interpersonal relations, and modes of recognition, directly affecting the status of the Black subject as an intellectual.

The results confirm the hypothesis that contemporary racism, especially in university settings, operates in sophisticated and diffuse ways, shifting from openly discriminatory manifestations to subtler mechanisms of delegitimization. Among these mechanisms is the constant demand to validate intellectual capacity, which subjects the Black person to a logic of permanent testing. Interpreted through W. E. B. Du Bois's (1999) notion of double consciousness, this dynamic shows that the participant's academic experience is traversed by an external gaze that continually interrogates her, demanding that she not only produce knowledge but legitimize it in real time.

The study thus shows that, by targeting the intellectual dimension, racism reactivates historical processes of dehumanization analyzed by Frantz Fanon (2008) while materializing the epistemicide described by Sueli Carneiro (2005). What is observed is not only the invisibilization of Black knowledge, but doubt cast on the Black subject's very capacity to produce legitimate knowledge. Repeated in everyday academic life, this movement has profound effects both on the institutional trajectory, marked by obstacles and inequalities, and on the psychic dimension, expressed in feelings of anguish, helplessness, and the desire to give up.

Another relevant finding concerns the experience of foreignness, evidenced by a recurring sense of non-belonging. Although formally included in the university, the participant recounts experiences that place her at the margins of institutional and symbolic recognition. Understood through Catherine Koltai's (2000) contributions, this condition indicates that racism operates not only by excluding but by displacing the subject from a place of belonging, making the person a foreigner in their own space. The process is intensified by the low representation of Black students and the absence of institutional spaces for listening and support that could enable collective elaboration of these experiences.

From an institutional perspective, the research reveals that apparently bureaucratic practices—such as enrollment, service at the registrar's office, and access to internships—can operate as devices of exclusion when traversed by unequal racial relations. As these practices are repeated, they accumulate barriers that directly affect the persistence and academic trajectories of Black students. Thus, while the university presents itself as a space of social mobility, it also proves to be a site where inequalities are reproduced, requiring critical revision of its modes of operation.

The analysis also reveals the emergence of strategies of resistance, which are central to the participant's trajectory. By transforming suffering into a driving force for action, the student mobilizes forms of confrontation that allow her to remain and complete her education despite adversity. This resistance, however, must not be romanticized, because it occurs under conditions of exhaustion and overload and reveals the urgent need for responsibility for persistence not to fall exclusively on the individual.

It is therefore concluded that the experience analyzed cannot be understood as singular or exceptional, but as an expression of a broader reality affecting the presence of Black subjects in Brazilian higher education. The study deepens the debate on racism at university by showing that the issue is not limited to access, but decisively involves the conditions of persistence, recognition, and mental health of these students.

Finally, higher education institutions must make an effective commitment to anti-racist practices that go beyond discourse and translate into concrete actions, including the creation of listening spaces, continuing education for faculty and staff, revision of institutional procedures, and appreciation of Black intellectual production. Only through such transformations can the university move from being a space that reproduces inequalities to an effective space for democratizing knowledge.

This study therefore reaffirms that understanding racism in its structural and subjective dimensions is indispensable to building a truly inclusive university, in which Black subjects do

not have to continually prove their humanity and capacity but may finally be recognized for what they have always been: legitimate producers of knowledge.

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