Documentary Ethnography, Gender-Based Violence, and Femicide: Methodological Contributions to Organizational Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Objective: the objective of this work is to discuss the contributions of documentary ethnography to studies and research on femicide in the field of administration in Brazil. To this end, we discuss the concept of gender-based violence, present an overview of the Maria da Penha Law and data on femicide in the country. **Methods:** based on the application of documentary ethnography in a Brazilian Jury Trial Court, with femicide as the object of analysis, we highlight the contributions of this method to the field of administration from two axes. **Results:** the first, in theoretical terms, is the presentation of the concept of non-intimate femicide, that is, femicide perpetrated in cases involving non-intimate relations, such as coworkers and employers, evidencing an organizational dimension of femicide that remains little discussed. The second point concerns an understanding of documents as social practices (writing-recording-circulation) of power operations that mediate organizational and institutional relations. **Conclusions:** as a conclusion, we propose documentary ethnography as a research method that makes it possible, through with-the-grain and against-the-grain readings, to understand how documents transform social phenomena into administrative data that underpin legal categories and organizational public narratives.

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the centrality of documents in contemporary organizational practices, especially in state, legal and bureaucratic contexts, the field of administration still tends to treat them predominantly as secondary sources of data rather than as analytical objects endowed with agency (Ferreira & Lowenkron, 2020; Trundle & Phillips, 2025). This perspective limits the understanding of how documentary practices produce classifications, stabilize meanings, organize institutional flows, and perform power relations, a limitation that becomes particularly evident in the analysis of legally mediated phenomena traversed by structural asymmetries. In this scenario, documentary ethnography emerges as a relevant methodological contribution by shifting the ontological status of documents from records of events to active social practices that produce administrative realities, legal categories, and institutional narratives. By understanding documents as ethnographic artifacts, this method makes it possible to analyze not only their contents, but also the processes of writing, circulation, archiving, and silencing that structure organizational action, expanding the methodological repertoire of administration for the study of phenomena marked by symbolic, moral, and political disputes, such as gender violence and femicide.

Femicide is one of the forms of gender-based violence that most frequently occurs and kills women in Brazil. Data from the Brazilian Public Security Forum indicate that in 2023 the country recorded 1,463 cases of femicide, the highest number since the criminal offense was typified (Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, 2025). This is equivalent to an average of four women murdered per day because of their gender. Although most femicides are committed by intimate partners, the visibility of cases that involve non-intimate relations, such as coworkers and employers, has been increasing, evidencing an organizational dimension of femicide that remains little discussed. This form of violence, termed non-intimate femicide (Pasinato, 2011), challenges the centrality of the domestic sphere and calls upon institutions, such as the justice system and the world of work, regarding their responsibilities in preventing this form of gender-based violence.

It is from this perspective that in this article we aim to discuss the contributions of documentary ethnography to studies and research on femicide in the field of administration in Brazil. We consider femicide as a privileged empirical field to evidence the analytical dimension of the method for being a complex social phenomenon that is transformed into administrative data documented in different public and private organizations in our country.

We ground the research in debates on gender-based violence, especially from the contributions of Saffioti (2015) and Segato (2006), articulated with discussions on documentary ethnography and the materiality of documents in the field of organizations (Ferreira & Lowenkron, 2020; Gupta, 2012; Latour, 2010). Empirically, we rely on a documentary ethnography carried out through the analysis of 28 femicide court cases processed in a Jury Court Division of a Brazilian state, in the period from 2015 to 2022, which we treat as ethnographic objects, and not merely as documentary sources. We mobilized with-the-grain and against-the-grain readings, as recommended by the ethnographic approach, with the objective of understanding how organizational documentary practices produce classifications about victims, aggressors, and crimes, as well as the social and political effects of these inscriptions.

The results of the work indicate that documentary ethnography makes it possible to understand how sensitive social phenomena, such as gender-based violence, are transformed into manageable administrative data within organizations. This occurs through the institutionalization of protocols that establish institutional grammars, which, by classifying administrative processes, inscribe norms, values, and gender hierarchies that erase, silence, or neutralize the gender dimension of violence, dissociating structural causes and organizational contexts from this phenomenon. Thus, it is possible to dissociate femicide from the work context by delimiting this phenomenon as confined to women's private sphere. Therefore, femicide is not only a legal event, but is also produced organizationally through documentary practices that structure decisions, classifications and regimes of visibility, reinforcing the central role of administration, in the case of this research, the Judiciary, in the management of gender-based violence. Finally, we warn readers that, because this is a study on violence, the content presented is of a sensitive nature.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To construct the theoretical framework of this work, we chose to organize it around two axes that guide our discussions. First, we present the concept of documentary ethnography, reviewing its main formulations in the literature and different understandings of the method, to explicate its conceptual and methodological operationalization in administration research. In the second axis, we discuss the concept of gender-based violence in organizations, highlighting the Maria da Penha Law and data on femicide in Brazil, which are mobilized not as an analytical end in themselves, but as the empirical

and conceptual basis necessary to highlight the interpretive possibilities of documentary ethnography as a method when applied to organizational phenomena.

Documentary ethnography and the ontological dimension of documents in research practices in the field of administration

The production of ethnographic knowledge was historically associated with the principle of 'I was there,' understood as a source of ethnographic authority derived from direct and prolonged contact with the people and contexts studied, with participant observation as the main methodological resource (Clifford, 2002). In this classic framing, documents occupied a secondary role because they were analyzed as complementary sources or as evidence to be interpreted a posteriori rather than as objects of observation in themselves. As Hull (2012) argues, the ethnographic tradition tended to analyze documents, but rarely to observe them as situated social practices. In the field of administration, this debate aligns with sociomaterial and historical approaches (Heller, 2023; Tennent & Gillett, 2025) by evidencing that documentary materiality (both physical and digital) is an active component of organization, because documents are instruments of coordination, technologies of power, and productive sources of organizational effects, thereby highlighting the relevance of documentary ethnography for research in this area of knowledge.

With the so-called 'historical turn' of the 1980s, ethnography began to incorporate more systematically archives, collections, and documents as legitimate fields of investigation. As Ferreira and Lowenkron (2020) highlight, ethnography of/in archives and its metaphorical extensions, among them documentary ethnography, ceased to be exotic approaches and became part of the methodological repertoire of ethnographic studies. This displacement implies a fundamental ontological change, because documents ceased to be conceived only as sources of information and began to be treated as ethnographic objects, endowed with materiality, agency, and social effects (Riles, 2006). In this framing, archives, collections, and case files are understood as spaces in which classifications, hierarchies, and meanings are produced that organize social life. Thus, documentary ethnography is not characterized by the invention of a new method, but by the displacement of ethnography to other materialities, guided by the thick description of social practices inscribed, organized, and performed by documents, understood as artifacts that produce social realities.

Authors such as Gupta (2012) and Riles (2006) deepen this debate by highlighting the analytical importance of the form, aesthetics, and materiality of documents, in contrast to excessively representational approaches. Documents matter not only for what they say, but for what they do, because they create relations, produce hierarchies, silence voices, and stabilize classifications. In state and organizational contexts, writing is one of the central activities of institutional routines, and the ethnographic analysis of documents allows us to understand how the state and organizations materialize in everyday life (Hull, 2012).

In Brazil, Lowenkron and Ferreira (2014), in ethnographing the production of police inquiries, state that 'following the papers' is a fundamental strategy to understand state practices. The legal maxim according to which "what is not in the case files is not in the world" evidences the performative power of documents, since that which is not documented becomes socially nonexistent (Ferreira & Lowenkron, 2020, p. 25). Researching with documents, therefore, implies questioning the very act of documenting, analyzing who documents, what is recorded, what is silenced, and what effects are produced. Gupta (2012) and Riles (2006) have highlighted the analytical importance of documentary materiality in various aspects, such as graphic form, disposition of information on paper, and modes of organization, at the same time as they call attention to the discourse and the meaning contained in them. The formal and aesthetic qualities of documents serve as a methodological and analytical counterpoint to what would be an excessively representational consideration of the ethnographic treatment of documentary material (Riles, 2006). Gupta (2012) describes how these documents or bureaucratic writings matter to people through their forms and practices, and not only for what the writing contains. One indication of this would be the instrumental form that the state assumes through these documents for non-literate people, who are affected primarily by the writing and by its form and textual practice.

This methodological displacement redefines the very sense of ethnographic 'being there.' In documentary ethnography, immersion occurs in the universe of production, circulation, and organization of documents. The researcher's experience is shaped by direct contact with archives, systems, documentary flows, and techniques of writing and archiving (Potechi, 2024). As Potechi (2024) highlights, documents are not only final products of social interactions, but mediators that create and break relations, informing cultural aesthetics and modes of organization of everyday life.

Therefore, documents are understood as social actors that participate actively in the constitution of practices, identities, and power relations (Gupta, 2012) and are analyzed for what they contain and for what

they do, because they build realities, stabilize meanings, and mobilize regimes of truth within organizational, bureaucratic, or political fields (Latour, 2010). Documentary ethnography thus seeks to follow documents in circulation, understanding their trajectories, uses, appropriations, and reinscriptions, and revealing how textual materialities intertwine with institutional practices and rationalities.

One foundation of this approach is the distinction between with-the-grain readings and against-the-grain readings of documents, since "archives are sometimes unconscious maps of the world" (Zeitlyn, 2012, p. 464). With-the-grain readings privilege the perspective of those who produce the documents, focusing on institutional concerns, hierarchies of credibility, and criteria for recording. Against-the-grain readings, in turn, subvert administrative rationalities, seeking to identify silenced voices, practices of resistance, and unintend-

ed effects of official records. This strategy is particularly relevant for administration, since it makes it possible to understand how organizations produce and manage inequalities through documentary practices that are apparently neutral.

Gupta (1995) systematizes this movement by proposing that documentary ethnography be guided by fundamental questions, such as who produces the document, to whom it is addressed, what it renders intelligible or silences, and which institutional practices it legitimates. From these questions, it becomes possible to understand how documents operate in concrete networks of practices, mediated by protocols, specialized bodies, public policies, and organizational arrangements. Table 1 presents a synthesis of this methodological proposal of Gupta (1995) applied to documentary ethnography and its implications for the field of administration.

Table 1. Stages of documentary ethnography and implications for research in administration.

Stage	Analytical description	Implications for research in administration
Situated reading of documents	Analysis of documents in the context of their production, circulation, and institutional use.	Makes it possible to understand administrative decisions as situated practices, not merely informational records.
Observation of the organizational setting	Insertion of documents into the flows, routines, and protocols of the organization.	Highlights administration as an arrangement of documentary practices that organize action and control.
Analysis of form and content	Examination of languages, categories, formats, and documentary fields.	Reveals how administrative classifications produce hierarchies, exclusions, and regimes of visibility.
Analysis of performative effects	Investigation of how documents produce decisions, subjects, and organizational realities.	Contributes to critical analyses of management, highlighting concrete effects of documentary decisions.
Tracing documentary trajectories	Monitoring the circulation, reinscription, and use of documents over time.	Broadens the understanding of processes of documentary classification based on structural dynamics of society.

Note. Prepared by the author based on Gupta, A. (1995). Blurred boundaries: The discourse of corruption, the culture of politics, and the imagined state. *American Ethnologist, 22*(2), 375–402. https://doi.org/10.1525/ae.1995.22.2.02a00090

Indeed, at the end of documentary ethnography it becomes possible to understand documents in concrete networks of practices, observing their everyday use, their mediators, and the interactions that keep them active in the social world beyond their temporal production (Gupta, 1995), through institutional frames and apparatuses, such as specialized bodies, protocols, team formation, or even public policies. In this way, documents are no longer only objects of analysis, as part of ethnography, but ethnographic objects that constitute the focus of observation of ethnographic research. Thus, it becomes possible to understand how social phenomena are transformed into administrative data by using documentary ethnography in the field of administration.

From this perspective, documentary ethnography makes it possible to follow the process of institutional translation through which complex, conflictual social experiences traversed by inequalities are progressively converted into manageable administrative categories. By tracing the flow of documents, from their initial production, passing through their circulation between

sectors, to their consolidation in official records and statistics, it becomes possible to observe how organizations operate classifications, cuts, and simplifications that make certain phenomena amenable to management. This movement is central to administration, because it reveals that administrative practices do not only respond to social events, but actively participate in their construction as 'organizational problems,' defining what will be recognized, measured, addressed, or silenced.

In the case of gender-based violence, as an example, and, in a particular way, of femicide, this process of transformation into administrative data also takes on violent contours. Documentary ethnography makes it possible to evidence how threats, stalking, aggressions, and attempted femicide occurring in the labor context are framed through records that frequently dissociate violence from its organizational dimensions. When documented as 'individual occurrences,' 'external events,' or 'interpersonal conflicts,' these forms of violence are progressively depoliticized and displaced from the sphere of institutional responsibility to the

private dimension of workers, both women and men. Documents do not only record violence, but operate its reclassification, producing manageable versions that preserve organizational rationality and reduce the visibility of gender power relations that permeate the world of work.

In this way, documentary ethnography contributes to shifting the debate on gender-based violence from an exclusively legal or moral realm to that of administrative and organizational practices, showing that management, the production of records, and the consolidation of data are fundamental dimensions of the organizational governance of violence. By transforming social phenomena into administrative data, organizations not only organize reality, but also define the limits of their own responsibility. Understanding this process is essential for the field of administration, since it makes it possible to critically analyze how documentary practices participate in the reproduction of gender-based violence and, at the same time, how they can be reoriented toward its prevention, confrontation, and institutional accountability.

Gender-based violence and non-intimate femicide as objects of organizational analysis

Saffioti (2015) defines violence as the "rupture of any form of integrity of the victim, whether physical, psychological, sexual or moral" (p. 18). It is a phenomenon that "... permanently and dangerously exceeds two limits: that of imaginative capacity and that of contingency ..." (Saffioti, 1994, p. 46), insofar as it continuously reinvents itself from the social relations that sustain it. In this sense, asymmetric power relations between men and women constitute the basis for the incessant production of new forms of violence, mobilizing symbolic, institutional, and material efforts to forge practices of punishment, control, and domination of women's bodies. It is precisely this historical and relational process, marked by structural gender inequality, that characterizes what we call gender-based violence.

In the organizational context, this type of violence has negative implications for victims' work performance and work quality (Węziak-Białowolska et al., 2020), as well as for those who witness or are exposed to situations of gender-based violence (Triana et al., 2019). Another important aspect to highlight is that gender-based violence also increases women's intention to leave their jobs when the situation occurs in the organization, and that gender-equitable management is a preventive factor for situations of sexual harassment in the work context, for example (Vara-Horna et al., 2023), as well as for mitigating harms when gen-

der-based violence occurs in the domestic environment of the victim (Agbaje et al., 2021).

Regardless of the form in which gender-based violence occurs, it is necessary to highlight that this is not a phenomenon that should be considered as an episode that occurs in a delimited situation (Cooke et al., 2025). It arises from structural inequalities and from a political economy organized around the exploitation of women's labor (Cooke et al., 2025; Marcondes et al., 2024). Saffioti (2015) highlights that confronting gender-based violence occurs through mechanisms that dispossess the maintenance of the project of male exploitation-domination, since "the execution of the project of domination-exploitation of men as a social category requires that their capacity for command be aided by violence" (p. 115). Thus, gender-based violence should be treated as a "material modality of social control and of repression exercised through 'ideational' forms of socialization" of women (Saffioti, 1994, p. 445).

Gender-based violence becomes a process of attention for the Brazilian state (Carvalho & Barreto, 2022) insofar as it concerns the regulation of power in society (Wilcox et al., 2021). In the field of administration, studies such as Wilcox et al. (2021) highlight how gender-based violence, especially domestic violence (Castro-Gonzáles et al., 2016), is framed as an epidemic in the world. The authors highlight the contemporary relevance of this debate in terms of labor relations and the importance of studying this topic within organizational analyses. The research of O'Connor et al. (2021) highlights the need to reduce male dominance and increase people's gender competence in organizations as initial steps to deal with the issue of violence against women. Therefore, gender-based violence is an important object of study in the field of administration (O'Connor et al., 2021; Teixeira et al., 2021).

In Brazil, the issue of gender-based violence has been progressively regulated and institutionalized by the state, configuring itself as a field of public policies, normative frameworks, and social disputes (Marcondes & Farah, 2021; Pamplona, 2025). These normative frameworks are mobilized, in this article, to show how organizations produce, record, and manage gender-based violence through specific documentary practices. A relevant milestone in this process occurred in 1984, when the country became a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), also known as the Women's Convention (Decreto n. 4.377, 2002). This is the first international treaty to comprehensively address women's human rights, establishing fundamental normative parameters for addressing gender inequalities. Subsequently, with the promulgation of the 1988

Federal Constitution, one of the most important legal advances in the country was consolidated, namely the principle of equality of rights and obligations between men and women, applicable to civil life, work and family relations (Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil / Constituição da República Federativa do Brasil, 1988; Pinsky & Pedro, 2012).

Law No. 11,340/2006 (Lei n. 11.340, 2006), known as the Maria da Penha Law (Albuquerque et al., 2024), was a milestone in this process, as it expanded the concept of violence against women, recognizing that it is not limited to physical aggression, but encompasses multiple dimensions and family and affective contexts, such as psychological, sexual, property-related, and moral violence (Lei n. 11.340, 2006). The Maria da Penha Law has been used and adapted to encompass new forms of violence, such as stalking and online harassment, and to strengthen urgent protective measures for women. This is the first law in the Brazilian legal system that considers gender-based violence against women to be a responsibility of the state and not only a family matter.

This understanding that gender-based violence is part of a state public agenda resulted in the development of measures to protect women's lives. On March 9, 2015, the Femicide Law (Lei n. 11.340, 2006), as it is popularly known, was promulgated by then President of the Republic Dilma Rousseff. This law recognized that, in Brazil, women are murdered because they are women.

Thus, the criminalization of femicide seeks to denounce the political dimension of women's deaths as a result of patriarchal control and punitive power over them (Segato, 2006). The new legal category is part of the political struggle for the affirmation of women's dignity as subjects of rights (Incháustegui Romero, 2014). Furthermore, by naming the phenomenon so that it can be recognized, it allows criminal statistics to be qualified, making it easier to dismiss arguments justifying the defense of honor and indicating the preventable nature of such crimes. Therefore, this recognition highlights the need for public policies related to the deconstruction of cultural gender patterns that normalize violence against women (Avila & Edem, 2018), including in organizational spaces and labor relations. More than legal devices, these legislations inform administrative routines, protocols, and documentary flows that structure organizational action in addressing gender-based violence.

Although Brazil has adopted various normative frameworks for addressing gender-based violence, these protection mechanisms have still not been sufficient to reach all scenarios of violence, especially those linked to lethality (Albuquerque et al., 2024; Quina & Onuma, 2021), which we term femicide. Despite recurrently considering this type of crime as a phenomenon of women's private life, it is necessary to consider that femicide can also occur in public environments and be perpetrated by people who do not have intimate ties with women (Caicedo-Roa et al., 2022), situations which we term non-intimate femicide (Pasinato, 2011). This phenomenon becomes especially important for the field of administration in the sense of questioning the boundaries of what is public and private when the subject is violence and its implications for labor relations, since prior studies have shown how gender-based violence affects these contexts (Wilcox et al., 2021). This debate becomes even more relevant when this type of violence becomes lethal for women.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Brazil is the fifth country in the world with the highest number of killings of women. Between 2013 and 2023, 47,463 women were murdered, which is equivalent to an average of 13 deaths per day (Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada [IPEA], 2025). The reporting service 'Ligue 180,' operated by the Brazilian federal government and responsible for registering reports of violence, recorded 72,094 reports of violence against women in the first half of 2024, averaging 12,015 per month and 400 reports per day (Ministério da Justiça e Segurança Pública, 2025).

According to the Femicide Report, between January and June 2025 there were 2,978 femicides in Brazil, of which 31.9% were completed cases, in which the victims died, and 68.1% were attempted cases (Laboratório de Estudos de Feminicídios [LESFEM], 2025). The daily average was five completed femicides and 11 attempted femicides per day in this analyzed period (LESFEM, 2025). Regarding official data from the Brazilian government, the DATASUS report (DATASUS, 2025), a platform where health data are collected, processed, and stored, indicates a tendency of increase in women's deaths due to external causes, that is, caused by violent or accidental events, which can be observed in Figure 1.

When we analyze the data linked to femicide cases, made available by the Brazilian Public Security Forum (FBSP) (Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, 2025), this tendency of growth of deaths due to external causes, which includes homicides, may have been influenced by femicide cases. Regarding this type of death, femicide rates in the country continued to increase even during the COVID-19 pandemic in the years 2020 and 2021 and rose further in 2022, after the quarantine period that was necessary as a measure of prevention and containment of this disease, as can be observed in Figure 2.
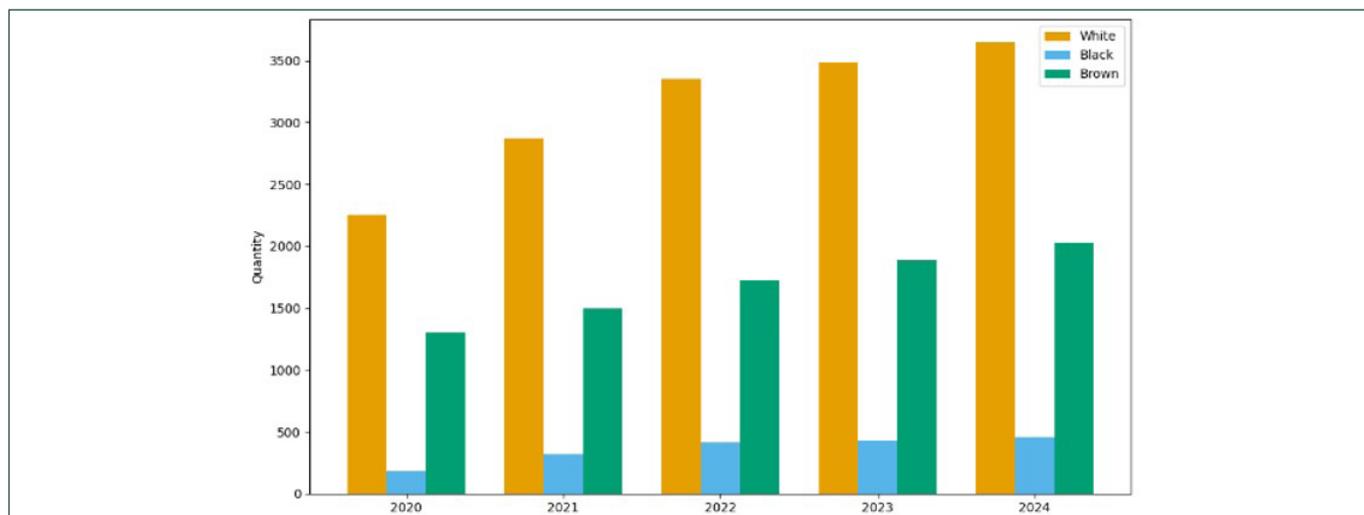
Source: DATASUS. (2025). DATASUS [Conjunto de dados]. Ministério da Saúde. http://tabnet.datasus.gov.br/cgi/tabcgi.exe?sim/cnv/obt10uf.def.

Figure 1. Mortality rate of Brazilian women due to external causes and race/color registration, 2020 to 2024.
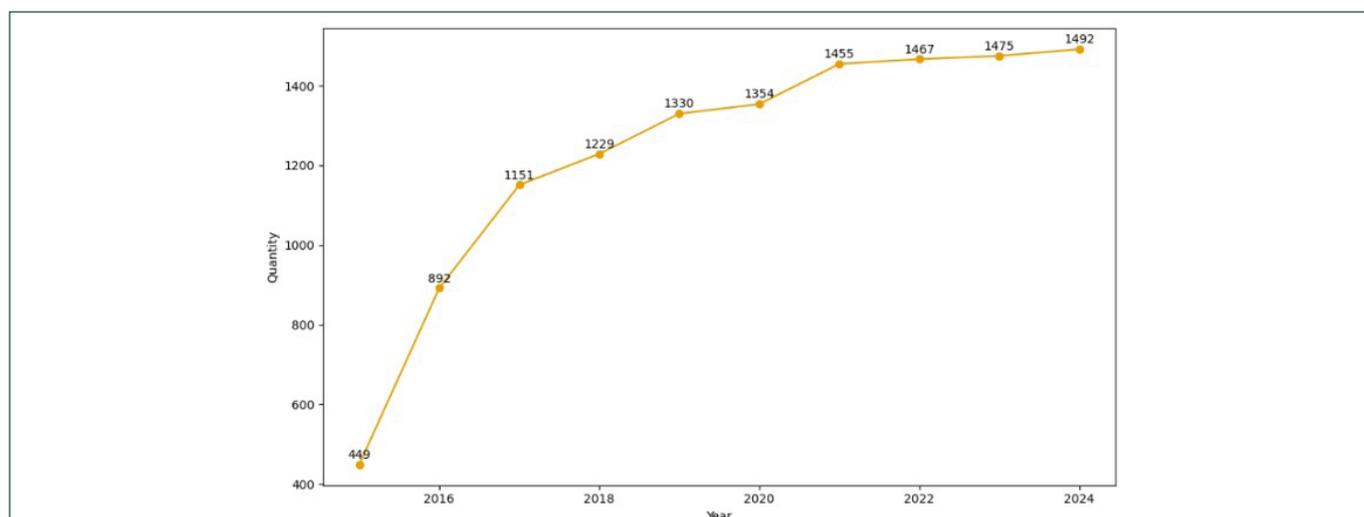
Source: Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública. (2025). Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública. https://publicacoes.forumseguranca.org.br/handle/123456789/279.

Figure 2. Femicide victims in Brazil, in absolute numbers, between the years 2015 and 2024.

The LESFEM's (2025) study also indicated that from January to June 2024, 4.1% of femicides perpetrated in Brazil occurred at the woman's workplace. Of these, 2.3% of these crimes were attempts, that is, the victim did not die due to circumstances beyond the aggressor's will, and 1.8% were completed, that is, with the effective victim's death (LESFEM, 2025). In 2025, of the 2,798 femicides perpetrated (attempted and completed) identified in this study, 41 occurred at the workplace (LESFEM, 2025). Thus, non-intimate femicides (Pasinato, 2011), although numerically smaller in relation to intimate ones, are analytically relevant because they reveal that the organizational space integrates the circuit of production of lethal gender-based violence.

From a theoretical point of view, non-intimate femicide challenges the classic separation between public and private, widely criticized by feminist thought (Pasinato, 2011). Violence against women was historically considered as a domestic or relational problem,

which contributed to preserving public and organizational spaces as supposedly neutral, rational, and genderless (Pasinato, 2011). Segato (2014, 2016) argues that this dichotomy is analytically fragile because patriarchal control operates both in the intimate and in the public sphere, through practices of disciplining, punishment, and the production of symbolic messages about the limits imposed on female bodies.

In the organizational context, non-intimate femicide highlights that the workplace can be established as a space of conflict and gender-based violence, especially in environments structured by rigid hierarchies, labor precariousness, tolerance of harassment, and absence of effective violence prevention protocols. The literature on violence and harassment in the workplace context indicates that such dynamics increase women's exposure to extreme risks, especially when threats and stalking are treated as issues of individual misconduct or as external to the organization (Pasinato, 2011).

The significant presence of attempted femicide in the workplace, evidenced by LESFEM's (2025) data, reinforces that lethal violence is preceded by signs that could be recognized and addressed at the organizational level.

In this sense, incorporating non-intimate femicide as an object of analysis in the field of administration implies shifting the focus from an instrumental understanding of organizations to an approach that recognizes their ethical, social, and political responsibility in ensuring safe working conditions. By problematizing the separation between public and private and recognizing the organizational environment as a space shaped by gender and power relations, administration expands its analytical scope and contributes to the development of management practices committed to human rights and to the prevention of violence against women.

To exemplify how non-intimate femicide (Pasinato, 2011) has occurred in Brazil, a report by the European Observatory on Femicide (Observatório Europeu do Femicídio, 2025) highlights the case of Francisca Chagas da Silva, a Black woman, union leader and human rights defender from the Quilombola community of Joaquim Maria, in the state of Maranhão. Francisca was found dead, naked, with signs of rape, strangulation, and stabbing. Throughout the proceedings, her murder was justified on the grounds that she was a Black woman and a rights defender, and sexual violence was used as a way to evidence that she should not occupy that leadership space. This report also highlights the case of Joanna Demafelis, from the Philippines, who was a domestic worker and had her cell phone confiscated by her employer and was tortured and strangled by him. Considering that, in Brazil, domestic work is performed predominantly by Black women, it is important to develop studies in Brazil that connect femicide and domestic work to understand how these two social phenomena have also articulated in our country.

We also highlight the need to improve the recording and collection of data on gender-based violence and femicide against trans women in our country, since there are still limited data on this phenomenon. We highlight that in January 2022 the 6th Panel of the Superior Court of Justice held that the femicide qualifier can be applied to a homicide committed against a transsexual or transgender victim, which makes the adoption of institutional protocols for the collection and systematization of this information still recent. Therefore, it is also necessary to reflect on research methods that enable the collection, systematization, and analysis of data on gender-based violence and femicide in Brazil from an organizational perspective within the field of administration.

This discussion is important both from the scientific perspective, regarding the production of data and infor-mation on these social phenomena, and from a management education perspective, since this production of knowledge may be accessible in business schools and foster the educational process toward gender equity. Therefore, we will present, in the next section of this article, documentary ethnography as one of these methodological possibilities.

AN EXAMPLE OF THE USE OF DOCUMENTARY ETHNOGRAPHY IN THE FIELD OF STUDIES ON FEMICIDE IN THE AREA OF ADMINISTRATION IN BRAZIL

For the presentation of the research results, we structured this section into three parts. First, we describe how the ethnographic study was conducted, highlighting how, in the process of data collection and analysis, documents are treated as ethnographic objects rather than a means of access to the ethnographic field. Next, we highlight the analysis process and, at the end, the results obtained regarding discussions on gender-based violence, specifically femicide, in the development of documentary ethnography.

How documentary ethnography was designed and implemented

Within the Brazilian justice system, the Court for Domestic and Family Violence against Women has jurisdiction to process and adjudicate criminal cases and urgent protective measures arising from the practice of domestic and/or family violence against women, as well as intentional crimes against life committed in that same context. Until the final and unappealable decision on indictment, such crimes remain under the jurisdiction of this court, being subsequently forwarded to the Jury Court, as established by the applicable legislation. It is within this organizational context, that of the Jury Court, that the case files analyzed in this research are inserted, which constitute the empirical corpus of this documentary ethnography.

The research occurred in the following sequence: (1) collection of femicide cases that are pending or were processed in the Plenary Division of the Jury Court, through access to the Online Services Portal of the Court of Justice; (2) selection of cases for the development of the research for the composition of the corpus of analysis; (3) analysis of the materials produced with the development of the study. Regarding the collection of femicide cases, that is, the case files, the access criterion was defined by the division of the Jury Court itself. After requesting access to the femicide case files pending in that division, we were granted access to 28 case files (total number of case files that were processed or are being processed in the di-

vision, according to the responsible clerk's office). The time frame ran from 2015 (date of the typification of the crime of femicide) to March 30, 2022 (date of granting access to the case files). The research results were cat-

egorized from the empirical evidence of the research, as recommended by the method of documentary ethnography, described in Table 1 of this work, and are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Emerging analytical categories from documentary ethnography and implications for management research.

Analytical category	Conceptual definition	Methodological implications (documentary ethnography)	Analytical implications for administration
Access protocols and institutional grammars	Set of formal and informal rules that regulate who can access documents, under what conditions, and through which formats.	Evidence that access to documents itself is part of the ethnographic field and requires situated readings of norms and forms.	Show how organizations control the production of knowledge and the visibility of sensitive phenomena through administrative practices.
Administrative classification of case files	Transformation of violence into administrative data through standardized codes (e.g., CNJ numbering).	Enable observation of how documents perform the translation of social events into organizational language.	Highlight how organizations produce governance through standardization, traceability, and document management.
Production of 'gendered' documents	Set of documentary practices through which gender norms, values, and hierarchies are inscribed, reproduced, and naturalized in processes of record-making, classification, and organizational narrative.	Enables identification of forms of institutional writing, documentary formats, and administrative categories (images, schemes, fields) through which violence is technically framed in documents, therefore requiring the simultaneous analysis of form, content, and circulation of documents.	Show how organizational practices can reproduce gender inequalities in an apparently neutral manner by supposedly using technical language.
Forms of invisibilization of femicide	Set of documentary practices that erase, silence, or neutralize the gender dimension of violence, dissociating structural causes and organizational contexts of this phenomenon.	Identification of institutionalized cultural criteria in records, classifications, documentation, framings, and institutional narratives of gender-based violence.	Reinforces the need for administration to incorporate femicide, especially non-intimate femicide, as an analytical object and as an issue of organizational responsibility.

Note. From the research (2025).

Regarding our analytical category, access protocols, and institutional grammars, access to the field and to the case files used was operationalized through a written request submitted by one of the article's researchers, a criminal defense attorney, seeking access to femicide case files that are being processed or had been processed in that court. The request was promptly granted, also in writing, with the researcher being advised only that, when conducting the research, she should establish mechanisms to ensure the intimacy, privacy, honor, and image of the parties involved in the proceedings. Therefore, this study uses no information that would enable the identification of the city, the court, the judicial district, or the individuals involved in the cases analyzed. The clerk's office then sent us, by electronic mail, a report containing the case numbers and their respective access keys, which allowed us to consult the records through the electronic system used by the court. With this authorization in hand, we submitted the research project to the university ethics committee to which this study is affiliated, seeking approval to conduct the research; this approval was also granted. From then on, data collection occurred through access to the case files in the judicial system over a period of 10 months, as well as through the work as a criminal defense attorney of one of the researcher-authors of this text, who acts directly in cases of violence against women, crimes in the domestic sphere, offenses committed in organiza-

tions, and litigation in proceedings involving completed and attempted femicides.

This experience in the legal field does not constitute only a biographical aspect, but shapes what feminist epistemology calls a situated standpoint (Harding, 1991), a place of knowledge production that emerges from the concrete and embodied practices through which the researcher relates to the world. The experience accumulated in reading, producing, interpreting, and contesting legal documents allows an in-depth understanding of institutional rationalities, classificatory disputes, silences, and modes of formalization that structure the documentation produced by the criminal justice system. This professional repertoire provides not only technical familiarity, but also an epistemic sensibility to perceive discursive nuances, contradictions, erasures, and organizational strategies that often remain invisible to researchers who do not move within the legal materiality of everyday penal practice. In this way, the researcher simultaneously mobilizes legal technique and ethnographic sensibility to analyze documents as technologies of government that produce meanings, control, and institutional realities.

Thus, the choice of the documentary ethnography method emerges as an epistemologically coherent consequence of the articulation between the researcher's professional trajectory and the object of study. Legal documents, decisions, inquiries, expert reports, police

reports, case files, and reports are here understood as ethnographic fields, in the sense proposed by the anthropology of documents (Lowenkron & Ferreira, 2014; Riles, 2006), as arenas in which institutional practices, bureaucratic rationalities, organizational affects, silences, hierarchies, and disputes are inscribed and become visible. However, it is necessary to highlight that in this study our focus is on documents; therefore, our discussions will be centered on this ethnographic object in order for it to attain the ontological status of documentary ethnographies, that is, not only as an object of analysis, but as an object of ethnographic observation.

Regarding the second stage of the research, (2) the selection of cases for the development of the research and the composition of the corpus of analysis, we chose to use all the case files made available for this study. Of the 28 case files, 19 are attempts, that is, the victim did not die as a result of the aggressions suffered. The year with the highest number of femicide case files was 2017, with eight case files, followed by 2019, with seven case files (Figure 3).
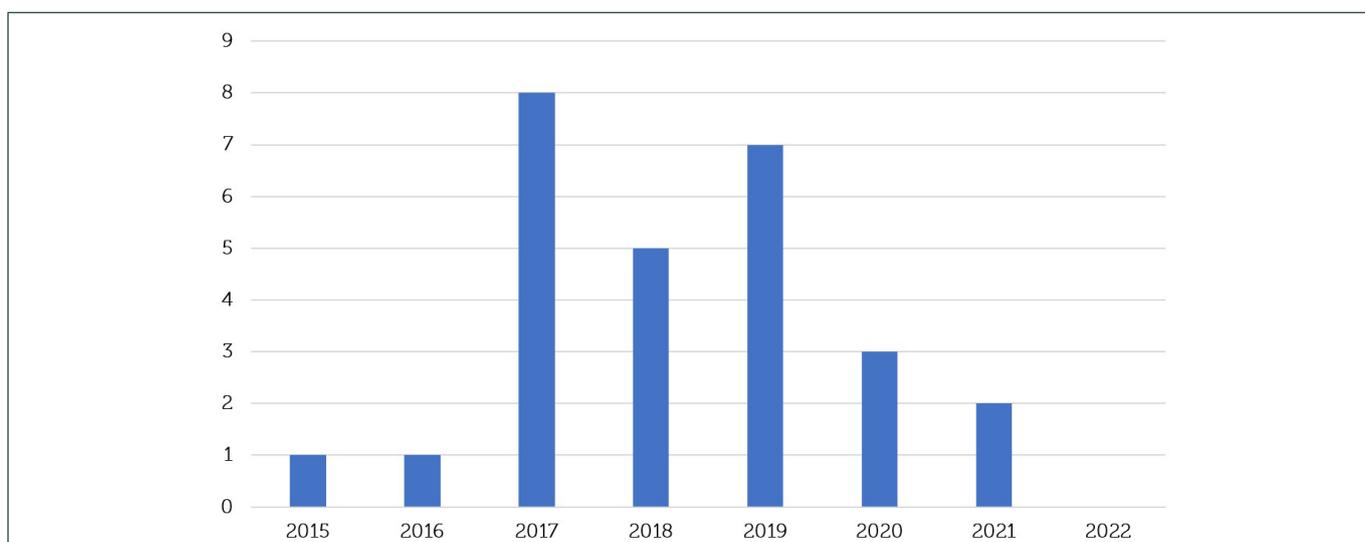
Source: From the research (2023).

Figure 3. Number of case files analyzed in the study.

Of the 28 case files, only one case involves a transsexual woman as the victim, while the other 27 case files refer to cisgender women. With regard to the victims' ages, in only one case is the victim a minor, a 12-year-old child. Regarding the circumstances of the crimes (means, motive, manner, and instruments), the main motive is base motive, that is, one whose motive is repugnant, socially unacceptable, immoral, despicable, vile, and the most commonly used means is one that prevents the victim from defending herself. For the analyses, we used all documents made available by the court, namely ordinances, official letters, police reports, records of exhibition and seizure, statements, investigation reports, expert reports (scene, post-mortem, ballistics), opinions issued by the Public Prosecutor's Office, witness examination records, arrest warrants, notices, official communications, certificates, decisions, judgments, appellate decisions, petitions, personnel records, letters rogatory, summons, and other unnamed documents present in the case files for the data analyses. From this process of categorization (Table 2), it

was possible to analyze how documents transform gender-based violence, specifically femicide, into administrative data, which will be presented in the next section of this work.

How the analyses were conducted

Regarding the analyses of the collected materials, it should be noted that ethnography follows an inductive process of analysis, because in ethnographic studies the categories or themes of observation are not necessarily defined a priori, but may emerge throughout the development of fieldwork. This movement in the investigative process is necessary because reflexivity about the analytical path transforms itself, producing its own movement of production of empirical materials for analysis, as well as the way they come to reflect our questions (Mattos & Castro, 2011, p. 66).

This procedure implied the adoption of an analytical strategy oriented toward the protection of privacy, deidentification, and deindividualization of the data. The object of analysis was treated as part of a pub-

lic agenda, prioritizing the collective performance of documents in society, and not the individualization of cases. In this sense, we avoided the use of information that highlighted personal singularities, privileging data that configure the people involved as subjects of rights within the judicial organization, that is, as organizational subjects. This analytical choice made it possible to ensure data privacy, avoid the construction of abstract subjects, and preserve the ethical rigor of the research.

Initially, the analyses of the materials produced in this research were carried out with the grain (Ferreira & Lowenkron, 2020; Zeitlyn, 2012), which made it possible to produce a descriptive overview of the circumstances and characteristics of the crime, aggressors, and victims. The choice of these three themes was based on the literature reviewed in this work, as well as on the practical legal experience of one of the researchers of this work, who legally deals with femicide cases within judicial organizations, since these themes provide the basis for a better understanding of the crime and its occurrence. Criminal law has always been interested in the crime and the aggressor, with the victim often being relegated to oblivion, even though she is part of the context.

The study of the victim in criminal proceedings changed after the 1970s, mainly with the crisis of the Welfare State and the advent of the Democratic State under the Rule of Law. It is in this context that victimology and the victimological movement begin to discuss the new role of the victim, placing her at the center of attention (Ferreira & Lowenkron, 2020; Zeitlyn, 2012; Souza et al., 2019). In this sense, the victim assumes a protagonist role, becoming the focus of study of the extent, nature, and causes of criminal victimization, its consequences for the people involved, and society's reactions to it (Souza et al., 2019).

Regarding the against-the-grain reading (Ferreira & Lowenkron, 2020; Zeitlyn, 2012), it was carried out to understand how femicide is produced beyond what can or cannot be recorded in the case files. In this way, we sought to denaturalize institutional interpretations of femicide cases. Instead of accepting documents, police occurrence reports, expert reports, and judicial decisions, for example, as a simple record of a fact, the ethnographer considered this process as performative and situated acts that participate in the social construction of the crime, the victim, and the aggressor. That is, we sought to understand how the documents interpreted and translated gender-based violence in terms of 'crime of passion,' 'trivial motive,' or 'domestic conflict,' naturalizing the structural dimensions of gender, race, and class. The against-the-grain reading, therefore, deterritorializes

the document, situating it in relations of domination and in the systems of writing that sustain patriarchy. Thus, it was possible, in our analyses, to interrogate the modes of truth production, since the documents were analyzed as part of a network of practices that materialize violence from the filling out of a police form, to the police occurrence report or the phone call to the police in search of help, to the judicial sentence. Each record reveals ways of perceiving, of being affected, and of classifying the world, which also makes it possible to understand what the world is allowed to forget.

Thus, it becomes possible to understand how femicide is managed as a bureaucratic and administrative category, and not only as violence against women. The against-the-grain reading shows how technical language and documentary forms can produce depoliticizing effects, transforming the death of a woman into a number, a case file, a statistical datum. The against-the-grain reading seeks to restore the human and political density of what documents reduce. It reads 'from the bottom up,' seeking the interstices of interrupted speech, silences, and absences and, in doing so, returns to the research the ethical and political character that gender-based violence demands.

Results obtained with documentary ethnography in terms of gender-based violence

The first aspect we highlight regarding the with-the-grain reading was the existence of administrative protocols within the judicial system for gaining access to the documents to be analyzed. As all femicide proceedings are under seal, public access to the documents is not possible. As we completed all the forms required to access the research materials, in this case, the submission of a research cover letter and the applicants' personal data, we began to decipher the technical grammars that guide the drafting and circulation of these documents. An important aspect of this dynamic, in the against-the-grain reading, is that because one of the researchers in this study works in the field of law, we already had this grammar previously incorporated into the research process. As a result, our forms were considered adequate, which enabled access to the case files for analysis.

Following our ethnographic trajectory, we proceeded to the analysis of the documents in order to understand, through concomitant with-the-grain and against-the-grain readings, how the system of documentary production transforms the death of a woman into administrative data, a legal-administrative category, and a public narrative, as presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Analytical categories for the transformation of femicide into documentary records.

Analytical category	Conceptual definition	Methodological implications (documentary ethnography)	Analytical implications for research in administration
Administrative data	Result of the institutional translation process through which complex social experiences are converted into standardized, measurable, and administrable records.	Requires tracing the documentary flow from its initial production to its consolidation in official records and databases.	Evidences how administration transforms social problems into objects of management, delimiting what can be recognized, measured, and administered.
Legal-administrative category	Normative framing that classifies the event according to legal and administrative typifications, producing effects of accountability, punishment, or archiving.	Requires analysis of documentary decisions that define the legal naming of the fact (e.g., femicide, homicide, violent death).	Reveals the role of judicial and administrative organizations in defining the institutional meaning of violence.
Public narrative	Stabilized and socially circulable version of the event, produced from official documents and reproduced by documents.	Implies observing how documents go beyond the institutional field and begin to circulate in public arenas.	Evidences how organizations participate in the construction of public memory and in the legitimation of official versions of the facts.

Note. From the research (2025).

In terms of administrative data, this process is identified by a numbering system that follows a 20-digit standard defined by the National Council of Justice (CNJ). The structure of the number is composed of parts that identify the branch of justice, the court, the year, the court of origin, and a check digit, allowing the case file to be traced throughout the national territory. We will not delve specifically into this structure so that it is not possible to identify the case files analyzed, configuring our analytical category administrative classification of case files, described in Table 2.

Regarding the construction of women's death as a legal-administrative category, in this study, a femicide, it becomes necessary to characterize how the death of this woman occurred, which constitutes our analytical category named administrative classification of case files, described in Table 2. The first aspect we identified in the study, in the with-the-grain reading, is that in the judicial organization researched the autopsy report is responsible for indicating the injuries and the cause of death of the victim and begins with the day and time when the body arrived at the Forensic Medical Institute (IML). It is necessary to highlight, in the against-the-grain reading, that these reports were rendered using a masculinized body drawing, as indicated in Figure 4, which exemplifies the report of a femicide perpetrated with a knife. Each mark described as an 'item' indicates the location on the woman's body where it was possible to identify knife wounds.
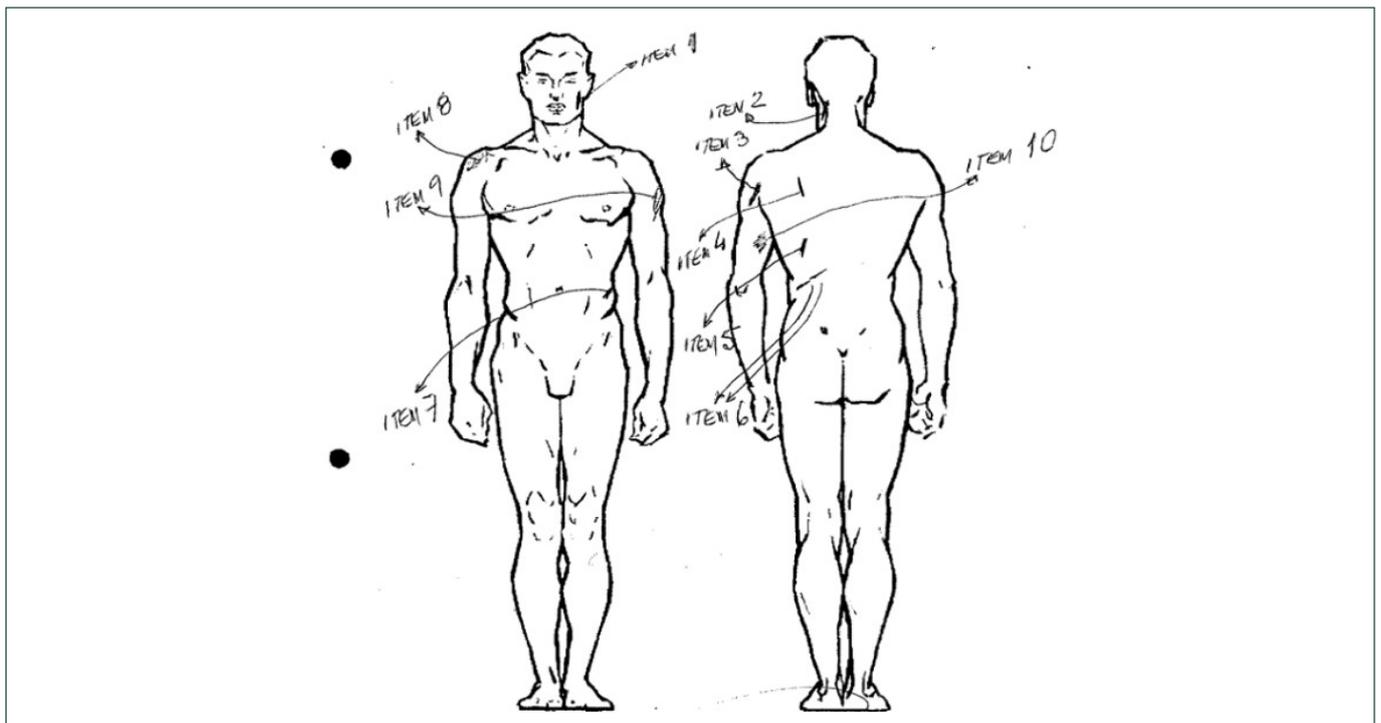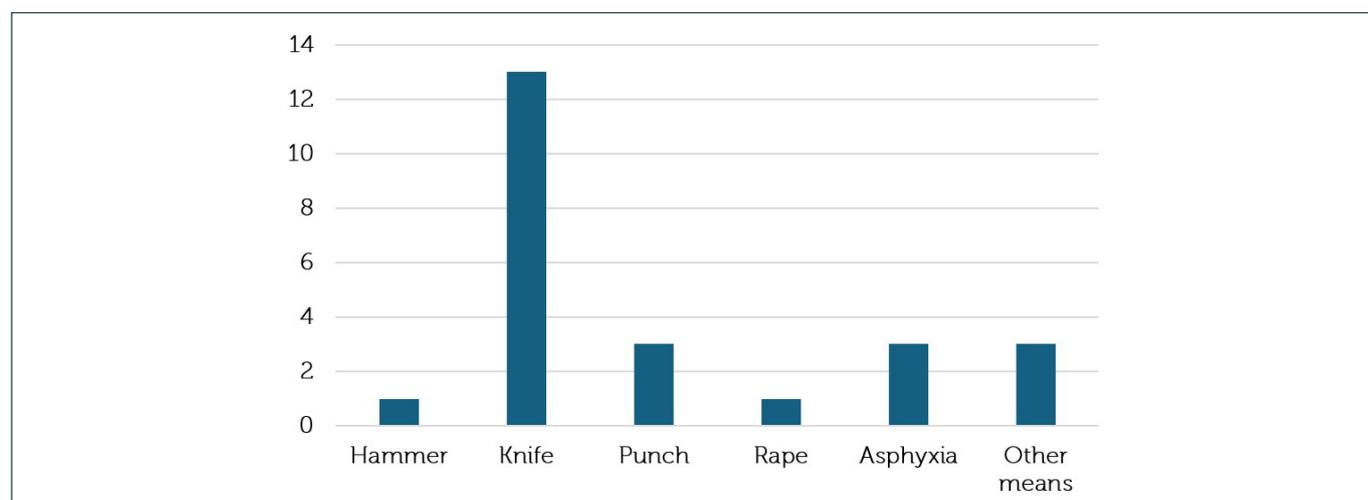

Source: From the research (2025).
Figure 4. Example of an autopsy report.

The against-the-grain reading of this image helps us perceive that, as we follow the flow of the production of documents situated in the police and judicial system, there is an erasure of expressions of the construction of the feminine in these bodies. Thus, the events of the crimes are reinscribed in an institutional grammar that, by producing layers of meaning around the death of women, simultaneously eliminates part of their lived experiences as women. This becomes evident in the reports that silence the visual production of the feminine in documents. In this way, the document, in this case the report, shapes the administrative boundaries through which women's bodies are constituted as the locus of the practice of gender-based violence. The documentary record silences the female body as administrative data, as described in our analytical category production of gendered documents in Table 2.

Another important aspect related to this is that one of the cases analyzed referred to a transsexual woman. Although, in the research case, the victim was recognized from the outset as a woman, already at the police station, as a victim of femicide, in a with-the-grain reading of the documents it was possible to observe that there was a dispute among different actors about this understanding. This is because there is, in the case file in question, a discussion about excluding the femicide qualifier due to the victim's biological sex, which demonstrates that the Judiciary still turns to biological questions to discuss gender. In the studied case, we observed that the police chief, in his report, presented an extensive definition of gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity to justify the qualification of the crime as femicide against the transsexual/transgender victim. However, the circumstances of this woman's life, her work, her social condition, and her life history became irrelevant to the official record, at many moments of the process, in an attempt to silence her in the documentary field. Indeed, in documentary terms, we can understand that femicide does not cease with the death of the victim's biological body.

Another important aspect in terms of gender-based violence that we observed in the documents concerned the instruments used in the crimes, all committed by cisgender men and with some degree of kinship to the victims, and the parts of the woman's body that were chosen as targets for the practice of violence. Regarding the instruments used, the knife was predominant across crimes (Figure 5).

Source: From the research (2023).
Figure 5. Instrument used to perpetrate crime.

In 11 of the case files analyzed, the injuries were inflicted on the victim's head, face, and/or neck. Here we present an excerpt from the indictment illustrating this point:

The defendant XXXXX committed the crime by employing cruel means, because he inflicted an excessive and unnecessary number of blows on the victim XXXX, striking vital regions of the victim corresponding to the head and the abdomen and thereby caused exacerbated pain and suffering to her ...

We highlight the use of the terms 'excessive and unnecessary number' to qualify the action of the male aggressor toward the female victim, because the materiality of the words may indicate tolerance regarding the quantity of blows that may be inflicted in the commission of a crime. In the against-the-grain reading, it becomes possible to understand how, in documents, structural violence is translated into individual emotion, depoliticizing the act and reinforcing the idea of a private motivation, dissociated from broader systems of gender domination. This type of formulation shows

how institutional power manifests itself in documentary form, which can naturalize the use of force against women's bodies.

Although it is not the focus of this work, we note that femicide crimes, in the analyzed judicial district, are hegemonically perpetrated by men, cisgender, white, aged between 18 and 30 years, with no history of substance use, who have or had affective and sexual relationships with the victims and who cite jealousy as the main motive to commit femicide. We did not observe, in the documents and case files analyzed, a discussion about labor relations, which indicates a tendency to understand femicide as a crime of the intimate sphere of couples. The victims, in turn, are predominantly women, cisgender, aged between 20 and 30 years, who were killed in their residences, in general, on Thursdays in the afternoon. We did not have further sociodemographic details of the victims, because these data are still not recorded for this type of crime in the analyzed judicial district, which indicates that the form of recording and documenting women victims of femicide reproduces the logic of silencing them as subjects of rights.

Another aspect observed in the against-the-grain reading is the limited emphasis on discussions about non-intimate femicide (Pasinato, 2011). Of the analyzed case files, only one case highlighted that the crime was committed at the workplace, an organization in which the victim and aggressor were business partners. Throughout the process, we did not observe a debate about the specificities of this occurrence, evidencing the understanding that femicide would be a crime of passion and excluding the workplace from these discussions, which highlights the need for the field of administration to engage more deeply with this discussion.

In the against-the-grain reading, what is not said in the document becomes analytical data. The fact that ethnographic data are not produced regarding sociodemographic elements of women victims of femicide, attempted or completed, reveals elements that are not considered in institutional language. In the analyzed case files, the absence of information on skin color, social class, or financial income suggests that silences do not occur by chance, but may be the effects of a documentary policy of the state, which selects which lives deserve to be narrated and which can be managed through silence. Thus, the against-the-grain reading is not limited to identifying what is written, but pursues what was excluded by the very form of writing, recognizing the document as a space of symbolic and political dispute over lives.

Documentary ethnography, therefore, makes it possible to understand, in the analyses on femicide, how the state materializes in the writing of procedural documents, through institutional subjects, and how administrative language sustains the exercise of power over women's bodies, whether in life or not.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE USE OF DOCUMENTARY ETHNOGRAPHY FOR ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSES OF FEMICIDE

As a contribution to the field of education and research in administration, we systematize the results of these discussions in three points. The first concerns the shift from understanding the document as a source to understanding the document as an ethnographable organizational practice; the second concerns the operationalization of documentary ethnography for organizational analyses; and, finally, femicide as an object of discussion in educational and research processes in organizations.

From the document as a source to the document as an organizational practice in administration research

Understanding the document as an ethnographable organizational practice, and no longer as a source of data for research, makes it possible to understand that documents organize experiences before representing them. This means that the process of documentary production is not a reflection of reality, but a performative act that constitutes it. In the context of education and research in administration, this constitutes an epistemological shift, because when an organization produces a document, it not only reports an event, but defines what counts as a fact through the choice of terms, the modulation of languages, and situated cultural practices, hence its ethnographic character, which transforms the event into an administrative and organizational object.

Thus, documentary ethnography makes it possible to perceive that the institutional recognition or denial of a fact is produced through documentary practices in organizations, especially state organizations. The absence of a word is a political and epistemic decision, just as the choice of expressions such as 'violent death' or 'interpersonal conflict' reveals the organization's gender grammar. This is why, in the current context, there is a debate about the use of the word 'gender' by the state. There are even reports of municipal governments, for example, that propose excluding even the term 'food genre' from their documents as a way of excluding these debates (Machado, 2013).

Ethnographic reading, in this case, does not seek only to identify what is written, but how and why it is written in this way. It is a matter of understanding that writing is a cultural practice of governing experience, a technology of managing life, here considered in cultural terms. As Gupta (2012) states: "bureaucratic writing is a practice of authority; letterhead is a performative act of the state" (p. 64). In other words, each document is a micro-expression of institutional power.

Documentary ethnography recognizes that all documentation is a cultural production in a field of political dispute and is therefore part of negotiation processes. By following the flow of documentary production, it becomes possible to understand how administrative instances deal with power hierarchies. The documentary ethnographer, when following internal processes, perceives that institutional 'truth' is the result of successive documentary mediations composed of police occurrence reports, technical reports, legal dispatches, opinions, and internal communications. Each document introduces cuts, translates experiences, and defines which elements will have legitimacy to circulate in the organization (Ferreira & Lowenkron, 2020).

Thus, for example, when we come across a news report about a femicide case, this document is the result of a long chain of inscriptions (Latour, 2010) that transform a woman's pain and gender-based violence into an administrative object, amenable to legal and statistical framing. Documentary ethnography therefore forces us to abandon the illusion of documentary transparency. The document does not 'speak for itself'; it speaks through the voices, silences, and strategies of power that constitute it.

By understanding documents as constitutive practices, documentary ethnography offers important analytical tools to investigate organizational processes that are often naturalized within the organizational context, such as the production of indicators, information management, the formulation of internal policies, institutional responses to crises, and the administration of conflicts and violence. In the context of this research, legislation is understood as a type of document that is part of the organizational apparatus that guides practices of recording, classification, and decision-making in the work context.

Instead of treating documents as objective representations of organizational action or as a secondary source of data, documentary ethnography makes it possible to analyze them as central devices of power, through which organizations define what is visible, legitimate, recordable, or amenable to accountability. This is a relevant contribution to research in the field of administration, as it shows that management does not occur only through explicit decisions, but also through routine documentary practices that structure organizational life.

On operationalizing documentary ethnography for organizational analyses

In documentary ethnography, the trajectory of documents becomes the researchers' ethnographic field. This means that the researcher's focus shifts from textual reading to the observation of the document in action, identifying who writes it, under what conditions, with which templates, for whom it is intended, how it is signed, filed, forwarded, or discarded. This perspective, inspired by Latour (2010), transforms the document into an actor within the organizational network. It is not a passive record, but an element that connects people, departments, systems, values, and regimes of truth. Decisions about how to name the event, which instance should issue a statement, and which textual format will be used (public note, ordinance, official letter) configure organizational modes of action and organizational aesthetics.

Thus, instead of collecting data from documentary sources, the ethnographer reads, transcribes, observes, and interprets throughout the process of circulation of texts, understanding them as social events in themselves. By way of example, documentary ethnography allows administration to understand that documents not only inform about violence but also participate in its institutional normalization. In the interpretive process, the with-the-grain and against-the-grain reading propositions (Ferreira & Lowenkron, 2020; Zeitlyn, 2012) support the analytical process.

With-the-grain reading consists of reading with the document, understanding its categories, terminology, and institutional procedures. It is an exercise of epistemological empathy that allows one to follow how bureaucratic writing produces coherence, authority, and social reality, highlighting the ways through which the state inscribes itself and stabilizes its technical grammar (Atkinson, 2017). Gupta (2012) shows that state bureaucracy operates through specific languages, in which writing is the instrument that confers reality on social facts. Thus, with-the-grain reading allows the ethnographer to follow the ways through which the state writes and inscribes itself, identifying the practices that stabilize its technical grammar. It becomes possible to identify structures in standardized fields (date, place, sex/gender, color/race) that constitute grammars of organized social life, their modes of completion, the protocols that guide their drafting, and the circulation the document will subsequently have.

In with-the-grain reading, the ethnographer's fieldwork shifts to the institutional routines of writing. The field is not only the place where femicide occurred, but also the police station, the courthouse, the registry office, the digital archive, and all the spaces where documents are produced, handled, and interpreted. The ethnographer follows how the police report is filled out, who drafts it, how the information is checked, what software is used, and what rules determine its validation. This observation shows that documents do not exist in isolation, but are actors in a network, connected to human and non-human actors (computers, systems, forms, stamps, codes) that together construct the authority of the text (Latour, 2010).

With-the-grain reading also focuses on the linguistic and graphic materiality of documents. The police report, for example, follows a rigid drafting template, with standardized verbs ("appeared at this police unit...", "reports that...", "informed that...") and a legal-administrative lexicon that confers impersonality and authority. Documentary standardization is not limited to a technical procedure but constitutes a technology of objectivity that enables the circulation of documents across different state instances, ensuring their institutional recognition. With-the-grain reading implies following the document in its own temporality, observing the rhythms and intervals that structure bureaucratic procedures, such as the passage from the police report to the inquiry and from this to the indictment. This trajectory shows that documents produce the time of the state, instituting practices of waiting, processing, and prescription. For Gupta (2012), this temporality is a form of structural power, because 'bureaucratic time' is what organizes social experience. Thus, with-the-grain reading is the moment in which the researcher learns the language of bureaucracy (Gupta, 1995), understands its silences as part of its grammar, and recognizes that documents, for state agents, are not necessarily instruments of power, but tools for work and for producing order and organization.

Against-the-grain reading seeks to challenge official narratives by revealing absences, translations, and framings produced by institutional documents along documentary chains that transform women's deaths into legal and statistical cases. Each documentary re-inscription adds meanings and, simultaneously, erases experiences by converting them into administrative facts. According to Gupta (2012), documents are central instruments in the production of state reality, organizing perceptions and categories for the management of life and death. In the case of femicide, this administration manifests itself in the transformation of structural violence against women into an individualized event,

described according to a causal logic of 'jealousy,' 'non-conformity,' and 'crime of passion.' Documentary ethnography interrogates these forms of inscription and their political implications.

Against-the-grain reading requires that the ethnographer follow the document in its institutional trajectory (Latour, 2010), since the standardization of document writing through forms based on fixed fields such as date, place, and sex/gender aims to produce objectivity and to impose narrative forms that define what can or cannot be included. Thus, absences come to be considered ethnographic data, because what is not said in the document becomes analytical data, constituting the organization's documentary policy. This becomes necessary in order to transform political issues into manageable information. For example, in cases of femicide, the state can constitute itself as an agent of women's deaths, while structural dimensions, such as machismo, remain invisible.

By proposing against-the-grain reading, documentary ethnography seeks to restore lived experience. This does not mean romanticizing the victim's experience, for example, but repoliticizing the way death is written. Reading against the grain means recognizing that femicide does not begin with the fatal blow, but with the everyday mechanisms that render gender-based violence silenced and silencable in women's daily lives, whether through police omission, the precarization of protection policies, or the media banalization of the deaths of poor and Black women, for example. Likewise, not considering femicide as an object of organizational analysis highlights the delimitations regarding which typologies of gender-based violence are amenable to debate in the workplace context. By circumscribing femicide as an intimate phenomenon, the possibility opens for organizations to exempt themselves from responsibilities in the face of this process. This is why, in this study, data on work and the victim's workplace are still not considered relevant data in procedural terms. This silencing regarding labor and organizational relations in femicide cases also indicates the separation between public and private as a possible delimitation of this type of violence as something pathological or as belonging merely to the affective-sexual domain.

Against-the-grain reading is, above all, a political and epistemological gesture. It inverts the vector of authority, because instead of considering state documents as guarantees of truth, it reads them as practices of power. This process becomes ethnographic insofar as it inscribes the researchers themselves in this process and situates the documents (notes, transcriptions, reports) within this circuit of meaning production. For this reason, the researchers themselves became part of

the flow of the judicial system by inscribing themselves documentarily in the court. By undertaking an against-the-grain reading of femicide cases, we observe that this is a phenomenon for which organizations also bear responsibility to discuss and act upon within their dynamics of confrontation. In this research, we identified two femicide cases that occurred in the victims' workplace: one in the company in which she was a partner with her husband at the time and a second in which she was murdered at her workplace. However, these facts were merely described and not considered important elements in the process of understanding the crimes committed.

Non-intimate femicide as an object of discussion in educational and research processes in organizations

Gender-based violence has been the subject of growing discussion in the field of administration, especially with regard to research in different organizational settings. Studies on sexual harassment (Portela & Fagundes, 2021; Teixeira & Rampazzo, 2017) and workplace bullying (Guimarães et al., 2016) have stood out in this field, showing how the work context is violent toward women. However, femicide remains a topic that is little discussed in this context (Leite et al., 2024; Quina & Onuma, 2021; Wilcox et al., 2021). Oriente and Alves (2022) highlight the importance of pedagogical actions in the school context as instruments for awareness-raising against femicide, emphasizing that education plays a crucial role in raising awareness and preventing gender-based violence. Portela and Fagundes (2021) analyze violence against women from the perspective of public and educational policies, stressing that education is one of the main means to dismantle practices of male domination and to promote gender equity.

The integration of femicide into educational and research processes in the field of administration can promote a deeper understanding of the structural and systemic nature of this social phenomenon and support prevention and intervention strategies for this type of crime. This integration requires a multidisciplinary approach, encompassing curricular structures, research initiatives, and administrative policies in undergraduate and graduate programs that highlight this type of violence not as something related to individual practices and the domestic sphere, but as a phenomenon that structures Brazilian society. Femicide is not synonymous with conjugal violence, as it is broader than this sphere of women's lives.

In curricular terms, Resolution No. 5/2021 (Resolução no. 5, 2021) of the Higher Education Chamber of the National Council of Education highlights, in the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Undergraduate Program in Administration, the need to develop social competencies in the training of administrators, which enables the incorporation of this debate transversally into undergraduate curricula. In graduate programs, the requirement for social impact of the activities developed by graduate programs in administration also enables the inclusion of this discussion in master's and doctoral curricula.

The inclusion of this debate in professional training becomes relevant, as studies indicate relations between labor market dynamics and femicide cases. Avakame's (1998) study already warned of a relationship between an increase in women's participation in the labor market and an increase in femicide cases. For the author, these phenomena would be related, because there would be a kind of 'reaction' by men in the face of reduced wage inequalities and women's economic empowerment, which could result in violent responses by intimate partners. Monárrez Fragoso (2000), in analyzing Ciudad Juárez, shows that femicide is associated with economic and social factors, being intensified by neoliberal policies that increase women's vulnerability at work. Indeed, these studies highlight the importance of educational processes in administration training, because organizations constitute important contexts for analysis in this debate.

Pasinato's (2011) study further highlights the importance of discussing femicide in the context of administration education by emphasizing what she calls non-intimate femicide, which remains little studied and little discussed, and which occurs in labor relations. It refers to the murder of women by men with whom they have a non-intimate relationship, such as colleagues or employers, evidencing the intersection of gender-based violence and power dynamics in work environments. Thus, femicide as an object of discussion in the field of administration education becomes a strategy for preventing and confronting this gender-based violence in the work context when characterized as non-intimate. As an object of research, it can assist in understanding how wage policies and labor relations can intensify or foster femicide in our country, including within labor relations.

Pasinato's (2011) proposition on non-intimate femicide fulfills two important analytical functions in the field of administration. The first is the possibility of politicizing and institutionalizing, as a topic of investigation, the deaths of women that occur in work contexts or in relation to institutional spaces that have historically been treated as gender-neutral. Second, it points to the need for instruments of investigation, record-making, and in-

tervention that recognize the specificity of these cases, for example, police and organizational protocols that map labor ties of women who have suffered this type of violence, whether in its attempted or completed form.

In the literature, non-intimate femicide has been discussed in contexts of revenge, retaliation, moral control, or the marking of boundaries of power in organizational spaces (Frota Loureiro, 2020). In the legal field, this concept has helped to explain how femicide occurs outside the family nucleus, in situations of revenge or disciplining, in the sense of marking territories of power, thus evidencing its normative-symbolic dimension of control over female bodies in the organizational context (Frota Loureiro, 2020).

In theoretical terms, non-intimate femicide challenges two important debates in feminist epistemologies. The first concerns the public/private opposition and the second, the centrality of intimate partner violence. Studies on violence against women have historically concentrated on the domestic sphere, denouncing the 'home' as a space of risk and violence (Gomes, 2018). Pasinato (2011), in discussing the category of non-intimate femicide, makes it possible to understand that when we analyze the deaths of women in contexts of war, organized crime, and in organizations, it becomes evident that patriarchal control is also exercised in public, institutional, and organizational spaces, where women's deaths fulfill functions of disciplining and reaffirmation of gender and race hierarchies (Gomes, 2018).

With this debate, the world of work and organizations is problematized as a space in which patterns of gender-based violence are produced and revealed not only in the form of harassment, discrimination, or occupational segregation, but also in their lethal form. Thus, organizational environments with cultures tolerant of violence, rigid hierarchical structures, the absence of safe reporting channels, and the naturalization of sexist practices create conditions that facilitate the escalation of violence against women, including their murders in the workplace.

CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to discuss the contributions of documentary ethnography to studies and research on femicide in the field of administration in Brazil. Based on the analysis of 28 judicial case files processed in a Jury Trial Court, documentary ethnography was mobilized to understand how judicial documents record and perform organizational practices that may reproduce gender-based violence. The results of this work showed that documents not only describe vio-

lent events, but also actively participate in their social constitution, transforming women's deaths into administrative categories, public narratives, and objects of management. This understanding reinforces the relevance of documentary ethnography for administration by enabling an understanding of how organizational action materializes in documentary routines that appear neutral, but are deeply traversed by relations of power, gender, race, and class.

In addition, by enabling the tracing of the flow of documents, from their production to their circulation and use, this approach shows how organizations transform social experiences into administrative data, administrative categories, and public narratives, often presented as neutral and technical. In this way, documentary ethnography contributes to the development of organizational analyses that are more sensitive to the political, ethical, and social dimensions of management, offering support both for the production of critical knowledge and for the reorientation of administrative practices that reproduce inequalities.

In this sense, the transformation of women's deaths into administrative categories emphasizes the need to consider femicide as an organizational phenomenon. The incorporation of non-intimate femicide (Pasinato, 2011) as an analytically relevant category for organizational analyses highlights that cases of lethal violence against women go beyond the domestic sphere and are articulated with labor relations, institutional environments, and organizational contexts. In this way, the article expands the traditional scope through which administration has addressed gender-based violence by problematizing the boundaries between public and private, as well as by calling upon organizations and institutions regarding their participation, active or omissive, in the production, recording, and management of these forms of violence. This demonstrates the need to rethink documentation and the use of organizational records in analyses of femicide, as well as the adoption of documentary ethnography with with-the-grain and against-the-grain readings as important in this process (Ferreira & Lowenkron, 2020) for the understanding of femicide as structural violence that affects all dimensions of social life, including the organizational dimension.

The theoretical contributions of the study show the need to broaden the scope of studies in the field of administration by incorporating gender-based violence as a phenomenon that structures and is structured by documentary and institutional practices in organizations. We also highlight an understanding of documents as social practices (writing-recording-circulation) of power operations that mediate organizational and in-

stitutional relations, with documentary ethnography as a research method that makes it possible, through with-the-grain and against-the-grain readings, to understand how documents transform social phenomena into administrative data, legal categories, and public narratives. Organizational analysis can benefit from approaches that follow documents in their trajectories, uses, and effects, expanding the understanding of how organizations manage complex social phenomena.

From a practical point of view, we highlight the need to recognize the pedagogical role of documents in constructing meanings about femicide, which can influence the training of administrators who are more aware of gender-based violence in organizational contexts. Thus, we highlight the importance of incorporating debates on femicide as an object of discussion in the field of education and research in administration, given the existence of the so-called non-intimate femicide (Pasinato, 2011). This type of gender-based violence is a debate that future studies can examine in greater depth, as well as other forms of violence institutionalized in organizational documents, expanding the debate beyond the Judiciary to organizations in health, education, private companies, and the public sector more broadly.

In this sense, the category of non-intimate femicide offers the field of administration an analytical instrument that makes it possible to interrogate, beyond organizational spaces, the training spaces of education and research in administration by debating: (a) how organizations recognize, or refuse to recognize, cases of women's deaths in work contexts as femicide; (b) how people management, safety, and compliance policies act or are omitted in the face of gender-based violence; and (c) how management practices can reinforce or contest the normalization of this violence. It also points to the need for research that articulates case analysis, the study of organizational policies, documentary investigation, and qualitative methodologies aimed at understanding everyday management practices that, although they do not 'pull the trigger,' structure the vulnerability of working women.

This makes it even more urgent that administration, as an academic field and as an institutional practice, act in the formulation of prevention, recording, and investigation protocols that explicitly consider non-intimate femicide in the world of work, articulating gender equality policies, occupational health and safety, and human rights. Indeed, this requires making education and research in administration an important educational site for confronting gender-based violence in organizations, as well as in society as a whole.

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1st author: conceptualization (equal), data curation (equal), formal analysis (equal), funding acquisition (equal), investigation (equal), methodology (equal), project administration (equal)

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