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Affirmative action and justice policies: an analysis of the understanding of law course students about the legal reservation of places for access to higher education

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Affirmative actions reflect the ideal of achieving equal opportunities and represent the realization of cultural transformations in order to reduce the effects of historically accumulated inequalities. Such actions are capable of implementing greater representation of minority groups in the most diverse domains of public and private activity. In the case of quotas instituted to guarantee minority access to higher education, the reservation of places is one of the forms of social justice that tries to guarantee a minimum level of education for the most disadvantaged, trying to compensate and equalize the opportunities for access to education. This research aimed to analyze the perception of students in the ISECENSA Law course about the affirmative action policy, with an emphasis on the quota modality that promotes the legal reserve of places for the so-called “minorities”. Therefore, the methodology used was qualitative and had as its starting point the bibliographical review to situate the quota policy as an object in the field of socio-legal studies. Documentary analysis of laws on the subject was carried out, as well as field research, through which the questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument to verify the position of ISECENSA law students on the quota policy and to identify whether the students understand the meaning of the quota policy. Thus, 115 questionnaires were applied to students from the 1st to the 5th period of the Isecensa Law course and the data collected showed the students' concern with Social Justice, even with the initial lack of knowledge about the concept of “affirmative action”. In this way, it was possible to analyze the perception of law students at ISECENSA regarding the quota policy and also to promote awareness of the reasons and effects of the implementation of that policy. It is expected then, to contribute to the humanization of educational institutions by encouraging diversity in order to build a society that respects difference, seeking to achieve peace and equality.

Keywords: Affirmative action policies. Quotas. University education. Justice.

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