

## Admission and permanence conditions of indigenous people in Federal Higher Education Institutions between 2013 and 2019

*Condições de ingresso e permanência de indígenas nas Instituições Federais de Ensino Superior entre 2013 e 2019*

*Condiciones de ingreso y permanencia de indígenas en Instituciones Federales de Educación Superior entre 2013 y 2019*

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**Abstract:** This article evaluates the effects of affirmative action on the entry and permanency of indigenous students in undergraduate courses at Federal Higher Education Institutions (FHEI). It presents two exploratory-descriptive and transversal research based on secondary microdata. In the study 1 was analyzed the profile of indigenous students (N=10.736), entry and permanency conditions of 65 IFES. Study 2 analyzed the percentage of indigenous people (N = 3,001) entering through the Quota Law, as opposed to the proportion of indigenous people in the population in each Federation Unit (FU). The results indicate that the Quota Law has boosted the number of indigenous people entering the higher education institutions, although they are still underrepresented in 14 UFs. Indigenous students, whether settled or not, have a more vulnerable profile compared to other students, requiring affirmative action programs and student permanence, sensitive to their specific needs from a material and symbolic point of view.

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**Keywords:** Higher Education; Quota Law; Indigenous; Federal Higher Education Institutions.

**Resumo:** Este artigo avalia os efeitos de ações afirmativas no ingresso e permanência estudantes indígenas em cursos de graduação de Instituições Federais de Ensino Superior (IFES). Apresenta dois estudos descritivo-exploratórios e transversais, realizados a partir de microdados secundários. No Estudo 1 foi analisado o perfil de estudantes indígenas (N = 10.736) de 65 IFES, condições de acesso e permanência. No estudo 2 foram analisados os percentuais de ingresso de indígenas (N = 3.001) pela Lei de Cotas, em contraponto à proporção de indígenas na população em cada Unidade da Federação (UF). Os resultados indicaram que a Lei de Cotas impulsionou o ingresso de indígenas nas IFES, contudo, estes ainda estavam subrepresentados em 14 UF. Estudantes indígenas, aldeados/as ou não, possuem perfil mais vulnerável na comparação com os demais estudantes, demandando programas de ações afirmativas e permanência estudantil, sensíveis às suas necessidades específicas do ponto de vista material e simbólico.

**Palavras-chave:** Educação Superior; Lei de Cotas; Indígenas; Instituições Federais de Ensino Superior.

**Resumen:** Este artículo evalúa los efectos de las acciones afirmativas en el ingreso y permanencia de estudiantes indígenas en carreras de graduación en Instituciones Federales de Educación Superior (IFES). Presenta dos estudios descriptivos-exploratorios y transversales, realizados con datos secundarios. En el Estudio 1 se analizó el perfil de los estudiantes indígenas (N = 10.736) de 65 IFES, sus condiciones de acceso y permanencia. En el estudio 2 se analizó el porcentaje de indígenas (N = 3.001) que ingresan bajo la Ley de Cuotas, en contraste con la proporción de indígenas en la población de cada Unidad de la Federación (UF). Los resultados indicaron que la Ley de Cuotas impulsó el ingreso de indígenas al IFES, sin embargo, aún estaban subrepresentados en 14 UF. Los estudiantes indígenas, sean o no aldeanos, tienen un perfil más vulnerable en comparación con otros estudiantes, demandando programas de acción afirmativa y retención estudiantil, sensibles a sus necesidades específicas desde el punto de vista material y simbólico.

**Palabras clave:** Educación Superior; Ley de Cuotas; Pueblo indígena; Instituciones Federales de Educación Superior.

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**Received on:** August 31, 2024

**Accepted on:** October 14, 2024

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## Introduction

Data from the last Demographic Census showed that the indigenous population in Brazil was estimated to consist of 1,693,535 people, half of whom (56.1%) were under the age of 30. Of a total of 630,041 households with at least one indigenous resident, 137,256 (21.8%) were located in Indigenous Lands and 492,785 (78.2%) outside Indigenous Lands (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics - BIGS [Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística - IBGE], 2022). It is important to view the country's indigenous population from the perspective of household stratification, considering whether or not they are located on

Indigenous Lands, or whether or not they are villagers, in order to have a clear picture of the territorialization processes of these native peoples.

The census data, which shows that the vast majority of Brazilian indigenous households are located outside of Indigenous Lands (78.2%), reveals an entire process of oppression, colonization, and expropriation of these peoples' rights over their Lands. It unveils the historical debt of the Brazilian state in ensuring their basic rights, while simultaneously summoning and challenging the country to devise public policies that safeguard access and constitutional guarantees for indigenous people, whether they live on Indigenous Lands or not. According to Carvalho (2021), indigenous peoples have sought to assert their occupation of multiple spaces in society that go beyond the boundaries of their villages. The recognition of their identity as indigenous goes beyond the experience of village life and is intertwined with processes of recognizing their history as a people, regardless of the geographical space they occupy, whether rural or urban.

From the perspective of the basic right of access to education, at the time of writing this report, there has been no information available from the last Census conducted in 2022 to provide an overview of the current educational status of indigenous peoples nationwide. Studies conducted by the National Observatory for Diversity and Inclusion in Brazilian Education (Diversifica), based on microdata from National Household Sample Surveys (cf. Santana; Meireles; Nacif, 2019a) show that until 2017, the access rate for self-declared indigenous people to elementary school was 96.5% and the completion rate was 80.2%. For secondary school, in 2017, the access rate for indigenous people aged 15 or above was 74.0%; the completion rate was 70.5%.

In that same year (2017), there were 242,473 students enrolled in Basic Education on Indigenous Lands (241,838 on Indigenous Lands + 635 in sustainable units on Indigenous Lands), which corresponded to 0.5% of the total number of students enrolled in Basic Education nationwide. These enrollments were spread across 3,220 schools located on Indigenous Lands (3,211 on Indigenous Lands + 9 in sustainable units on Indigenous Lands), but only 2,152 (66.83%) of these schools used specific teaching materials on indigenous themes. Among the country's basic education teachers, only 0.6% declared themselves as indigenous. In 2017, 26,176 indigenous people were enrolled in Youth and Adult Education (YAE). In higher education, in 2017, the percentage of access by the indigenous population was 45.8%; the percentage of completion was 38.5% (cf. Santana; Meireles; Nacif, 2019b). This article aims to deepen the analysis of this educational issue, with a specific focus on the conditions of admission and permanence of indigenous students in Federal Higher Education Institutions (FHEIs).

In recent decades, the profile of students attending Federal Higher Education Institutions (FHEIs) has changed radically in the sense of greater democratization of access to public higher education, as a result of pressure from organized civil society groups who demanded the right to access FHEIs, with the full participation of black and indigenous movements (Baniwa, 2013). From a space formerly occupied basically by the white elite, who had greater economic power, FHEIs have increasingly been populated by students with diverse socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnic-racial profiles, originating from less wealthy social classes (Almeida-Filho, 2014).

Studies carried out by the National Forum of Pro-Rectors of Communitarian and Student Affairs (Fonaprace) (*Fórum Nacional de Pró-Reitores/as de Assuntos Comunitários e Estudantis* [Fonaprace], 2019) revealed that, from the perspective of school origin, in 2003 students from public schools represented 46.2% of FHEI enrollments; in 2018 this percentage was 64.1%. In terms of per capita family income, in 2003 students with an income of up to 1.5 times the minimum wage represented 42.8%; in 2018 they represented 70.2%. Regarding enrollments based on self-declared race/color, three groups (yellow, white, and black) had a percentage of representation in FHEIs equal to or higher than that found in the Brazilian population. On the other hand, the enrollment of self-declared brown and indigenous students was under-represented - in the case of indigenous people, who are the focus of this study, there was a reduction in representation over the years from 2003 to 2008 (Fonaprace, 2019).

According to Lázaro, Cerqueira, and Castro (2019), this change in the profile of students can be interpreted as the result of a range of social pressures, most notably from the 1980s onwards, which denounced ethnic-racial inequalities in Brazilian society and demanded equity and increased access to various social assets, including education. Faced with these social pressures, a set of affirmative measures aimed at reducing ethnic, racial, or social inequalities in higher education were implemented in 2001 (Carvalho, 2016). For the latter author, university councils were key actors in establishing regulatory frameworks for the institution of Placement Reservation Programs (PRP) for access to public universities. This author identified several models for reserving places: 94 measures aimed at students from public schools; 67 at indigenous people; 52 at black people; 33 at people with disabilities; 25 focused on residents of the region; 14 aimed at low-income students, and seven aimed at including quilombolas.

Another set of affirmative measures can be listed as important measures that have contributed to the democratization of access to higher education across the country. The Program to Support Restructuring and Expansion Plans for Federal Universities (Reuni), for instance, enabled an increase in the number of openings at FHEIs through the expansion and internalization of previously consolidated institutions, as well as the creation of new federal universities and

institutes across all Brazilian regions (Brasil, 2007). In 2002, there were 45 FHEIs nationwide, increasing to 63 in 2017; regarding the number of campuses, there were 148 in 2002, increasing to 408 in 2017. The number of students enrolled in federal universities has also grown dramatically over this period: from 500,459 in 2002 to 1,120,804 in 2017 (Fonaprace, 2019).

The use of grades in the National High School Exam (NHSE), from 2004 onwards, as a classification criterion for admission to the FHEIs, especially with its connection to the Unified Selection System – USSys (Brasil, 2010a), enabled greater territorial mobility and also contributed to the diversification of the profile of FHEI students. In turn, the National Student Assistance Plan (NSAP) has helped to increase the permanence of low-income students in FHEIs (Brasil, 2010b), as has the Ministry of Education’s Permanence Scholarship Program (Brasil, 2013), aimed at students in conditions of socioeconomic vulnerability, especially indigenous and quilombola students.

Among these government measures, Law 12.711/2012 - known as the “Quotas Law” (Brasil, 2012) - was certainly the most powerful affirmative measure to ensure the admission of population groups that had limited access to Brazil’s FHEIs. The Quotas Law determined the progressive reservation of places, with a minimum of 25% each year, with a maximum term of four years from its publication, for full compliance with the 50% reservation of places at FHEIs, by course and shift, for students from public schools, with a per capita family income equal to or less than 1.5 times the minimum wage and self-declared black, brown, or indigenous people in a proportion at least equal to the number of black, brown, and indigenous people in the population of the Federation Unit where the institution is located, according to the latest BIGS Census.

Santana et al. (2021), in a study based on higher education surveys, found a progressive increase in the number of admissions to FHEIs through Placement Reservation Programs (PRP) after passing the Quotas Law: from 56,954 admissions in 2013 to 112,596 in 2018 - in this period, the number of admissions through PRP nearly doubled. However, although the law established that, by 2016 at the latest, 50% of the places offered by FHEIs should be held by their beneficiaries, this was not the case in the study. In 2018, 36.8% of new admissions were through the PRP, of which 32.8% could be attributed to the Quotas Law – while the other 4% were attributed to other varied PRPs offered by FHEIs.

Studies with national samples evaluating the effects of the Quotas Law on student admission to FHEIs are relatively scarce. Among those that can be retrieved, the focus is often on general descriptions that assess the effect of the Law on the diversification of student profile (e.g. Fonaprace, 2019; Santana; Meireles; Carvalho, 2019; Santana et al, 2021), with an emphasis on the income and racial/color profile, in particular making comparisons between quota and non-quota students (e.g. Jesus; Meireles, 2021) and often treating black, brown, and indigenous students as a group named

BBI (black, brown, and indigenous) to characterize the admission profile that considers ethnic-racial criteria (e.g. Nexo Políticas Públicas, 2024; Senkevics; Mello, 2022; Todos pela Educação; Moderna, 2020). Broad studies on the indigenous presence in FHEIs and their conditions of permanence are even rarer, with case studies on the experience of one university or another being more common (e.g. Estácio, 2011; Oliven; Bello, 2017; Peixoto, 2017; Pereira, 2011).

In light of the above, this study was carried out with the aim of assessing the effects of affirmative measures on the admission and permanence of indigenous students on undergraduate courses at Federal Higher Education Institutions (FHEIs). To this end, two separate studies were carried out, but with specific objectives intrinsically related to the general objective of this research report.

Study 1 aimed to: (1) characterize the profile of indigenous students with an active enrollment at FHEIs; (2) assess the evolution of the admission of indigenous students to FHEIs, by year and type of admission (Broad Competition – BC or by other Placement Reservation Programs – PRPs, including admission criteria that can be attributed to the Quotas Law); (3) to identify the undergraduate courses and fields of knowledge in which indigenous students were enrolled at the FHEIs; (4) to evaluate the permanence conditions of indigenous students, through participation in academic programs and activities, student assistance programs; and (5) to identify the future prospects of these students.

The second study aimed to assess whether the places that should be reserved for indigenous people under the Quotas Law (at least equal to the percentage of indigenous people in the population of the State where the FHEI is located, according to the latest BIGS Demographic Census) were, in fact, being occupied.

## Method

These were exploratory, cross-sectional descriptive studies, using secondary data sources. Study 1 used microdata from the 5th National Survey on the Socioeconomic and Cultural Profile of Undergraduate Students at Federal Higher Education Institutions - FHEI 2018 (Fonaprace/Andifes, 2018). This survey included a sample of students attending on-site undergraduate courses with active enrollment until 2018 at 63 Federal Universities and 02 Federal Institutes of Higher Education (one in Minas Gerais, and the other in Rio de Janeiro), totaling 65 FHEIs. According to the report issued on this study (Fonaprace/Andifes, 2019), the results were expanded through calibration processes, so that the sample can be considered comprehensive and representative of the population of undergraduates at the participating



FHEIs. Thus, the database contained 1,200,300 student responses, from which only the responses of indigenous students were selected (N = 10,736).

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In study 2, the information was extracted from the microdata of the Higher Education Census conducted by the Anísio Teixeira National Institute of Educational Studies and Research (NIESR) in 2019. This database included responses from indigenous students who were admitted to FHEIs in 2019 (N = 3,001). The variables of interest selected for this study were: total admission, admission modality (BC or PRP, including admission criteria that can be attributed to the Quotas Law, through the creation of a composite variable for this diagnosis) and Federation Unit (FU) where the FHEI is located. Finally, information on the percentage of the indigenous population in each Federation Unit (FU) was selected from the Demographic Censuses (IBGE, 2010, 2022). In this study, the data and information were also analyzed descriptively.

## Results and Discussion

### Study 1: Profile, access conditions, and permanence of indigenous students in FHEIs

Of the 10,736 indigenous students actively enrolled in the FHEIs up to 2018 (Fonaprace/Andifes, 2018), 4,672 were villagers (43.5%) and 6,064 were non-villagers (56.5%); most were female; coming from the North and Northeast regions; aged over 25; without children; not working at the time of the survey and with a per capita family income of up to half the minimum wage (see Table 1). According to data from the Fonaprace survey, the general profile of FHEI students was characterized as being mostly female, from the Southeast and Northeast regions, aged between 20 and 24, self-declared black (black or brown), with a per capita family income of up to one time the minimum wage (Fonaprace, 2019). In this brief comparison, it can be noticed that

indigenous people access higher education later, are mostly women, and have a more unfavorable socioeconomic situation compared to other students.

Table 1 - Profile of indigenous students with an active enrollment at FHEIs, considering total enrollment and segmentation by village (N = 10.736)

Variables	Total		Village status	
	Frequency	%	% Villagers (n = 4,672)	% Non-villagers (n = 6,064)
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	5,018	46.7	49.3	44.1
Female	5,632	52.5	50.2	54.9
Not stated	86	0.8	0.5	1.0
<b>Age range</b>				
≥ 17 years old	128	1.2	1.3	1.1
18 to 24 years old	5,572	51.9	44.1	57.9
≥ 25 years old	5,035	46.9	54.6	41
<b>Birthplace region</b>				
North	4,111	38.3	45	33.1
Northeast	3,354	31.2	27.9	33.8
Southeast	1,340	12.5	5.1	18.2
South	628	5.8	8.9	3.5
Midwest	1,111	10.3	11.5	9.5
Not stated	192	1.8	1.6	1.9
<b>Campus region</b>				
North	4,018	37.4	48.0	29.3
Northeast	3,303	30.8	23.7	36.2
Southeast	1,447	13.5	6.6	18.7
South	891	8.3	10.3	6.7
Midwest	1,077	10.0	11.4	9.1
<b>Children aged 0 to 5*</b>				
Not applicable	7,352	68.5	53.8	79.8
1 child	1,449	13.5	20	8.5
2 children	475	4.4	7.5	2.1
3 children	101	0.9	1.6	0.5
4 or more children	259	2.4	4.3	1.0
No children under 5	1,100	10.2	12.8	8.1
<b>Employment</b>				
Employed	2,618	24.4	22.4	25.8
Unemployed and not searching for it	2,802	26.1	30.1	23.1
Unemployed, but searching for it	5,316	49.5	47.5	51.1
<b>Per capita monthly income</b>				
Up to half a MW	5,804	54.1	68.0	43.3
More than half a MW to 1 MW	2,632	24.5	19.2	28.6



Over 1 MW to 1.5 MW	920	8.6	4.2	11.9
Over 1.5 MW	873	8.1	2.4	12.5
No statement	507	4.7	6.2	3.7

Note. \* 42 indigenous people (17 non-villagers; 25 villagers) reported that their children aged from zero to five stay in the FHEI's own nursery during school hours. MW = minimum wage.

Source: Prepared by the authors based on Fonaprace microdata (2018).

### Evolution of active enrollment of indigenous students in on-site courses at FHEIs

According to the data presented in Table 2, it can be noted that the total number of indigenous students actively enrolled at FHEIs in the period studied has been growing year after year, with a significant increase in enrollment following the implementation of the Quotas Law (Brasil, 2012), increasing from 772 enrollments in 2013 to 1,520 active enrollments in 2018. It can also be noted that most students enrolled were non-villagers, indigenous villagers were only enrolled from 2008 onwards.

Table 2 - Active enrollment of indigenous students at FHEIs, by year of admission, village status, and type of admission (N = 10,736)

Year of admission	Admission Total (N = 10,736)	Village status			
		Villagers (n = 4.672)		Non-villagers (n = 6.064)	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
2000	0	0	0.0	0	0.0
2001	0	0	0.0	0	0.0
2002	0	0	0.0	0	0.0
2003	0	0	0.0	0	0.0
2004	6	0	0.0	6	100
2005	0	0	0.0	0	0.0
2006	14	0	0.0	14	100
2007	25	0	0.0	25	100
2008	42	10	23.8	32	76.2
2009	57	24	42.1	33	57.9
2010	202	70	34.7	132	65.3
2011	394	143	36.3	251	63.7
2012	606	207	34.2	399	65.8
2013	772	289	37.4	483	62.6
2014	1.175	441	37.5	733	62.4
2015	1.645	673	40.9	971	59.0
2016	1.846	831	45.0	1015	55.0
2017	2.432	1157	47.6	1275	52.4
2018	1.520	825	54.3	695	45.7

Source: Prepared by the authors based on Fonaprace microdata (2018).

Admission conditions

When taking a more detailed look at the admission methods used by all these students at FHEIs (Table 3), it can be noted that 41.9% reported admission by broad competition and 56.7% through the composition of profiles that operate via different inclusion criteria stated by the students, which can be attributed to the Quotas Law. Approximately 1.1% reported being admitted through other PRPs.

Table 3 - Total active enrollment of indigenous students, by form of admission to FHEIs and proportion according to village status (N = 10,736)

Form of admission	Admission Total		Village status			
	Frequency	%	Villagers (n = 4.672)		Non-villagers (n = 6.064)	
			Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Broad Competition	4,498	41.9	1,690	37.6	2,808	62.4
Quotas Law:						
Public school/income of up to one and a half MW	261	2.4	48	18.4	213	81.6
Public school/BBI/income of up to one and a half MW	3,330	31	1,632	49	1,698	51
Public School / Income of up to one and a half MW / Disability Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
Public school/BBI/Disability/Income of up to one and a half MW	23	0.2	17	73.9	6	26.1
Public School/ Regardless of Income	300	2.8	61	20.3	239	79.7
Public School/BBI/Regardless of Income	2,149	20	1,106	51.5	1,043	48.5
Public School/ Regardless of Income/Disability	12	0.1	0	0	12	100
Public School/ Regardless of Income/BBI/Disability	18	0.2	8	44.4	10	55.6
Other Placement Reservation Programs	119	1.1	98	81.5	21	18.5
No answer / no valid information	26	0.3	12	44.4	14	55.6

Note. MW = minimum wage. BBI = Black, Brown and Indigenous.  
Source: Prepared by the authors based on Fonaprace microdata (2018).

When analyzing admissions by broad competition, it can be noted that non-villager indigenous students had higher admission rates (n = 2,808) compared to those who were villagers (n = 1,690). When focusing the analysis on admissions under the Quotas Law, greater access was granted by the criterion that includes public schools, self-declared race, and low income (3,330 admissions, of which 1,632 were villager indigenous and 1,698 were non-villager indigenous people). The second main inclusion criterion that contributed most to the admission of indigenous people was the one that considers public schools and racial criteria, regardless of income (2,149 admissions; 1,106 from indigenous people and 1,043 from non-indigenous people). In this study, 119 students stated that they had entered through other Placement Reservation Programs (PRP),

especially those with indigenous backgrounds (81.5%), highlighting the importance of specific quotas for indigenous backgrounds implemented by some universities (e.g. Federal University of Recôncavo da Bahia [UFRB], 2014, 2018).

### Enrollment of indigenous students in FHEIs, by Federative Unit

Considering the total number of students enrolled in FHEIs until 2018 (Fonaprace, 2019), the Southeast was the region with the highest number of active enrollments (30.0%), followed by the Northeast (29.6%), South (17.5%), North (12.6%), and Midwest (10.3%) regions. In the present study, the North (37.4%) and Northeast (30.8%) regions had the highest number of indigenous students enrolled in FHEIs until 2018, followed by the Southeast (13.5%), Midwest (10.0%), and South (8.3%) regions.

A closer look at the number of enrollments per Federation Unit and the percentage of villager indigenous students enrolled and not enrolled reveals a higher ratio of non-enrolled students in 20 FUs. Only in the states of Mato Grosso do Sul, Santa Catarina, Rio Grande do Sul, Bahia, Roraima, Rondônia, and Tocantins was the percentage of villager indigenous students higher than the percentage of non-villager indigenous students.

Table 4 - Number of indigenous students with active enrollment at FHEIs, by campus Federation Unit, total enrollment, and villager status (N = 10,736)

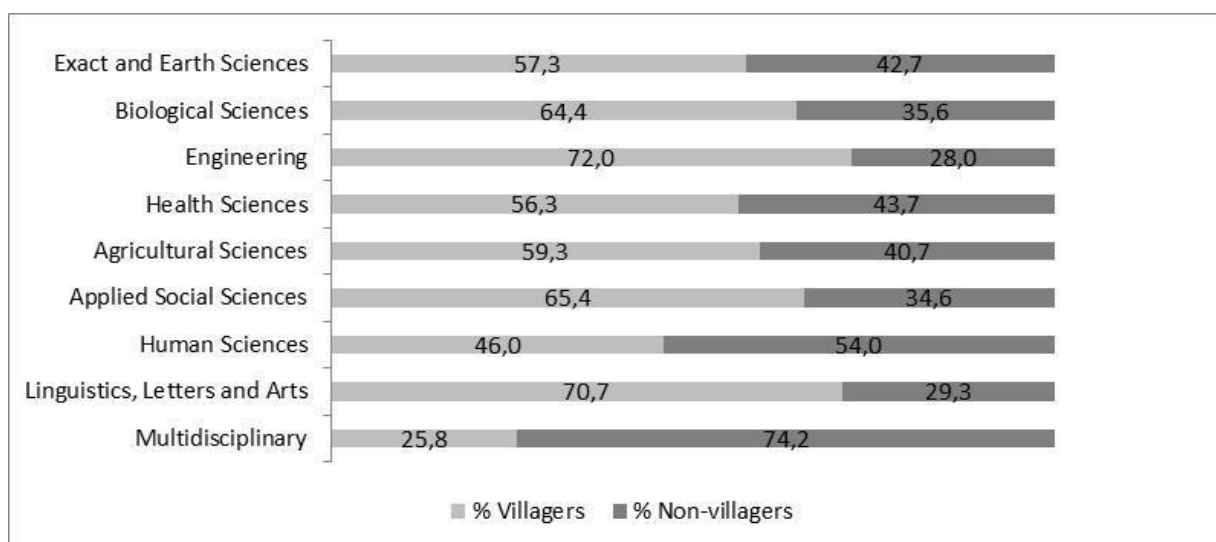
Federation Units (FU)	Total number of enrollments (N = 10,736)		Villager condition			
			Villagers (n = 4,672)		Non-villager (n = 6,064)	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
AC	86	0.8	27	31.4	59	68.6
AM	812	7.6	394	48.5	418	51.5
AP	94	0.9	25	26.6	69	73.4
PA	1,052	9.8	503	47.8	549	52.2
RO	513	4.8	357	69.6	156	30.4
RR	1,063	9.9	675	63.5	338	31.8
TO	397	3.7	259	65.2	138	34.8
North	4,017	37.4	2,240	55.8	1,727	43.0
AL	301	2.8	105	34.9	196	65.1
BA	680	6.3	355	52.2	325	47.8
CE	334	3.1	116	34.7	218	65.3
MA	448	4.2	38	8.5	410	91.5
PB	638	5.9	286	44.8	352	55.2
PE	465	4.3	138	29.7	326	70.1
PI	117	1.1	20	17.1	96	82.1
RN	159	1.5	24	15.1	135	84.9

SE	162	1.5	24	14.8	138	85.2
Northeast	3,304	30.8	1,106	33.5	2,196	66.5
ES	121	1.1	16	13.2	105	86.8
MG	429	4.0	125	29.1	304	70.9
RJ	661	6.2	43	6.5	618	93.5
SP	235	2.2	126	53.6	109	46.4
Southeast	1,446	13.5	310	21.4	1,136	78.6
PR	273	2.5	92	33.7	181	66.3
RS	429	4.0	261	60.8	168	39.2
SC	189	1.8	129	68.3	60	31.7
South	891	8.3	482	54.1	409	45.9
DF	192	1.8	47	24.5	145	75.5
GO	185	1.7	73	39.5	112	60.5
MS	519	4.8	323	62.2	196	37.8
MT	181	1.7	90	49.7	91	50.3
Midwest	1,077	10.0	533	49.5	544	50.5

Source: Prepared by the authors based on Fonaprace microdata (2018).

The on-site undergraduate courses most accessed by indigenous students were, for the most part, in the broad areas of Humanities (25.98%), Applied Social Sciences (16.82%), and Health Sciences (12.87%); the least accessed were: Biological Sciences (4.01%) and Agricultural Sciences (6.27%). From the analysis of Figure 1, it is possible to notice a different pattern in the choices made by indigenous students for the major areas of knowledge within undergraduate courses, depending on their villager status.

Figure 1 - Percentage of indigenous students enrolled in FHEIs, by major area of knowledge and villager status (N = 10,736)



Source: Prepared by the authors based on Fonaprace microdata (2018).

A list of the twenty on-site undergraduate courses in which the highest number of indigenous students were actively enrolled up to 2018, including the percentage of indigenous villagers and non-villagers enrolled in these courses, can be found in Table 5.

Table 5 - Number of active enrollments of indigenous students at the FHEIs in the 20 courses with the highest number of active enrollments and ratio of places held by villager status.

On-site undergraduate courses	Total Number of Active Enrollments	Villager status	
		% Villager (n = 4.672)	% Non-villager (n = 6.064)
Languages	623	37.1	62.9
Pedagogy	581	45.4	54.6
Law	450	39.3	60.7
Intercultural	341	88.3	11.7
Basic Education	315	95.6	4.4
Administration	313	33.5	66.5
Biological Sciences	311	32.8	67.2
Medicine	299	36.8	63.2
History	286	37.8	62.2
Geography	279	47.3	52.7
Physical Education	253	35.2	64.8
Nursing	249	51.0	49.0
Agronomy	242	41.3	58.7
Social Sciences	216	41.2	58.8
Anthropology	201	63.2	36.8
Psychology	190	36.8	63.2
Management of Indigenous Collective Health	161	70.2	29.8
Veterinary Medicine	160	28.1	71.9
Civil Engineering	150	24.0	76.0
Social Services	149	43.0	57.0

Source: Prepared by the authors based on Fonaprace microdata (2018).

### Engagement in academic programs

More than half (62.4%) of indigenous students reported that they were not involved in any extra-curricular activities or academic programs (see Table 6). When there was engagement, it was more intense in paid activities and/or programs (19.41%), especially among those who were not villagers (n = 1,319; among villagers = 765). Engagement in research and extension activities was low - only 7.5% reported having scientific initiation experiences (e.g. ISIP, ISPITDI); 6.4% reported having extension experiences (e.g.

ISPUE, IEP), and 4.0% had experiences in the Tutorial Education Program – TEP. Of particular note were the TEP, PIBID / PLI programs, which were those in which the presence of villager students was proportionally higher compared to non-villagers.

Table 6 - Percentage of indigenous students with active enrollment at FHEIs, by participation/engagement in academic programs (N = 10,736)

Academic Activities	Total (N = 10,736)		Villager status			
			Villager (n = 4,672)		Non-villager (n = 6,064)	
	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%
I do not participate in an academic activities or programs	6.699	62.4	3.216	48.0	3.484	52.0
I participate in an academic activity or program	4.037	37.6	1.456	36.1	2.581	63.9
Paid academic activity or program	2.084	19.4	765	36.7	1.319	63.3
Non-compulsory internship (Extracurricular)	817	7.6	182	22.3	634	77.6
Research (ISIP, ISPITDI, etc.)	801	7.5	183	22.9	619	77.3
Extension (ISPUE, IEP, etc.)	690	6.4	160	23.2	530	76.8
Monitoring	578	5.4	147	25.4	431	74.6
TEP (Tutorial Education Program)	432	4.0	288	66.7	145	33.6
Teaching (ITISP / IGP)	338	3.1	165	48.8	172	50.9
Junior Company	201	1.9	43	21.4	158	78.6
Other unspecified activity or program	1.179	11.0	500	42.4	680	57.7

Note. Note. ISIP = Interinstitutional Scientific Initiation Program; ISPITDI = Institutional Scholarship Program for Initiation in Technological Development and Innovation; ISPUE = Institutional Scholarship Program for University Extension; IEP = Integration Extension Program; ITISP = Institutional Teaching for Initiation Scholarship Program; IGP = International Graduation Program. Source: Prepared by the authors based on Fonaprace microdata (2018).

When comparing these findings with those of another study that assessed the engagement of quota and non-quota students in academic activities (cf. Jesus; Meireles, 2021), it can be seen that the engagement in paid academic programs (19.4%) and in research (7.46%), extension (6.43%), and TEP (4.02%) activities of the indigenous students in this study was lower than that of the students in the other studies. Jesus and Meireles (2021) found that student engagement in paid academic activities was higher among non-quota students (25.0%) compared to quota students (22.9%). In addition, they identified higher participation by self-declared white, yellow, and black, non-Quilombola students. In the same study, these authors revealed that the participation of non-quota students in research and extension activities was also higher: research (non-quota students = 14.1%; quota students = 11.9%); extension (non-



quota students = 8.9%; quota students = 8.4%); with the exception of TEP (quota students = 1.8%; non-quota students = 1.7%).

As a whole, these results are in line with the findings presented here for indigenous students, showing that their academic engagement has been less intense than that of other groups of students. They also draw attention to the need to formulate institutional policies that expand the range of extracurricular academic activities available, in order to allow an increasingly growing number of indigenous students to have a qualified permanence during their training at FHEIs.

#### Participation in Student Assistance Programs

Although 87.2% of indigenous students had a per capita family income of up to 1.5 times the minimum wage, and were therefore eligible for the National Student Assistance Program (NSAP), only 56.8% reported participating in a student assistance program – a higher percentage than that found in the Fonaprace study (2019), whose participation percentage in student assistance programs was 30.0%. In another study, Jesus and Meireles (2021) identified a participation percentage in student assistance programs of 40.9% among quota students and 22.2% among non-quota students.

The most accessed programs by indigenous students (see Table 7) were: Permanence Scholarship (*Bolsa Permanência*) provided by the Ministry of Education (MEC) (29.4%); Food (21.6%); Housing (13.3%); Transport (9.3%); Permanence Scholarship (*Bolsa Permanência*) provided by the FHEI itself (8.4%). Programs for health care, teaching materials, digital inclusion, day care, and sports, culture, and leisure were rarely accessed.

Table 7 - Percentage of indigenous students actively enrolled in FHEIs, by participation in Student Assistance Programs (N = 10,736)

Types of Student Assistance	Total (N = 10,736)		Villager status			
			Villager (n = 4,672)		Non-villager (n = 6,064)	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Does not participate or has participated in Student Assistance Programs	4,636	43.2	1,365	29.4	3,271	70.6
Participates or has participated in Student Assistance Programs	6,100	56.8	3,307	54.2	2,793	45.8
Food	2,318	21.6	1,082	46.7	1,236	53.3
Housing	1,428	13.3	692	48.5	736	51.5
Psychological care	314	2.9	114	36.3	199	63.4
Pedagogical support	250	2.3	155	62.0	95	38.0
Medical care	280	2.6	92	32.9	188	67.1
Dental care	129	1.2	40	31.0	89	69.0
Transport	994	9.3	330	33.2	664	66.8
Day care	78	0.7	27	34.6	51	65.4
Sport and Leisure	117	1.1	59	50.4	58	49.6
Culture	129	1.2	58	45.0	71	55.0
Disability	21	0.2	5	23.8	16	76.2
Digital inclusion	58	0.5	33	56.9	25	43.1
Promissaes	15	0.1	10	66.7	5	33.3
The institution's permanence scholarship	905	8.4	347	38.3	558	61.7
MEC Permanence Scholarship	3,157	29.4	2,318	73.4	838	26.5
Teaching materials	159	1.5	58	36.5	100	62.9

Note. Promissaes = Milton Santos Project for Access to Higher Education.

Source: Prepared by the authors based on Fonaprace microdata (2018).

Pereira (2011), in a study on the access and permanence policy for indigenous students at the Federal University of Tocantins (UFT), also found that the university ensured access, but that the policies and measures for the qualified permanence of indigenous students were undermined. The author points to the need to increase the number of places for indigenous people, as well as improving affirmative measures and material assistance to help them stay, such as: student housing, having a university restaurant on all campuses, resources for students to travel from the village to the university, among others. Estácio (2011), when studying the inclusion process of indigenous students at the Amazonas State University, discussed the relevance of specific processes that favor the admission of indigenous students (specific quotas for indigenous people), as well as the need to expand student assistance for these students to remain at the university.

For Baniwa (2013), providing quota systems for indigenous people is not enough, instead they need to be complemented and reinforced with projects and programs that allow indigenous students to be supported and monitored. For this author, programs that promote the affiliation and integration of these students are important, but the university needs to acknowledge the importance of diversity and allow itself to be touched by the multicultural potential evidenced by the indigenous presence on campus.

In another study, with indigenous students from the Federal University of Western Pará (UFOPA), Peixoto (2017) reports on strategies created by these students to identify, recognize, and expose racism in the institution, building a space for decolonial reflection, mutual support, and the pursuit of racial equality. Oliven and Bello (2017) also present a study with black and indigenous students - the first to be admitted to the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul through the quota system, highlighting the importance of this policy, the challenges, and potential of affirmative and inclusion policies.

In a study on the career of students in higher education, using the sociological portrait methodology, Santana et al. (2019b) interviewed indigenous students and identified reports that the existence of a special selection process with reserved places for indigenous villagers was essential for them to gain access to the university. They also stated that the existence of the permanence scholarship and affirmative measures and student assistance policies were essential for their material and symbolic maintenance at the institution. In this study, one of the non-villager indigenous students reported a series of challenges related to stereotypes surrounding indigenous people in the university environment. She reports that it was quite difficult to have to reaffirm her indigenous identity at all times, stressing that the issue of having an indigenous identity goes beyond the boundaries of her village.

#### Expectations for the future

When asked about their expectations for the future, specifically what they intend to do after graduating, 51.19% stated that they want to go to graduate school (villagers = 41.5%; non-villagers = 58.5%). 49.38% want to work (villagers = 41.3%; non-villagers = 58.7%); 14.49% want to take another undergraduate course (villagers = 45.52%; non-villagers = 54.5%); and 8.38% stated that they were unsure (villagers = 41.0%; non-villagers = 59.0%). Among the indigenous students, the expectation of admission to postgraduate courses (51.19%) was high, surpassing the percentages found in a previous study that also researched this issue among quota students (46.7%) and non-quota students (49.4%) (Jesus; Meireles, 2021). These results ratify the

importance of affirmative measures and the reservation of places in postgraduate courses, to be implemented by FHEIs under the Quotas Law, which has recently been revised and sanctioned by the President of the Republic (Law 14.723 of November 13, 2023).

**Study 2: The Quotas Law and the representativeness of indigenous people admitted to FHEIs**

From a total of 356,338 new enrollments in 2019 at FHEIs, 3,001 (0.84%) corresponded to indigenous students: 1,602 (53.4%) were admitted through the Broad Competition (BC) program and 1,399 (46.62%) through the Placement Reservation Program (PRP). In order to evaluate the PRP admissions in more detail, it was necessary to create a composite variable to operationalize the reservation criteria as determined by the Quotas Law (Law 12.711/2012), and it was found that 889 (29.6%) indigenous students entered by criteria that can be attributed to the Quotas Law and 510 (17.0%) by other criteria attributed to other PRPs. With these details, it was possible to identify the percentage of indigenous students entering under the Quotas Law in each Federation Unit (FU) and compare them to the percentage of the indigenous population in each of these FUs according to census data, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8 - Percentage of indigenous people in the Brazilian population (2010 and 2022), compared to the percentage of indigenous students entering FHEIs in 2019 under the Quotas Law

Regions and Federation Units	% of indigenous people in the Brazilian population (2010 and 2022) and admission to FHEIs in places reserved by the Quotas Law (2019)		
	Demographic Census 2010	Demographic Census 2022	% admission to FHEIs under the NIESR Quotas Law 2019
North			
AC	2.14	3.82	0.78
AM	4.80	12.45	4.11
AP	1.10	1.55	0.52
PA	0.50	1.00	0.14
RO	0.87	1.34	0.91
RR	11.18	15.29	7.51
TO	0.93	1.32	0.21
Northeast			
AL	0.44	0.82	0.37
BA	0.40	1.62	1.04
CE	0.24	0.64	0.29
MA	0.52	0.84	1.58
PB	0.52	0.76	0.55
PE	0.61	1.18	1.25

PI	0.11	0.22	0.13
RN	0.09	0.36	0.24
SE	0.26	0.21	0.55
Southeast			
ES	0.27	0.38	0.24
MG	0.16	0.18	0.22
RJ	0.10	0.11	0.09
SP	0.11	0.12	0.33
South			
PR	0.25	0.27	0.32
RS	0.31	0.33	0.44
SC	0.26	0.28	0.47
Midwest			
DF	0.28	0.21	0.18
GO	0.13	0.28	1.43
MS	2.94	4.22	5.87
MT	1.42	1.59	0.34
TOTAL IN BRAZIL	0.47	0.83	0.84

Source: Prepared by the authors based on data from the Demographic Census (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics [BIGS], 2010, 2022) and microdata from the Higher Education Census (Anísio Teixeira National Institute of Educational Studies and Research [NIESR], 2019).

As can be seen in Table 8 and in the results previously presented and discussed in Study 1, the Placement Reservation Programs - above all, the Quotas Law - have contributed greatly to increasing the democratization of access to FHEIs for students with varied profiles (cf. Santana et al., 2019c; Santana et al., 2021). It is possible to note that the indigenous presence in these institutions has increased, but still at a slow pace and below expectations.

According to the provisions of Law 12.711/2012, by 2016 - four years after its implementation - it was expected that the percentage of places reserved for each racial group (black, brown, and indigenous) would be effectively occupied by these groups with a percentage at least equal to their representation in the Federation Unit where the FHEI was located, according to the latest BIGS Census. The results presented in Table 8 show that this Quotas Law target was not fully achieved for the indigenous group.

When taking the admission of indigenous students to FHEIs under the Quotas Law in 2019 as a comparison parameter and the proportion of indigenous people in the 27 Federative Units, according to the 2010 Demographic Census, indigenous people were under-represented in at least 14 FUs where FHEIs are located (Acre, Amazonas, Amapá, Pará, Roraima, Tocantins, Alagoas, Espírito Santo, Rio de Janeiro, the Federal District,

and Mato Grosso). As an example, if the 2022 Census is considered, the scenario is even less favorable: only four of Brazil's 27 Federative Units (FUs) would have adequately implemented the Quotas Law, ensuring the admission of indigenous students in a proportion equal to or greater than that found for the indigenous population of these FUs: Mato Grosso do Sul, São Paulo, Pernambuco, and Maranhão.

### **Concluding remarks**

This article was developed with the aim of evaluating the effects of affirmative measures on the admission and permanence of indigenous students on undergraduate courses at Federal Higher Education Institutions (FHEIs). Through two comprehensive empirical studies, it was possible to conclude that the Quotas Law is an affirmative measure policy that induces access to FHEIs, and has improved the admission of indigenous students to these higher education institutions. Although it has not yet been fully implemented - in 2019 indigenous people were still under-represented in at least 14 FUs - the Quotas Law has ensured that indigenous people are adequately admitted to the reserved places in their selection processes, making it undoubtedly the most powerful affirmative policy for promoting racial equality currently in place in Brazil.

The studies also enabled identifying that the profile of indigenous students at FHEIs, compared to the profile of other students at these institutions, is more vulnerable: they access higher education later; most of them are women; they access fewer academic programs and student assistance benefits, and have a more unfavorable socio-economic status. It was also possible to identify differences in the profile of indigenous villagers and non-villagers, which need to be considered when planning affirmative measures and designing qualified permanence programs at FHEIs. The results, seen in the light of other studies, indicate that policies for the permanence of indigenous people should meet their material needs, but also address aspects of their affiliation, sense of belonging, symbolic permanence, and confronting racism.

Finally, the results indicate the need for FHEIs to discuss their selection processes internally and identify the reason for the under-representation of indigenous people in their admissions, given that their places should be reserved by law. Identifying and correcting this under-representation of indigenous candidates in most of the Federative Units is something that FHEIs urgently need to address in order to fully comply with the Quotas Law. Therefore, new studies should continue to explore and evaluate the issues of access, representativeness, and permanence conditions of



indigenous students at FHEIs. In addition to undergraduate admission, which is the focus of this article, the results obtained regarding the future expectations of the indigenous students included in this study indicated that more than half of them intend to pursue postgraduate studies, confirming the importance of affirmative measures and the reservation of places in postgraduate studies, in compliance with the provisions of the new Quotas Law - Law 14.723/2023.

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