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Black Movement: Using discontinuities in admissions to study the effects of college quality and affirmative action

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# **Black Movement: Using discontinuities in admissions to study the effects of college quality and affirmative action**

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The recent adoption of race-targeted policies makes Brazil an insightful place to study affirmative action. In this paper, we estimate the effects of racial quotas at the University of Brasilia, which reserved 20% of admissions slots for persons who self-identified as black. To do so, we link the admissions outcomes of high-performing applicants in 2004-2005 to their education and labor market outcomes in 2012. We adopt methods that make use of sharp discontinuities in the admissions process. In summary, the policy of racial quotas mostly improved outcomes for the targeted group. Quota applicants, specifically males, enjoyed an increase in years of education, college completion, and labor earnings. More broadly, the results for quota and non-quota applicants confirm the importance of college quality in a setting outside of the U.S.

Keywords: affirmative action, racial quotas, mismatch, educational policy, college quality, minorities, Brazil.

JEL codes: I23, I25, I26, J15, J24.

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