BAR OPENING HOURS, ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AND WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS

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Abstract

It is widely proven that individuals that consume more alcohol are also much more likely to suffer a working accident. However, this observed correlation may be due to other unobserved factors affecting both alcohol consumption as well as working accidents (such as the type of job). Thus, in this paper we establish the causal impact of alcohol consumption on working accidents by exploiting a progressive reduction in Spanish bar opening hours throughout regions and time. We first explore how this policy affected alcohol consumption and then assess its impact on working accidents, which stands as a very important determinant of productivity levels. Our results show that stricter closing times for bars causally decrease the consumption of alcohol by the affected population. In turn, this is also translated into fewer accidents at work. Importantly, we also show that these effects are short lived so that alcohol consumption and working accidents recover their pre-reform levels after a period of adaptation.

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