

The Effect of Restricting Opening Hours on Alcohol-Related Violence

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Abstract

OBJECTIVE: We investigated whether limiting the hours of alcoholic beverage sales in bars had an effect on homicides and violence against women in the Brazilian city of Diadema. The policy to restrict alcohol sales was introduced in July 2002 and prohibited on-premises alcohol sales after 11 pm.

METHODS: We analyzed data on homicides (1995 to 2005) and violence against women (2000 to 2005) from the Diadema (population 360,000) police archives using log-linear regression analyses.

RESULTS: The new restriction on drinking hours led to a decrease of almost 9 murders a month. Assaults against women also decreased, but this effect was not significant in models in which we controlled for underlying trends. **CONCLUSIONS:** Introducing restrictions on opening hours resulted in a significant decrease in murders, which confirmed what we know from the literature: restricting access to alcohol can reduce alcohol-related problems. Our results give no support to the converse view, that increasing availability will somehow reduce problems

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