Do Fewer Guns Lead to Less Crime? Evidence from Australia

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Abstract

The 1996 National Firearms Agreement (NFA) in Australia introduced strict gun control laws and facilitated the buyback of over 650,000 firearms. While several studies have investigated the effect of the NFA on firearm deaths, none has looked at its impact on crimes. In this paper we adopt the Difference-in-Difference identification approach to examine the impacts of the NFA on crimes. We find that the NFA significantly decreased the rate of armed robbery in four out of eight states, but had no effect on attempted murder, sexual assault, or unarmed robbery.

Keywords: Gun Control Law; Difference-in-Difference; Crimes; Australia

JEL Classification: K29; C32

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