

In the wrong place at the wrong time: Mass shootings and human capital

Michele Ubaldi^{a,†}

^a*Department of Economics and Social Sciences, Marche Polytechnic University, Italy*

Abstract

This article studies the effect of mass shooting exposure on individuals' health and labor market outcomes. We used data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics from 1999 to 2019. Our identification strategy relies on the quasi-randomness of mass shootings. We compare changes in outcome variables of individuals living in affected cities with changes in outcome variables of matched individuals living in non-proximal and not affected cities. We find that mass shootings exerted a negative and significant effect on mental health, which persists for at least 8 years, is larger for women and is race related. We instead find a nil effect on individuals' labor market outcomes.

Keywords: Mass shooting; health; labor market participation; earnings; difference-in-differences.

JEL Classification: C23, I18, J24, J28, K14

[†]Corresponding author: Department of Economics and Social Sciences, Marche Polytechnic University, Piazzale Martelli 8, 60121 Ancona, Italy.
E-mail addresses: m.ubaldi@pm.univpm.it (M. Ubaldi)