

EXPENDITURES ON SPORTS APPAREL: A COMPARISON BETWEEN MOUNTAINBIKERS, BICYCLE RACERS AND RECREATIONAL BIKERS

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Abstract

Aim of abstract

In the present study the consumption of cycling apparel is analyzed. The first aim of this study is to analyse the expenditures of cyclists while practising their sport. In particular, we will describe the expenditures on sports apparel by cyclists who participate in mountain bike (off road cycling), bicycle racing (on a race bike) and/or recreational cycling (just for fun, on a regular city bike). Second, this study tries to define which socio-demographic, socio-economic and sports specific variables determine whether people spend money on sports. Third, we will make an estimation of the determining factors of the amount of expenditures on sports apparel that these three types of cyclists make. In a last phase we will compare these results with expenditures of runners. There are three reasons why this research is relevant. First of all, research has shown the importance of the sports sector for the economy, and the significant contribution of sports apparel to the sports sector (Scheerder, Vos & Taks, 2011). In this sector cycling plays an important role as it seems to be the most popular participation sport. Although cycling is very popular, it has received little attention until today. Second, to successfully compete in the expanding leisure market, sports providers and stores should develop a thorough understanding of the consumption behaviour of sports participants. Market segmentation is essential for stores to understand and satisfy their customers and thereby to maximize their profit.

Theoretical background

In line with recent research of Downward and Riordan (2007), Pawlowski et al. (2009) and Wicker et al. (2010), an adopted version of the household production theory of Becker (1965) will be used to explain expenditures on sports participation. Becker's theory suggests that income, time and human capital are important indicators of expenditures on sports participation. In our study we will incorporate the variables suggested by the findings from the literature, and some additional variables that are specific to cycling, such as the number of cycling subdisciplines participants are actively involved in.

Methodology

The data about expenditures on cycling in Flanders were gathered in 2009 by the Department of Human Kinesiology of the K.U.Leuven. An online internet questionnaire called 'Leuven Cycling Survey' was used, which obtained data of 5,158 people about cycling habits, socio-demographic variables and expenditures on cycling. With regard to running a similar questionnaire has been used in 2007, which resulted in a response of 9,912 subjects.

In order to analyze the expenditures on cycling, total expenditures were split into ten different cost categories (e.g., clothing and footwear). By means of logistic regression we analysed which variables determine whether mountain bikers, bicycle racers and recreational cyclists spend money on sports apparel. Next we will analyze the determinants expenditures clothing and footwear by means of a Heckman selection model (e.g., Pawlowski & Breuer, 2011; Scheerder & Vos, 2010). The results were checked for outliers and multicollinearity.

Results

Cyclists spend 120.3 Euros a year on clothing and 25.3 on footwear while practising their sport (Table 1). The descriptive results also indicate that mountain bikers and bicycle racers spend more money on their sports than recreational cyclists do.

The findings of the logistic regression show that the probability that recreational cyclists spend money on sports apparel is higher for cyclists that are male, aged 31 till 50, higher educated, and for cyclists that practice more cycling variants, with higher intensity and in competition. Apart from sex, bicycle racers and mountain bikers have less significant results on socio-demographic and socio-economic variables, but the sport specific variables still remain significant. Bicycle racers apparently are more homogeneous as regards their expenditure behaviour than mountain bikers, which in turn are less divergent than recreational cyclists. Furthermore, the results show rather high scores on the goodness of fit (measured by Nagelkerke R²s) for recreational cycling, lower results for mountain bike and even lower R²s for bicycle racing, which is another indication of the decreasing impact of the socio-demographic and socio-economic variables used in the models.

References:

A Heckman selection model will be used to estimate expenditures on cycling apparel. The results will be compared with the expenditures by runners on running apparel.

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