

Expenditure on Sports Apparel: An Analysis of Adults' Consumption

Jeroen Scheerder, KULeuven Research Unit Social Kinesiology & Sport Management, Belgium,
jeroen.scheerder@faber.kuleuven.be

Steven Vos, KULeuven and Flemish Policy Research Centre for Culture, Youth & Sport, Belgium

Marijke Taks, University of Windsor and KULeuven, Canada / Belgium

Keywords: sporting goods, consumption, expenditure, adults

Abstract

Introduction

This study aims to analyse demographic, socio-economic and psychographic variables underlying consumer expenditure on sports apparel, i.e. sports clothes and shoes. It is acknowledged that background variables of this kind provide a marketing tool to segment sports markets [1]. In the literature a relationship between demographic, sociocultural and economic determinants and sports expenses has been demonstrated [2]. For example, men generally spent more money on sport than women. Other social variables, however, seem to be inconsistently correlated with sports expenses. It has been shown that sport-related variables are more important to explain sports expenses than social background variables [1]. Active involvement in (recreational) sports is rapidly growing among adults, especially among women and older adults [3]. As a consequence, it is expected that this demographic segment has increased its interest in sporting goods. Given the purchasing power of adults, they become an interesting target market for the sporting goods industry. This is the third segment, after university students in sport programs [4] and teenagers [5], being analysed in the framework of a series of international comparative studies on sports consumption.

Methods

Data are retrieved from a cross-sectional sample of parents of school-aged children in Belgium (Flanders). In total 1355 adults (i.e., parents between 27 and 87 years of age) participated in the study. A standardised questionnaire, originally developed for university students [4], was adapted for children and adult populations. The questionnaire includes three sections, i.e.: (a) consumer expenditures on sporting goods, i.e. apparel and equipment, (b) participation in leisure-time sports activities, and, (c) socio-cultural and socio-economic background of the families. The focus of this contribution is on apparel expenditure only. ANOVA-statistics were applied to describe differences in sports apparel expenditures between sport participants and non-participants. Secondly, grouped data regression models were estimated to examine the effects of the independent variables on the consumer expenses in sport (Grouped Data Procedure in Limdep [6]).

Results

Only a minority of the adults does not spend money on sports apparel (8,9%). Interestingly, the proportion of inactive adults (27,7%) outnumber the non-consumers, indicating that sports products are consumed by non-participants as well. Sports participants and non-participants both wear sports apparel during work and/or leisure time ($F=0,432$, NS). Table 1 presents the results for a selection of grouped data regression models for sports apparel. In the first model age is negatively related to sports apparel expenditure, whereas there is a positive relationship in the two other models. In all of the models it is clear that subjects from the highest educational group are likely to spend more money on sports apparel compared to people with a primary educational level. The second and third models include psychographic variables such as attitudes towards sporting goods and watching sport on TV. In the third model sports related variables such as the level of sports participation and sports involvement of friends strongly contribute to the explanation of the expenses on sports apparel (t-values included Table 1).

Table 1 Coefficients for Grouped Data Regression Models of Self-Reported Expenditure on Sports Apparel

Variable	Model1		Model2		Model3	
	Estimate	t-value	Estimate	t-value	Estimate	t-value
Constant	-131,98*	-2,55	-328,18***	-6,43	-372,49***	-6,20
Sex						
Male (ref.)						
Female	-35,40***	-3,34	-18,66	-1,88	-25,20*	-2,40
Age	-1,32	-1,41	1,07	1,22	1,85*	2,02
Educational level						
Primary (ref.)						
Secondary	45,09	1,96	43,89*	2,07	35,44	1,59
Higher (3 year degree)	65,64**	2,77	63,78**	2,93	57,80*	2,55
Higher (4-5 year degree)	79,99**	3,06	77,24**	3,21	59,90*	2,41
Higher (university level)	123,05***	4,85	123,74***	5,29	110,76***	4,55
Family size						
≤ 3 members (ref.)						
4 members	6,26	0,45	9,67	0,75	5,05	0,39
5 members	-7,38	-0,49	8,44	0,60	3,82	0,27
≥ 6 members	-72,07***	-3,42	-71,94***	-3,65	-80,76***	-3,96
Sports participation partner						
No (ref.)						
Yes	55,52***	4,48	49,27***	4,27	44,55***	3,60
Level of sports participation						
None (ref.)						
Moderate	208,65***	10,57	189,37***	10,38	136,30***	7,09
Medium	303,79***	13,27	255,82***	12,05	192,54***	10,20
Intense	412,00***	15,99	338,08***	13,96	271,61***	14,90
Irregular (seasonal only)	225,73***	8,72	215,59***	9,01	164,77***	8,70
Attitude towards sporting goods			29,44***	12,20	26,19***	10,39
Sports participation friends					53,51***	7,36
Watching sport on TV (frequency)					-12,81**	-2,62
Likelihood Ratio Test (DF)	464,35(14; $p<.001$)		145,10(1; $p<.001$)		187,59(2; $p<.001$)	

*= $p<.05$; **= $p<.01$; ***= $p<.001$

Discussion

The results indicate that consumer expenditure on sports apparel is determined by demographic, socio-cultural as well as psychographic variables. Among others, education, family size, active sports participation and attitude towards sporting goods are found to influence the amount of money spent on sports apparel. These findings are in line with the results from other studies [1][2]. Similar to previous findings, the results of the different models show that sport-related variables stronger determine the financial expenses on sporting goods than the social variables. Although inactive adults also seem to be purchasing sporting goods, sport expenditures do increase with a higher level of sports involvement, whereas social background variables only play a secondary role.

Acknowledgements

The Flemish Policy Research Centre for Culture, Youth & Sport is supported by the Flemish Government, Belgium. We would also like to thank the master students Evelien Suls and Kyra Thys for their valuable contribution in collecting the data.

References

- [1] Taks, M., Renson, R. & Vanreusel, B. (1999). Consumer expenses in sport. A marketing tool for sports and sports facility providers? *European Journal for Sport Management* 6(1): 4-18.
- [2] Lera-López, F. & Rapún-Gárate, M. (2005). Sports participation versus consumer expenditure on sport. Different determinants and strategies in sports management. *European Sport Management Quarterly* 5(2): 167-186.
- [3] Scheerder, J., Vanreusel, B. & Taks, M. (2005). Stratification patterns of active sport involvement among adults. Social change and persistence. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 40(2): 139-162.
- [4] Ohl, F. & Taks, M. (2007). Secondary socialisation and the consumption of sporting goods. Cross cultural dimensions. *International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing*, 2 (1/2): 160-174.
- [5] Taks, M., Ohl, F., Mason, C., Esch, A. & Scheerder, J. (2007). Buying, having and being. An international comparison of teenagers' consumption of sporting goods. In EASM (Ed.). . *Sport events and sustainable development (Abstract Book of the 15th EASM Congress)*. (pp. 374-375). Torino: Scuola Universitaria Interfacoltà in Scienze Motorie.
- [6] Green W. (1998). *Limdep version 7.0 user's manual (Revised edition)*. New York, NY: Econometric Software.