

0673

COST DIFFERENTIALS BETWEEN STANDARD AND NON-STANDARD MOTORCYCLE HELMET IN MEXICO

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Objective To identify the cost ratio of standard and non-standard helmets sold in retail shops in Cuernavaca, Mexico.

Method A survey was performed using a convenience sampling taken from 10 retail shops. The data was collected in a questionnaire applied by a single interviewer during February 2009, exploring the maximum and minimum cost prices (in local currency) of standard and non-standard helmets provided by the vendors. Data analysis included descriptive statistics.

Results 60% of the retail shops sold standard helmets. Almost half of the shops sold standard helmets; being the largest difference of nearly US \$851 between the cheapest and the most expensive standard helmet. The average cost of the most common sold standard helmet was US \$124. Thus, showing great costs variations: the cheapest of US \$43 and the most expensive standard helmet of US \$923. 100% of the retail shops sold non-standard helmets with more homogeneous costs.

Conclusions The study suggests that Mexican Motorcycle users tend not to pay attention to the quality of the product, and generally lack interest in the standardised elements. This behaviour is influence by the high costs, lack of information on security and risk factors associated to traffic accidents, and most importantly, due to the lack of law enforcement. An important finding was the non-existence of the term standard in any Mexican legislation related with the matter, as much as with the fact that some of the non-standard helmets are aesthetically similar to the standard helmets.