

CONSUMER BELIEFS TOWARD THE PROTECTION OFFERED BY MOTORCYCLE HELMETS: THE EFFECTS OF CERTIFICATION, PRICE, AND CRASH SPEED

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Abstract

This study examined consumer beliefs towards the level of protection offered by motorcycle helmets varying in price (\$35, \$60, \$120, \$240); level of certification (none, DOT, SNELL, both DOT and Snell); and at high versus low speed lay-down type crashes. Fifty-eight motorcycle riders and passengers were surveyed. The results indicated that consumers believe the level of protection offered by motorcycle helmets is dependent upon certification level more than price; and the expected severity of injury during a crash has little or no relationship to the helmet's certification or price. The implications of these findings include: motorcycle helmets with the same certification should provide the same level of protection regardless of price, or different levels of certification should be provided that represent the actual level of protection offered by the helmet. Finally, consumers should be provided with more education on the actual level of protection they can expect from a helmet based on its certification.

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