

THE MOTIVATIONS OF NON-HABITUAL FANS ON PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL

INTRODUCTION

A particular situation has been happening in the Brazilian football: several clubs are playing some matches in non-usual stadiums. In fact, around 15% of all Brazilian League matches were played in non-habitual stadiums in the last three seasons. In this sense, as the clubs are playing in other cities and also states, those attendees may have different motivations. Thus, the present paper aims to analyse the specific determinants of demand for tickets in non-usual stadiums.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The demand for tickets is an extensively researched issue. A vast part of the literature can be found on Borland and Macdonald (2003). However, several recent papers have been studying some different topics, like secondary market (Diehl, Drayer & Maxcy, 2016), lower divisions (Jena & Reilly, 2016), television audiences (Buraimo & Simmons, 2015), competition format (Pawlowski & Anders, 2015) as well as reanalysing the Uncertainty of Outcome Hypothesis-UOH (Coates, Humphreys & Zhou, 2014). Nevertheless, the motivations from non-habitual supporters have never been researched.

METHODS

The present paper has analysed all 163 matches that took place in non-usual stadiums during the last three seasons (2013, 2014 and 2015) from Brazilian League. No sold out has happened in those games. The econometric method consists in panel data linear regressions with home team fixed effects. This methodology takes into account unobserved club-specific effects. The general equation is presented as follows:

$$\text{Log_attendance} = f(\text{Match Characteristics}, \text{Uncertainty of Outcome}, \text{Stadium Features})$$

The first group comprises variables related with the match quality, the fixtures, the real tickets price, day of the week and a derby dummy. The Uncertainty of Outcome was measured by the home team probability to win and its squared value. The stadium features taking into account its relative capacity, relative city population and GDP as well as some of its particular quality levels: general, hygiene, comfort and security.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The outputs of the regressions are presented in the Table 1. The three models explain more than 42% of the live attendance. The match quality is the most powerful determinant of demand for non-habitual supporters. This result is in line of Reilly (2015). The derby matches also attract more fans, corroborating with Madalozzo and Villar (2009). On the other hand, the round and round² have presented an opposite result comparing to Pawlowski and Anders (2015). It may be a consequence of the particularities from the Brazilian football calendar. The UOH has no impact for non-habitual supporters. This finding is different from the classical UOH as well as Coates, Humphreys and Zhou (2014) results. Notwithstanding, it may be understandable. As those clubs are playing matches in different cities, the expected result does not matter to this kind of supporters. Then, it also might explain the opposite effect from the real ticket price. The fans are attracted for good facilities, but indeed just the comfort level really has impact.

Table 1. Determinants of Demand for tickets in non-usual stadiums

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Match Quality	0.924** (0.374)	0.802** (0.363)	0.873** (0.366)
Round	0.0647*** (0.0220)	0.0625*** (0.0213)	0.0511** (0.0219)
Round ²	-0.00132** (0.000569)	-0.00129** (0.000549)	-0.00102* (0.000560)
Real Ticket Price	0.0142*** (0.00447)	0.0113** (0.00441)	0.0123*** (0.00454)
Home Win Probability	0.281 (2.964)	0.472 (2.863)	0.782 (2.888)
Home Win Probability ²	-0.241 (2.817)	-0.443 (2.722)	-0.729 (2.738)
Derby	0.445** (0.204)	0.367* (0.198)	0.335* (0.200)
Relative Stadium Capacity	0.428** (0.169)	0.136 (0.187)	0.204 (0.186)
Saturday	0.155 (0.168)	0.114 (0.163)	0.104 (0.164)
Weekday Dummy	0.134 (0.142)	0.137 (0.137)	0.126 (0.138)
Relative City Population	0.326 (0.245)	0.362 (0.237)	0.391 (0.239)
Relative City GDP	-0.306 (0.228)	-0.341 (0.220)	-0.364 (0.223)
General Quality	-	0.267*** (0.0831)	-
Security	-	-	0.0610 (0.128)
Comfort	-	-	0.258* (0.146)
Hygiene	-	-	-0.0107

	-	-	(0.0660)
Constant	7.194*** (0.837)	6.701*** (0.823)	6.556*** (0.834)
Observations	163	163	163
Number of id_h	21	21	21
R-squared	0.423	0.466	0.473

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

CONCLUSIONS

The present paper is the first one that analyses the motivation from non-habitual supporters in live matches. Our findings evidenced that those fans are attracted by the presence of their clubs. Hence, the outcome expectations do not matter. In this sense, they are willing to pay more expensive tickets. Furthermore, the results demonstrated that the stadium's comfort level has strong impact to attract non-habitual fans. Further papers may assess the relationship between ticket price and demand in non-usual stadiums through alternative econometric models.

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