

Demographic Determinates of the Decision to Close a Recreation Center

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Should a financially strapped city close its recreation center to save money even if many citizens cannot afford the private fitness facilities in the area?

Lit Review, Value Pluralism

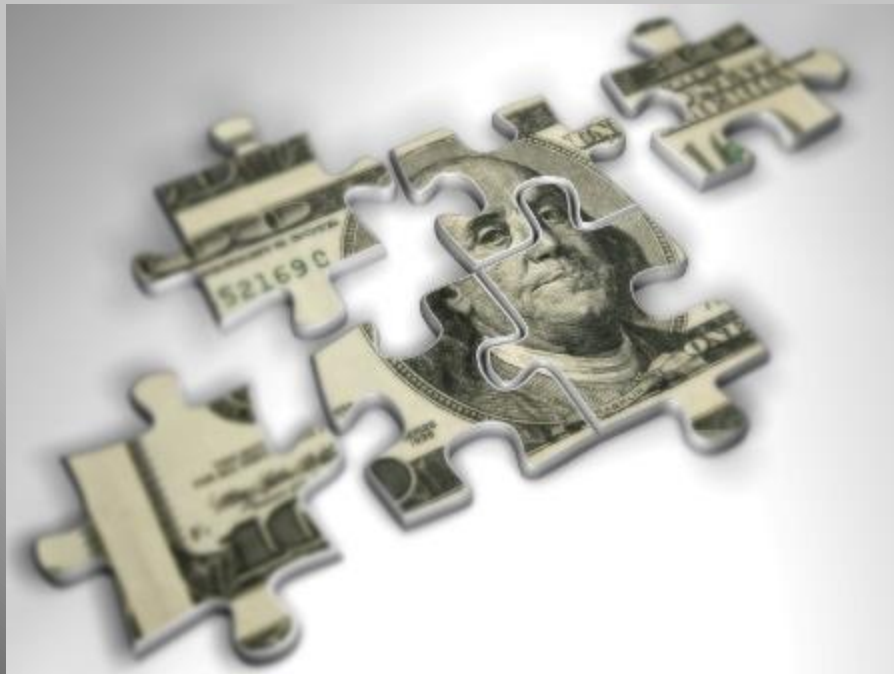
Tetlock's (1986) value pluralism model asserts that people are likely to think about an issue in integratively complex ways to the degree that the issue activates conflicting values that people perceive as:

- (a) important and
- (b) approximately equally important.

Lit Review, Funding

New Public Management, The “Hollow” State
(Hood, 1995; Millward, 1996)

Alternative funding streams (Terry, 2005)



Lit Review, Funding

Fee-based Recreation (Martin, 1999; Van Slyke and Hammonds, 2003)

Alternative funding streams (Harris & Driver, 2001)

- Outsourcing
- Privatizing
- Cutting, closing



Lit Review

Many financial decision influenced by public opinion, preferences, and support.

Public management research (including recreation) has long held the position that demography and values influence these decision preferences (More, 2002; Witesman & Walters, 2013).

Lit Review

Conflict in recreation spaces (Carothers et al., 2001).

Recreation participation (Gomez, 2002)

Preferences for park characteristics (Ho et al., 2005)

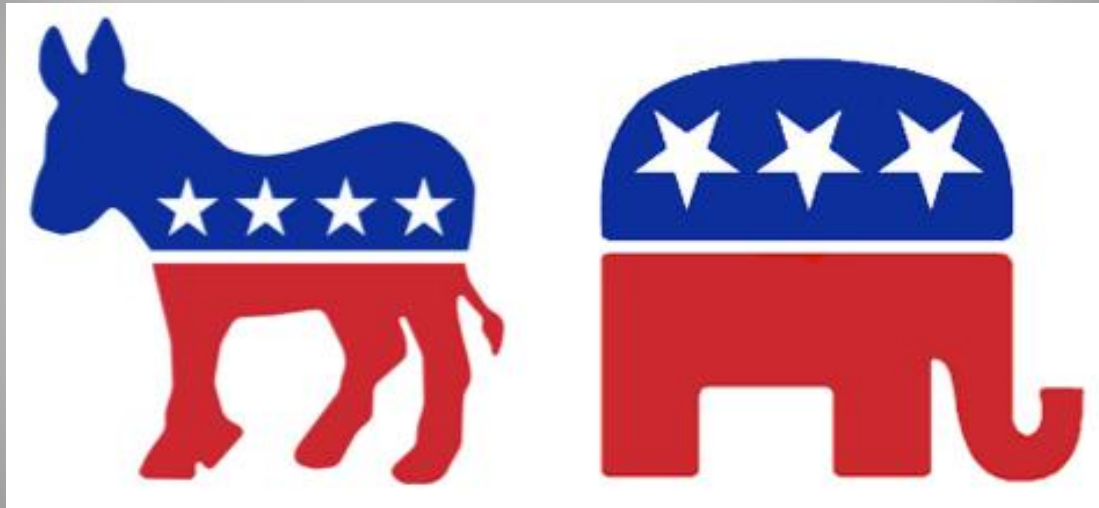
Conservation attitudes (Tanner et al., 2008)

Significance

Scarcity of research on the role of values in recreation financial decision making...

Establish a baseline from which to develop more complex measures of values...

How do we measure values?



Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between political stance (value measure) and the decision to close a recreation center, when controlling for other demographic variables.

Hypotheses

Ha1: Political Stance will significantly predict the decision to close a recreation center when controlling for all other variables.

Ha2: Republican leaning individuals are more likely to close a recreation center than democratic leaning individuals.

Methods, Sample

Sample

- N = 1,608
- Quota Based Sampling, Online survey

Comparison to current population data

- Male .584 .491
- White .840 .670
- Age 35-54 .410 .375
- 55-64 .273 .167
- Higher on all income levels

Methods, Instrumentation

Tetlock (1986) Value Pluralism Model

- 1 item
- Binary Scale

Should a financially strapped city close its recreation center to save money even if many citizens cannot afford the private fitness facilities in the area?

Methods, Instrumentation

Basic Demographic Information:

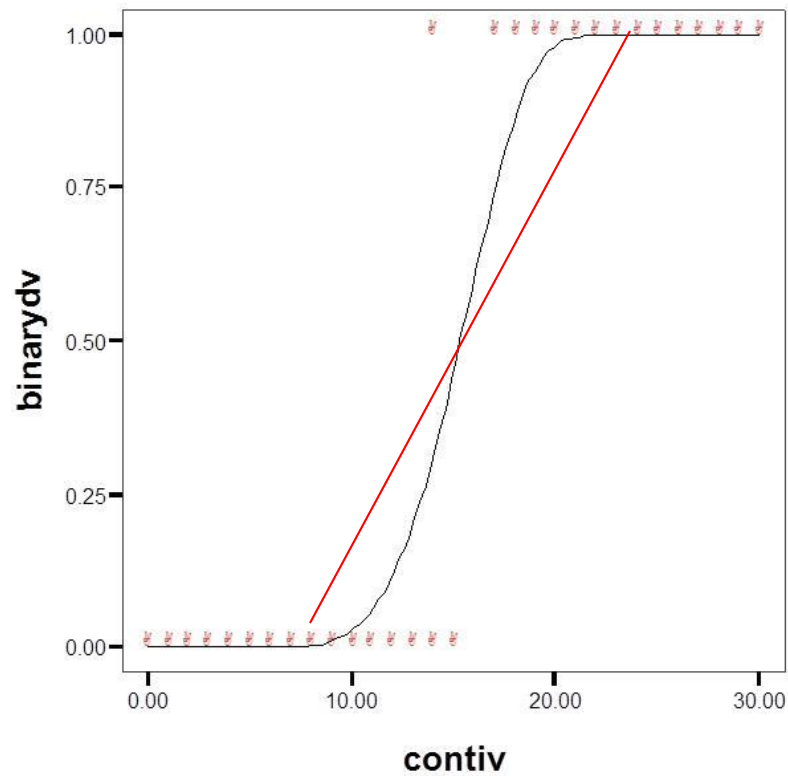
- Gender, Education, Income, Race, Age

Political Stance:

- 7 Point Likert Scale
- Converted to three groups:
 - Republican Leaning
 - Independent
 - Democrat Leaning

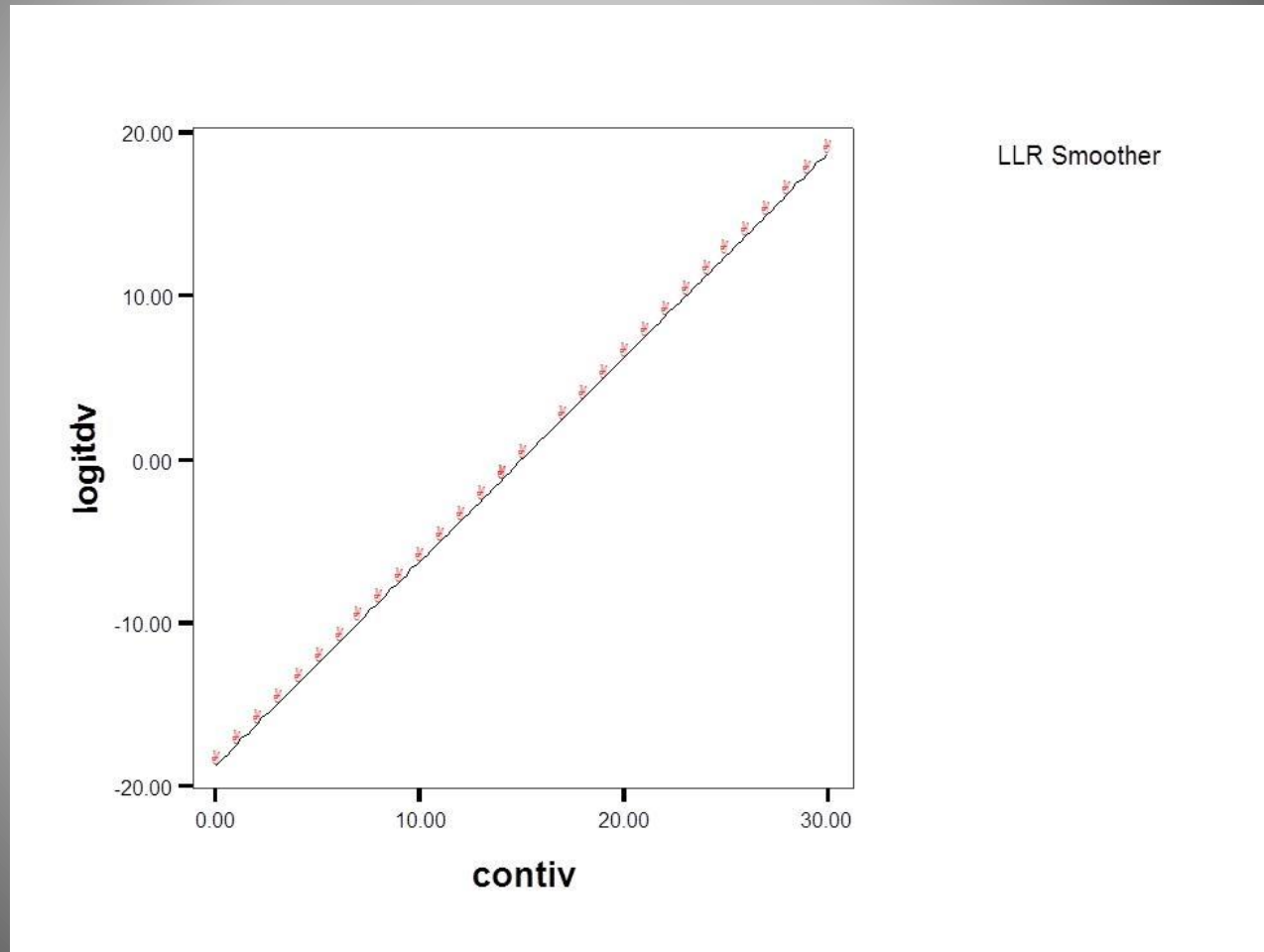
Methods, Analysis

Binary Logistic Regression



Methods, Analysis

Binary Logistic Regression



Results

The model is significant ($X^2(15) = 110.449, p < .001$) and explains approximately 5.5% of the variance in the decision to close the recreation center ($R^2_L = 110.449/2001.922 = 0.05517$).

Results

Income ($X^2(5) = 16.598, p = .005$)

Race ($X^2(6) = 16.420, p = .012$)

Gender ($X^2(1) = 18.913, p < .001$)

Age ($X^2(1) = 4.426, p = .035$)

Political stance ($X^2(2) = 26.427, p < .001$)

Political stance uniquely explains 1.3% of the variance in the decision to close the recreation center.

Results

Income: Probability of closing a recreation center is higher at higher income levels.

What / is your annual personal income?	Mean	Std. Error	95% Wald Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper
\$100,000 or more	.43	.049	.34	.53
\$75,000 to \$99,999	.50	.053	.40	.60
\$50,000 to \$74,999	.35	.042	.27	.44
\$35,000 to \$49,999	.37	.045	.29	.46
\$26,000 to \$34,999	.35	.046	.27	.45
Less than \$25,000	.33	.038	.26	.41

Covariates appearing in the model are fixed at the following values:
MeanCentered_Age=.0000

Results

Race: Probability of closing a recreation center is highest for Asian Indians (53%), Whites (44%), and Latino Americans (44%).

What is your race?	Mean	Std. Error	95% Wald Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper
Other, Mixed Race	.41	.120	.21	.65
East Asian	.36	.078	.22	.52
Asian Indian	.53	.111	.32	.73
American Indian	.31	.079	.18	.48
Black	.26	.045	.18	.36
White	.44	.015	.41	.47
Latino	.44	.131	.22	.69

Covariates appearing in the model are fixed at the following values:
MeanCentered_Age=.0000

Results

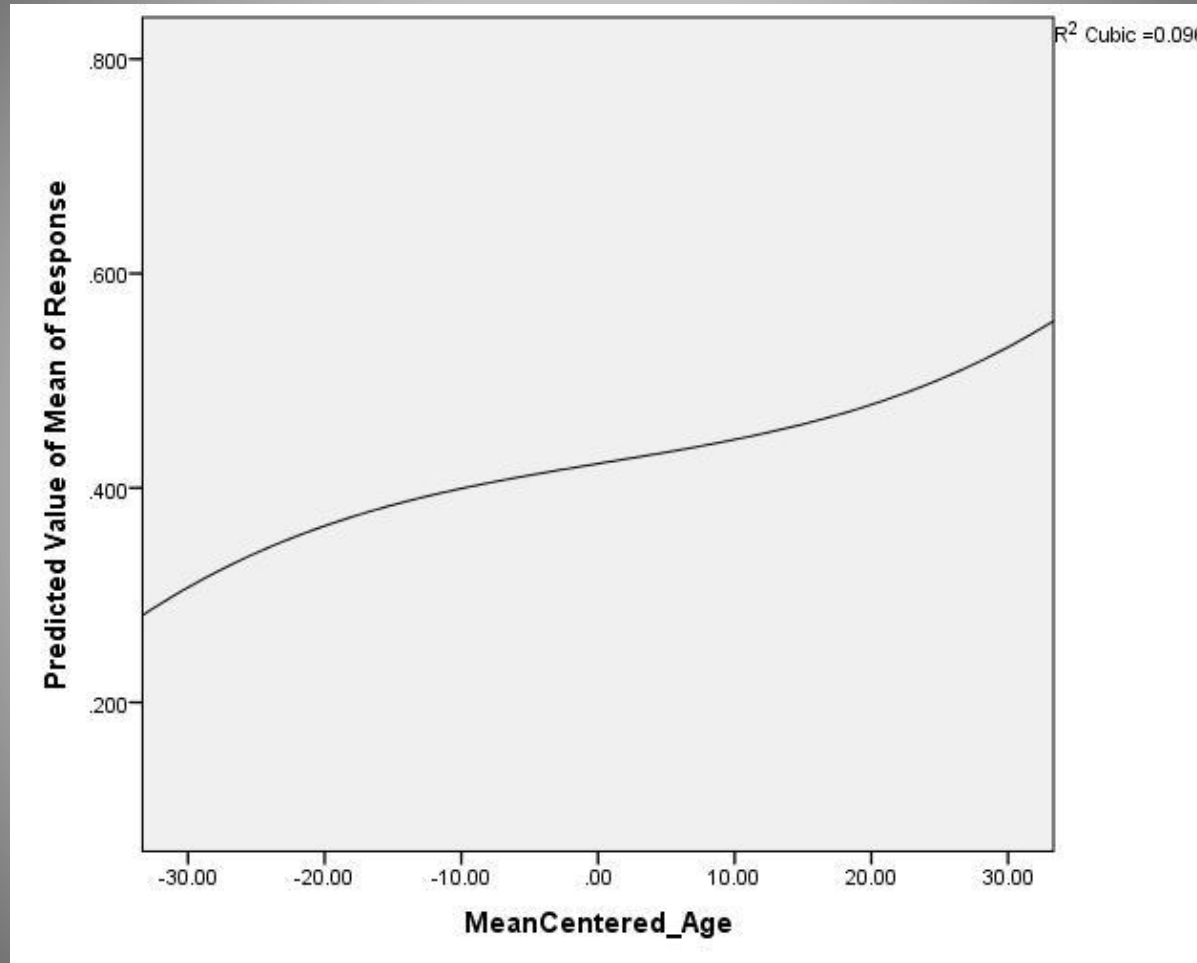
Gender: Males have a higher probability (45%) of closing a recreation center.

Estimates

What is your gender?	Mean	Std. Error	95% Wald Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper
Male	.45	.038	.38	.52
Female	.33	.037	.27	.41

Covariates appearing in the model are fixed at the following values:
MeanCentered_Age=.0000

Results



Age: As your age increases the probability of closing a recreation center increases.

Results

Political Stance: Republican leaning individuals had the highest probability (49%) of closing a recreation center.

Estimates

Political Stance	Mean	Std. Error	95% Wald Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper
Republican	.49	.043	.40	.57
Independent	.36	.040	.29	.44
Democratic Leaning	.34	.036	.27	.41

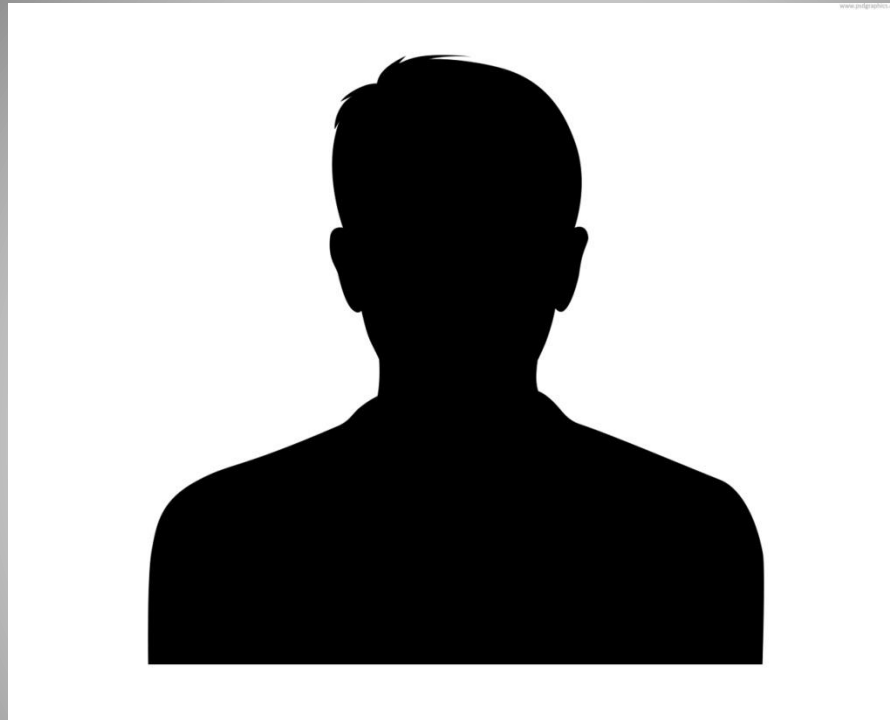
Covariates appearing in the model are fixed at the following values:
MeanCentered_Age=-.0173

Other Results

Descriptive Statistics:

- Overall, 58% of respondents said they would not close a recreation center.
- When accounting for whether or not a person voted at the last election, this number dropped to 54%

Summary



Upper class, Older, Male, Republicans are more likely to close a recreation center in the given scenario.

Discussion, Findings

What does this mean? Why would republican leaning individuals choose to close?

- Suggests they may value economic efficiency over social equality, in terms of recreation resources.

So what?

- Republican congress...may mean fewer tax dollars, federal revenue sources directed to recreation.

Discussion, Findings

Using the Tetlock (1986) method and a measure of public values:

- Justify Decision making and communicate to stakeholders.
- Increase our understanding of decision preferences in complex scenarios.

Discussion, Findings

Use value models to “make the case” for recreation or identify its place in the hierarchy of values.



Future Research

More complex Value models

Limited to online sample, though potentially more representative of the voting population

Varied decision scenarios and contexts

Questions