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16. Abstract

This study was designed to examine monthly variations in the relative sales of cars and light trucks among all light-duty vehicles sold in the United States during the past 10 years, and the monthly variations of fuel economy of all light-duty vehicles sold (cars and light trucks). Because cars tend to have better fuel economy than light trucks, the expectation was that there would be a positive correlation between the share of car sales and the average fuel economy of all light-duty vehicles sold.

The monthly vehicle-sales data for this analysis came from the Bureau of Economic Analysis, while the fuel economy data came from our ongoing monthly monitoring of the fuel economy of new vehicles sold.

The main findings are as follows: (1) car sales (relative to light-truck sales) were lowest during fall and early winter, and highest during spring and early summer, (2) fuel economy of all light-duty vehicles sold was lowest during late fall and early winter, and highest during spring and summer, and (3) these two measures were positively correlated, with the correlation coefficient being statistically significant.

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