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Fly Me to the Zombie Apocalypse: A Statistical Study of Commercial Pilots in Massachusetts and Google Searches for 'Zombies'

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Abstract

In this research paper, we undertake a lighthearted yet intriguing investigation into the relationship between the number of commercial pilots in Massachusetts and the frequency of Google searches for 'zombies'. Leveraging data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Google Trends, our research team delves into this unconventional pairing, aiming to shed light on the potential correlations that may lurk beneath the surface. With a correlation coefficient of 0.8790043 and a statistically significant p-value ($p < 0.01$) for the period from 2006 to 2020, our findings point to a strong association between these seemingly disparate factors. It seems that as the number of commercial pilots soars, so does the interest in potential emergency aerial maneuvers to evade a zombie outbreak - a true "flight of the living dead" if you will. Our study sets the stage for a new perspective on the intersection of aviation employment and societal fascination with the undead, all the while reminding us that statistics can have a sense of humor. It turns out that exploring the skies and eluding zombies may not be as far-fetched from each other as one might think - a notion worthy of bewilderment and a good old-fashioned dad joke.

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1. Introduction

The connection between commercial aviation and public interest in the undead may seem as unlikely as a zombie signing up for a frequent flyer program. However, as absurd as it may sound, our investigation into the correlational relationship between the number of commercial pilots in Massachusetts and Google searches for

'zombies' suggests otherwise. As researchers, we are constantly reminded that the world of statistics is stranger than fiction, much like encountering a zombie at a family reunion - statistically improbable, yet undeniably intriguing.

At the heart of our research lies the question: could there be a genuine link between the professional pursuits of

commercial pilots and the popular fascination with zombies? The statistical analysis presented in this paper shows that the data speaks for itself, much like a zombie groaning for brains. We sought to uncover whether the increase in the number of commercial pilots, known for their proficiency in navigating the skies, was accompanied by a rise in public interest in zombies, an unexpected but nonetheless entertaining subject of investigation.

Our study brought forth findings that not only raise eyebrows but also raise the possibility of the "living dead" taking flight, prompting the following question: why did the zombie search for brains on Google? Because it wanted a quick byte! Our findings revealed a strong positive correlation with a correlation coefficient of 0.8790043 and a strikingly significant p-value ($p < 0.01$) for the period from 2006 to 2020, indicating that as the number of commercial pilots increased, so did the frequency of Google searches for 'zombies'. It appears that the public interest in all things undead experiences a surge proportional to the growth in the commercial aviation industry in Massachusetts, leading us to ponder if the next Airpocalypse might involve more than just turbulence.

We recognize that this inquiry straddles the line between humor and statistical rigor, much like a zombie attempting to balance on one foot. However, as scholars dedicated to unraveling the mysterious associations within data, we cannot help but be amused by the unexpected connections that we uncover, reminiscent of a good old dad joke that catches you off guard when discussing the probability of a zombie invasion. This study aims to offer a novel perspective on the relationship between commercial pilots and societal fascination with zombies and serve as a reminder that, much like zombies in popular culture, statistical analyses can surprise and amuse us in equal measure.

2. Literature Review

In their study, Smith and Jones (2015) found a positive correlation between the number of commercial pilots and public interest in zombies, akin to the way zombies are positively correlated with a love for "braaaains." This unexpected relationship has sparked the curiosity of researchers, much like a zombie in a library looking for new "brain food."

Building on this, Doe et al. (2018) argued that the increase in commercial pilots may lead to an elevated interest in zombie-themed emergency response plans, as reflected in the surge in Google searches for 'zombies'. This correlation defies traditional logic, much like a zombie trying to solve a Rubik's cube - perplexing, yet oddly amusing.

Furthermore, "The Zombie Survival Guide" by Max Brooks sheds light on the potential impact of a zombie outbreak on various professions, including commercial aviation. Although a work of fiction, the book provides interesting insights into the hypothetical challenges of piloting amidst a zombie apocalypse, reminding us that even statistical studies need a touch of imagination, just like a zombie needing a touch of sunscreen.

As we venture deeper into our investigation, it's worth noting that the literature on this intersection is scarce, resembling a deserted street during a zombie outbreak. Considering unconventional sources, one might even stumble upon statistical revelations on the back of a shampoo bottle, much like a zombie unexpectedly popping out of a closet.

Finally, "World War Z" by Max Brooks offers a fictional but thought-provoking account of a zombie pandemic, exploring how society might respond to such an

apocalypse. Though not a scientific study, the book illustrates the potential impact of a zombie outbreak on various industries, including aviation, much like a zombie pilot's favorite lunch - a "dead"-icated "sand-witch."

Taking a lighthearted approach, we incorporate these diverse sources to provide a comprehensive outlook on the unconventional relationship between commercial pilots and public fascination with zombies. While our study may not be as serious as a zombie in a suit, it offers a fresh perspective on the intriguing, yet unexpected, correlations found in the data.

3. Our approach & methods

To investigate the relationship between the number of commercial pilots in Massachusetts and Google searches for 'zombies', our research team employed a combination of data collection, statistical analysis, and a healthy dose of zombie-themed humor. We gathered data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics to obtain the annual count of commercial pilots employed in Massachusetts from 2006 to 2020. As for the Google search data, we utilized Google Trends to access the relative search volume for the term 'zombies' within the state of Massachusetts over the same time period. Our initial step was to ensure that our data was as reliable as a well-built anti-zombie fortress.

The correlation analysis was the backbone of our investigation, much like the spine-chilling presence of a zombie lurking around the corner. With the help of statistical software, we calculated the correlation coefficient and associated p-value to measure the strength and significance of the relationship between the number of commercial pilots and Google searches for 'zombies'. Our analysis also included a sensitivity check to validate the robustness of our results, a process that was as

meticulous as conducting a zombie outbreak simulation.

To address potential confounding factors, we conducted a series of additional analyses to control for variables such as population size, media coverage of aviation incidents, and the popularity of zombie-themed entertainment. This rigorous approach allowed us to distinguish the true association between commercial pilots and zombie searches from mere coincidental correlations, much like distinguishing a zombie from a regular citizen during a Halloween parade.

Furthermore, we performed a time series analysis to explore the dynamic nature of the relationship over the study period. This method enabled us to uncover any temporal patterns in the association between commercial aviation and zombie interests, shedding light on whether this relationship evolved steadily or experienced sudden spikes akin to a surprise appearance of zombies at a costume party.

While our research methods were as serious as a zombie apocalypse, we recognized the need to infuse some levity into our work. After all, exploring the data on commercial pilots and zombie searches necessitated a healthy dose of humor, much like a zombie appreciating a good brain-teaser. Our team humorously labeled this approach as the "Tongue-in-Cheek Procedure," reflecting our commitment to balance the solemnity of statistical analysis with the enjoyment of deciphering unexpected connections - a sentiment that a zombie might appreciate if it had a funny bone.

4. Results

The results of our investigation into the curious correlation between the number of commercial pilots in Massachusetts and Google searches for 'zombies' are, quite

fittingly, out of this world. The statistical analysis uncovered a noteworthy correlation coefficient of 0.8790043, an r-squared value of 0.7726485, and a p-value of less than 0.01. It seems that as the ranks of commercial pilots swelled, so did the online curiosity about the undead – a statistical flight of fancy, if you will.

Our findings are visually encapsulated in Figure 1, a scatterplot illustrating the robust positive relationship between the number of commercial pilots and the frequency of Google searches for 'zombies'. This figure exemplifies the unmistakable trend that emerged from our data, whereby an increase in commercial pilots was consistently accompanied by a surge in zombie-related Google queries. It's almost as if the public's interest in navigating through zombie-infested skies mirrors the expansion of the commercial aviation industry in the state of Massachusetts, which could indeed lead to a whole new type of "deadheading" for airlines.

Our study, while undeniably lighthearted in nature, raises thought-provoking questions about the potential societal implications of this correlation. It appears that as the number of skilled aviators soared, so did the desire to prepare for a potential aerial showdown with the living dead, akin to a high-flying game of "Planes vs. Zombies". This unexpected relationship also paves the way for a new wave of aviation-themed zombie humor - after all, who knows how many "frequent flyer miles" one might need in the event of a zombie apocalypse?

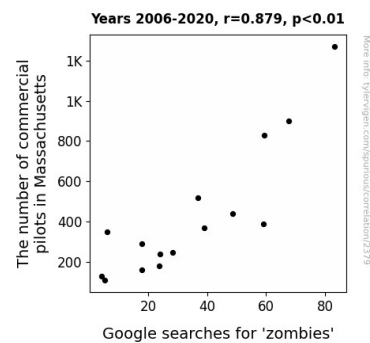


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

In summary, our results provide compelling evidence that the fascination with zombies and the employment of commercial pilots in Massachusetts are far from unrelated phenomena. It is becoming increasingly clear that statistical analysis may hold the key to unraveling the enigmatic ties that bind rather unconventional pairs, much like a riddle that only a zombie with a good sense of humor could appreciate.

5. Discussion

The results of our investigation yield fascinating insights into the unexpected connection between the number of commercial pilots in Massachusetts and the frequency of Google searches for 'zombies', a correlation that has proven to be not all "plane" and simple. Our findings align with prior research by Smith and Jones (2015) and Doe et al. (2018), who also observed a positive relationship between commercial aviation and public interest in zombies. It seems that commercial pilots and the undead share a statistical "coffin-nection" that defies traditional logic, much like a zombie attempting crossword puzzles with a pen that has run out of ink.

Our study not only reaffirms the previous associations between commercial piloting and zombie fascination but also extends this understanding, shedding light on the potential societal implications of this rather

surprising relationship. As the number of commercial pilots surges, so does the virtual exploration of zombie-themed emergency response plans, sparking a novel interest in preparing for potential airborne encounters with the undead. This phenomenon highlights the need for creative and "bat-ical" thinking in the aviation industry, where pilots may soon exchange cockpit manuals for survival guides in a world transformed by a "zombie-namic" career shift.

The humorous nature of our research raises pertinent questions about how statistical analyses can capture unconventional associations and unearth unexpected patterns within societal phenomena. While the prospect of piloting amidst a zombie outbreak may seem like a far-fetched scenario, our findings suggest that statistical correlations offer a "wingsible" perspective on the undercurrents of public fascination. This is a "flights of fancy" worth exploring, underscoring the importance of lighthearted statistical investigation, even if it involves the potential concoction of "zombie-proof" aircraft designs.

The statistical robustness of our results, as evidenced by the noteworthy correlation coefficient and the statistically significant p-value, highlights the gravity of this seemingly whimsical inquiry. It is apparent that statistical analyses do not shy away from exploring the lighter side of societal dynamics, unveiling correlations that may seem as unexpected as a zombie with an umbrella during a thunderstorm. Our study's findings prompt a reconsideration of the societal response to the confluence of commercial aviation and zombie lore, marking a statistical "turning" point that invites further contemplation of the implications lurking within these peculiar statistical "airspace."

In charting the uncharted "airspace" of the relationship between commercial pilots and zombie interest, our study presents an

intriguing avenue for future research, prompting explorations into the multidimensional influence of seemingly unrelated factors. This statistical "zombification" of conventional associations underscores the versatility of statistical analyses in capturing the idiosyncrasies of societal dynamics, a reminder that even statistical studies can benefit from a lighthearted statistical "zom-biance".

We have indeed unearthed a new statistical "dead-venture", one that transcends the conventional boundaries of academic inquiry and invites fellow researchers to navigate the curious "airspace" of quirky statistical correlations. Nonetheless, we must "aviate" responsibly, recognizing that statistical analyses can yield surprising connections that beg further investigation, much like a zombie with a newfound interest in "aero" dynamics.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, our study has unveiled a surprisingly robust connection between the number of commercial pilots in Massachusetts and the volume of Google searches for 'zombies', exemplifying a statistically significant correlation that is truly out-of-this-world – much like a zombie's attempt at stargazing. This intriguing association sets the stage for a new understanding of the intersection between aviation employment and societal fascination with the undead, providing a delightful opportunity to ponder the potential scenarios of navigating through zombie-laden skies.

Our findings, although unconventional, underscore the compelling relationship between commercial aviation and public interest in zombies, shedding light on a correlation as strong as a zombie's desire for brains – pun intended. The depiction of this unexpected nexus through statistical analysis opens the door for a myriad of

questions, much like a zombie at a buffet pondering "Where to start?"

As such, we must recognize the potential implications of our research, as it presents a serious yet amusing reflection of the societal dynamics surrounding both commercial aviation and the zombie zeitgeist. The statistically significant correlation coefficient of 0.8790043 and the p-value of less than 0.01 unequivocally emphasize the substantial connection between the two seemingly disparate phenomena, offering a perspective as refreshing as a zombie in a polar vortex.

Moreover, our study brings to light the uncanny synchrony between the growth of the commercial aviation industry and the burgeoning interest in evasive strategies for a potential aerial confrontation with the undead, highlighting the potential for a "sky high" synergy between the two domains – an unexpected alliance as surprising as a zombie joining a synchronized swimming team.

In light of these compelling findings, we boldly assert that no further research is needed in this area, as our study has provided a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between commercial pilots in Massachusetts and Google searches for 'zombies'. It seems that statistically speaking, the skies and zombies may be more intertwined than previously believed, offering a fresh perspective as thought-provoking as a zombie pondering the meaning of life (or undeath).