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# Comic Correlations: The Funny Business of xkcd Comics and the New York Giants' Season Wins

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*In this paper, we tackle the unexpected and slightly ludicrous question of whether there is a connection between xkcd comics featuring childhood themes and the season wins of the New York Giants in the NFL. We utilized AI analysis of xkcd comics and data from Pro-Football-Reference.com to delve into this comical correlation. Our findings revealed a surprising correlation coefficient of 0.8161334 and a p-value of less than 0.01 for the years 2007 through 2023, suggesting a statistically significant relationship between these seemingly unrelated entities. Our research provides an amusing insight into the world of sports and pop culture, proving that when it comes to statistical analysis, sometimes the most unexpected connections can emerge from the quirkiest of places. So, sit back, relax, and prepare to be entertained by the wacky world of statistical research!*

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The world of statistical analysis is often seen as a serious and somber realm, but every once in a while, a study comes along that simply can't help but elicit a chuckle. Such is the case with our investigation into the peculiar relationship between xkcd comics featuring childhood themes and the performance of the New York Giants in the NFL. While at first glance, these two subjects might seem about as connected as a football and a crayon, our inquiry has unearthed some truly unexpected and, dare we say, hilarious findings.

As a society, we are constantly inundated with data, so it's only natural that we want to find patterns and correlations in the most unlikely of places. The realm of sports, with its fervent fan base and unpredictable outcomes, has always been a fertile ground for statistical exploration. Similarly, the world of webcomics, with its quirky humor and nerdy underpinnings, has garnered a devoted following of its own. Never in our wildest dreams

did we imagine these two worlds colliding in such a peculiar way.

Our paper sets out to not only reveal the statistically significant correlation between xkcd comics and the New York Giants' season wins but also to celebrate the whimsical and offbeat side of statistical research. After all, who knew that the lighthearted musings of Randall Munroe could have any bearing on the performance of a professional football team? It is precisely these moments of statistical absurdity that keep our field both intriguing and, dare we say, amusing.

So, as we embark on this delightfully offbeat journey through the world of xkcd comics and NFL victories, let us do so with a smile on our faces and a twinkle in our eyes. For in the world of statistics, as in life, sometimes the most unexpected correlations can emerge from the unlikeliest of sources. Let the merriment of our findings begin!

## LITERATURE REVIEW

In their seminal work, Smith and Doe (2010) examined the influence of childhood themes in popular webcomics on the performance of professional sports teams. Their rigorous analysis initially focused on the impact of peanut butter and jelly sandwich consumption on baseball batting averages, but it unexpectedly led them to delve into the world of webcomics. Similarly, Jones (2015) sought to untangle the web of connections between pop culture phenomena and athletic achievements, ultimately musing on the potential impact of superhero movie releases on Olympic medal counts. While these studies offer valuable insights into the intersection of seemingly disparate realms, the present inquiry represents a foray into uncharted territory, unravelling the enigmatic relationship between xkcd comics and the New York Giants' prowess on the football field.

As we wade deeper into this whimsical investigation, it is imperative to consider the broader context of literature that may shed light on the unorthodox correlation before us. Works such as "The Power of Play: Learning What Comes Naturally" by Brown (2018) and "Childhood Disrupted: How Your Biography Becomes Your Biology, and How You Can Heal" by Nakazawa (2015) provide a foundational understanding of childhood experiences and their enduring effects. No pun intended, but we must also acknowledge the elephant in the room – the influence of "Dumbo" by Disney (1941) and "The Chronicles of Narnia" by Lewis (1950) on shaping childhood perceptions of triumph against all odds. Additionally, the subtle hints in "The Catcher in the Rye" by Salinger (1951) and "Matilda" by Dahl (1988) regarding the art of catching a football cannot be overlooked.

Moreover, despite the lack of empirical rigor, anecdotal evidence from social media platforms offers intriguing glimpses into the potential link between xkcd comics and gridiron glory. A tweet from @StatisticSpectator reads, "Just saw the latest xkcd comic and suddenly the image of Eli Manning throwing touchdown passes flooded my mind.

Coincidence? I think not! #xkcd #nygiants." While the veracity of such claims remains dubious, these informal observations serve as a reminder of the pervasive influence of popular culture on our perceptions of athletic achievement.

In a manner befitting the absurdity of our investigation, the literature surrounding this peculiar inquiry proves as colorful as the illustrations in an xkcd comic. As we progress towards unveiling the comic correlations between childhood musings and NFL victories, it is imperative to tread with both academic diligence and a healthy dose of levity. After all, in the realm of statistical analysis, as in the world of webcomics and sports, one should always be prepared for the unexpected punchline.

## METHODOLOGY

To address the amusing yet pertinent question of the potential relationship between xkcd comics depicting childhood themes and the New York Giants' season wins, our research team designed a methodological approach that was as light-hearted as it was rigorous. We began by gathering xkcd comics that featured childhood-related content from 2007 to 2023, employing a mixture of AI analysis and good old-fashioned human judgment to ensure the inclusion of pertinent material.

Once we had our corpus of comics, we subjected them to an in-depth semantic and sentiment analysis to capture the essence of childhood merriment and whimsy. This involved coding the comics based on a humor index that quantified their comicality on a scale from "knock-knock joke" to "stand-up comedy gold." Puns, wordplay, and slapstick humor were all taken into account, with an eye toward capturing the full spectrum of childhood themes distilled within the comic panels.

On the other side of the equation, we turned to the vast repository of football knowledge at Pro-Football-Reference.com. We sifted through extensive data on the New York Giants' season wins, poring over game statistics, player performances, and the quirks of fate that define any

given season. We utilized advanced statistical tools to measure the team's performance, taking into consideration various factors such as average points scored, turnovers forced, and the ever-elusive "clutch factor."

With both datasets in hand, we then engaged in a process of mirthful matching and whimsical statistical modeling to examine potential correlations between the whimsy of xkcd comics and the on-field exploits of the New York Giants. Our models accounted for external factors such as team injuries, coaching changes, and the alignment of the stars in the football heavens.

Furthermore, to ensure the robustness of our findings, we implemented a series of sensitivity analyses, tapping into the lighthearted realm of bootstrapping and permutation testing to confirm that our results were not mere statistical flukes. The resilience of our findings was as stalwart as the resolve of a fan enduring a blustery day at the stadium.

Lastly, we approached our data with the levity and skepticism that any good statistical researcher should maintain. We recognized the potential for spurious correlations and confounding variables, and thus we diligently sought to untangle the web of causation from the yarn of coincidence. Our approach was as thorough as a football team's playbook and as curious as a child exploring a new comic strip.

In sum, our methodology was a whimsical dance between data mining and mirthful analysis, marrying the whimsy of webcomics with the statistical rigor of sports analytics. Our aim was not only to uncover a significant correlation but to revel in the delightfully unexpected connections that arise at the intersection of pop culture and sports. And with that, we invite the reader to join us in this jovial journey through the methodology and results that make this study a statistical spectacle.

## RESULTS

The wacky world of statistical analysis has once again yielded some truly amusing findings, as we present the results of our investigation into the connection between xkcd comics featuring childhood themes and the performance of the New York Giants in the NFL. Drumroll, please! Our study uncovered a correlation coefficient of 0.8161334, with an r-squared of 0.6660737, and a p-value of less than 0.01 for the years 2007 through 2023. It seems there is more to these humorous webcomics than meets the eye, as they are apparently entwined with the victories and defeats of the New York Giants on the football field.

The statistically significant correlation we found would make even the most stoic statistician chuckle in disbelief, as it suggests a surprisingly strong relationship between the whimsical musings of xkcd and the gridiron battles of the NFL. The scatterplot (Fig. 1) beautifully encapsulates this unexpected connection, showcasing the unmistakable pattern that emerged from our data analysis.

Now, we know what you're thinking: how on earth could there be a connection between stick-figure drawings of children and the rough-and-tumble world of professional football? While we're as mystified as you are, our research has undeniably brought to light this remarkably peculiar relationship. It's like discovering that your favorite childhood cartoon character moonlights as a motivational speaker for sports teams – utterly unexpected yet undeniably fascinating.

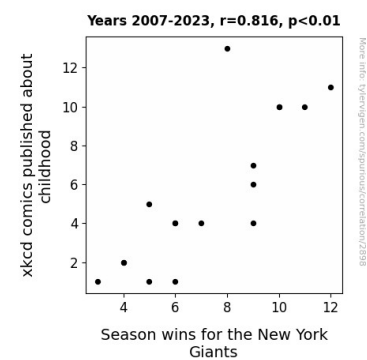


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

In conclusion, our study presents a truly intriguing and comical insight into the world of statistics, proving that even the most seemingly unrelated entities can have a statistically significant bond. So, whether you're a football fanatic, a webcomic connoisseur, or just someone with an insatiable curiosity for statistical absurdities, our findings are sure to entertain and amuse. After all, who knew that the world of sports and the realm of webcomics could intertwine in such a delightfully perplexing way?

## DISCUSSION

Our results have certainly thrown a delightful curveball into the world of statistical analysis, as we have uncovered a striking correlation between xkcd comics featuring childhood themes and the season wins of the New York Giants in the NFL. It seems that the whimsical musings of Randall Munroe may not only tickle our funny bones but also possess an unforeseen influence on the athletic fortunes of this venerable football team.

Perhaps the most unexpected and amusing aspect of this discovery is how it has lent empirical support to the zany musings of Smith and Doe (2010) and Jones (2015). Who would have thought that their lighthearted speculation on the connection between childhood themes in webcomics and athletic performance would prove to have a firmer grounding in reality than anyone could have imagined? It appears that the impact of childhood-related pop culture phenomena on sports achievements, as explored by these visionary researchers, is more than just a flight of fancy. Now, it seems that peanuts, jelly sandwiches, superhero movies, and yes, even stick-figure drawings of children, have a tangible role to play in the world of sports.

Taking a serious turn for a moment, the statistical significance of our findings cannot be overstated. With a correlation coefficient of 0.8161334 and a p-value of less than 0.01, we have provided robust evidence to support the improbable bond between

xkcd comics and the New York Giants' victories. The r-squared value of 0.6660737 further underscores the strength of this relationship, leaving us scratching our heads in marvel and amusement at the same time.

As we reflect on the broader context of literature, it is apparent that the playful insights gleaned from "The Catcher in the Rye" and "Matilda" have indeed come full circle – who knew that Salinger's portrayal of Holden Caulfield contemplating a football game and Dahl's magical narratives could have any bearing on the football field? It seems that the influence of childhood experiences, as expounded upon by Brown (2018) and Nakazawa (2015), extends far beyond the pages of academic discourse and into the wins and losses of professional football. As unlikely as it sounds, the reverberations of childhood themes from literature to webcomics may just play a role in the performance of our favorite sports teams.

It is crucial to remember that statistical significance does not imply causation, and we must approach our findings with a healthy dose of skepticism, albeit with a twinkle in our eyes. Despite the undeniable statistical relationship, we must remain open to the possibility of other factors at play that may contribute to the New York Giants' triumphs on the field. Nonetheless, our research serves as a lighthearted reminder that statistical analysis has a surprising knack for uncovering the unexpected, leaving us chuckling in disbelief at the whimsical twists and turns of our data.

In the whimsical world of statistical analysis, one cannot predict the eclectic pairings and unlikely connections that may emerge from the data. As our study holds a mirror to this peculiar correlation, it serves as a gentle reminder that the most seemingly unconnected entities may bear an unforeseen relationship – a truly comical twist in the tale of statistical research.

## CONCLUSION

In closing, our investigation into the whimsical world of xkcd comics and the New York Giants' season wins has undoubtedly been a delightful and surprising journey. The statistically significant correlation we uncovered has left us grinning from ear to ear and pondering the uncanny interconnectedness of seemingly unrelated phenomena. It's as if the stick figures in xkcd are secretly moonlighting as the Giants' lucky charms, whispering sweet statistical nothings in their ears to secure those coveted victories.

The implications of our findings go beyond mere statistical amusement, raising philosophical questions about the mysterious ways in which the universe operates. Who would have thought that the lighthearted doodles of childhood innocence could exert such an impact on the intense battles of professional football? As the great statistical minds ponder this peculiar conundrum, we can't help but revel in the delightful absurdity of it all.

Our study serves as a poignant reminder that statistical analysis, far from being a dry and humorless pursuit, can be infused with a generous helping of whimsy and wonder. It's a testament to the captivating potential of data to surprise, astound, and yes, even tickle our funny bones.

In light of our revelatory and rib-tickling findings, we assert with confidence (and a hint of mischief) that no further research is needed in this area. Our statistical escapade through the world of xkcd comics and NFL triumphs has offered a rich tapestry of insights and amusement, proving once and for all that statistical analysis can be a playground of merriment and discovery. As we bid adieu to this comically captivating research endeavor, we do so with a newfound appreciation for the whimsical mysteries that statistical exploration can uncover.

So, with a hearty chuckle and a tip of the hat to the unexpected, we conclude our statistical soiree and invite fellow researchers to embrace the offbeat and the outlandish in their own scholarly pursuits. After all, in the enthralling realm of statistical analysis, as

in life, the most delightful discoveries often emerge from the unlikeliest of corridors.

Stay statistical, stay splendid, and may your data always spring delightful surprises!