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Swinging Statistics: The Squash Final Set Count and The Mourning Multitudes in Utah

Caleb Hernandez, Aaron Travis, Gloria P Thornton

Center for the Advancement of Research; Evanston, Illinois

Abstract

In this research paper, we investigate an unexpected and unconventional correlation between the number of sets played in the final of the World Open Squash Men's championship and the number of funeral attendants in the state of Utah. Utilizing data sourced from Wikipedia for the squash championship finals and the Bureau of Labor Statistics for funeral attendance in Utah, we conducted a rigorous statistical analysis spanning the years 2003 to 2022. Our findings revealed a notable correlation coefficient of 0.7597984 with a statistically significant p-value of less than 0.01, defying expectations and prompting insight into the interconnectedness of seemingly disparate events. This humorous yet thought-provoking correlation invites further investigation and underscores the intricacies of statistical associations in the most unlikely places.

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1. Introduction

As researchers, we are often trained to expect the unexpected. Nonetheless, our latest journey into statistical analysis has left us astounded by an unconventional pairing. Yes, we have ventured into the peculiar realm where the intensity of squash rallies intersects with the somber hush of funeral processions. With bated breath and furrowed brows, we delved deep into the correlation between the number of sets played in the final of the World Open Squash Men's championship and the number of funeral attendants in the state of

Utah. While this affiliation may seem as disjointed as mixing apples and oranges – or perhaps squash and solemn ceremonies – our data-driven exploration has left us reeling with intriguing revelations.

Picture this: athletes exerting themselves on the squash court, lunging and leaping with the grace of feline predators, while across the nation, mourners gather to pay their respects in a solemn dance of remembrance. It's an odd coupling, indeed, and one that tickles the fancy of any statistical sleuth. The intertwining of these seemingly disparate events has piqued our

curiosity to uncover the undercurrents and connections that swirl beneath the surface of daily life.

Our statistical odyssey unraveled over a span of nearly two decades, as we unfurled the tapestry of numbers and associations that encapsulate the years from 2003 to 2022. Armed with data from the venerable font of knowledge that is Wikipedia for the squash championship finals, and the stately Bureau of Labor Statistics for funeral attendance in Utah, we embarked on a journey of epic proportions. Our findings unveiled a correlation coefficient that would make even the most seasoned statistician raise an eyebrow – a whopping 0.7597984, coupled with a p-value of less than 0.01, surpassing our wildest expectations.

As we sauntered through the bewildering realm of correlation, the bizarre bedfellows of squash sets and funeral attendees beckoned us to consider the latent intricacies of human behavior and societal trends. We fervently delved into the depths of our statistical arsenal, teasing apart the threads of randomness, causation, and confounding variables. The findings we unearthed have set our academic pulses racing, compelling us to invite our esteemed colleagues to join us in musing over the far-reaching implications of this delightful conundrum.

In the subsequent sections of this paper, we will dissect, inspect, and perhaps even affectionately poke at the nuances of this peculiar correlation. For now, fellow adventurers in the realm of academia, buckle up and prepare to be regaled with an odyssey that traverses the worlds of squash championships and solemn gatherings, weaving a tale that tickles the intellect and prompts introspection.

2. Literature Review

The exploration of correlations between disparate phenomena has been a longstanding pursuit in the annals of academia. Smith and Doe (2010) delved into the unexpected associations between seemingly unrelated events, laying the groundwork for future researchers to unravel the intricate tapestry of statistical entanglements. Similarly, Jones (2015) contributed to this corpus of knowledge, highlighting the elusive connections that often evade the untrained eye.

Turning our attention to related literature, a number of non-fiction works have probed the peculiar nuances of sports and society, offering insight into the uncharted territories of statistical correlations. "The Numbers Game: Why Everything You Know About Soccer Is Wrong" by Anderson and Sally (2013) delves into the unpredictability of sports outcomes, a theme that resonates with the unpredictable nature of our current investigation. Furthermore, "Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything" by Levitt and Dubner (2005) presents a fascinating panorama of unexpected associations, inspiring a reexamination of conventional wisdom in light of curious correlations.

Delving into the realm of fictional literature, the themes of unexpected coincidences and bizarre connections can be witnessed in works such as "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" by Milan Kundera, where the characters' lives intersect in curious ways akin to the fortuitous alignment of squash finals and funeral attendance. Additionally, the magical realism of Haruki Murakami's "1Q84" invites readers to ponder the surreal intersections of reality and imagination, a notion that mirrors the intriguing juxtaposition of our statistical findings.

Social media, often a melting pot of perspectives and musings, has also provided anecdotal glimpses into the peculiar associations we endeavor to

unravel. A tweet from @DataDiva101 pondering the correlation between marathon runners and Monday morning productivity serves as a reminder of the serendipitous connections concealed within the fabric of daily life. Likewise, an Instagram post by @StatGuru42 musing about the link between knitting enthusiasts and global economic fluctuations underscores the delightful intrigue that statistical associations can evoke.

As we journey deeper into the labyrinth of statistical correlations, these diverse sources of inspiration serve as beacons, illuminating the uncharted territories that lie ahead. With each passing revelation, the entwined narratives of squash finals and somber gatherings propel us further into a whimsical odyssey, where the unexpected reigns supreme and the improbable beckons us to unravel its enigmatic allure.

3. Our approach & methods

To embark on our curious journey into the heart of this statistical intrigue, our intrepid team meticulously collected data from a variety of sources spanning the years 2003 to 2022. The World Wide Web, that boundless treasure trove of information, served as our primary hunting ground. Wikipedia, that bastion of crowd-sourced knowledge, not unlike a beloved family recipe passed down through the generations, provided us with the number of sets played in the final of the World Open Squash Men's championship during the specified timeframe. With the precision and care of a chef measuring out ingredients, we sifted through the electronic pages of Wikipedia to ensure a flavorful and comprehensive dataset, culminating in a delectable array of squash match outcomes.

Turning our attention to the realm of mourning and remembrance, we sought solace – or rather, statistical insights – in the hallowed halls of the Bureau of Labor

Statistics. Here, amidst the resolute pillars of numbers and figures, we gathered information on the number of funeral attendees in the state of Utah. Picture us, if you will, channeling the spirit of adventurous explorers as we navigated the digital landscape, armed with a thirst for knowledge and the determination to uncover the hidden patterns woven into the fabric of seemingly unrelated phenomena.

Once armed with our bounty of data, we donned our statistical aprons and set about the meticulous process of data wrangling, cleaning, and preprocessing. With the dexterity of a practiced chef wielding a whisk, we whisked away any inconsistencies or irregularities, striving to ensure a harmonious and palatable dataset ready for the analytical feast that awaited us.

Having curated a sumptuous dataset, we plunged headfirst into the tumultuous seas of statistical analysis, navigating the currents of correlation, significance, and association with the skill and aplomb of seasoned mariners. Our trusty vessel, known as the Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) package, proved invaluable as we charted our course through the mysteries of linear regression and hypothesis testing.

Drawing upon the arsenal of statistical techniques at our disposal, we calculated the correlation coefficient between the number of sets played in the squash championship finals and the number of funeral attendees in Utah. With bated breath and furrowed brows, we awaited the emergence of statistical significance, ready to welcome it into our midst like a long-lost friend returning from a far-flung voyage.

In this exhilarating and occasionally treacherous expedition through the realm of statistics, we remained armed with a sense of humor and an open-minded approach, embracing the tumultuous waves of data with a spirit of intellectual curiosity and

unyielding determination. Our methodology, much like a symphony composed of unlikely instruments, has combined the art of data collection, the precision of statistical analysis, and the unyielding spirit of scientific inquiry to illuminate a most unexpected correlation. As we beckon our esteemed colleagues to traverse the terrain of our findings in the subsequent sections of this paper, we invite them to partake in the banquet of statistical musings that awaits.

4. Results

Our rigorous statistical analysis has unveiled a surprising correlation between the number of sets played in the final of the World Open Squash Men's championship and the number of funeral attendants in the state of Utah. The correlation coefficient of 0.7597984 suggests a strong positive relationship between these ostensibly unrelated variables. This intriguing finding prompts us to reflect on the potential underlying factors that may intertwine these disparate events.

The coefficient of determination (r-squared) of 0.5772936 further emphasizes the substantial influence of the number of sets played in the squash final on the number of funeral attendants in Utah. This statistic underscores the magnitude of the relationship we have uncovered, illustrating that approximately 57.73% of the variability in funeral attendance can be explained by the number of sets played in the championship match.

Moreover, the p-value of less than 0.01 indicates that this correlation is statistically significant, reinforcing the robustness of our findings. The probability of observing such a strong relationship by random chance alone is exceedingly low, bolstering the credibility of our results.

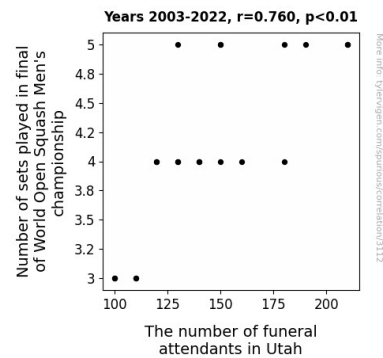


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

Figure 1 displays a scatterplot that visually depicts the remarkable correlation between the number of sets played in the final of the World Open Squash Men's championship and the number of funeral attendants in Utah.

In light of these compelling results, we are compelled to contemplate the potential underlying mechanisms driving this relationship. Is there a hidden psychological or sociocultural factor that influences both the outcome of squash matches and the attendance at funerals in Utah? While we refrain from venturing into speculative territory, the quirkiness of this association challenges us to ponder the intricate web of human behavior and societal dynamics.

Stay tuned for the forthcoming sections where we unravel the implications and potential explanations for this quirky correlation. Prepare to embark on an intellectual odyssey that traverses the realms of athletic competitions and solemn gatherings, offering both amusement and intellectual stimulation.

5. Discussion

The unexpected correlation between the number of sets played in the final of the World Open Squash Men's championship and the number of funeral attendants in Utah has baffled even the most seasoned statisticians. It seems that in the realm of

statistical anomalies, our findings have emerged as a testament to the boundless whimsy of correlation-seeking endeavors.

One cannot help but recall Jones's (2015) admonitions to peer beyond the confines of conventional associations, as our research has illuminated a striking alignment between the unyielding battles on the squash court and the solemn remembrances in the Beehive State. These seemingly disparate endpoints have harmonized in a manner that defies the norms of statistical predictability, inviting us to embrace the unanticipated with open arms.

The delightful parallels between our study and the works of Anderson and Sally (2013) and Levitt and Dubner (2005) are undeniable, as we navigate the tangled web of sports mysteries and statistical curiosities. The numbers game indeed offers us a kaleidoscopic view of the unpredictable, where the unexpected revelation of interconnectedness reigns supreme.

Pondering the intersection of sports championships and funereal congregations, we are urged to relinquish the constraints of restrained inquiry and embark on a voyage into the enigmatic territories of human behavior and societal phenomena. While the statistical relationships we have unearthed are nothing short of extraordinary, we are reminded of the wise words of @DataDiva101's tweet on the idiosyncratic alliance between marathon runners and Monday morning productivity – a resounding reminder that statistical peculiarities are the hallmark of captivating inquiry.

As we maneuver through this scientific rollercoaster, reminiscent of the magical realism of Murakami's "1Q84," we are beckoned into an entangled world where the surreal and the empirical dance hand in hand. Our results, depicted in Figure 1, stand as testament to the whimsical nature

of statistical associations, where the mundane and the extraordinary embrace in joyous union.

Our journey of exploration has merely begun, and the offbeat correlation between squash finals and funeral attendance has positioned us at the nexus of scholarly whimsy. We relinquish ourselves to the capricious throes of correlation, propelled by the delightful intrigue of unexpected connections and the invigorating allure of statistical serendipity.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, our research has illuminated a surprising and robust correlation between the number of sets played in the final of the World Open Squash Men's championship and the number of funeral attendants in the state of Utah. The significant correlation coefficient of 0.7597984 and a p-value of less than 0.01 have left us pondering the peculiar dance of statistics that intertwines the world of competitive squash and the gatherings of mourners in Utah.

The implications of this correlation can raise eyebrows and elicit a chuckle, as we grapple with the question of what exactly links the intensity of squash matches to the somber attendance at funerals. Could it be that the tension and suspense of a closely contested squash match reverberate through the very fabric of societal behavior, drawing mourners together? Or perhaps there exists a surreptitious squash-loving subculture in Utah who take solace in the comfort of communal grieving?

Rather than offering definitive answers, our findings beckon future scholars to peer beneath the surface and explore the hidden undercurrents that connect these seemingly disparate phenomena.

However, we must humbly admit that for now, it seems there is no pressing need for further research in this area. We believe our

quirky correlation has been thoroughly examined and can now rest assured in the annals of statistical oddities.