PURDUE UNIVERSITY FORT WAYNE

You Can't Teach Size

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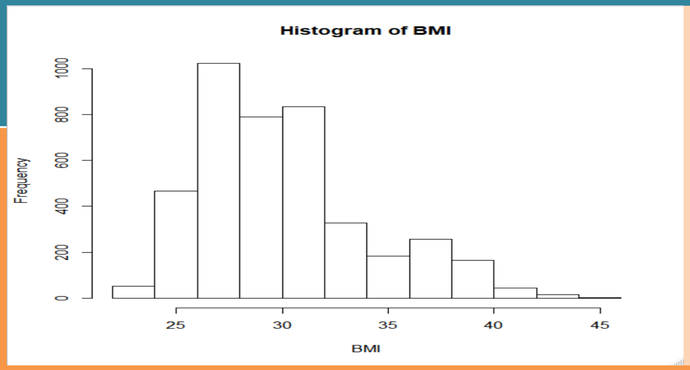
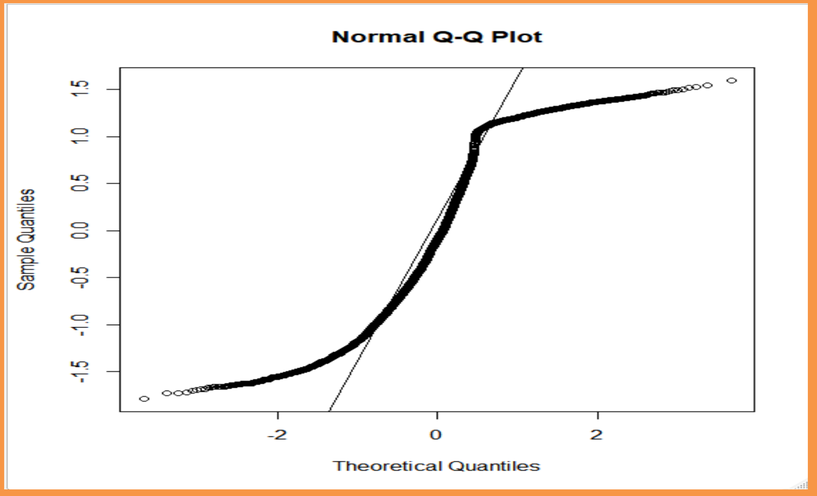


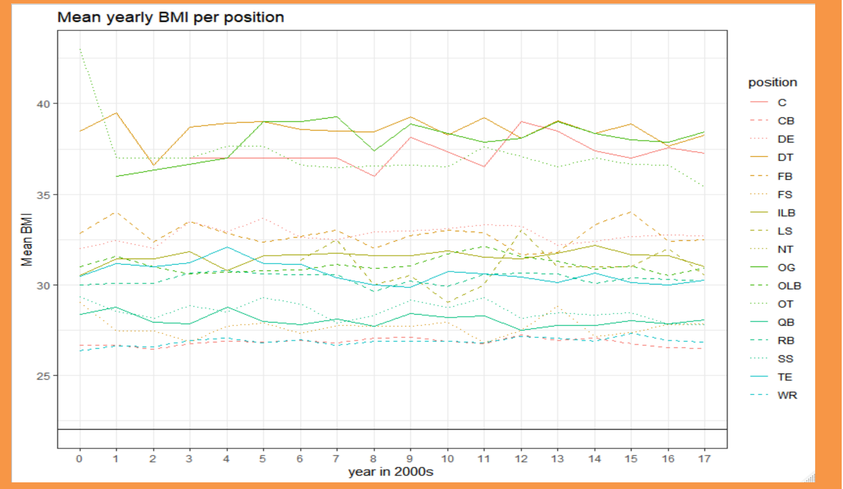
Why Does This Matter?

In the NFL there is an adage that size can't be taught. This statement would lead one to believe that as the years go on those who would be drafted would be larger than the year before. If supported by data analytics this could have implications on players, the NFL, colleges, and fans or viewers of the NFL. The direct implications on players would mean that they would want to be larger. If a player is stunted physically this could have negative affects on them; leading players to use steroids or other growth hormones to get larger so they can have a higher chance of being drafted. The NFL would be comprised of mainly larger players, so the game would most likely not have the lithe players who make the speed plays that some people enjoy, so the viewers would miss out on those. Colleges would most likely recruit larger players instead of looking at other factors, such as intelligence because when a colleges' player get drafted that looks fantastic for the college.

Initial Analysis

The analysis began in Excel, where many variables were cut out leaving only height and weight, which was converted to BMI using the correct formula. The focus of this analysis was mainly on the BMI of the players, but when height or weight of a player was looked at the results were similar with the results of BMI. A Spearman's correlation between BMI and Draft place of the whole dataset was very near zero. This means that there was not a correlation between the two. After looking at the whole dataset, subsets through position and year were created to look at if there was a different trend. While some positions saw an increase in the mean BMI toward the end of the dataset there did not seem to be a significant difference in the Spearman's correlation coefficient over the years. One year, one position had a negative coefficient of one which suggests size doesn't matter.





Further Analytics – What more can I do?

Within the data set there are other variables such as 40-yard sprint speeds or max bench presses. It would be interesting to add these variables to the mix and see if one could find a regression that could accurately suggest where a player should be drafted based on these factors. Also, it may be interesting to see if an algorithm, such as a neural network or Naïve Bayes could predict where a player should be drafted.

References And Acknowledgements

1. Source: Anonymous Dragon. NFL-DRAFT-2018. Retrieved from: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1sFcj1W38gR_Bg3BQz8lZSuFrRQr0BDk8K066ctrxrOA/edit#gid=1586587221
2. Bratina, Anthony. "Evolution of Offensive Linemen". Tuscaloosa News. 1 Dec. 2019
3. Acknowledgment Professor Zubovic