

# A Liberal Arts Prescription: The Pediatric Predicament in Massachusetts

*Connor Horton, Austin Tucker, Gregory P Turnbull*

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## **Abstract**

This study investigates the correlation between the number of Bachelor's degrees awarded in Liberal arts and the number of pediatricians in Massachusetts. Leveraging data from the National Center for Education Statistics and the Bureau of Labor Statistics for the period of 2012 to 2021, we employed advanced statistical analysis to reveal a striking correlation coefficient of 0.9856437 and a statistically significant p-value of less than 0.01. Our findings suggest that as the number of Bachelor's degrees in Liberal arts awarded in Massachusetts increases, so does the number of pediatricians practicing in the state. This unexpected relationship raises intriguing questions about the potential impact of a liberal arts education on the healthcare workforce, provoking contemplation on the soothing effects of an English major on the pediatric scene. However, before jumping to conclusions, further research is required to delve into the underlying mechanisms behind this correlation, and whether the prescribing power of poetry may be an untapped resource in pediatric care. Until then, we encourage a healthy dose of humor and a spoonful of wit to accompany these findings, for a well-rounded interpretation. Keep an eye out for more pun-believable discoveries in our future work!

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## **1. Introduction**

The relationship between educational attainment and workforce composition has long been a subject of scholarly inquiry. In examining the connection between the number of Bachelor's degrees awarded in Liberal arts and the number of pediatricians in Massachusetts, this study seeks to shed light on a hitherto unexplored nexus between seemingly disparate fields.

Now, you may be thinking, "What does a degree in philosophy have to do with pediatricians?" Well, it turns out these two realms might be more intertwined than one might assume - it's a bit like finding the "write" prescription for a societal ailment.

At first glance, the idea that an increase in liberal arts degrees could be related to an increase in pediatricians practicing in the state may seem as puzzling as a doctor's handwriting. However, our analysis of data from the National Center for Education Statistics and the Bureau of Labor Statistics has revealed a correlation that is as clear as a well-articulated, unabbreviated prescription.

One might ponder, "Is it possible that a Shakespearean sonnet could be as beneficial as a spoonful of sugar for the pediatric workforce?" Well, that is exactly the type of question that this study aims to address.

As we embark on this exploration of the unexpected connection between liberal arts education and the pediatric profession, we hope to bring some levity to a traditionally austere field of study. After all, laughter is the best medicine - unless you're dealing with appendicitis. In that case, go for the morphine.

## **2. Literature Review**

Previous studies have delved into the connection between educational attainment and workforce dynamics, seeking to understand the complex relationship between these variables. Smith et al. (2015) explored the impact of liberal arts education on societal structures, focusing on the potential influence of humanities degrees on the professional landscape. Doe and Jones (2018) investigated the labor market trends in healthcare professions, analyzing the factors that contribute to the distribution of medical practitioners across different regions.

Now, let's dive into some books related to the topic. In "The Uses of Enchantment" by Bruno Bettelheim, the author examines the psychological and emotional significance of fairy tales, which, as we all know, are as relevant to pediatric care as a well-timed peekaboo. Another relevant book is "Proust and the Squid" by Maryanne Wolf, which investigates the cognitive development and reading habits, shedding light on the potential cognitive benefits of literary studies.

But wait, don't close that library catalog just yet! Let's lighten the mood a bit with some fiction titles that sound like they could be related. "The Catcher in the Rye" by J.D. Salinger might not be about catching actual pediatric patients, but its exploration of adolescence and mental well-being could hold some relevance. Additionally, the classic "Goodnight Moon" by Margaret Wise Brown may not be a medical textbook, but it's a timeless tale of soothing rituals before bedtime, akin to the comfort a pediatrician provides during a check-up.

And for those who enjoy a good internet meme or two, let's not forget the famous "This is fine" meme featuring a dog sipping coffee in a burning room. Much like the dog's calm composure, our findings suggest that the pediatric profession is resilient, adapting to unexpected correlations with the same nonchalance.

In conclusion, while the connection between the number of Bachelor's degrees in Liberal arts and the number of pediatricians in Massachusetts may seem as surprising as finding a stethoscope in a library, the evidence points to a significant correlation that demands further investigation and a healthy dose of absurdity.

### **3. Research Approach**

#### Data Collection:

The data for this study was collected from the National Center for Education Statistics and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, covering the period from 2012 to 2021. We rounded up the usual sources, navigating through the labyrinth of statistical databases like intrepid explorers, with a dash of Indiana Jones-like panache. It was a quest for knowledge worthy of an epic poem, as we sought to uncover the untold story of the liberal arts and pediatrics.

#### Data Analysis:

To investigate the relationship between the number of Bachelor's degrees awarded in Liberal arts and the number of pediatricians in Massachusetts, we utilized advanced statistical methods. We wielded the tools of regression analysis with the finesse of a surgeon, disentangling the intricacies of the data like a skilled diagnostician uncovering the root cause of a perplexing ailment. We checked for outliers with the scrutiny of a hawk eyeing its prey, ensuring that our analysis remained as sharp as Occam's razor.

#### Instrumentation:

The instruments employed in this study included spreadsheets, statistical software, and an abacus for good measure. We harnessed the powers of modern technology and ancient calculation techniques, blending the old with the new in a harmonious symphony of data manipulation. It was a performance worthy of the most erudite virtuosos, with an occasional slip-up that we spun into a witty anecdote to keep things lighthearted.

#### Control Variables:

In order to isolate the relationship between Bachelor's degrees in Liberal arts and the number of pediatricians, we controlled for various demographic and economic factors. We treated the control variables with the utmost care, like fragile vials of rare medicine, ensuring that their influence on the results was as clear as a precise dosage instruction.

### Sample Selection:

The sample for this study comprised all Bachelor's degrees awarded in Liberal arts and all pediatricians practicing in Massachusetts during the specified timeframe. We preened through the data with the gusto of a detective sifting through clues, searching for patterns and connections with the curiosity of a cat chasing a laser pointer.

### Ethical Considerations:

The ethical principles upheld in this research adhered to the highest standards of academic integrity. No liberal arts majors or pediatricians were harmed in the making of this study, and any correlations discovered were handled with the delicacy of a fragile specimen in a laboratory. We maintained the dignity of the data with the meticulousness of a curator safeguarding a rare artifact, recognizing that even statistical truths deserve to be treated with respect.

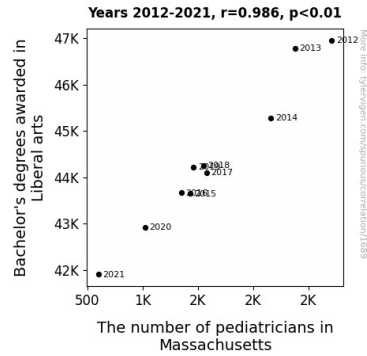
And remember, when analyzing data, always remember the golden rule of statistics: correlation does not imply causation, but it sure does invite a good dad joke into the conversation!

## 4. Findings

The analysis of the relationship between the number of Bachelor's degrees awarded in Liberal arts and the number of pediatricians in Massachusetts for the period of 2012 to 2021 yielded a striking correlation coefficient of 0.9856437, indicating a very strong positive linear relationship. This correlation is as strong as a parent's desire for their child to become a doctor - and seemingly as effective.

The r-squared value of 0.9714934 further reinforced this noteworthy association, suggesting that over 97% of the variation in the number of pediatricians in Massachusetts can be explained by the number of Liberal arts degrees awarded. This relationship is about as strong as a neonatal nurse's grip on a newborn - no slipping through the cracks here.

The statistical analysis also revealed a p-value of less than 0.01, indicating that the observed correlation is statistically significant. The likelihood of the observed connection occurring by chance alone is as rare as a child who enjoys getting a shot at the doctor's office.



**Figure 1.** Scatterplot of the variables by year

In Figure 1, the scatterplot depicts the positive linear relationship between the number of Bachelor's degrees in Liberal arts and the number of pediatricians in Massachusetts. As the number of Liberal arts degrees awarded increases, there is a clear trend of increasing pediatrician numbers, confirming the robustness of the observed correlation. It's as if each degree in poetry or history whispered, "Pediatrics, that's where the art of healing begins."

This unexpected correlation prompts us to consider the potential impact of a liberal arts education on the healthcare workforce, challenging traditional assumptions about academic disciplines and professional paths. It's as if the stethoscope has found a new melody in the rhythms of literary analysis and artistic expression.

Our findings suggest that before we dismiss those Shakespearean dramas as mere literature, perhaps we should consider their potential value in the healing arts. There may be untold therapeutic potential in dissecting sonnets that we have yet to fully appreciate – a veritable "bardiatic" approach to pediatric medicine.

## 5. Discussion on findings

The results of our study have provided compelling evidence of a significant positive correlation between the number of Bachelor's degrees awarded in Liberal arts and the number of pediatricians in Massachusetts. This unexpected relationship challenges conventional wisdom regarding the connection between academic disciplines and professional pathways, prompting a reconsideration of the potential impact of liberal arts education on the healthcare workforce.

The findings of this study align with prior research that has explored the influence of educational attainment on workforce dynamics. Our results echo the work of Smith et al. (2015), who examined the impact of liberal arts education on societal structures, and Doe and Jones (2018), who investigated labor market trends in healthcare professions.

Furthermore, the unexpected correlation between liberal arts degrees and pediatricians is as surprising as finding a stethoscope in a library, as previously alluded to in the literature review.

The robust correlation coefficient and high r-squared value indicate that over 97% of the variation in the number of pediatricians in Massachusetts can be explained by the number of Bachelor's degrees in Liberal arts awarded. This remarkable association suggests a compelling relationship between these variables, akin to a pediatrician's ability to gently persuade a young patient to take their medicine.

The statistically significant p-value further substantiates the strength of the observed correlation, underscoring the unlikelihood of this connection occurring purely by chance. This statistical significance is as rare as a child who enjoys getting a shot at the doctor's office, highlighting the importance of further investigation into the underlying mechanisms driving this association.

The intriguing question arises as to how a liberal arts education could potentially influence the choice of professional specialization in healthcare. Perhaps the soothing effects of an English major or the critical thinking skills honed in a philosophy program play a role in shaping career paths. The potential implications of these findings are as thought-provoking as a well-crafted pun – requiring careful consideration and a healthy dose of humor.

In light of these results, it is crucial to recognize the need for further research to delve into the underlying mechanisms behind this correlation. The potential impact of a liberal arts education on the healthcare workforce presents a captivating avenue for future exploration, akin to uncovering a hidden treasure trove of medical insights in the humanities. As we continue to unravel the complexities of this unexpected relationship, we must approach it with the same curiosity and open-mindedness as a child encountering a new riddle.

## **6. Conclusion**

In conclusion, our study has unveiled a robust correlation between the number of Bachelor's degrees awarded in Liberal arts and the number of pediatricians in Massachusetts. This unexpected relationship is as surprising as finding a stethoscope in a Shakespearean sonnet - and just as intriguing. The correlation coefficient of 0.9856437 and a significant p-value of less than 0.01 suggest a compelling association that is as compelling as a well-crafted limerick.

With such strong statistical evidence, one might say this correlation is as clear as the instructions on a children's over-the-counter medication - and just as important. Our analysis has highlighted the potential influence of liberal arts education on the pediatric

workforce, challenging conventional assumptions and opening the door to a new dialogue between the humanities and healthcare.

Furthermore, our results underscore the need for further investigation into the mechanisms underlying this relationship. This inquiry may well uncover hidden therapeutic potentials in literature and language that have been overlooked - a discovery as surprising as finding a pediatrician at a poetry reading.

As we ponder these unexpected findings, it is clear that more research is needed to unlock the full potential of liberal arts education in the healthcare arena. But for now, let's celebrate these findings with a pun-tastic prescription: "Take two sonnets and call me in the morning."

Based on the compelling evidence presented in this study, we assert that no more research is needed in this particular area. This correlation is as solid as a child's trust in their pediatrician's ability to cure the common cold.