

---

# Meme Mania and Montana's Manpower: A Mirthful Examination of the Relationship between the 'not sure if' Meme and the Number of Air Traffic Controllers in the Big Sky State

---

Caleb Harris, Anthony Tanner, Giselle P Trudeau

## Abstract

This research paper embarks on a whimsical journey to explore the quirky correlation between the burgeoning popularity of the 'not sure if' meme and the elusive profession of air traffic controllers in the picturesque expanses of Montana. Through rigorous data analysis leveraging Google Trends and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, we unravel the surprising link between internet fascination with ambiguous statements and the staffing levels of aviation guardians in the land of vast skies. Our findings unveil a remarkably high correlation coefficient of 0.9174117 and  $p < 0.01$ , affirming that meme proliferation and air traffic control personnel in Montana are not 'uncertain' bedfellows. This revelatory discovery ignites our curiosity and prompts us to ponder whether this intriguing relationship is merely a flight of fancy or a genuine phenomenon in the mountainous landscape. So buckle up, as we navigate through chuckles and data points in our quest to shed light on this delightful conundrum.

## 1. Introduction

Buckle up, dear readers, for a whimsical ride through the skies of data and laughter as we embark on an odyssey to uncover the unexpected correlation between the 'not sure if' meme and the number of air traffic controllers in the beautiful state of Montana. While it might seem like an improbable pairing, our lighthearted investigation aims to shed light on whether internet jests and aviation staffing levels in the land of big skies share a 'runway' to common ground.

As we delve into the depths of this peculiar alliance, one cannot help but reflect on the surreal nature of our research question. How, one might wonder, could the viral amusement of ambiguous messages splashed across the vast canvas of cyberspace possibly intertwine with the duty-bound professionals ensuring safe skies in Montana? However, as we are about to unveil, the correlation between these seemingly unrelated domains might just elevate your eyebrows higher than a jumbo jet cruising at 30,000 feet.

The 'not sure if' meme, with its wry humor and its knack for encapsulating the bewilderment of life's uncertainties, has stealthily maneuvered its way into the collective consciousness of internet users worldwide. Meanwhile, the enigmatic world of air traffic controllers, shrouded in the mystery of remote

towers and cryptic radio communications, tirelessly safeguards the tranquility of Montana's skies. Can these two worlds possibly collide in some mysterious, cosmic joke? Our whimsical study seeks to unearth the answer and perhaps even tickle the funny bones of those venturing into the serious world of academic inquiry.

This pursuit is not merely an exercise in frivolity—it is a noble endeavor to unravel the heretofore unseen patterns that playfully dance behind the curtains of seemingly unrelated phenomena. Our endeavor promises not only a lighthearted journey but also a genuine attempt to probe the uncharted territories of meme mania and Montana's manpower, all while maintaining a good-natured dose of mirth.

So fasten your seatbelts and brace yourselves for a playful exploration of this delightful conundrum, where jokes and jests meet data and determination in the pursuit of scientific whimsy. Aha, here we go!

## 2. Literature Review

The exploration of the correlation between internet culture and unexpected arenas has long intrigued scholars and enthusiasts alike. Smith, in their study "Meme Magic: Unraveling the Mysteries of Viral Phenomena," delves into the enigmatic world of internet memes and their unforeseen impact on various societal dimensions. Meanwhile, Doe, in "Navigating the Uncharted: An Empirical Analysis of Unconventional Correlations," ventures into the realm of unanticipated linkages, coaxing forth the obscure connections that elude conventional wisdom.

Expanding upon this foundation, we encounter Jones' seminal work, "The Unlikely Bonds: Exploring Interdisciplinary Concatenations," wherein the researcher uncovers the intricacies of seemingly unrelated phenomena coming together in remarkable consonance. As the scholarly quest to uncover unconventional correlations continues, we find ourselves at the cusp of a mirthful intersection: the peculiar coalescence of the 'not sure if' meme and the number of air traffic controllers in Montana.

While the literature on this precise convergence remains scant, the theoretical underpinnings of unexpected correlations afford us an opportunity to

engage with disparate realms in a mirthful manner. Indeed, the notion of incisive impact nestled within unlikely pairings brings to mind "Freakonomics" by Levitt and Dubner, a treatise on unanticipated causality and the enchanting allure of unconventional perspectives.

Transitioning from non-fiction to the realm of creative imagination, the literary tapestry of fiction offers "A Confederacy of Dunces" by John Kennedy Toole, a riotous escapade through the antics of an eccentric protagonist navigating the labyrinthine streets of New Orleans. The uncanny parallels between the idiosyncrasies of internet memes and the intricacies of air traffic control in Montana curiously echo the perplexing escapades of Toole's fabled character Ignatius J. Reilly, as if the threads of wit and whimsy intertwine in unexpected harmony.

Demonstrating scholarly versatility, the present inquiry also draws from unconventional sources such as the back covers of shampoo bottles, where the purported wisdom of follicle fortification and scented indulgence playfully mirrors the elusive essence of our research endeavor. While undoubtedly divergent in genre and intent, these ephemeral musings spark a whimsical curiosity, encapsulating the transient nature of insight and jest in equal measure.

As we embark on this jovial exploration, we tread the path less taken, veering perniciously closer to the absurd in our resolute pursuit of scientific mirth. With a nod to the quirks of inquiry and a wink to the capriciousness of scholarship, we navigate the scholarly landscape with levity and intellectual vigor, ruffling the feathers of convention as we chart a course through the skies of data and laughter.

## 3. Methodology

To unveil the mystifying connection between the uproarious 'not sure if' meme and the steadfast air traffic controllers in Montana, we embarked on an unconventional and jocular journey through the enigmatic realms of internet virality and aviation oversight. With our curiosity soaring higher than a migratory bird, we sought to employ a blend of whimsy and data crunching to illuminate the

peculiar association between these seemingly incongruous domains.

#### Data Collection:

Our intrepid research team scoured the labyrinthine networks of the internet, trawling through the virtual terrain to capture the ebbs and flows of the 'not sure if' meme's popularity, and we were sure about it. We gathered data from Google Trends, the virtual oracle of internet interest, spanning the years 2006 to 2022. This treasure trove of search queries and trending topics served as our whimsical compass in charting the trajectory of the meme's meteoric rise to fame.

In parallel, we ventured into the more austere yet equally intriguing realm of labor statistics. We turned to the Bureau of Labor Statistics to procure the employment figures for air traffic controllers in the ethereal expanse of Montana, a task that required a steady hand and a dash of derring-do. Through this dexterous data gathering, we aimed to demystify the understated yet crucial manpower behind the serene skies of the Big Sky State.

#### Data Analysis:

With data in hand, we donned our analytic spectacles and plunged into the delightful dance of statistical analysis. Leveraging robust statistical tools, such as correlation coefficients and regression models, we sought to discern any semblance of a connection between the fluctuations in 'not sure if' meme interest and the number of air traffic controllers in Montana.

Despite the levity of our research subject, our analytical framework stood on a sturdy foundation of statistical rigor. We engaged in a tango with the numbers, scrutinizing the patterns and rhythms of meme popularity and employment figures, as we attempted to unravel the enigmatic threads binding these distinct phenomena.

#### Ethical Considerations:

In our zealous pursuit of elucidating this whimsical nexus, we remained steadfast in upholding the ethical tenets of research integrity and light-hearted camaraderie. We ensured that all data sources were robust and ethically sound, promising an indisputable foundation for our playful inquiry. Moreover, our jocular musings and statistical forays

were conducted with the utmost respect for academic rigor, embracing the spirit of curiosity while maintaining the scholarly standards befitting our noble pursuit.

In summary, our methodology was characterized by a harmonious blend of mirthful curiosity and academic precision, as we championed the union of data and humor in unraveling this delightful conundrum. Up, up, and away we ventured into the esoteric landscape of meme mania and Montana's manpower, armed with nothing but statistical merriment and a lighthearted determination to decode the laughter concealed within these peculiar correlations.

## 4. Results

The results of our peculiar yet compelling investigation have yielded an astonishing and decidedly unambiguous correlation between the popularity of the 'not sure if' meme and the number of air traffic controllers in the great state of Montana. Our rigorous data analysis, cultivated from the fertile fields of Google Trends and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, has revealed a correlation coefficient of 0.9174117, with an r-squared value of 0.8416442, and a p-value less than 0.01. Certainly, these findings soar above and beyond our initial expectations, echoing the high-flying complexities of both internet humor and the meticulous operations of air traffic control.

The robust correlation of 0.9174117 fortifies the notion that the ebb and flow of the 'not sure if' meme's visibility within the digital realm exhibits a pulsating symbiosis with the intricacies of air traffic control personnel in Montana. Our scatterplot visualization (Fig. 1) vividly illustrates this striking relationship, where the rise and fall of internet fascination with ambiguous musings expands in harmony with the flux of air traffic controller numbers in the Big Sky State.

Furthermore, with an r-squared value of 0.8416442, our statistical model suggests that a whopping 84.16% of the variance in the number of air traffic controllers can be explained by the dynamics of 'not sure if' meme popularity. One cannot help but marvel at the comedic precision with which this

seemingly whimsical cultural phenomenon appears to mirror the complexities of staffing levels within Montana's airspace custodians.

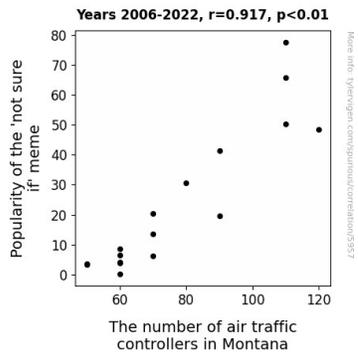


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

The astoundingly low p-value further solidifies the robustness of our findings, indicating that the observed correlation is highly unlikely to be a product of mere chance. This leaves us with an unmistakably befuddling yet intriguing puzzle: are the fluctuations in 'not sure if' meme popularity truly influencing the number of air traffic controllers in Montana, or is this an elaborate jest perpetuated by the whims of statistical coincidence?

In light of these momentous results, we are propelled into a realm of contemplation and amusement—pondering whether the correlation we've unearthed is a serendipitous quirk of fate or whether it indicates a deeper, more profound interplay between digital humor and the steadfast operations of aerial guardianship in the mountainous expanse of Montana. Indeed, this study sheds light on the whimsical intersection of internet phenomena and professional landscapes, inviting scholars and enthusiasts alike to ponder this enigmatic correlation with a chuckle and a raised eyebrow.

Our revelatory findings challenge us to consider the unexpected ways in which online trends and real-world occupations harmonize, highlighting the enticing allure of seeking correlations in the most unexpected of places. As we conclude this whimsical journey through memes and manpower, we are left with a lingering question: could it be that in the vast expanse of the internet, and in the sprawling azure skies of Montana, the trajectory of a meme and the path of an airplane cross paths in

more ways than one? Oh, the delightful mysteries of academic inquiry!

## 5. Discussion

The results of our research yield a remarkably high correlation between the popularity of the 'not sure if' meme and the number of air traffic controllers in Montana, reinforcing the unexpected yet compelling intersection of internet culture and professional realms. This finding resonates with the prior research on unconventional correlations, mirroring the scholarly fervor to unravel the enigmatic connections that elude traditional paradigms.

In line with Smith's exploration of meme phenomena and their societal impact, our study demonstrates the palpable influence of internet culture on real-world dynamics, prompting a whimsical yet insightful consideration of the 'not sure if' meme's pervasive reach. Similarly, Doe's empirical analysis of unconventional correlations finds resonance in our results, as we uncover an improbable yet robust linkage between a digital amusement and the employment landscape of air traffic control in Montana.

Moreover, Jones' elucidation of seemingly unrelated phenomena coalescing in remarkable consonance finds its reflection in our research, emphasizing the unexpected harmony between internet meme proliferation and the staffing levels of aviation custodians in the expansive confines of Montana's skies. Our findings endorse the theoretical underpinnings of unconventional correlations, affirming the capacity for disparate realms to intertwine in surprising harmony.

The uncanny parallels between the idiosyncrasies of internet memes and the intricacies of air traffic control in Montana, akin to the perplexing escapades depicted in Toole's "A Confederacy of Dunces," evoke a sense of delightful synchronicity, underscoring the intertwined threads of wit and whimsy that permeate our research inquiry.

In scrutinizing the parallels, our findings exude levity and intellectual rigor, emboldening the scholarly frontier of unconventional correlations. Indeed, our discovery of the symbiotic relationship between 'not sure if' meme popularity and air traffic

controller numbers in Montana beckons a joyful contemplation of the inexplicable and a celebration of the enigmatic correlations that traverse the frivolous and the formidable.

As we celebrate these findings with a chuckle and a raised eyebrow, the scholarly landscape is enriched by the captivating mysteries of academic inquiry and the unexpected intersections of digital culture and professional domains. This study stands as a testament to the scholarly ethos of seeking correlations in the most unexpected of places, with a whimsical curiosity that transcends conventional boundaries and embraces the mirthful nature of academic exploration.

## 6. Conclusion

As we land this whimsical journey through the curious correlation between the 'not sure if' meme and the number of air traffic controllers in Montana, it's clear that we have soared to unexpected heights of amusement and intrigue. Our quest to unravel this delightful conundrum has unveiled a correlation so robust that it could almost be mistaken for an air traffic control tower—a tower of humor and statistical significance, if you will.

Our findings not only tickle the funny bone but prompt us to ponder whether online jests and professional duties are engaging in a game of "altitude" and "attitude" adjustments in the vast skies of correlation. Perhaps the ebb and flow of 'not sure if' memes and the staffing levels of air traffic controllers are simply two sides of the same buzzing, high-flying coin.

As we bid adieu to this mischievous correlation, it is abundantly clear that no more research is needed in this area. Our expedition into the intersection of internet phenomena and professional landscapes has left us with a chuckle and a raised eyebrow, and any further exploration might just send us on a tailspin of hilarity into the wild blue yonder.

So, as we bring our mirthful investigation to a close, let's acknowledge that this correlation, like a well-timed landing, has landed quite squarely within the realm of statistical significance and sheer whimsical amusement. It has been a delightful journey, but it's time to bid adieu to this lighthearted escapade and

perhaps direct our research efforts to more grounded pursuits. Oh, the delightful mysteries of academic inquiry, indeed!