



Attendance & Salary in Baseball



Alec DiConza



Main Question:

Is there a correlation between money driven in from attendance at baseball games and a team's ability to spend more money on their players' salaries?



Data Collection & Research

- 2025 MLB Attendance report from ESPN
- Median ticket price data from KTLA
 - This is the only source that listed this data. It's important to note that this data should be taken with a bit of caution since it doesn't come from an official data source.
- MLB Stadiums & their capacity from USA Today
- MLB Team Salary Payroll Tracker from Sportrac
- MLB Team records from ESPN

- Multiply median ticket price by total attendance number (according to ESPN report)

Attendance	Top Games	Beane Count	Closers	Cy Predictor	Streaks	Managers	Debuts	Park Factors	Homers		
2025 Attendance		Home	Road			Overall					
RK	TEAM	GMS	TOTAL	AVG	PCT	GMS	AVG	PCT	GMS	AVG	PCT
1	LA Dodgers	81	4,012,470	40,536	0.0	81	35,702	0.0	162	42,619	0.0
2	San Diego	81	3,437,201	42,434	0.0	81	31,828	0.0	162	37,131	0.0
3	NY Yankees	80	3,392,659	42,408	0.0	81	30,311	0.0	161	36,322	0.0
4	Philadelphia	81	3,375,477	41,672	0.0	81	30,074	0.0	162	36,158	0.0
5	NY Mets	80	3,182,052	39,775	0.0	81	32,488	0.0	161	36,109	0.0
6	Chicago Cubs	81	3,017,983	37,259	0.0	81	33,946	0.0	162	35,602	0.0
7	San Francisco	81	2,925,823	36,121	0.0	80	31,791	0.0	161	33,969	0.0
8	Atlanta	81	2,903,167	35,841	0.0	81	30,381	0.0	162	33,111	0.0
9	Toronto	81	2,849,935	35,184	0.0	80	26,410	0.0	161	30,824	0.0
10	Boston	81	2,776,496	34,277	0.0	81	30,078	0.0	162	32,178	0.0
11	Houston	81	2,727,877	33,677	0.0	81	26,320	0.0	162	29,999	0.0
12	Milwaukee	81	2,650,089	32,717	0.0	81	29,207	0.0	162	30,962	0.0
13	LA Angels	81	2,615,506	32,290	0.0	81	29,300	0.0	162	30,795	0.0
14	Seattle	81	2,538,053	31,333	0.0	80	28,804	0.0	161	30,977	0.0
15	Colorado	80	2,404,613	30,057	0.0	80	30,847	0.0	160	30,452	0.0
16	Detroit	81	2,413,442	29,795	0.0	80	25,743	0.0	161	27,782	0.0
17	Texas	81	2,397,071	29,593	0.0	81	26,999	0.0	162	28,296	0.0
18	Arizona	81	2,393,973	29,555	0.0	81	30,173	0.0	162	29,864	0.0
19	St. Louis	81	2,250,007	27,777	0.0	79	29,181	0.0	160	28,470	0.0
20	Cincinnati	80	2,157,413	26,967	0.0	81	29,621	0.0	161	28,302	0.0
21	Cleveland	81	2,051,360	25,325	0.0	79	27,759	0.0	160	26,527	0.0
22	Washington	80	1,916,768	23,959	0.0	81	29,388	0.0	161	26,690	0.0
23	Baltimore	80	1,803,655	22,545	0.0	81	28,318	0.0	161	25,450	0.0
24	Minnesota	80	1,768,718	22,108	0.0	80	27,248	0.0	160	24,678	0.0
25	Kansas City	80	1,748,808	21,860	0.0	81	27,475	0.0	161	24,685	0.0
26	Pittsburgh	81	1,525,025	18,827	0.0	81	30,311	0.0	162	24,569	0.0
27	Chicago White Sox	78	1,405,702	18,201	0.0	81	28,249	0.0	159	23,232	0.0
28	Miami	81	1,156,422	14,276	0.0	81	29,571	0.0	162	21,924	0.0
29	Tampa Bay	81	786,750	9,712	0.0	80	28,751	0.0	161	19,173	0.0
30	Athletics	81	768,464	9,487	0.0	81	27,912	0.0	162	18,699	0.0

Money Spent in Salaries

Spotrac Report:

- Teams are ranked by their payroll allocations

For scatterplot purposes, payroll allocations are rounded to the nearest million.

MLB Team Salary Payroll Tracker

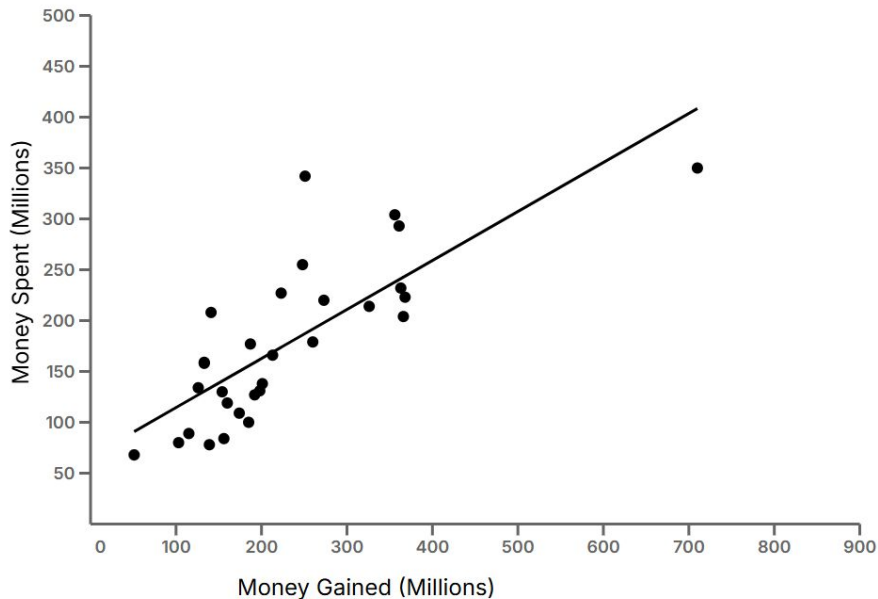
A real-time look at the 2025 salary payroll totals for each MLB team..

SEASON

2025

RANK	TEAM	RECORD	AVG AGE TEAM	TOTAL PAYROLL ALLOCATIONS
1	 LAD	93-69 🏆	29.5	\$350,024,106
2	 NYM	83-79	29.3	\$342,303,011
3	 PHI	96-66	30.4	\$293,240,191
4	 NYY	94-68	29.7	\$304,091,683
5	 CHC	92-70	29.6	\$214,020,073
6	 SD	90-72 ☆	29.3	\$223,125,239
7	 TOR	94-68 ★	28.9	\$255,230,406
8	 HOU	87-75	28.6	\$232,140,003
9	 SF	81-81	28.4	\$178,562,152
10	 BOS	89-73 ☆	28.8	\$203,658,855
11	 ATL	76-86	29.5	\$220,223,651
12	 SEA	90-72	28.0	\$165,596,493
13	 TEX	81-81	30.3	\$226,526,491
14	 DET	87-75	28.5	\$157,542,361
15	 LAA	72-90	27.5	\$208,420,995
16	 STL	78-84	27.1	\$131,152,698

Scatterplot: Money Earned vs Money Spent



- Clear linear trend
- Outlier note: LA Dodgers with ~\$710 million driven in from attendance and ~\$350 million spent on salaries
- Even without outlier, the slope is steeper, if anything

Does this mean there is an association?

H_0 : There is no association between money earned from attendance and money spent on salary for a team's players (slope = 0)

H_A : There is an association between money earned from attendance and money spent on salary for a team's players (slope does not equal 0)

Takeaway: We are 95% confident that, on average, the money spent on player salaries increases between \$0.33 and \$0.63 for every additional dollar earned in game attendance.

Best-fit values

Slope	0.4819 ± 0.07313
Y-intercept	66.31 ± 19.06
X-intercept	-137.6
1/Slope	2.075

95% Confidence Intervals

Slope	0.3321 to 0.6317
Y-intercept	27.28 to 105.3
X-intercept	-309.3 to -44.28

Goodness of Fit

R Square	0.6080
Sy.x	49.89

Is slope significantly non-zero?

F	43.42
DFn, DFd	1, 28
P Value	< 0.0001
Deviation from zero?	Significant

- Slope decidedly non-zero
- 60.8% of variation in salaries can be explained by variation in money from attendance (R Square)
- 0.7797 correlation (strong)
- Reject null hypothesis (there is clear association)

Notes...

Tampa Bay Rays and Athletics both played at Minor League parks throughout the 2025 season. Their data, in general, can be discounted. However, taking them out of the equation does little to change the results. Upon running the test again, the p-value is still less than 0.0001 and we are 95% confident that the slope is between 0.3 and 0.61.

Also, just because this association exists does NOT mean we can say that high attendance CAUSES salaries to increase. There are a variety of reasons why this may happen. What we are looking for is an association, and we found it.

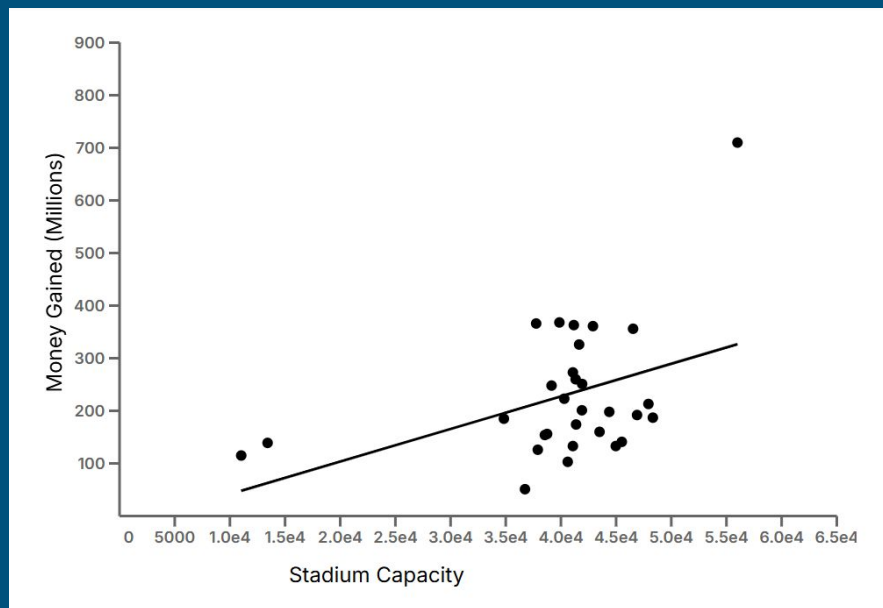
Something else to consider...

Teams have varying ballpark sizes, so some may be at a disadvantage when it comes to driving in revenue from attendance.

- USA Today reported and ranked the sizes of all 30 (28 if discounting Rays and Athletics) MLB stadiums

MLB stadiums by capacity

1. Dodger Stadium (Los Angeles Dodgers) – 56,000
2. Chase Field (Arizona Diamondbacks) – 48,330
3. T-Mobile Park (Seattle Mariners) – 47,929
4. Coors Field (Colorado Rockies) – 46,897
5. Yankee Stadium (New York Yankees) – 46,537
6. Angel Stadium (Los Angeles Angels) – 45,517
7. Oriole Park at Camden Yards (Baltimore Orioles) – 44,970
8. Busch Stadium (St. Louis Cardinals) – 44,383
9. Great American Ball Park (Cincinnati Reds) – 43,500
10. Citizens Bank Park (Philadelphia Phillies) – 42,901
11. Citi Field (New York Mets) – 41,922
12. American Family Field (Milwaukee Brewers) – 41,900
13. Wrigley Field (Chicago Cubs) – 41,649
14. Nationals Park (Washington Nationals) – 41,373
15. Oracle Park (San Francisco Giants) – 41,331
16. Daikin Park (Houston Astros) – 41,168
17. Truist Park (Atlanta Braves) – 41,084
18. Comerica Park (Detroit Tigers) – 41,083



Best-fit values

Slope	0.006196 ± 0.002496
Y-intercept	-20.48 ± 102.7
X-intercept	3306
1/Slope	161.4

95% Confidence Intervals

Slope	0.001083 to 0.01131
Y-intercept	-230.8 to 189.8
X-intercept	$-1.718e+5$ to $2.082e+4$

Goodness of Fit

R Square	0.1804
Sy.x	116.7

Is slope significantly non-zero?

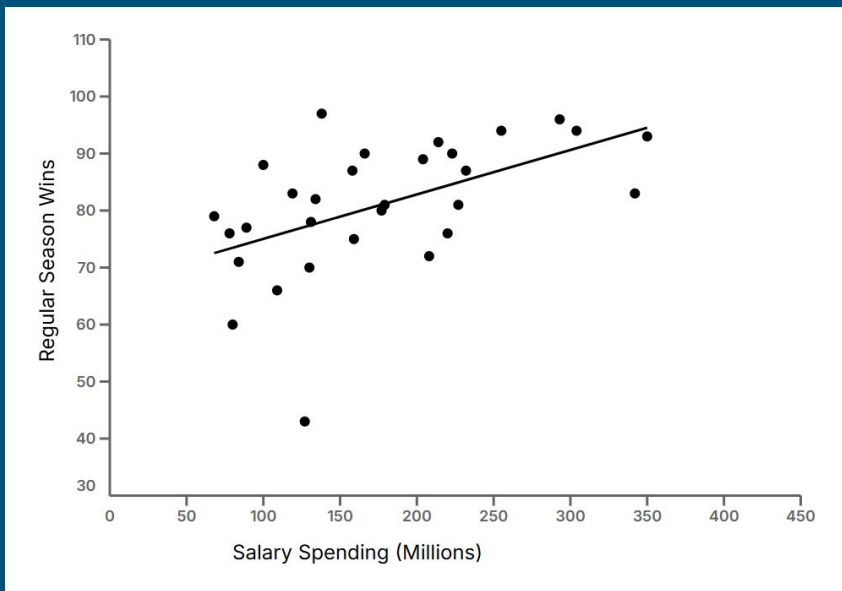
F	6.163
DFn,DFd	1,28
P Value	0.0193
Deviation from zero?	Significant

Dodgers, obviously, still an outlier. We see the slope is still decidedly non-zero, but it is VERY close. The R Square value is low, as well. Based on this, there is an association between a team's stadium capacity and the money they take in from attendance, but it's not a very strong one. With Dodgers data point removed, the association is even weaker and the 95% confidence interval includes zero, so we can't be overly confident about this association existing at all.

A new question...

Is spending all of this money on salary worth it? Do teams that spend more on their players really win that many more games?

New scatterplot:



Best-fit values

Slope	0.07799 ± 0.02408
Y-intercept	67.23 ± 4.639
X-intercept	-862.0
1/Slope	12.82

95% Confidence Intervals

Slope	0.02866 to 0.1273
Y-intercept	57.72 to 76.73
X-intercept	-2652 to -457.8

Goodness of Fit

R Square	0.2725
Sy.x	10.15

Is slope significantly non-zero?

F	10.49
DFn,DFd	1,28
P Value	0.0031
Deviation from zero?	Significant

What we know: There is a positive linear association between the amount of money being spent for team salary and the number of times each team wins in the regular season of 2025. However, the R Square value is pretty low and the slope of our linear regression equation is not too far above zero. It's hard to know whether this additional money spending is "worth it," as causation cannot be applied here and there are tons of other factors at play, but it's interesting to see that the association at least exists.

Conclusions

Clearly, there is an association between the money each MLB team makes through attendance and the money they spend on their players' salaries. However, there is not as strong an association between spending tons of money on salaries and the overall success of the team.

And again, causation cannot be an outcome of this testing!

Links to Data

[2025 MLB Attendance - Major League Baseball - ESPN](#)

[MLB ticket prices ranked by team: L.A.'s clubs on opposite ends | KTLA](#)

[MLB stadiums ranked by capacity: Biggest and smallest ballparks](#)

[2025 MLB Team Salary Payroll Tracker](#)

[MLB Standings - 2025 season - ESPN](#)