Using Psychological Assessments to Predict Player Performance in the NFL

As documented in the popular book Moneyball (Lewis, 2003), professional sports teams have dramatically shifted to using sports analytics to predict the success of athletes. While teams use a wide range of data to do this, they have not fully exploited standardized psychological assessment in their analytical models. In fact, many have questioned whether psychological assessments are useful for predicting success in the unique context of professional sports. This presentation describes the Player Assessment Test (PAT) which was implemented by the NFL in 2013 for all players attending the NFL Combine from 2013-2019. Results of a multi-year validation study have demonstrated that the PAT significantly correlates with a number of player performance outcomes. This presentation reviews these results and discusses how psychological assessments like the PAT provide critical data that can be used in a variety of college and professional sports to predict performance outcomes as well as more traditional organizational settings.