St. Mary Maternity Hospital: Introduction to SPSS and Statistical Analysis

Layout and Interface: Data Editor, Syntax Editor, and Output Viewer

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SPSS consists of three parts:
- The Data Editor
- The Syntax Editor
- Output Viewer

When you start SPSS, the Data Editor window opens by default.

The Data and Variable Editor:

The Data Editor allows you to create your data set and perform statistical operations interactively, using point-and-click menus. The Data Editor window has two sheets: 1

By default, the Data View opens whenever you open the Data Editor. It contains your actual data set. Here, the variable names are displayed in the grey row right above row 1. Each variable represents a case, and each column represents a variable.

Exporting your output

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To export outputs, go to File > Export.

A dialog box pops up. Specify the type of output you want to export from the Export drop-down menu. Specify your file destination and name in the File Name box. Specify your file type from the File Type drop-down menu. You can export the outputs in Html, Text, Excel, Word, and PowerPoint format. Then click OK.

If you only want one or two tables or charts, you can select them in the output viewer and press CTRL+C.

What columns mean

Name: Is the name of the variable. These will appear in the column window in the Data View.

Type: Is the type of data in a variable. String refers to data stored as text, usually proper names. Numeric variables store data as a number. Either can be set to Date and Dollar.

Width: Tells the computer how many records to display. If you do not want to use a decimal point, to set as a zero here.

Decimals: Tells the computer how many records to display for a variable in the data set.

Label: This column is useful for matching what the variable is displaying the raw data to track code.

Values: These allow you to display certain labels depending on the data in each cell.

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Important Menu Commands

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The Data Menu
The Data menu provides techniques for defining or deleting, creating variables or cases, sorting files, splitting files, merging data sets, aggregating data, or using a select command to look at a subgroup within the data file.

The Transform Menu
The Transform menu allows you to transform your data set on the basis of existing variables, among other things, you can recode your variables and compute new variables from existing ones.

The Analysis Menu
With the Analysis menu you perform statistical operations on your data set, the output of which will be displayed in the Output Viewer. In this segment we will be exploring descriptive statistics using this menu.

The Graphs Menu
The Graphs menu contains a number of graph options that allow you to visually display descriptive statistics in the Output Viewer.

Basic measurements

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Standard Deviation
The standard deviation is a measure of dispersion that is calculated based on the values of the data. It allows us to see how widely the data are dispersed around the mean.

Skewness
Skewness is a measure of whether the peak is centered in the middle of the distribution. A positive value means that the peak is off to the left, and a negative value means it is off to the right.

Kurtosis
Kurtosis is a measure of the extent to which data are concentrated in the peak versus the tail. A positive value indicates that data are concentrated in the peak; a negative value indicates that data are concentrated in the tail.

The Mean
The mean is defined as the sum of a series of observations divided by the number of observations in the series. It is commonly used to describe the central tendency of variables.

The Median
The median is the middle value in a series of values. It is the observation that divides the sample into two sub-samples of the same size.

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What columns mean

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In SPSS, variable names may not have spaces.

Type: Is the type of data is a variable. String refers to data stored as text, usually proper names. Women's variables store data as a number. Either useful options are Date and Dollar.

Value: Tells the computer how many records to display. If you do not want to use a decimal point at all, enter a zero here.

Decimals: Tells the computer how many records to display. If you do not want to use a decimal point at all, enter a zero here.

Labels: This column is useful for matching what the variable is measuring. You may set options here.

Value: These allow you to display certain labels depending on the data in each case.

Important Menu Commands

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The Data Menu
The Data menu provides techniques for defining or killing variables, sorting data, splitting files, merging data sets, aggregating data, or using a select command to look at a category within the data file.

The Transform Menu
The Transform menu allows you to transform data sets on the basis of existing variables, among other things, you can recode your variables and compute new variables from existing ones.

The Analyze Menu
With the Analyze menu you perform statistical operations on your data set, the output of which will be displayed in the Output Viewer. In this segment we will be exploring descriptive statistics among data menu.

The Graphs Menu
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What columns mean

Name: Is the name of the variable. These will appear in the column headers in the Data View.
In SPSS variable names may not have spaces.

Type: Is the type of data in a variable. String refers to data stored as text; usually proper names. Numeric variables store data as a number. Other useful options are

Tip: SPSS cannot perform statistical functions on data stored as strings.

Width: Tells the computer how much space each case needs to take up. This is measured in characters. Thus a width for country means that country names can be r
letters long.

Decimals: Tells the computer how many decimals to display. If you do not want to see a decimal point at all enter a zero here.

Labels: This column is useful for explaining what the variable is measuring. You may use spaces here.

Values: These allow you to display certain labels depending on the data in each case.

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Type: Is the type of data in a variable. Many times in data based on text, usually proper names. Nominal variables store data as a number. Either useful options are Date and Dollar.

Width: This column controls statistical functions on data stored as strings.

The SPSS cannot perform statistical functions on data stored as strings.

Decimals: Tells how complete how many records to display. If you do not want to see a decimal point at all write a zero here. Select a long.

Labels: This column is useful for watching what this variable is measuring. You may add options here.

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