

Merging, Recoding and Running Statistical Tests in SPSS

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SPSS is an industry standard software for running statistical tests on quantitative data in evaluation and research studies. Other tools used include SAS and Stata.

Common questions about working with SPSS data

1. How do I combine multiple SPSS tables into one table?

Make sure your data is organized, labeled and sorted correctly. Also determine if you are simply adding cases (same columns but different rows) or adding variables (same rows but different columns). Match variable names and structure correctly to avoid unpaired variables. If you are worried about maintaining data integrity, it's a good idea to save the new database under a new name.

2. I have to recode variables in SPSS but I don't want to go through the data and do this manually, what can I do?

To recode variables, go up to the data tab in the datasheet view, click on "Recode Variables" and code the variables either using new variable (new variable created after recoding) or within the same variable (recoded variable under same variable name).

3. What are some useful tests to run in SPSS?

Some tests to consider when examining correlations within the data are the one-sample t-test, independent-sample t-test (use to compare means under different groups) and one-way ANOVA (comparing multiple means to one variable).

How to use this information in your organization

Step 1: When you receive data from multiple sources, merge the databases in SPSS to make the analysis more efficient, increase data sample sizes and broaden analysis options.

Step 2: Recode variables through SPSS to improve the efficiency of the analysis and increase data sample sizes.

Step 3: Choose appropriate statistical tests for your data to indicate if certain correlations exists that will add insightful information in your analysis.

This white paper was developed through information gained in quantitative analysis coursework at the Humphrey Institute and using SPSS product guides.