What is SPSS?

The following brief definition is taken from the SPSS Base User's Guide.

"SPSS is a comprehensive system for analyzing data. SPSS can take data from almost any type of file and use them to generate tabulated reports, charts, and plots of distributions and trends, descriptive statistics, and complex statistical analysis."

See www.spss.com for more information.

SPSS is the acronym of Statistical Package for the Social Science. SPSS is one of the most popular statistical packages which can perform highly complex data manipulation and analysis with simple instructions. It is designed for both interactive and non-interactive (batch) uses.

**SPSS Program Functionality:**

**Breadth of functionality: Good**

SPSS has scores of statistical and mathematical functions, scores statistical procedures, and a very flexible data handling capability. It can read data in almost any format (e.g., numeric, alphanumeric, binary, dollar, date, time formats), and version 6 onwards can read files created using spread sheet/data base software. It also has excellent data manipulation utilities.

The following is a brief overview of some of the functionalities of SPSS:

- Data transformations
- Data Examination
- Descriptive Statistics
- Contingency tables
- Reliability tests
- Correlation
- T-tests
- ANOVA
- MANOVA
- General Linear Model (Release 7.0 and higher)
- Regression
- Nonlinear Regression
- Logistic Regression
- Loglinear Regression
- Discriminant Analysis
- Factor Analysis
- Cluster analysis
- Multidimensional scaling
- Probit analysis
- Forecasting/Time Series
- Survival analysis
- Nonparametric analysis
- Graphics and graphical interface.
Reliability and Robustness: Poor

SPSS has quite a few known bugs at this point. Bugs are corrected by applying an endless stream of patches, which may or may not introduce new bugs, and will almost certainly break other software installed on the system.

State of the Art: Excellent

SPSS Release 6.0 and higher are considered as one of the leading statistical software applications. The integration of the graphics module to the Base with excellent interface is just one example of the state of the art of the product.

User Friendliness: Good

SPSS has a very easy to learn command language. Explanation for keywords and subcommands are available through online help. The University of Windsor supports SPSS for Windows, for Unix and for MAC.

SPSS Help Resources:

Network-based help: Excellent

To join a national electronic mailing list, send email to listserv@uga.cc.uga.edu with the body of the message:

    subscribe spssx-l [yourfirstname] [yourlastname]

Program's Help System: Excellent

SPSS offers extensive online help in Manager Mode, and in prompted session on mainframe and mini computers. SPSS on microcomputers also have extensive help utility.

SPSS Training and Support:

Document Availability: Excellent

On-Line documentation for SPSS is available.

Training Availability: Good


University of Windsor Consulting Support: Full Support

Consulting support is available from 9 am to 4 pm (M-F) via phone, email, and for walkins. Appointment is recommended for walkin consulting.

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Other Consulting Support: Good

Registered SPSS users can contact the vendor directly with the number provided with the license agreement. Users can subscribe to the SPSSX-L discussion group and post their questions to the net. SPSS computists can always turn to their colleagues who are familiar with SPSS software for help.