**Differences between PSPP and SPSS**

**PSPP Users’ Manual**

* You can open and print the users’ manual by going to <http://pspp.awardspace.com/>

**Listing variables**

* PSPP will list the variables and then you select those variables you want to use. PSPP lists the variables using the variable labels. However, it’s easier to find the variables if they are listed by variable names. You can change the way PSPP lists the variables by right clicking anywhere on the list of variables and unchecking the box that says, “Prefer variable labels” and that will list the variables by name. You can also click on "Sort by name" and the variable names will be listed alphabetically.

**Running syntax files**

* To run a syntax file in both PPSP and SPSS, click on “Run” in the menu bar and then click on “All” to run all the commands in the file or select the commands you want to run and click on “Selection.”

**Frequencies**

* If you do not want to compute any statistics in SPSS, don’t click on the “Statistics” button and SPSS will skip computing any of the statistics.
* If you do not want to compute any of the statistics in PSPP, you have to add a subcommand to your syntax file that reads “/STATISTICS = NONE”. In the graphical interface to PSPP, you need to uncheck the default statistics (i.e., mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum) to stop PSPP from computing these statistics.
* When you run a bar chart in PSPP, it attempts to write the value labels below the appropriate bar. If your value labels are too long it will overwrite the labels.
* When you run a histogram in PSPP for a variable that has some very large values and many smaller values, the histogram is unreadable. SPSS does a better job of drawing the histograms for these variables.

**Charts (Graphs)**

* PPSP is very limited in terms of graphs. It will create pie charts, bar graphs, histograms and scatterplots. However, there is no capacity to edit these charts which limits their usefulness. PSPP does not create box plots.
* SPSS has more capabilities for creating charts and graphs.
* Another option that is freely available, is *[Statistics Open for All](http://sofastatistics.com/home.php) (SOFA),* which includes much more extensive graphics capabilities.
* Still another option is Excel which has considerable graphic capabilities.

**Compare Means/Paired-Samples T Test**

* SPSS has a box where you move the first variable and another box where you move the second variable in the paired-samples t test.
* PSPP has a box (i.e., Var 1) where you move the first variable. Then you have to move the slider at the bottom of the “Test Variable(s)” box to the right to see the Var 2 box where you put the second variable.

**Temporary**

* The TEMPORARY command is used in PSPP to make a change such as selecting out particular cases and applying that change to only the next command. Without the TEMPORARY command the change would apply to all subsequent commands.

**Select Cases**

* PSPP will execute the SPSS commands to select out particular cases and will do it correctly.
* However, the graphical interface in PSPP is not very user friendly. Click on “Data” in the menu bar and then click on “Select cases.” Select “Use filter variable” and move the variable you want to use to select cases into the filter box. PSPP will select out the cases that have a value of 0 or have user-defined missing values or system missing values. PSPP will select out these cases for your entire session unless you put the TEMPORARY command right before the SELECT CASES command. The purpose of the TEMPORARY command is to tell PSPP to carry out the SELECT IF command for only the next command (e.g., the paired-samples t test) and then go back to using all the cases.

**One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

* SPSS has an option to run one-way analysis of variance from within the MEANS procedure which is part of COMPARE MEANS.
* PSPP does not have this option so you will need to use the ONE-WAY ANOVA command which is also part of COMPARE MEANS.
* SPSS will compute Eta, a measure used with a nominal or ordinal measure and an interval measure. PSPP does not compute Eta but it is easy to get Eta from the one-way analysis of variance output. Just divide the between-groups sum of squares by the total sum of squares.

**Crosstabs**

* In SPSS the default for “Cells” is the count but in PSPP the default is count and the row, column, and total percents.
* When running the Chi Square test in SPSS the output will tell you the number of cells for which the expected frequencies is less than 5. This is handy since one of the assumptions of the Chi Square test is that the expected frequencies aren’t too small which is often defined as less than 5. PSPP does not give you this information. You can see the expected frequencies in PSPP by checking the “Expected” box in the “Cells” list of options.

In SPSS you can add control variables in the bottom box of the crosstabs dialog box. PSPP does not have a similar option. However, PSPP will run a SPSS syntax file that includes control variables.

In order to run a table with a control variable in PSPP, you need to create a blank syntax file. To do this click on “File” in the menu bar and then on “New” and finally on “Syntax.” A blank syntax file should open. Enter the following commands into the syntax file.   
  
CROSSTABS  
 /TABLES=[enter dependent variable] BY [enter independent variable[ BY [enter   
 control variable]  
 /STATISTICS=[enter statistics you want]/CELLS=COUNT COLUMN [or whatever   
 you want to include].  
  
To run this command click on “Run” in the menu bar and then click on “All.” Your table should appear in the output window.

Notice the format of the “TABLES” subcommand. It lists the table you want to run in the following order – dependent variable BY independent variable BY control variable.

**Transform/Compute/IF**

* In SPSS you can use IF commands to create different values of a variable depending on the condition specified in the IF command.
* PSPP will run SPSS syntax files containing these IF commands but we could not find any way to create them using the graphical interface for PSPP. You could enter the SPSS commands in the syntax window in PSPP and run the commands. This would be similar to the way we created a syntax file to run a three-variable above.