

Throughout the *Data Analysis* course, the cohort was introduced to the computer software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) published by IBM. SPSS is the software package that provides researchers with the capability of assiduous data analysis. SPSS allows researchers to input data and run various reports. These reports can determine the value of your data based upon its statistical significance. The reports can also identify areas of concern based on the various outcomes of measurement such as standard deviation and chi squares.

For the duration of the course the cohort was asked to complete two assignments. The first assignment required us to create a presentation on the negotiations between the Teacher's Union and the Board of Education for the Urbana School District. The assignment required that we examine the data to determine the top ten negotiation items for the teachers of Urbana. The data analyzed provided the trends of the sentiments of the teachers of Urbana. After our group analyzed the data, with just a simple click of a button we were able to look at the mean of the data and determine the areas of concern based on the mean of the responses. We compared the responses at the elementary level, the middle school level, and the high school level and identified the top priorities for negotiations. This assignment was valuable because it provided the platform to experiment with the potential of SPSS.

Our group was instructed to research and analyze the results of a survey completed by the students, teachers, parents, and community members of the Urbana School District, as our next assignment. We prepared a presentation for the Urbana Board of Education which identified the areas of concern to the individual stakeholder groups of Urbana. The aim of this project was to synthesize the various outcomes of cross tabulations in order to utilize data as a means of addressing the needs of a school district.

This assignment was practical because it provided the capacity to analyze the data as it applies to the teachers, students, parents, and community of a school district. This is important because the data can be interpreted as it relates to improving a school district.

In conclusion, this course highlighted how to effectively analyze data by using SPSS. Our experience in this course was both valuable and practical because, as educational leaders we will need to gather raw data and synthesize these data in order to analyze the meaning behind the numbers.