**Compute a mean score in SPSS**

In this video I’m going to show you how to compute a mean score across two or more variables. So this is going to give us a mean for each row in our data set. In this case I’ve got participants so it’s going to give us a mean score for each participant, and you’ll see I’ve got four mean scores, so there’s slightly different ways we can compute a mean according to how many responses that we have, so if we’ve got missing values we can choose not to include a mean for that particular participant.

Let’s have a quick look at our coding before we get started. So if you go to the variable view, you can see that for all four of my satisfaction variables, one represents strongly disagree through to five representing strongly agree. Now it’s really important that when you’re combining variables, that they’re all measured in the same way. So if you have something like scales, or items on a scale, like I have here with satisfaction, they all need to be positively worded or they all need to be negatively worded. In this case, all of mine are positive. Now an example of a negatively worded question would be if I had dissatisfied with quality. So if I have that instance, I would need to reverse code that variable, before I was able to combine it with the others. If you want to know more about reverse coding, please see that specific video.

Okay, let’s have a look back at our data view. We’ve got four different mean scores that we’re going to calculate. The first one calculates a mean regardless of any missing values for participants. The second one we’re going to do is only going to compute a mean score if a person has two or more scores. So you’ll see here that this participant only answered one so they no longer have a score here for the mean. The third one will only compute if they have three or more scores, and the fourth one will only compute if you have all four satisfaction scores.

So let’s go ahead and get started. I’m going to delete these ones here that I have here so that we can create them again, if we go to ‘clear.’ Okay, we can compute a variable from the transform menu using the first option called ‘Compute Variable’. We need to give our variable a name. I’m going to call my ‘Mean Satis’. Now you can type in a label and specify the variable type. Here it is going to be numeric and we can type in a label for this, so I can call it Mean Satisfaction Score, for example. And go ahead and click ‘continue’. Now to get our mean we’re going to use the function group called Statistical. We want the mean; you can either double click or use the arrow. I’m going to go ahead and double click. Now you see these question marks, we’re going to replace the question marks with our variables. So the first one is highlighted, I’m going to go ahead to my first variable to double click. I’m now going to highlight my second question mark and replace it with my second variable. You can double click or use the arrow. I’m going to go ahead and double click it in. I’ve got more than two variables so I’m going to separate them with commas. If I put a comma at the third , put a comma, and add the fourth one. Now that’s all we need to do, we can go ahead and click ‘okay.’ You can see here that we have our new mean satis score, and if we have a look at our variable view, we’ve got a label; we have a level measurement which is scale by default. The decimal places are also set to default as to, and all this is okay, it’s what we want. So let’s have a look at how we can specify how many items a person must have before we make a mean score. If we go back to transform and compute, I’m going to go ahead and change the name because we can’t have two variables with the same name. I’m going to put a two because I’m going to specify that a person has to have two or more scores before we make a mean. If we have mean, and we put a full stop, and then the number two, this tells SPSS only calculate a mean if there are two or more. So we’re going to go ahead and click ‘okay.’ And you can see here for the fifth participant, they only have one score so this is missing because we don’t have two or more. We can do the same thing for three or more. So if I go back to compute, I change this to a three, change this to a three, go ahead and click ‘okay’, so you get the hang of it. So you can do this for four, and you can do this for as many variables that you’re combining, so if I had ten variables, I could do it up to ten if I wanted to. Okay, so this gives us a mean score across all participants.

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