Issues in research

The inclusion of a CD-ROM outlining the types of computer applications available and examples of real projects utilising the software available is innovative and beneficial.

Overall this book is a useful text in relation to qualitative research which would be beneficial to both novice and established researchers in the field. Written by experts in the field of qualitative research, the publication brings the subject back to a simplified and meaningful framework useful to all with helpful hints on how to start and writing up the process.

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**SPSS in Practice**

Author: Basant K Puri  
Publisher: Arnold  
No of pages: 175  
Price: £14.99  
ISBN: 0340761121

This textbook gives an introduction to performing statistical analysis using SPSS version 10. SPSS is a very popular statistical program, used widely by health professionals and health researchers. This is an update to the first edition, *Statistics in Practice*. Published in 1996, that book was based on an earlier version of SPSS. The new version is made very accessible by the non-technical language and the continuous use of images of SPSS menus, input and output screens. These allow the reader to practise using the examples given and to interpret the results produced. The examples used are based on data already within the SPSS program and so are readily available to the reader. The range of the statistical methods covered is wide: from the basics of data exploration to analysis of variance and linear regression, including parametric and non-parametric methods along the way.

Chapter 1 offers a succinct introduction explaining the basic statistical concepts used in the book. This is followed by a detailed chapter on data
entry. The often-neglected issues covered here ensure that data are correctly entered or imported into SPSS in the appropriate format. This is a fundamental step in preparing for data analysis and is often a stumbling block for the new user.

Without going into the theory of statistical testing, Chapter 3 gives a simple guide to the appropriateness of different tests for different purposes and data types. This information might more usefully have been placed after Chapters 4 and 5 (which cover data exploration, transformation and selection), immediately before the chapters concerned with statistical testing, but is helpful none the less. Chapters 6 to 10 (on comparing two sample averages, contingency tables, analysis of variance, statistical association, and linear regression between two variables) are helpfully structured into subsections covering main analysis sub-types.

In summary, this is a useful book covering the commonly used statistical functions in SPSS, aimed at the new to intermediate-level SPSS user. It does not cover more advanced methods, e.g. non-linear regression and multi-variate methods. Readers should be aware that it is not a statistics textbook and that they will therefore need some statistical understanding or should use the book in conjunction with a statistical text.

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Statistics with Confidence (Second Edition)
Authors: Altman DG et al
Publisher: BMJ Books
No of pages: 240
Price: £19.95
ISBN: 072791375 1

The fact that this book is a second edition, and that its two editions have gone through ten printings, suggests that it has some merits that appeal to researchers, or at least to editors who may read what those researchers write. It deals with surveys, clinical trials, diagnostic studies, and epidemiological work inter alia; indeed, it is remarkable how much it