The assignment that I chose to reflect on was SPSS Lab 1 because it was a rewarding assignment that introduced me to the world of SPSS software. This was a significant moment in my studies as SPSS is anticipated to be a central tool in my future endeavors in data analysis. The process was intricate and required me to access a Windows desktop on my Mac through UM Flint's "LabAnywhere" Virtual Machine. I found myself navigating through SPSS while working with a .sav file containing information from over 500 respondents. This hands-on experience was invaluable in teaching me the intricacies of data manipulation, understanding descriptive statistics, creating visual representations, and interpreting SPSS outputs. I learned to develop skills in analyzing data using SPSS, both creating and interpreting data tables and graphs, making informed decisions about data, and effectively communicating data analysis results. I was introduced to a real-life example of dataset from the Toronto Study of Intact Families and various SPSS file types, including data, syntax, and output files. The practical skills I acquired ranged from opening data files in SPSS to understanding different data views, using a codebook to interpret variables, and calculating statistical measures like mean, median, mode, and standard deviation. I also learned how to construct frequency distributions and create various types of charts such as pie charts, bar graphs, and histograms.

The tasks in this assignment required me to select different variables from the dataset, describe them, analyze them using SPSS, and then present my findings in a report format. This aligned perfectly with my curriculum in computer science and data analysis by offering me practical experience in handling real-world datasets. I had to perform a comprehensive analysis of the survey data with a focus on variables like maternal pride, TV viewing hours, and a child's origin. This analysis honed my skills in data interpretation, understanding different variable types, considering multiple perspectives, understanding measurement levels, interpreting descriptive statistics, and choosing appropriate statistical measures.

I was happily surprised at how much my skills in SPSS were greatly enhanced. I learned data manipulation, computation of descriptive statistics, data visualization, and interpretation of outputs. The lab emphasized reflection through in-depth data analysis and its wider implications. It encouraged me to view social phenomena from various angles by analyzing diverse family dynamics. I became familiar with core concepts like data entry, manipulation, and basic statistical analysis. This skill set is applicable across different data processing tools, reducing my learning curve in the workplace, and enhancing my adaptability in data-driven tasks and new software environments. LabAnywhere was great most of the time and it convenient due to its flexibility and accessibility, but it still had its drawbacks. I encountered occasional slowness and the inconvenience of losing the instance if left the system inactive for too long which required me to frequently redownload my project and restart the SPSS application. Despite this, however, I found the overall assignment to be of great benefit to me and my understanding of the material. The assignment improved my ability to use SPSS for data analysis, emphasizing reflection on the data analysis process. It critically examined how statistical methods and software tools like SPSS influence the interpretation of social science data. The assignment also required me to view data from various analytical angles which enriched my understanding and application of data analysis in social science research.