

Guidelines for Theory Chapters (15-25 pp suggested)

1. Origins and Historical Development of Theory

- historical period during which theory emerged through recent developments
- influences of major historical events, cultural shifts, and developments in related academic disciplines
- emergence of theory itself as dynamic over time, including backgrounds of founders, earliest publications, ongoing debates, and level of acceptance of the emerging theory in field
- table of key primary sources
- introductions of major concepts of theory as they were used by founders

2. Core Assumptions and Interrelated Concepts of Theory

- assumptions and values implied or stated in theory about human nature and about families (goals and functions)
- emergence of core concepts linked to primary resources
- philosophy of science (eg, reductionism versus holism; subjectivity vs objectivity; possibility of verifying theory)
- conceptual definitions of major concepts of theory as they are being used in contemporary research
- how major concepts interrelate in theory, including issues of causal, circular, interactive, and mediating relationships among concepts
- operationalization of concepts in variables used in family research
- challenges and shifts in science that led to variations of core theory framework
- graphic diagram (if appropriate) depicting major concepts and hypothesized linkages

3. Main Problems, Questions, and Limitations of Theory

- aspects of family life that theory most clearly addresses
- major questions the theory is especially equipped to ask
- major family problems the theory can help explain
- areas of family life not addressed, or not addressed systematically by the theory
- summaries of major critiques of theory, applications, new debates, and tensions with other frameworks
- current problems in conceptualizing, operationalizing or applying the theory in empirically supporting the theory

4. Examples of Research Emerging from Theory

- content areas in family science in which theory has been used extensively, including classic studies or important groups of studies that have supported the theory or have been informed by the theory
- how these studies have influenced the development of the theory

5. The Growing Edge: Future Directions of Theory

- recently emerging trends, emphases, or extensions of theory
- new areas of family life being addressed
- new methodologies being applied or considered to illustrate the theory
- future prospects growth and advancement of theory

Guidelines for Methods Chapters (15-20 pp suggested)

1. Historical Origins of Methodology

- origins of methodology, both general and with respect to applications to family research, through recent development and adaptation to family science
- critical historical events, technological developments
- key people
- table of primary resources

2. Basic Assumptions of Methodology

- theoretical assumptions, both general and those more specifically related to family theories, the latter being of crucial importance
- if applicable, statistical assumptions
- fit between both types of assumptions and the actual complexity of family life
- whether the methodology's assumptions properly reflect or improperly oversimplify reality

3. Overview of Methodology

- concepts used, models used to tie concepts together, specific techniques
- relationship of methodology to other phases and aspects of overall research process
- dynamic evolution of technological advances and datasets to enable methodology

4. Summary of Main Questions the Methodology Can Address

- general questions and questions specific to family processes or theories the methodology can address with varying degrees of effectiveness
- challenges to methodology that led to growth, expansion, and innovation
- gender differences
- individual versus family levels of analysis

5. Example of Application of the Methodology to Research with Families

- appropriate and inappropriate application of the methodology to family researcher with emphasis on theoretical and assumption issues rather than minor, more technical points

6. Limitation of Methodology for Family Research

- concepts that the methodology cannot easily handle in either measurement or analysis
- privileging of the methodology compared to other methodologies
- difficulties in linking concepts together
- errors that can be caused by inappropriate application (how well-intentioned uses of methodology can lead to incorrect conclusions about how families function)
- theoretical issues that may tend to be overlooked or overemphasized if too much dependence is placed on this particular methodology

7. Future Directions of Methodology

- general trends and trends specific to family research