



What's missing from introductory family textbooks?

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Abstract

One of the central purposes of an introductory course in marriage and family science is to introduce students to the theory and research methods that are commonly used in the discipline and to the applications of research to practical issues confronting families and society.

This study was conducted to assess the degree to which the content of the major introductory textbooks in marriage and family science include theory, research methods, and applications. In short, how well do we introduce students to family science theory, methodology and application?

We examined **seventeen textbooks published between 2012-2019** regarding content devoted to theory, research methods, and application.

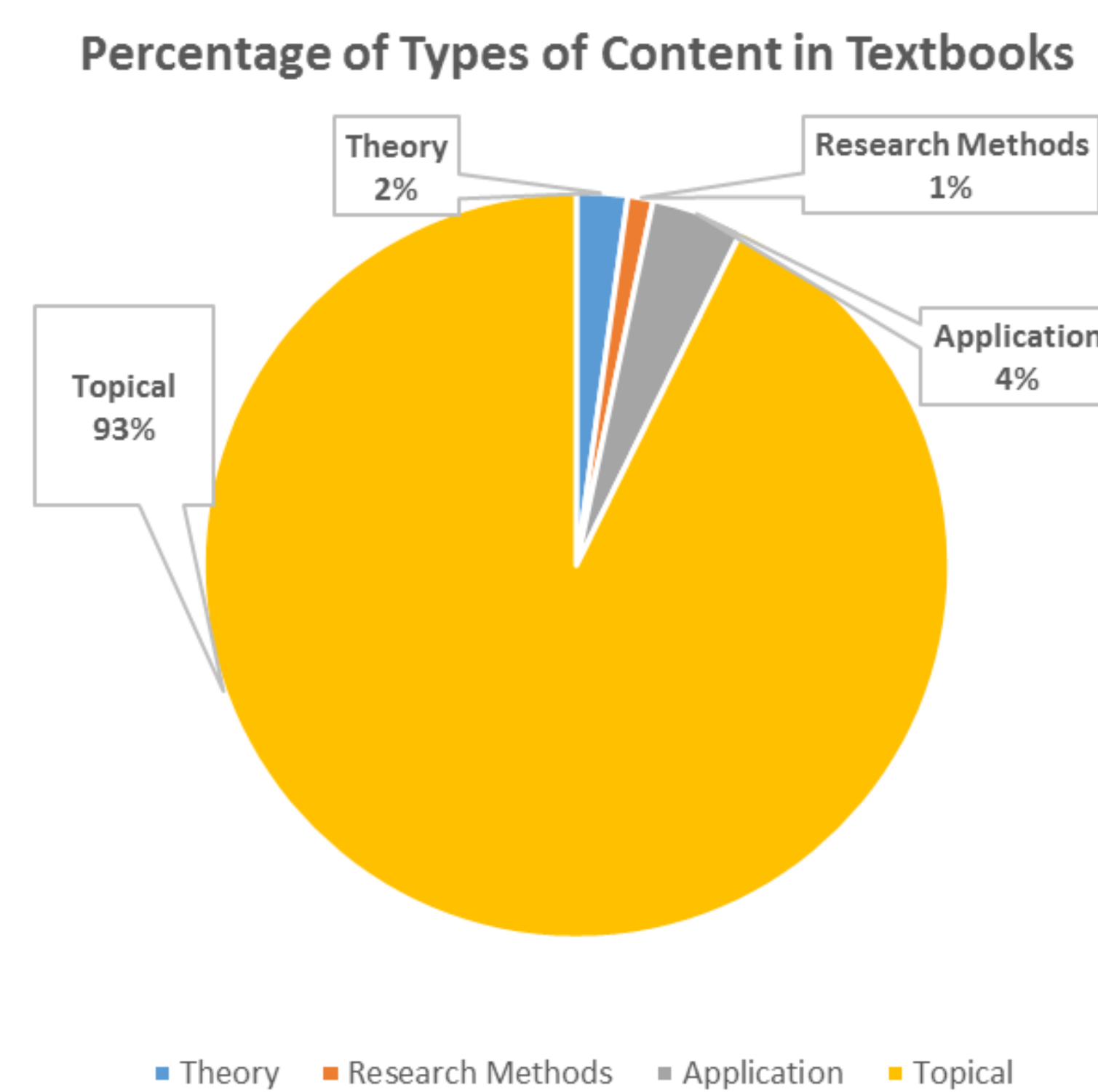
The results indicate that only a small percentage of introductory textbooks include much content on theory (2%) and research methods (1%).

Also, despite the emphasis on the translation of research, introductory textbooks cover family life education and family therapy in less than 1% of the book.

Family policy receives more coverage (3%), but still rarely provides any discussion about roles in policy process and how research can inform policy.

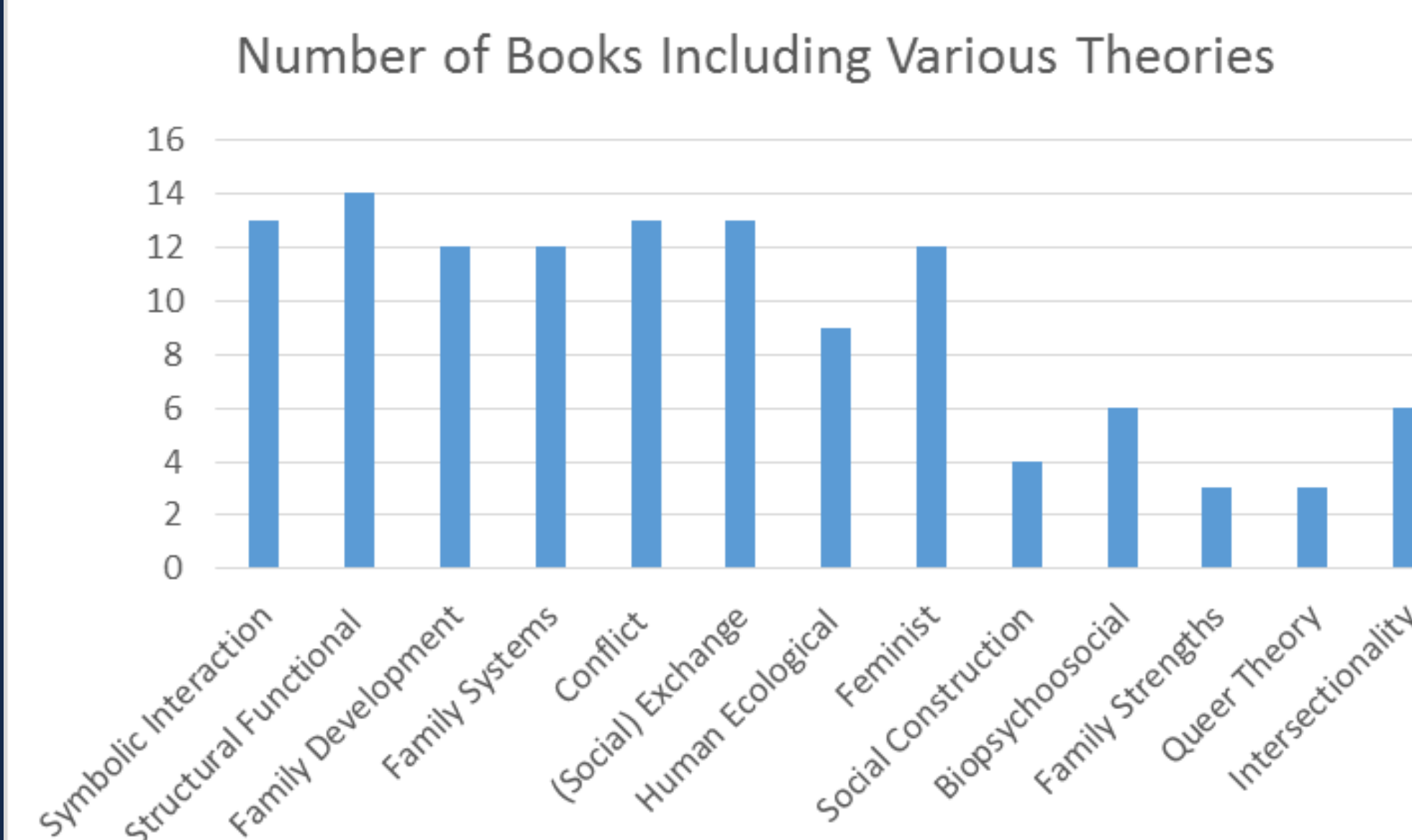
These results are discussed in terms of how introductory textbooks may be failing to provide adequate preparation for family science students.

Are we providing the scientific foundations?



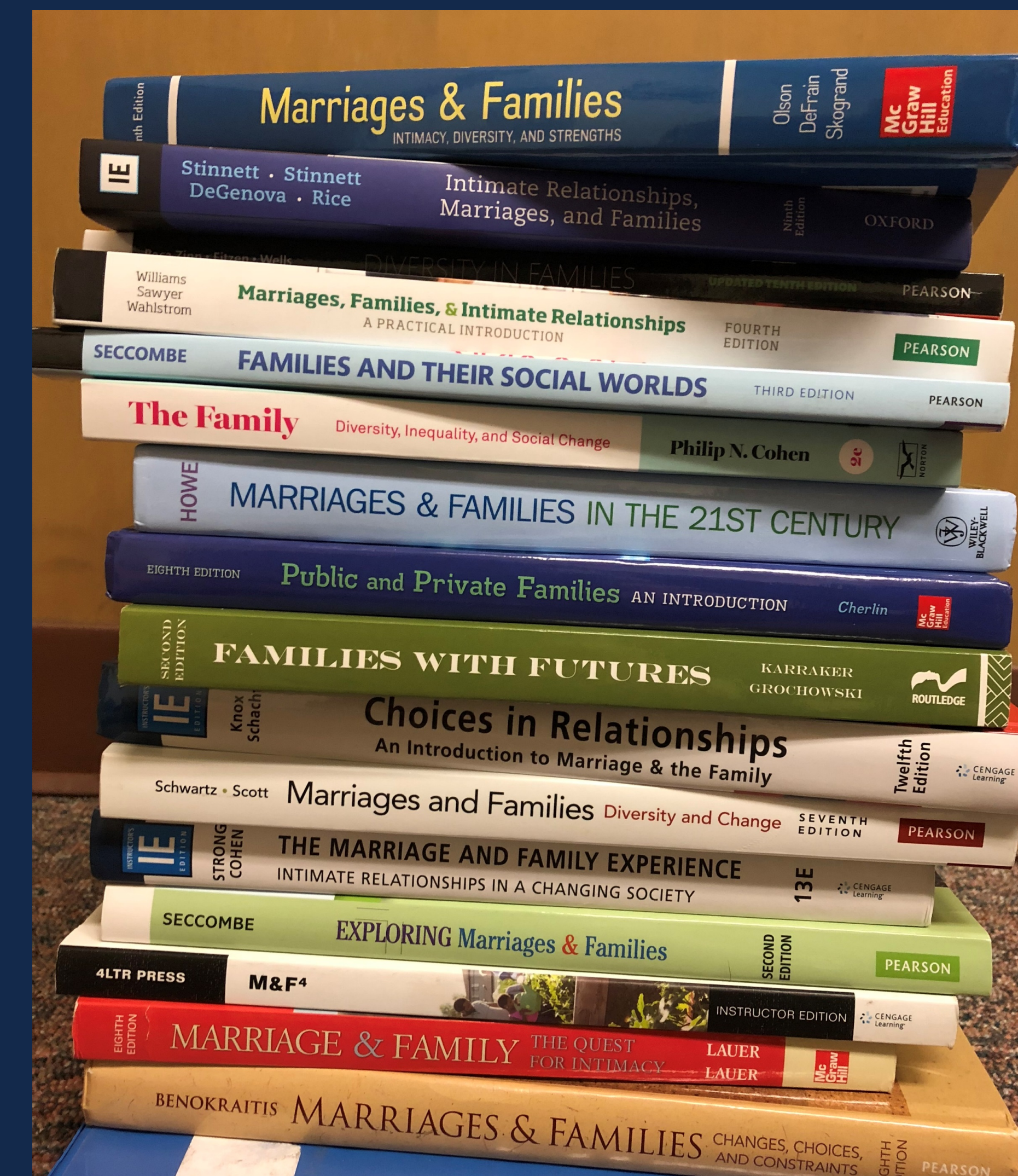
What theories are we teaching?

Mostly older theories.

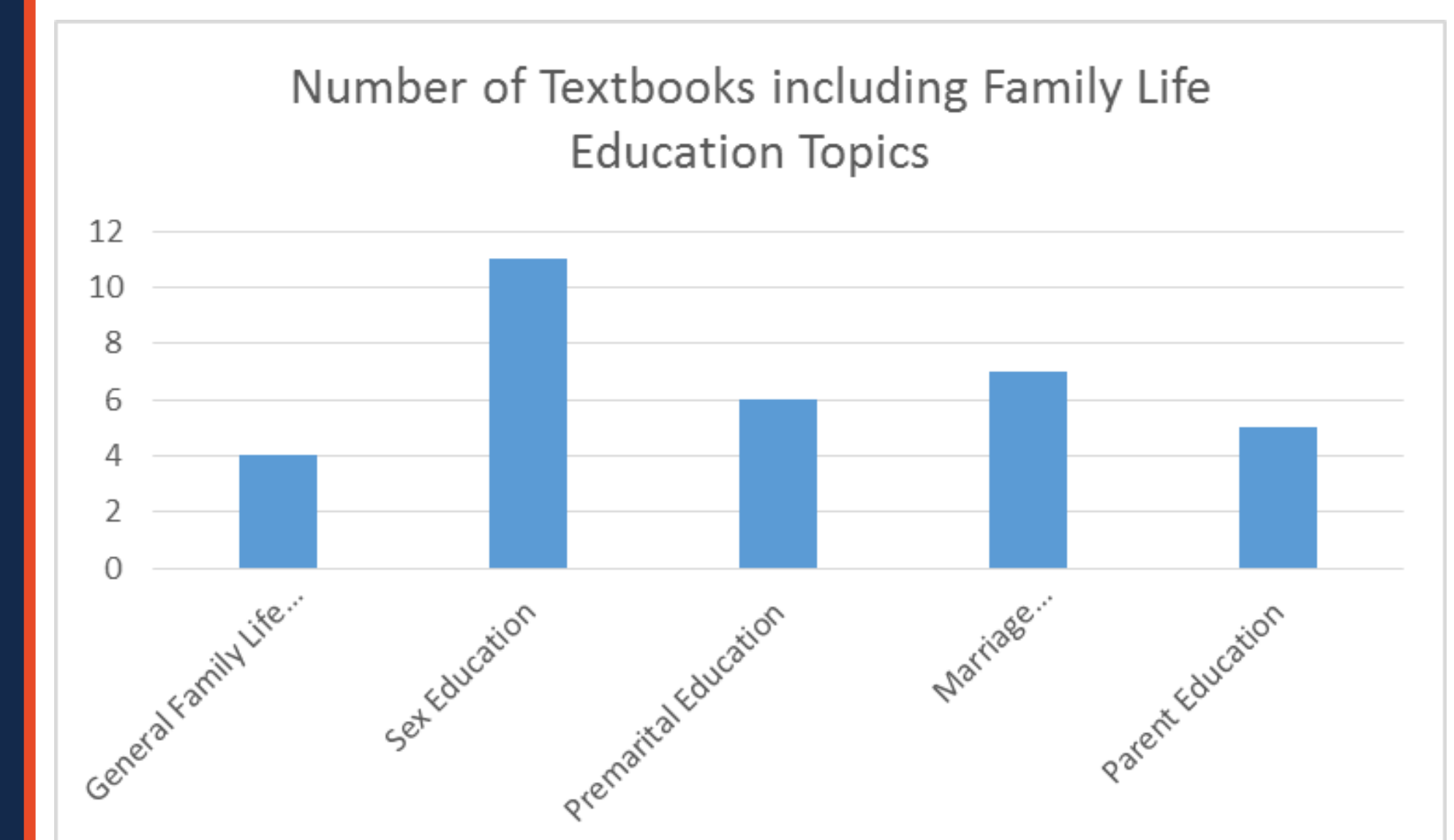


What research methods are we teaching?

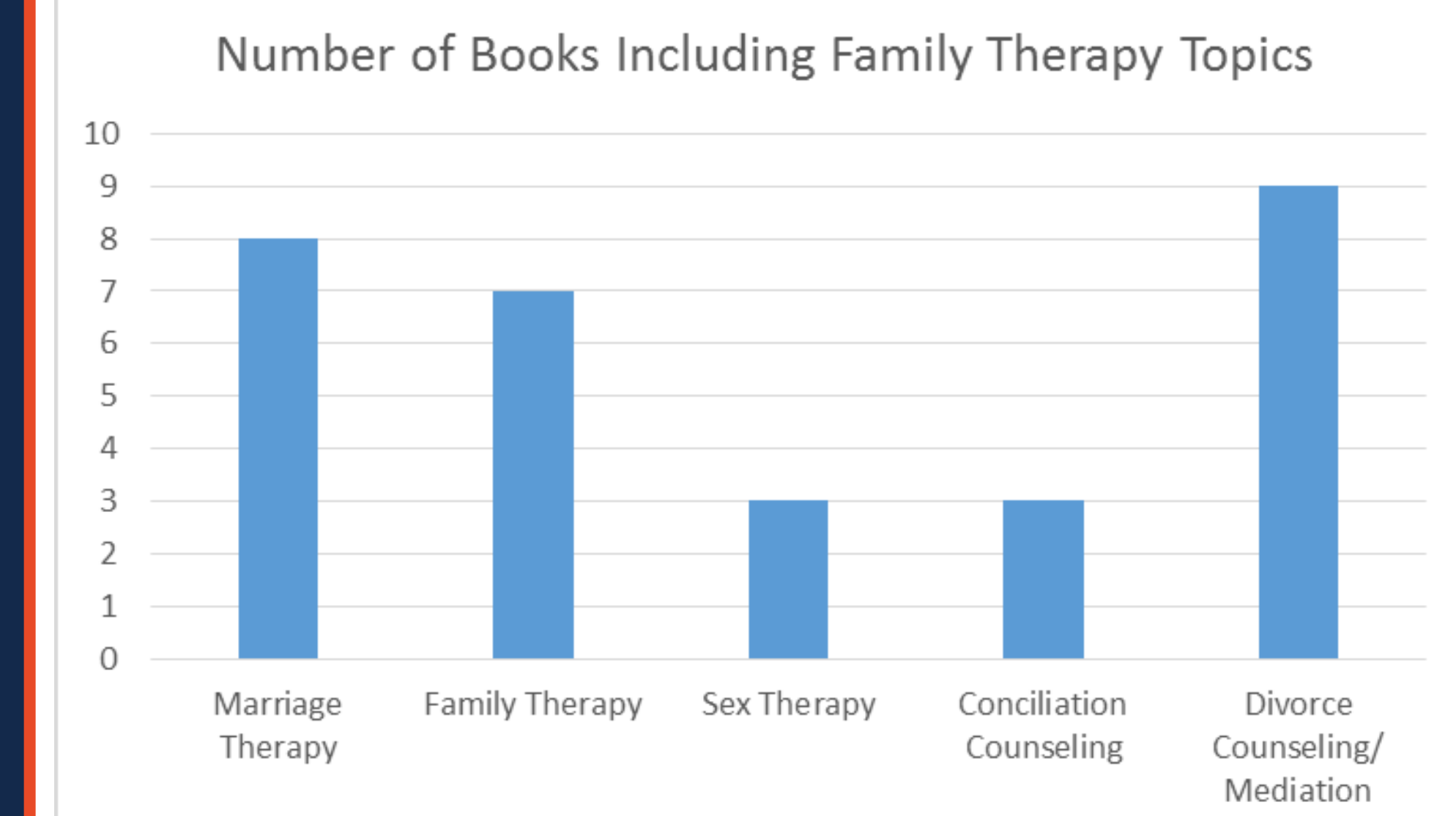
Almost no explanations of lab-observational methods, ecological momentary assessment or biological assessment



What about application? Family Life Education?



Family Therapy?



Family Policy?

