

# Dissertation data discovery and dissemination: linking users to the datasets behind doctoral research

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We concur with the conference planners: "There has been an explosion of data sources and topics; vast changes in compilation and dissemination methods; increasing awareness about access..." Therefore, we offer a glimpse into the latest trends and best practices in research and scholarship by investigating recent doctoral dissertations across four disparate fields of study.

**The challenge to colleges and universities:** train students in traditional research and scholarly techniques, and enable them to thrive in a "data-drenched society".

**The response from doctoral student researchers:** make greater use of – and provide seamless access to – secondary data and materials?

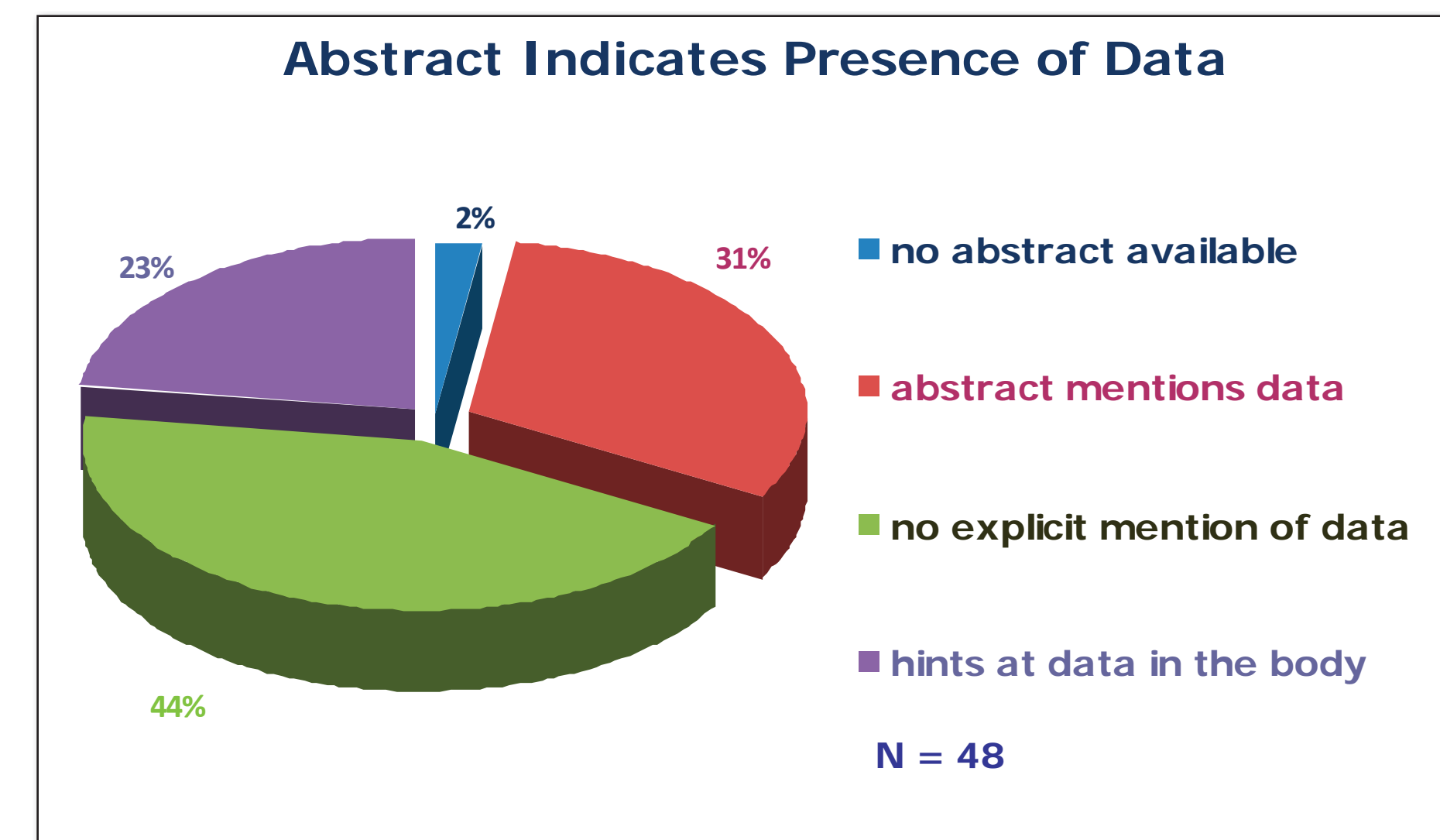
**The role of academic libraries:** actively participate in data discovery and description of datasets, while working closely with vendors and archives.

This poster highlights the results of our analysis of a sample of recent dissertations from four disciplinary groupings:

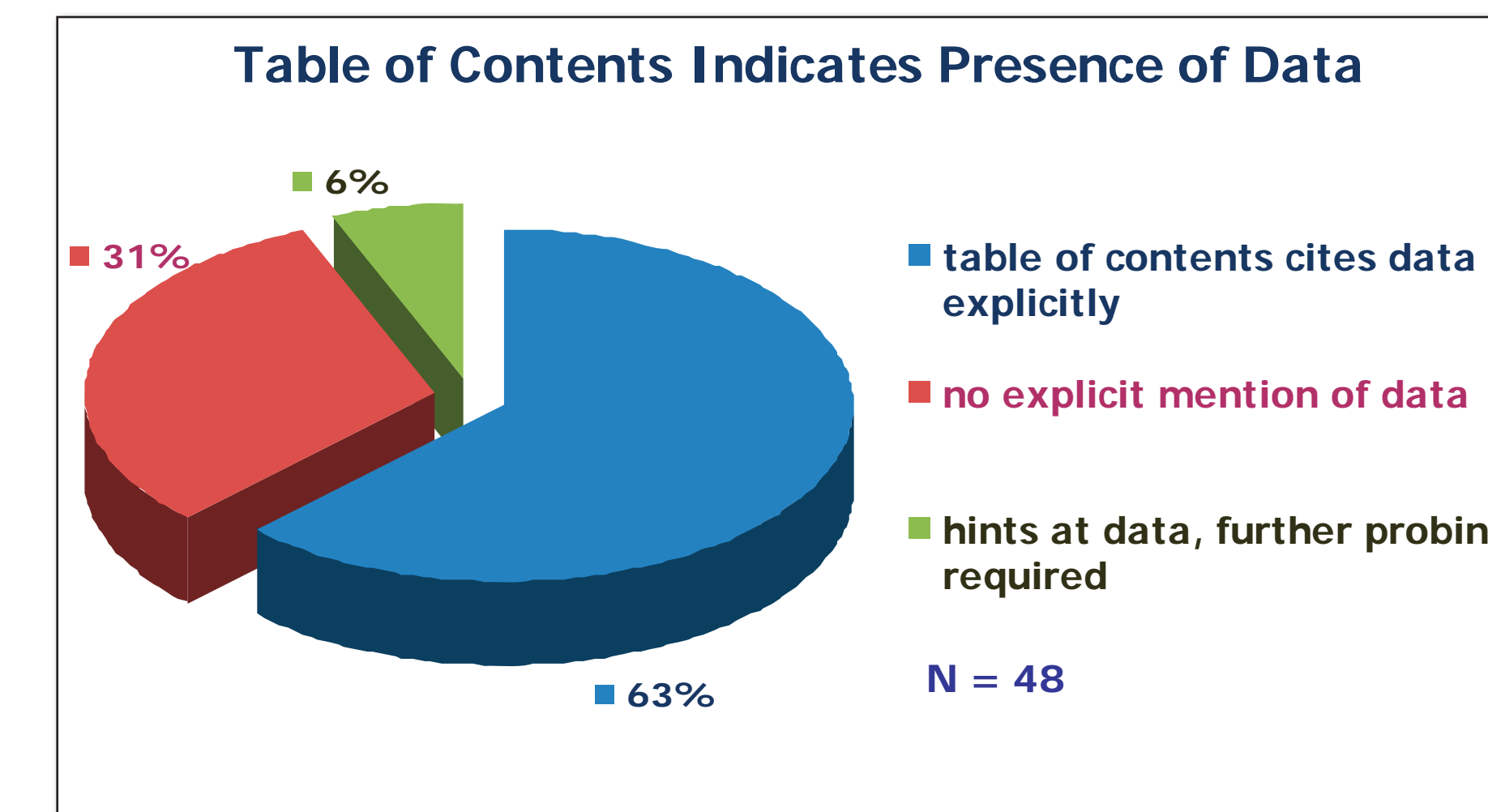
- ▶ "hard pure" represented by Biology
- ▶ "soft pure" represented by Sociology
- ▶ "hard applied" represented by Mechanical Engineering
- ▶ "soft applied" represented by Education

Specifically, we examine the findability and availability of datasets; explore the nature of the datasets being used; and suggest linkages to vendors and archives.

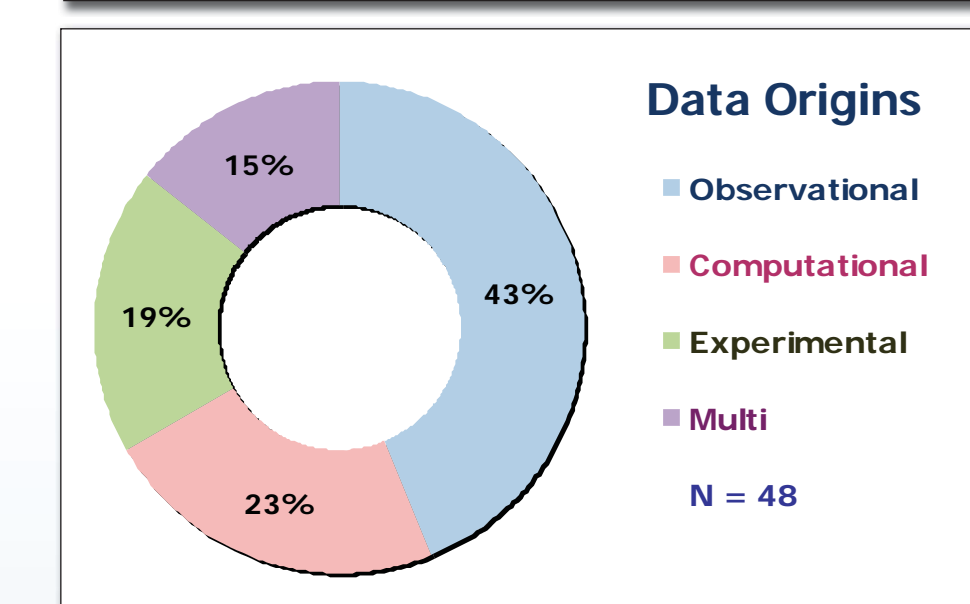
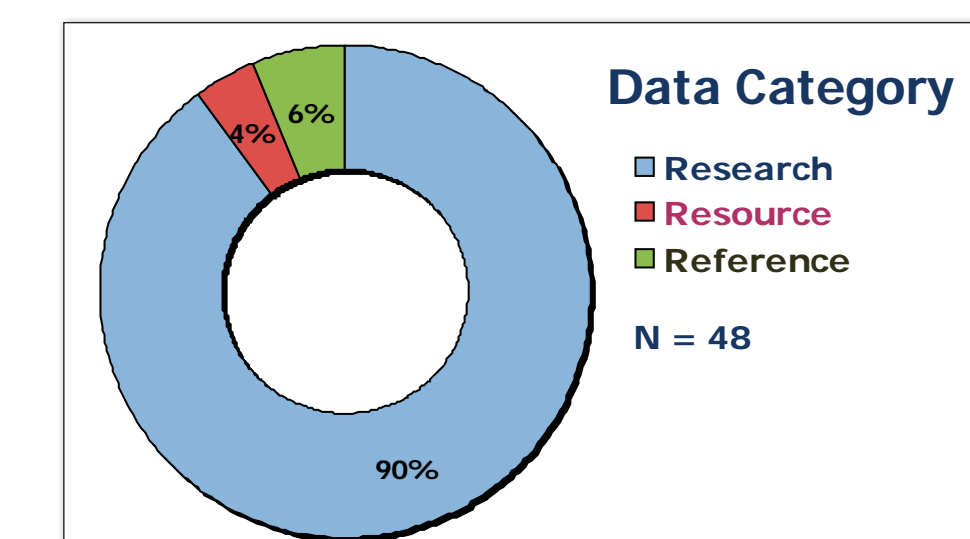
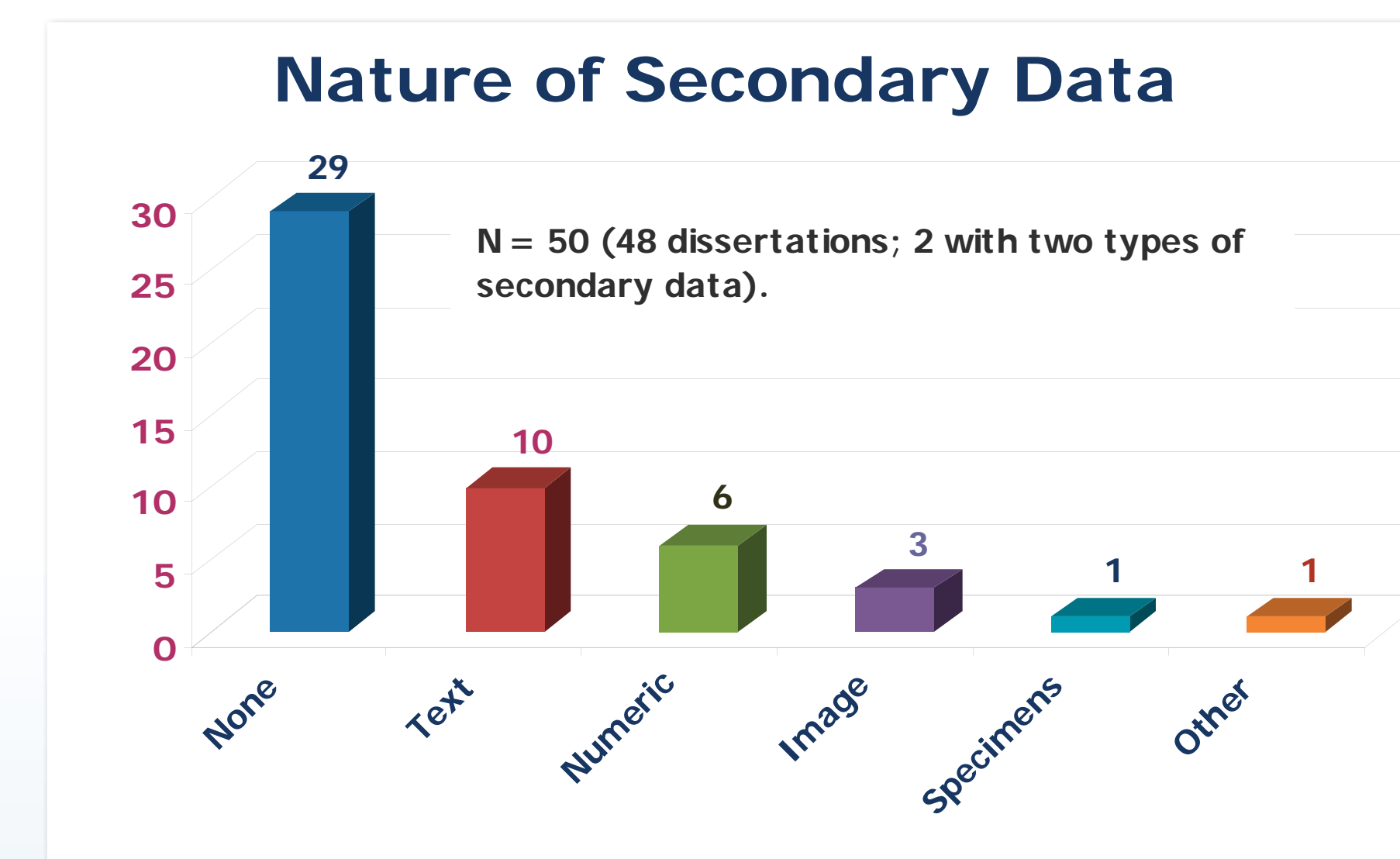
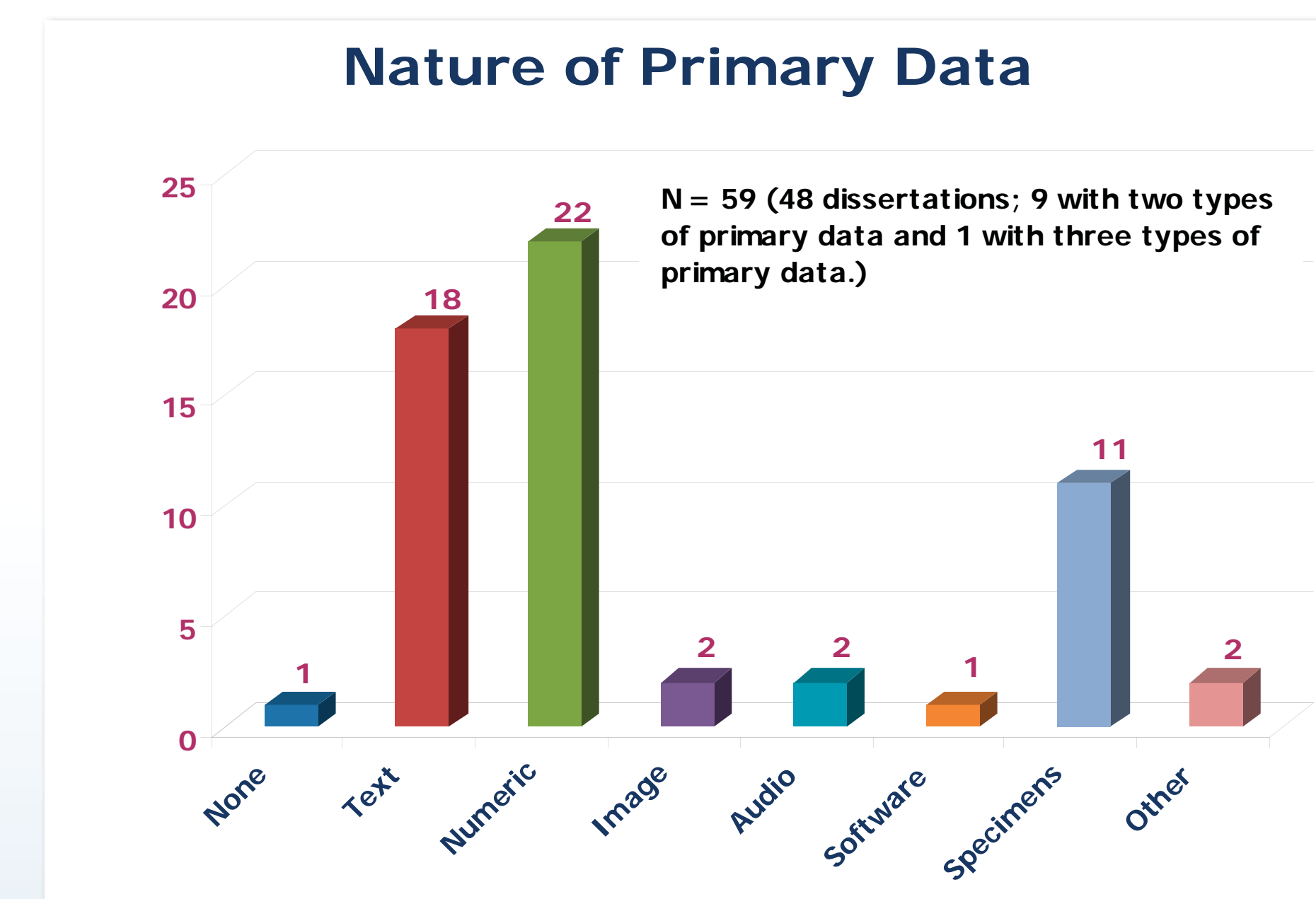
## 1. Do abstracts accurately indicate the use of data (primary or secondary)?



## 2. Do titles or tables of content adequately reflect the use and availability of data?



## 3. What is the nature of the collected data?

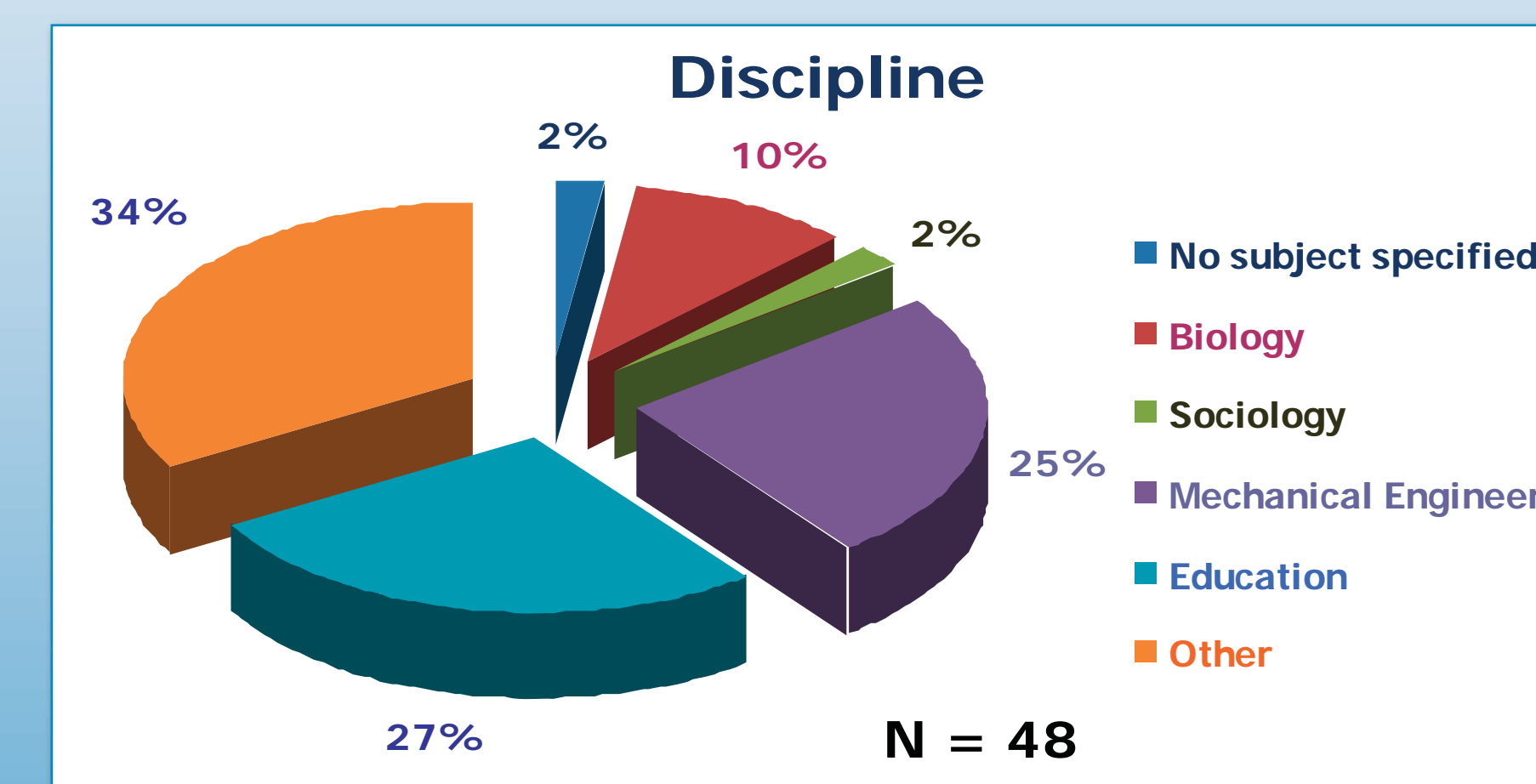
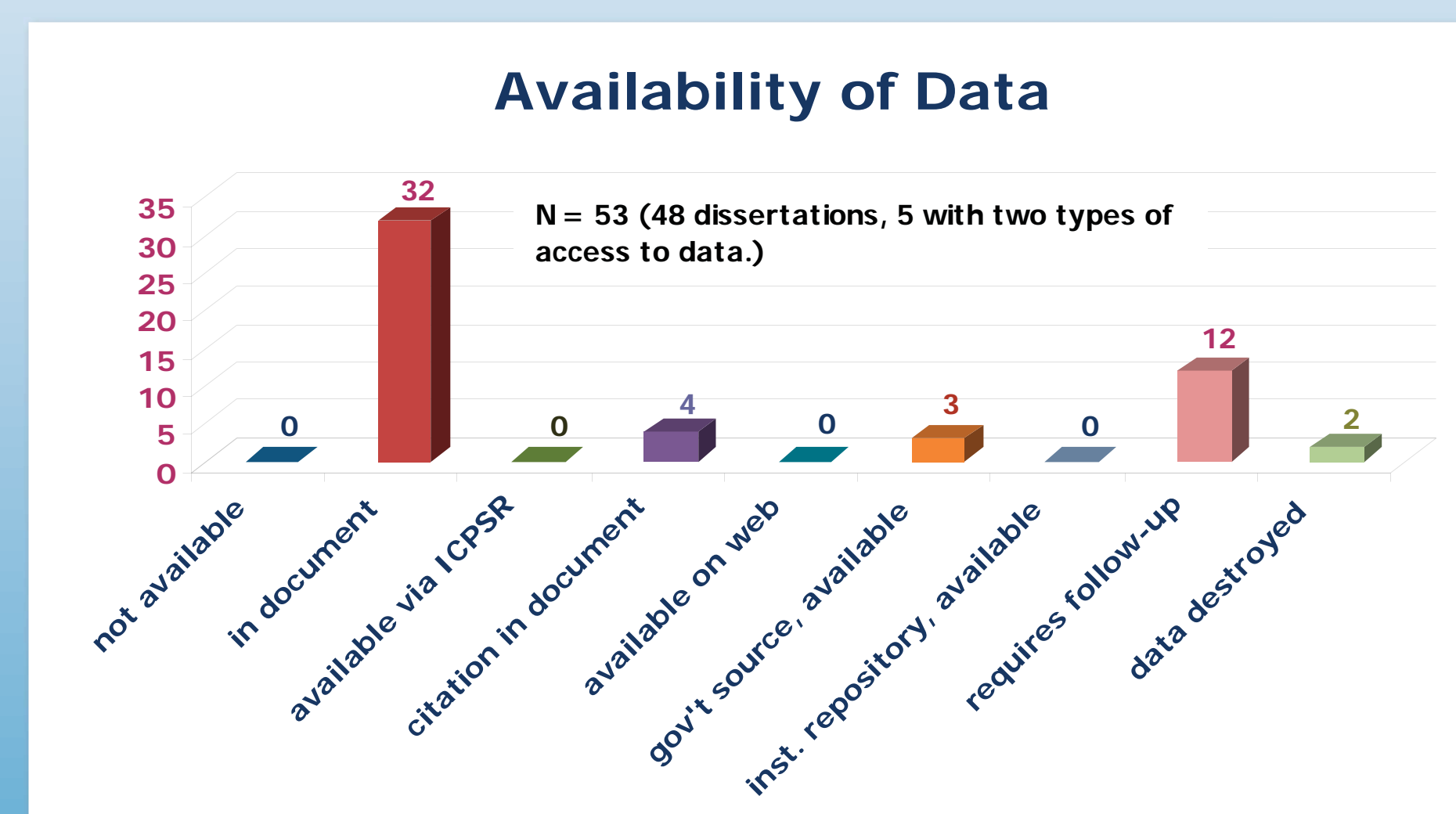


Dissertation datasets tend to be unique, and are configured to serve only the immediate need of the dissertation;

this points up tough choices for archiving and preservation.

However, the origin of datasets used in doctoral dissertations suggests a greater need for archiving and preservation.

## 4. Are there disciplinary differences regarding dataset use, reuse and sharing?



Cultural and ethical imperatives of disciplinary groupings may influence the use and reuse of data.

The increase in data-driven inquiry presents an opportunity for research libraries to enhance their relevance and institutional reach. The library can avoid becoming marginalized by fully serving the needs of data-seeking users.

users → datasets