Derleme Makale / Review Article

PARADIGMS IN FAMILY RESEARCH: DIVERSITY AND REFLEXIVITY

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Abstract

This article addresses scholarly reflexivity in family research, by studying the use of paradigm from the second half of the twentieth century. In doing so, the present study focuses on countries that have produced remarkably abundant scholarly literatures on family issues, with a special focus on the United States, and with a limited focus on Japan for comparison from a non-Western context. By reviewing several types of family studies, this article throws light upon both the various manifestations of scholarly (self-)reflexivity and the diverse characteristics of the way paradigms are referred to in family science, as well as the connection between them. In doing so, the employment of paradigms is discussed through aspects such as the subject, the addressed field and its covered scale, as well as certain substantive attributes of the employed paradigm. In contrast, reflexivity in this study is referred to as reflexivity upon knowledge production, which is either related to the characteristics of a specific academic community or referred to a concrete research subject. By employing this conceptual tool, the present study, without claiming to be exhaustive, suggests that theoretical studies (especially from a philosophical approach), as well as emancipatory studies with a strong normative approach reveal high scholarly (self-)reflexivity, where the focus is either on the academic community, or on the applied research methodology and underlying assumptions, rather than on a specific family practice or process.

Keywords: Family, Paradigm, Social ccience, Diversity, Reflexivity, Ideology

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Aile Araştırmalarında Paradigmalar: Çeşitlilik ve Düşünümsellik

Öz

Bu makale, yirminci yüzyılın ikinci yarısından itibaren *paradigma*nın kullanımını inceleyerek aile araştırmalarında bilimsel düşünümselliği ele almaktadır. Bunu yaparken, bu çalışma, aile meseleleri hakkında dikkate değer büyüklükte akademik literatür üretmiş ülkelere, özellikle Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ve Batı dışı bir bağlamda karşılaştırma yapmak için sınırlı bir şekilde Japonya'ya odaklanmaktadır. Bu makale, aile çalışmalarının çeşitli türlerini gözden geçirerek, hem bilimsel (kendi üzerine) düşünümselliğin çeşitli tezahürlerine, hem aile biliminde paradigmalara atıfta bulunulan yolların farklı özelliklerine, hem de ikisinin arasındaki bağlantıya ışık tutmaktadır. Bunu yaparken, paradigmaların kullanılması; kullanılan paradigmanın belirli esas özelliklerinin yanı sıra konusu, alanı ve kapsadığı ölçeği gibi çeşitli yönleriyle tartışılmaktadır. Buna karşılık, bu çalışmada düşünümsellik, ya belirli bir akademik topluluğun özellikleriyle ilgili olan veya somut bir araştırma konusuna atıfta bulunan bilgi üretimi üzerine düşünümselliğe göndermede bulunmaktadır. Bu kavramsal aracı kullanarak, bu çalışma, kapsamlı olma iddiasında bulunmadan, güçlü bir normatif yaklaşıma sahip özgürleştirici çalışmaların yanı sıra (özellikle felsefi bir yaklaşımdan yapılan) teorik çalışmaların belirli bir aile pratiği veya sürecinden ziyade, odağının ya akademik topluluk olduğu ya da uygulamalı araştırma metodolojisi ve altında yatan varsayımlar olduğu yüksek düzeyde bilimsel (kendi üzerine) düşünümselliği ortaya koyduğunu öne sürmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Aile, Paradigma, Sosyal bilim, Çeşitlilik, Düşünümsellik, İdeoloji

Introduction

Family, with its diverse manifestations across human history, is a highly popular research subject in the social sciences. Standing in close connection to various spheres of society, the transformation of family from 'traditional' to 'modern', as a reflection of industrialisation and urbanisation, attracted remarkable social attention in the nineteenth and twentieth century. With the advent of what is often called the *postmodern* family (i.e., the pluralisation of family patterns), this early interest was further intensified from the 1960s in Western countries, and from the 1980s in a growing number of non-Western societies as well. Consequently, the remarkable changes to the family have

inspired much debate in both developed and developing countries. Being strongly linked to social progress, these discussions in both academic and non-academic circles, including the political sphere and the media, have frequently been driven from a normative approach based on cultural (national) orientation, often making the family a subject of many ideological debates. Though the discourse on family tends to be affected by ideals and beliefs, the strength of the normative approach in the related discussion varies from country to country, and also over time within the same country. The fluctuation in the use of the normative approach is arguably exposed to changes in sociopolitical and socioeconomic conditions, and also to the reflexivity of both academic and non-academic circles in the local society.

Given this strong reflexivity related to family, the present study focuses on academic research as one of the most influential social fields of knowledge production. The formation of scholarly reflexivity of family research has been proceeding with the development of an abundant literature in various countries since the nineteenth century. This forming (self-)reflexivity is revealed well by, among other things, the publication of studies on the history of family research in a specific country. These studies, from a purely descriptive approach, tend to discuss the birth and development of family research from various aspects such as the number of researchers along with their institutional organisation, the number of related journals, popular research topics, as well as the conditions of dominant theories and approaches. Nonetheless, there are also academic studies such as that of Ronald L. Howard (1981) on the development of American family sociology between 1865 and 1940 that go beyond these rather factual descriptions, addressing the conditions of family research from an intellectual ecological perspective.[1]

The present study takes up this tradition of (self-)reflexivity in family research from a specific point of view: that of the paradigm. The concept of the paradigm was first specified in detail by Thomas Kuhn (1962) for the field of physics, defined as a set of commonly shared models by a certain (academic) community for problem solving. Though the details of Kuhn's conceptualisation of paradigm did not remain without critiques,[2] the term became popular in both

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[1] As Howard (1981) states, the intellectual ecology of social scientists, unlike the intellectual ecology of natural scientists, extends beyond their own academic community.

[2] Among others, Steve Fuller (2000) sees Kuhn's *paradigm* concept as merely an "arrested social movement" (p. 37, 402) and suggests that the paradigm shift itself, as described by Kuhn, should be questioned as well. Second, Fuller also draws attention to that Kuhn's physics-based statements do not seem to fit the case of the biological and social sciences. In relation to the latter, Fuller points to that "its narrative was used uncritically by social scientists and other inquirers to legitimate their activities as paradigms on the same footing as those of the physical sciences" (p. 380).

natural and social sciences, including family studies. While the number of studies that make use of this concept is limited, it appears in various fields related to the family such as family sociology, anthropology, demography, psychology, therapy, pedagogy, and philosophy. In fact, the way paradigms are used and referred to in these studies shows great diversity that deserves a closer examination. Yet, there is a lack of a proper study on the various ways paradigms have been employed in family-related research, as well as on the way their diverse employment reflects scholarly reflexivity related to knowledge production.[3] This study aims to fill in this gap by discussing academic *reflexivity* in connection to *diversity* behind the employment of paradigms in family studies, seen through aspects such as the *subject*, the addressed *field* (i.e., academic field and geographical region) and its covered *scale*, as well as the *substantive attributes* of the employed paradigm (i.e., being 'theoretical', 'practical', 'empirical', or 'ideological').

As a hypothetical background, this study assumes that strong scholarly reflexivity emerges when a given academic community produces a large body of literature about a specific research subject, i.e., family in this case. Furthermore, this study also assumes that the various aspects regarding the employment of paradigms reveal different forms of reflexivity. The form of reflexivity varies according to whether it is related to the characteristics (thoughts, ideals, and actions) of a specific academic community (referred to as "self-reflexivity"), or a concrete research subject addressed by that academic community. In doing so, it can be expected that, for instance, emancipatory (normative) studies (i.e., studies that aim to improve the social conditions of a specific social group) may imply a relatively strong scholarly self-reflexivity. Although a proper cross-national comparison by using a two-dimensional analytical framework regarding the employment of paradigms and the related scholarly reflexivity would be ideal for testing these assumptions, the present study, without claiming to be exhaustive, is content with offering a detailed review of the way paradigms are used in family research to provide a basic understanding of its current conditions. In doing so, this study addresses scholarly (self-)reflexivity, with a special attention paid to family science in the United States, on the assumption that the large body of the American academic literature is accompanied by strong scholarly reflexivity regarding knowledge production. On the other hand, the

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[3] Knowledge production in this study is not limited to the three modes of knowledge and action discussed by Jürgen Habermas (1971), but it is referred to any kind of production through which a scholarly community achieves a new understanding (i.e., 'knowledge') about a specific question. This, among other things, can be about the characteristics of a certain research subject or a given research method, or even about the academic milieu and social embeddedness of a specific scholarly community.

present study also offers a brief discussion of family research in a non-Western context, with a special attention to Japan, where family (sociology) research developed a remarkably large body of scholarly literature under American influence, while also facing challenges in reflexivity that are (due to different cultural traditions and historical development) less seen in the United States. Adding this additional discussion is expected to inspire the scholars of family studies for further research about the employment of paradigms and academic reflexivity in a wider (global) context.

'Meta' Paradigms in Family Research

A review of family studies regarding paradigms should arguably start with addressing the concept of the *developmental paradigm* provided by Arland Thornton (2001). Instead of discussing the underlying paradigm(s) behind the way of doing family research in a specific country, Thornton focuses on the development of social sciences between the 1500s and 1900s in European history, paying special attention to family change from a demographic point of view. In doing so, Thornton points to the existence of a certain 'meta' narrative or 'meta' paradigm (though Thornton himself does not refer to it as such), which are believed to have penetrated through European social sciences for centuries up until the latter half of the 1900s. Thornton argues that this "paradigm was a model of change that has been applied at the individual, organizational, and societal levels", and that in "this paradigm, change was pictured as natural, uniform, necessary, and directional" (p. 450). He refers this developmental paradigm to the scholarly belief that there was a kind of evolutionary social development (including family change) in a global context, with Northwestern European countries in the lead. This paradigm, however, stood on false scholarly assumptions and methodology. By calling the underlying methodology *reading history sideways*, Thornton suggests that scholars in past times "believed they could read the history of the European past in the non-European present" (p. 451). He also argues that this developmental paradigm, which was successfully challenged by new historical findings in the latter half of the twentieth century, dominated knowledge production for over two centuries. Furthermore, Thornton points to that this paradigm turned into a kind of *developmental idealism* that affected both scholars and ordinary people. Thornton also outlined four key propositions of this: 1.) "Modem society is good and attainable"; 2.) "The modern family is good and attainable"; 3.) "A modern family is a cause and an effect of a modem society"; and 4.) "Individuals are free and equal, and [...] social relationships are based on consent" (pp. 454-455). As Thornton suggests, this developmental idealism spread all over the world and started to function as a kind of driving force for family change "in the direction of the modern family as defined

by developmental idealism" (p. 461) through, among other things, national governmental policies. On the other hand, whereas being aware of the remaining diversity of family patterns due to the persistence of certain indigenous elements, Thornton further argues that "the principles and ideas of developmental idealism may be the single most powerful explanation for many family changes in many places inside and outside northwest Europe" (p. 461). Concluding his study, Thornton denies the validity of the developmental paradigm, and at the same time, he also denies the paradigm of social change from traditional to modern. In doing so, he also calls into question the dominant practice of academic studies of employing structural explanations about family change over ideational explanations, and argues for the necessity of study of the ways in which developmental idealism was (and was not) responsible for specific family changes.

Thornton's attempt to describe the driving force behind the centuries-long way of doing research in the social sciences, with a special attention paid to family change, is a remarkable achievement. Though the present study does not aim to engage in a deep critical review of Thornton's suggestions,[4] a couple of remarks on this work are in order. First of all, whereas Thornton makes reference to numerous writers in his study, he does not mention one of the most influential American scholars in the middle of the twentieth century: Talcott Parsons. Emerging within the remarkable enthusiasm and optimism after World War II, Parsons, as a structural functionalist, was one of those scholars who paved the path towards the formation of what was later named *convergence theory*. This theory suggested a correlation between the conditions of economic development and social organisation, thus assuming that societies reaching similar economic conditions will show resemblance in their social organisation as well. This assumption also included family change, albeit based on capitalist economic and social conditions, and suggested convergence toward the nuclearisation of the family with the (male) breadwinner–housewife model, having two children on average.[5]

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[4] Thornton's book-length work (2005), which is based on his ideas in the above-mentioned study of 2001, drew remarkable scholarly attention and acknowledgment. On the other hand, certain points in his arguments need reconsideration, such as "the argument that developmental idealism emerged from belief in the developmental paradigm" (Caldwell, 2006, p. 222). Similarly, his rather overgeneralised descriptions of the cited writers also need careful reassessment.

[5] As found in North American middle-class families in the middle of the twentieth century. Interestingly, this type of convergence theory was tacitly challenged by the search for the socialist family type in Communist countries during the Cold War, which also implicitly claimed a kind of convergence under the slogan of socialist and communist ideas. In contrast to the convergence theory emerging in Western capitalist countries, this latter was burdened by the lack of a historical precedence and remained as a mere ideological experiment.

Whereas Thornton makes reference to the new historical findings in the latter half of the twentieth century[6] so as to contest the assumptions of the developmental paradigm, he leaves the related paradigm shifts within culture-related studies during the twentieth century undiscussed. The sociocultural evolutionary paradigm that dominated research studies on culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and which is also embedded in the discussions by Thornton on the developmental paradigm, was challenged from the middle of the twentieth century by the formation of a new paradigm, later called cultural relativism, hallmarked by Franz Boas and his disciples such as Ruth Benedict. This paradigm denied the evolutionary development of societies and emphasised the unique essence of each culture as being a complete world in itself. From the late twentieth century, a third paradigm called social constructivism emerged as a contrasting response to cultural relativism, by denying its core assumption, i.e., essentialism. Though these second and third paradigms differed in their basic assumptions, both shared a common standpoint in denying the evolutionary character of the first paradigm. Despite the fact that these paradigm shifts in culture-related studies seem to be relevant to the suggested developmental paradigm, it may be due to Thornton's closeness to demographic studies that he did not address them. Finally, it also needs to be noted that whereas Thornton questions the principles and ideas of the suggested developmental paradigm in detail, he does not specify what another paradigm could or should then replace the developmental paradigm.

Differing from the aforementioned study, Allen W. Barton and Robert C. Bishop (2014) address paradigmatic issues in family research in connection to a thus far less discussed perspective. Instead of focusing on popular subjects in family research such as theories, methods and contents, the authors pay attention to the philosophical background of family studies. The reason for their choice of subject lies in that "paradigmatic beliefs and values that shape research are centrally guided by *philosophical* matters, not research facts" (p. 241). Moreover, the authors, following Thomas Kuhn's conceptualisation, refer to paradigm as "normal science" and argue that "paradigms encompass key epistemological (nature of knowledge) and ideological (system of ideas and ideals that guide an individual or group) issues" (p. 241). In relation to this, they argue that whereas ideals cannot be avoided in academic studies, greater awareness about them can both reveal their latent existence behind research studies and significantly contribute to the development of new progressive theories and methodologies related to family.[7] They also suggest that ideologies

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[6] I.e., the findings by the Cambridge Group's work on the English family.
[7] Their standpoint questioning the researcher's objective neutrality in terms of ideals and beliefs goes

exist not only as *products* (such as scientific theories), but also within the *process* of knowledge, and thus they turn their attention to the mode of inquiry. Barton and Bishop here distinguish five different modes of inquiry: natural scientific, descriptivism, critical social science, postmodern, as well as contemporary hermeneutics, and discuss them from various aspects including philosophical characteristics, application and critique, but without ranking them according to validity and reliability. In doing so, the authors claim that "each reflect different paradigmatic approaches shaping social science research endeavors" (p. 242). They further argue that two ethical ideals, autonomy and individualism, appear as dominant values in the Western world and provide a detailed discussion on two of their ideological manifestations: political liberalism and liberal individualism.[8] By employing these concepts, they show how ideological assumptions are latently embedded in contemporary family research studies and raise four questions (for future studies) in relation to subjectivity and objectivity. Among them, the last appears as especially pressing: "How can family researchers simultaneously embrace an objective reality of family interaction while still maintaining the meaning-making processes and interpretations of the individuals within the family itself?" (p. 254). In fact, Barton and Bishop do not specify the conceptualisation of a *paradigm* per se, instead, as mentioned above, they draw attention to those paradigmatic ideals and beliefs are formed through philosophical orientations rather than research facts. On the other hand, by stressing the underlying importance of ideals and values in social sciences, they actually make a distinction between the social and natural sciences. Though Barton and Bishop do not reflect on this, this distinction throws light upon some questionable aspects of Thomas Kuhn's conceptualisation of paradigm (1962).

Compared to Thornton's grand theory on developmental paradigms, the study of Barton and Bishop appears smaller in scale both in a geographical sense and in the addressed time period. The concept of the *paradigm* seems to be less elaborated on as well. Whereas Thornton provides a detailed discussion on the underlying paradigmatic assumptions behind the social sciences including family research, Barton and Bishop seem to be content with calling attention to the significance of studying the underlying philosophical (paradigmatic) assumptions behind the five discussed modes of inquiry, in relation to dominant ideals and

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against Karl Mannheim's concept of *Freischwebende Intelligenz* (free intelligentsia or socially unattached intelligentsia). See Rajkai (2014, p. 27) for a detailed discussion on the matter.

[8] In their discussions this is further broken down into utilitarian individualism and expressive individualism. Though Barton and Bishop do not explicitly employ the term social or intellectual ecology, they tacitly touch upon them, by arguing that "values and ideals can also be embedded in research endeavors on the basis of the general milieu of the culture in which research takes place" (p. 249).

beliefs in social sciences. Yet, their research is highly significant in illuminating the latent dimension behind the way of doing family research in general. In doing so, their study takes a kind of intermediary position between Thornton's grand theory and the mainstream practice of doing family research on paradigms. Despite these differences, however, it can be argued that both the study of Thornton and that of Barton and Bishop show a high degree of scholarly (self-) reflexivity regarding knowledge production on behalf of the improvement of underlying research assumptions, although they do so by discussing different 'problematic' issues. Compared to these studies, the mainstream research practice, as shown in the following sections below, tends to focus on paradigms in a much smaller scale, albeit in various contexts.

Paradigms and Family Processes

One specific way of employing the term *paradigm* in family studies pertains to the categorisation of family processes, often referred to as *family paradigm*. In this case paradigm is used for describing internal relations and processes within a family or the relationship between the family and society. In American family research this type of employment of paradigms appears in studies related to what can be called the psychosocial sphere of the family.[9] For instance, Richard H. Evans and Norman R. Smith (1969) addressed the family's decision-making patterns (referring to them as paradigms) by employing a two-level analytical framework: social class and family life cycle.[10] The thus created behavioural matrix was then used for studying whether decisions among family members were made on a joint (syncretic) basis or on a non-joint (autonomic) basis. The findings suggested that variables such as the role of the housewife, social interaction, product competence, marital relations, and family income all contributed to the formation of decision-making paradigms.

In contrast to the family's *actual practice* in everyday life as discussed above, in the early 1980s David Reiss and Mary E. Oliveri published several studies on family problem-solving behaviour and the family's construction of social reality. In their study of 1980, they addressed family strategies to cope with challenges and stressful events. In doing so, they aimed to explore both the characteristics of the families' coping strategies, as well as their relationship to the families' adaptability to challenges and stress. Though Reiss and Oliveri are aware of the problems regarding Kuhn's ideas in the philosophy of science, they

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[9] The title of Handel's edited book, *The Psychosocial Interior of the Family* (1967) well reflects this (social) psychological approach to family.
[10] They divided the concept of social class into three categories (upper-middle; lower-middle; and upper-lower) and family life cycle into four categories (young married, no children; young married with children; old married with children; and old married, no children), thus creating a behavioural matrix.

find them suitable for their empirical work. In doing so, they define the concept of family paradigm as a "new idea or approach, born in crisis, which serves as a background and orienting idea or perspective to the family's problem solving in daily life" (1980, p. 435), that functions as a kind of stable compass whenever family needs to interpret a new situation.[11] In relation to *family paradigms*, they articulate three conceptually distinct dimensions: configuration, coordination and closure,[12] and argue that if the position of a family along these dimensions is known, then it becomes possible to foresee their reactions to challenges and stress. Besides the family's problem-solving strategies, the authors also address the relationship between the way families construct social reality and their ties to kinship networks. They first confirm associations between the family's construction of social reality and its connection to kinship (Oliveri & Reiss, 1981), and then they aim to clarify the causality between them (Reiss & Oliveri, 1983).[13] In doing so, they (re)confirm that interactions within a family and interactions between the family and the outside social world are both formed by a certain paradigm. By employing the three aforementioned dimensions, they define paradigm as "a set of enduring assumptions about the social world shared by all family members", and argue that "families can be distinguished one from the other by the nature of their paradigms" (1983, p. 81). They conclude that both the family's social constructions and the characteristics of kinship networks contribute to the formation of the family's ties to kinship.

Taking up the concept of family paradigm as suggested above, Larry L. Constantine devoted a book-length study (1986) to its further investigation in relation to family therapy. In this work, which is, among other works, based on the reconsideration of the models previously developed by David Kantor (1975), Constantine conceptualises family paradigm in the following way: "Every family develops its own special style, its own strategies for dealing with family living. In doing so, the family operates as if it were guided by a *family paradigm*, a model of what the family is, can be, and should be" (p. 14). Constantine discusses theory, paradigm and therapy in a systematic order and develops a dialectic

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[11] It must be noted that this kind of interpretation of paradigm first appears in Reiss' study of 1971. This was also further polished by scholars such as David Kantor (1975, 1983).

[12] Configuration in their study is referred to "the degree to which the family can discover the hidden or underlying patterns in the stimulus arrays", coordination to "the degree to which members attend to the details of each other's problem-solving efforts", and closure to "the degree to which families delay their final decisions until they have all the evidence they can obtain" (1980, pp. 435-436).

[13] More precisely, this was about the causality of the following three elements: the family's social constructions, the actual characteristics of the family's kinship network, as well as the family's ties to kinship. Reiss and Oliveri assumed that the family's social constructions were rather just outcomes of the actual characteristics of the kinship network and played an intermediary role between the characteristics of the kinship and the family's ties to kinship.

(quadraplex) model, by adding the synchronous family to Kantor's original typology on the closed, random and open types of families.[14] Each of these represents a different paradigm and has both enabled and disabled forms. This conceptual framework was then employed for other studies as well, such as the work of Margaret Ward (1997), who focused on the adoption of older children. Ward in her study aims to test the validity of Constantine's aforementioned typology, by employing it for "the issue of matching family characteristics and strengths to the needs of older children" (p. 257). In doing so, Ward concludes that whereas Constantine's model appears to be useful for adoption studies in a theoretical sense, there is a need for further refinement of the reliability and validity of its empirical tools, such as the Family Paradigm Assessment Scale (FPAS) and the Parenting Assessment Scale, in order to be able to use them with confidence for research and practice. By making reference to, among others, Ward's study, Lori A. Hoisington (2011) also addresses Constantine's aforementioned typology in relation to human emotions and gives a detailed description of the related literature. In her quantitative survey research, Hoisington skilfully demonstrates the diversity of relationships between family paradigms and human emotions.

The employment of paradigm and the form of scholarly reflexivity regarding knowledge production discussed in this section differ remarkably from those in the previous section. By focusing on well-defined academic fields within the United States, the subject of the employed paradigms in these studies is not the underlying scholarly assumptions behind family research in a cross-disciplinary sense, but it is rather the *family*, or more precisely, the members of a family in their daily life. In doing so, they tend to be practical and empirical. On the other hand, Constantine's work, as well as those later studies above based on his research seem to go beyond the scope of the aforementioned work of Evans and Smith, as well as that of Reiss and Oliveri in that they do not simply aim to describe the characteristics of various types of families from a specific point of view, but they also attempt to provide a theoretical basement for further studies. In doing so, these works appear to show certain overlaps with studies on paradigm (as discussed below) that are explicitly meant for providing better theoretical or practical frameworks for future research, as well as for educational purposes regarding the family.

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[14] In Constantine's book, closed families are referred to as "stability through tradition", random families as "variety through innovation", open families as "adaptability through negotiation" and synchronous families as "harmony through identification" (p. 291, 304, 315, 329).

Paradigms for Research and Educational Development

Several studies address paradigmatic issues for further development of existing research and educational methods. For instance, Beutler and his co-athours (1989) aim to describe the uniqueness of the family sphere and distinguish it from other spheres of human experience, by employing a newly coined concept: the family realm. Their motivation for doing so lies in that family is so unique that employing theories from other social sciences unavoidably encounters limitations. They discuss seven characteristics of the family realm, such as generational and permanent relationships, relationships as "total" persons, simultaneous process orientation, emotional intensity, qualitative purposes (process and "being"), altruistic values, as well as nurturing governance, and argue that these characteristics collectively constitute the essence of the family realm. Though the authors are not certain about whether the suggested perspective can meet Kuhn's definition of a paradigm (or being paradigmatic), they refer to this as a new scientific perspective. In doing so, they evaluate theories related to family from the perspective of the *family realm* that the authors believe have failed to successfully grasp the characteristics of family life. As a response to later critiques regarding the concept of the family realm, Howard M. Bahr and Kathleen S. Bahr (1996) decided to introduce the concept of family transcendence "as a unifying theme for family realm characteristics" (p. 541). They call family transcendence a *paradigm*, which they conceptualise as a model that is devoted to provide a holistic insight into the various possible contexts and relations attributable to families. In doing so, they distinguish three basic categories of family transcendence: generational transcendence (parent–child relations as an essential bond), ancestral transcendence (ancestral linkages) and social mediation (ties to the human family beyond kinship). They argue that whereas mainstream family theories tend to be based on positivism, the family transcendence paradigm, based on hermeneutics and interpretive approach, stresses *understanding* rather than giving causal explanations. In doing so, they stress the following three principles for a proper methodology: individual perspective and consciousness, respect for the host subculture, as well as recognition of the ubiquitousness of connections. They also argue that the family transcendence paradigm is open, not dogmatic, which helps to reveal "both common sense and the meanings of life as lived in families" (p. 554).

In contrast to this approach to family above as a new theoretical methodology, the 61st (1) edition of *Journal of Marriage and Family* (1999) is devoted to publishing writings on an empirical paradigm for researching the transmission of emotions between family members through repeated diary and experience-sampling data. As Reed W. Larson and David M. Almeida argue, "this

empirical paradigm provides a promising tool for understanding emotional processes within the daily ecology of family and community life" (p. 5). The focus in this new empirical paradigm is on the continued measurements through daily reports at the end of each day, either in the form of diary entry or telephone report, from family members regarding, among other things, daily events and emotional states. In doing so, the collected studies aim to map out the ways of emotional chain reactions among family members in order to know the diversity of the way family members affect each other. As Larson and Almeida suggest, further research in this direction is awaited especially in the case of siblings, nonresident fathers and children, and in the case of same-sex couples.

The 41st (1) edition of *Family Relations* (1992) offered a collection of writings regarding paradigms in family studies as well, albeit not in relation to research methods per se, but rather to teaching methods in the field of family pedagogy to empower both professionals and students at the university level. As the opening introductory article (Allen & Crosbie-Burnett, 1992) suggests, a quiet revolution was going on in the early 1990s in the way families were being taught, characterised by controversial paradigm shifts and teaching methods in five different areas. The first area refers to the incorporation of family patterns different from the (male) breadwinner nuclear family structure into the mainstream teaching course on family. In contrast, the second area rather pertains to the process of teaching, more precisely a shift toward a more egalitarian relationship between teachers and students, by respecting the students' personal experiences and increasing the students' voice to decide on the content and flow of the courses. In relation to this increase of a rather student-led learning style, the third area refers to the teacher's legal liability to support the students by finding counselling whenever it is necessary, since the students may learn about perspectives in relation to their own families that might upset them. The fourth area where changes are taking place is the ethnic composition of instructors and students in the United States. On the one hand, the studentship that once used to come from the European-American middle class in most universities was no longer homogeneous by the 1990s, whereas there was also an increase in the employment of female instructors with a greater diversity in the professorship. Finally, the fifth area refers to the shift from the individual to the family as the subject of analysis in such fields as psychology, law and medicine.[15]

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[15] For instance, Shirley Hanson, Marsha Heims and Doris Julian (1992) point to the fact that the shift from the individual to the family as the unit of analysis was a very recent phenomenon in the field of health care. Among other things, they discuss one specific innovative curriculum from a department of family nursing within a school of nursing and argue that it "provides one example of an approach to the presentation of family health care and may serve as a paradigm or model to other disciplines preparing professionals with a similar focus" (p. 49).

The presented studies in this edition of *Family Relations* address several of these aforementioned changes. Among these studies, Carol A. Morgaine sets the background for "the controversy over paradigms, elaborated in later articles" (Allen & Crosbie-Burnett, 1992, p. 10). Morgaine in her study addresses the relationship between the historical and philosophical foundations of family life education, as well as the three paradigms of knowledge production and action (instrumental/technical, interpretive, and critical/emancipatory),[16] as elaborated by Jürgen Habermas (1971).[17] In doing so, Morgaine (1992) does not discredit any of these paradigms, rather she gives a detailed discussion about how instructors can apply them to different aspects of family life education, suggesting that "a paradigm shift calls for a reconceptualization of families' needs, knowledge, teaching/learning, problem solving, and change" (p. 15).

In contrast to the studies above, Nitza M. Hidalgo in 1998 calls for a rather emancipatory paradigm shift in a thus far less discussed context. By reviewing the related reference literature at the time, Hidalgo, focusing on the role of educational researchers, found the application of Eurocentric forms of knowledge to all people (along with the expected research neutrality) problematic, arguing that "researcher neutrality masks underlying conceptual frameworks that posit the behavior and experiences of people of color to be inferior to that of Whites" (p. 104). She also questions the popular research practice that the same concepts are being applied to all kinds of "oppressed" minority groups in the United States.[18] In order to challenge the unavoidable homogenisation of the Latinos through mainstream family research methods, Hidalgo outlines the characteristics of a Latino-specific family qualitative research paradigm as a suggested approach for future studies, which "is grounded in an understanding of the structural, cultural, contextual, and gendered conditions of the Latino experience in the United States" (p. 104). By borrowing from the critical race theory and feminist standpoint theory, as well as from the Puerto Rican culture and experience, the suggested paradigm is devoted to providing a more sophisticated framework to study the differences between Latinos and other "oppressed" minorities, as well as the characteristics of intragroups within the

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[16] Put simply, whereas the technical (instrumental) paradigm of knowledge and action is based on providing factual information as practiced in natural sciences, the interpretive (practical) paradigm stresses the way individuals interpret the meaning of the surrounding social world. In contrast, the emancipatory (critical) paradigm goes beyond the interpretive paradigm by stressing the individuals' ability to hold critical attitude to the surrounding world, and, through this (self-)reflexivity, to change their situations.

[17] As Morgaine notes, Marjorie M. Brown had employed the three ways of knowledge and action to the study of family life as early as 1980.

[18] For instance, as Hidalgo argues, the racial identity theory, which is applied to both Latinos and African Americans as if the two groups were identical in the way they create their identity.

Latino communities. In doing so, she argues that the new paradigm should include "extended family, community, friends, community members, and families' institutional participation" (p. 109). Hidalgo suggests that this Latino-specific paradigm not only aims to give an authentic description of the actual conditions of Latino cultural knowledge, but it also empowers Latino communities for taking transformative action for improvement. Based on ethnographic assumptions, Hidalgo stresses the voice of the researched and draws attention to the need to understand groups from their own perspective, on a family basis. In doing so, she points to that the information (stories) received from Latino families will be consequently different (while having certain overlaps among them), and that discovering their stories becomes a useful tool for successfully challenging the stereotypes regarding Latinos in the United States. It can be argued that this emancipatory paradigm as a desired methodological model is future oriented, and thus it does not necessarily meet the criterion of paradigm as "normal science". Moreover, it must also be noted that Hidalgo's call for a shift in the role of the researcher to listen to the voice of the researched may not be revolutionary. Cultural relativism, for instance, has emphasised the uniqueness of each culture since the middle of the twentieth century. Yet, her call for a shift from the individual to the family as the unit of analysis to empower Latino communities appears as a remarkable contrast to the desired paradigm shift in family sociology studies to empower the *individual* in choosing (family) lifestyle, as discussed below in the following section on emancipation.

The studies addressed in this section tend to vary in terms of both the field and scale of the employed paradigms, as well as in their substantive attributes. For instance, whereas the studies on family realm and family transcendence have a cross-disciplinary and theoretical orientation, the study on research methodology regarding daily reports and experience-sampling data is rather empirical. Yet, the subject of the employed paradigms tends to be a specific research or teaching method, and not the family members in their daily life as in the studies above on family paradigms. In doing so, the research of Morgaine (1992) skillfully examines the applicability of the three modes of knowledge and action (discussed by Habermas) in family life education in detail. Thus, it can be argued that the scholarly reflexivity upon the improvement of research and teaching methods in these studies suggests a stronger self-reflexivity than those above on family paradigms. Yet, it must be noted that knowledge production within these studies seems to be, with varying degrees, less elaborated than in the research of Thornton and that of Barton and Bishop.

Paradigms and Emancipation

Similar to Hidalgo's suggested emancipatory paradigm above, emancipatory paradigmatic assumptions can also be well traced in studies related to the diversifying family patterns and lifestyles, including, though not limited to, gender issues. For instance, in the middle of the 1990s, Katherine R. Allen and David H. Demo (1995) argued that a paradigm shift was going on "from viewing the family as a monolithic entity to recognizing family pluralism" (p. 111). In doing so, they called for the necessity of a new and affirmative research paradigm acknowledging the legitimacy of various sexual orientations. By regarding lesbian and gay families as one indicator of the ongoing diversification of family patterns, they analysed more than 8,000 articles in nine journals published between 1980 and 1993 from the perspective to what extent the family relations of lesbians and gay men were discussed. The authors concluded that research on them was limited to three main areas: same-sex relationships, lesbian mothers, and the children of lesbian and gay parents. They argued that the underlying assumption of family research at the time tended to be sexist and homophobic (or, as defined by the authors, "heterosexist"), whereby lesbians and gay men were regarded as (distinct) *individuals* rather than as *members of a family*. While admitting that it was still awaited to find meaningful ways for how to position sexual orientation in family studies, they challenged this heterosexist assumption and called for a paradigm shift on behalf of the recognition of family pluralism.

In connection to family pluralism, Myra M. Ferree and Elaine J. Hall in the late 1990s turned their attention to introductory sociology textbooks published between 1983 and 1988 and found that the selected textbooks discussed class, race and gender in "profoundly unequal" ways (1996, p. 929).[19] Jeff Manza and Debbie V. Schyndel (2000) questioned this finding and suggested that the extent to which gender inequality was discussed in relation to macro and meso-level factors was close to that for class and race. As a response to this critique, Ferree and Hall (2000) argued that Manza and Schyndel, while focusing on the increase of discussions on gender from a quantitative perspective, failed to grasp the underlying theoretical paradigms regarding gender in sociology textbooks from a qualitative perspective. Ferree and Hall here refer to two paradigms: the sex-role

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[19] By referring to Thomas Kuhn, the authors in this study describe sociological paradigms in the following way: "By sociological 'paradigm' […] we mean the shared assumptions of sociological discourse that define certain problems as significant, identify relevant evidence, and produce agreed-upon social facts (solutions) as well as troubling anomalies" (1996, p. 930). They argue that whereas certain elements of a sociological paradigm are commonly accepted in the field of sociology, sociological paradigms are less constraining compared to those in natural sciences.

paradigm (restricting diversity) based on a functionalist approach and the (rather emancipatory) gender-relations paradigm based on a feminist approach and conclude that the "paradigm guiding research questions is indeed changing, but we do not yet see much evidence of this gender-relations perspective replacing the sex-role model in contemporary textbooks" (p. 481). The major difference in the paradigmatic assumptions between the sex-role model and gender-relations model, as suggested by the authors, refers to the degree of acknowledgement of the multiplicity of relations: whereas the sex-role model favours one (ideal) model, i.e., the (male) breadwinner–housewife model, which is thought to oppress diversity and individual freedom, the gender-relations model is rather referred to stressing the diversity of various potential relations as a kind of emancipatory model on behalf of individual freedom. Similar to this assumption, Áine M. Humble and Carol A. Morgaine (2002) examined feminist methods in selected articles published between 1988 and 1999 in *Family Relations*, based on the three paradigms of knowledge and action as suggested by Habermas. In doing so, they concluded that whereas the critical/emancipatory paradigm serves as the central paradigm for feminist studies, this seemed to be most difficult to be achieved for reasons such as, among other things, grading (which creates a hierarchy between instructors and students), large classes, as well as the personal constraints (e.g., educational and family experiences) of the instructors.

In parallel to the studies above, Susan A. Mann et al. in 1997 addressed the conditions of paradigm shift in American family sociology, with a special focus on the question whether a shift took place from the structural functionalist paradigm hallmarked by Talcott Parsons to what is often called the postmodern paradigm. The motivation for their study derived from the conflicting views of David Cheal (1991) and Dorothy A. Smith (1993) on the matter.[20] According to Cheal, family theory in American sociology was no longer overwhelmed by Parson's theory (the structural functionalist paradigm) and was more characterised by what could be called theoretical pluralism. In contrast, Smith, however, argued that Parsons' theoretical position regarding the modern nuclear family remained central. In doing so, she pointed to the survival of the Standard North American Family (SNAF), a coinage by Smith, which was thought to

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[20] By citing Bernard Farber (1964), Mann et al. point to that whereas before the 1950s four approaches had competed in American family sociology (i.e., the interactionist approach, the family life-cycle approach, the family-problems approach, as well as an early institutional-functionalist approach), functionalism came to dominate American family sociology by the middle of the 1950s. In contrast, the second half of the twentieth century brought about changes in the newly forming academic scholarship that aimed to incorporate the diverse experiences of both women and men coming from different classes, races and ethnicities, challenging the formerly established structural functionalist paradigm.

function as a kind of ideological code.[21] To examine which of the two standpoints was correct (i.e., whether there was an ongoing paradigm shift), Mann and her co-authors selected seven family sociology textbooks published between 1960 and 1990 and carried out a profound content analysis on six selected topics: theory, social class, race and ethnicity, gender, family violence and sexual orientation.[22] The findings showed that the seven selected textbooks for analysis tended to include "more critical literature that shifted their foci from convergence to diversity, from differentiation to stratification, and from consensus to conflict" (1997, p. 339), and that power and conflict with diversity and inequality were more vastly discussed. Yet, the authors argued that this was not accompanied by a corresponding shift in the theoretical analysis and assumptions,[23] whereby structural functionalism appeared as a continuing theoretical orientation.[24] With this result, Mann et al. supported the latter (Smith) position,[25] arguing that structural functionalism was still playing a central role in American family sociology.[26]

By focusing on family research within the United States, the studies in this section – mainly (though not limited to) from a (family) sociological perspective, but with cross-disciplinary implications – contrast the ongoing pluralisation of family patterns with the dominant, but arguably less suitable structural-functionalist approach to grasp actual conditions. In doing so, these studies show a high degree of scholarly reflexivity on behalf of improving research methodology. On the other hand, these studies also appear to be both descriptive regarding the ongoing pluralisation of family patterns and normative (i.e., emancipatory) by supporting the pluralisation of family forms on an ideological basis. Though the level of scholarly reflexivity in these studies seems

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[21] Smith (1993) bases the concept of *ideological code* on *genetic code*, stating that an 'ideological code' is like a "schema that replicates its organization in multiple and various sites" (p. 51), and argues that the Standard North American Family (i.e., a heterosexual married couple with the husband as the breadwinner) functions as an ideological code in American family sociology.

[22] As for theory, Mann et al. (1997) examined whether the following six theoretical perspectives were reported in the selected textbooks: functionalism, exchange theory or behavioural psychology, symbolic interactionism, developmental theory, macro conflict theory and feminist theory. They regarded the first four as "traditional perspectives" (i.e., the early postwar paradigm) and the last two as "critical approaches" (p. 321).

[23] This was especially true for topics such as social class, family violence and sexual orientation.

[24] With a few exceptions such as in the discussion of African American families and gender issues.

[25] Susman et al. argue that both Kuhn and Cheal failed to foresee the way a dominant paradigm could hinder the progress of alternative theories, just as the hegemonic position of structural functionalism in American family sociology acted as an obstacle against the development of alternative perspectives.

[26] It is worth noting that the self-reflexivity of American family sociology can be well seen in other textbook analyses as well, such as that of Hyman Rodman (1965), Brent C. Miller and David M. Klein (1981), as well as Nancy A. Greenwood and Margaret L. Cassidy (1986, 1990).

to be (somewhat) less elaborated than in the study of Thornton and that of Barton and Bishop, the initial assumption of the present study regarding the connection between emancipatory research and the (high) level of scholarly self-reflexivity can be acknowledged. This kind of connection, however, is not limited to research studies in the United States, but it can be observed in non-Western family research as well, as discussed below in the following section.

Paradigm Research in non-Western Context

A similar research interest in paradigm shifts can be seen outside the Unites States as well, such as Japan, which has been heavily influenced by American family sociology in postwar times. In fact, family sociology in Japan takes a special place among that of non-Western countries, due to its large independent organisation (i.e., a separate academic association and journal) within the local (Japanese) sociological world. The extent to which Japanese family sociology is being organised is much less seen, or not seen at all, in other non-Western countries. This unprecedented research activity and independence brought about a remarkable self-reflexivity, also in terms of paradigm research.[27] In 1989, Emiko Ochiai addressed paradigm in family sociology,[28] by discussing Kuhn's conceptualisation, as well as Ronald L. Howard's concept of intellectual ecology in detail. Through these concepts, she examined the current conditions of Japanese family sociology and emphasised the need for a new approach to replace the then dominant perspective called *collective approach* (*shūdanronteki apurōchi*) in Japanese family sociology.[29] While acknowledging that the *collective approach* became a "normal science" during the 1950s in Japan, she pointed to that the convulsions of modern family idealism from the 1980s made this approach unsuitable for studying modern society. In order to support this claim, Ochiai took three textbooks on family sociology for analysis[30] and examined the underlying background hypotheses regarding the family from a *sociology of knowledge* perspective from eight analytical viewpoints. Based on the findings, Ochiai proposed a more flexible and *interpretive* approach that (unlike the *collective* approach based on fixed modern family norms) does not give an a priori definition of the family. In doing so, Ochiai aimed to provide a better framework for understanding the then ongoing family changes in Japanese society. On the other hand, she remained careful, asserting that it could not be

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[27] For the remarkable history of family sociology in Japan, see Ochiai (2013).

[28] Ochiai devoted a whole chapter (Chapter 6) on "paradigm" in this book-length study about the modern family and feminism.

[29] The collective approach basically refers to the modern nuclear family approach hallmarked by the North American structural functionalist family theory, where the family is examined as a *collective group* with fixed family roles, and not as a network of *individuals* with relatively flexible family relations.

[30] Waller and Hill (1938 to 1951); Bell and Vogel (1960) and Morioka and Mochizuki (1983).

known at the time whether this interpretive approach itself would become a paradigm (i.e., a commonly shared approach) in the future. This question was addressed twenty years later when Ochiai (2013) summarised and evaluated the characteristics of the development of family sociology in Japan. In doing so, Ochiai confirmed the paradigmatic shift to "a family model as a network of individuals" that also brought about the shift "from groups to networks", as well as "the shift from family units to individual units as a shift in the basic unit of society" (p. 117). In fact, Ochiai in this study distinguished and skillfully described in detail three different paradigms (i.e., the pre-war *i.e.,* paradigm,[31] the postwar modern nuclear family paradigm, as well as the aforementioned individual network paradigm) in Japan's family research history and argues that "the shifts in the ruling paradigms of family sociology for each era were formed by the position of Japan in the global context" (p. 104).

As an extension of Ochiai's research interest in paradigms, a cross-national comparative study (Rajkai, 2014) was carried out on the conditions of family sociology, based on the following conceptualisation. From the 1980s, modern families have become diverse and the sociology of family came under pressure to face new challenges on the micro level. Hence, this study analysed various family concepts, ideologies and models represented in single-authored family sociology textbooks and aimed to examine whether there was a shift in the research paradigm from that viewing "the social unit (in modern society) is the (modern) family" to that "the basic social unit is the individual". In doing so, this study focused on four non-Western European cultures in East Asia (Mainland China, Taiwan, Japan) and Eastern Europe (Hungary), where changes to the family structure, as well as to the local social milieu were thought to be far more complex than in Western Europe and North America. In doing so, this research argued that these societies had become a kind of buffer zone in terms of ideologies between the Western and non-Western world, having caused great contradictions in the formation of self-identity. The study assumed that on the one hand there was a growing awareness of emphasising individual autonomy due to economic development, whereas, on the other hand, local discourses on family related to the conditions of cultural (national) identity had emerged as narratives against Western-born individualised discourse, thus hindering the shift to a postmodern paradigm (i.e., "the basic social unit is the individual"). To examine the underlying paradigms and potential paradigm shifts in the selected four societies, representative family sociology textbooks were taken for analysis from two periods of time: 1970s–1980s and 1990s–2000s. As a result of the analysis,

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[31] The *ie* refers to Japan's premodern stem family system. Its unified form in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century became the basic legal and social unit of modern Japan up until 1947.

four main ideological sources were identified from the examined textbooks: pre-modern ideology based on traditional family values, Western capitalist modern ideology, socialist modern ideology, and postmodern ideology advocating individualism. These four identified sources were found functioning as ideologies competing for hegemony over interpreting family change. The findings suggested four different patterns in terms of paradigmatic shift. Whereas Japan presented an obvious move toward a framework taking the individual as the analytical unit,[32] family sociology textbooks in Mainland China and Taiwan showed limited signs in the direction of a postmodern paradigm and basically continued stressing that "the basic social unit is the family". In contrast, the examined single-authored family sociology textbooks in Hungary suggested a reverse paradigm shift to pre-socialist, Christian values. The study found that the difference in paradigm shift between these societies is mainly due to the nature of, and degree of inquiry into, a cultural (national) identity in relation to local traditional ideals and beliefs.[33]

Just as the studies related to emancipation in the previous section, those above in the present section reveal the significance of the underlying ideological confrontations behind paradigmatic issues in family (sociology) research, albeit in different degrees of complexity. The debate in the United States mainly refers to the acceptance or denial of the structural functionalist approach as a methodological paradigm seen through the assumed existence of an ideological code called the Standard North American Family. This throws light upon two opposing ideologies: the modern (capitalist) family ideology and the (individualised) postmodern ideology advocating pluralism. In contrast, the case of Japan (and also Taiwan) discovers a rather complex confrontation of ideologies that both involves the local traditional family ideology, modern (capitalist) ideology, and (individualised) postmodern ideology. The study of Mainland China and Hungary, however, suggests an even higher degree of complexity of ideological confrontations, by pointing to the existence of a modern socialist ideology in the case of (former) socialist countries. On the other hand, it must be noted that all the studies in the present and previous sections show that ideology has an important influence on the formation of paradigms and paradigm shifts, both in relation to micro-level issues such as individual identities, as well as to macro-level issues such as the formation of cultural (national) identity. Yet, the remarkable complexity of ideological confrontations in Eastern Europe and East Asia suggests that the employment of paradigms and the related scholarly

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[32] This, however, does not necessarily mean that Japanese family sociologists in general would identify with the perspective that the basic social unit is the individual.
[33] Regarding the differences in the search for cultural (national) identity and the way they contributed to the contrasting paradigm shifts in the four societies, see Rajkai (2014) for details.

reflexivity in non-Western family research are both heavily burdened, challenged, and diversified due to the compelled positioning of the 'Self' against the 'Other' (i.e., Western Europe and North America in the first place).

Summary and Discussion

The studies discussed in this article provide a remarkable glimpse into the various ways paradigms have been employed within family research since the second half of the twentieth century. According to this diversity, the employment of paradigms can be categorised in several distinct, though correlating, ways. First, they reveal important characteristics of the academic scholarship's (self-)reflexivity in relation to family. This refers both to reflexivity regarding the research subject (i.e., the family) per se and to academic self-reflexivity regarding the way of doing research. The latter can be further divided into reflexivity in regard to revealing (or even calling into question) underlying paradigms behind the research methods and reflexivity on the scholars themselves from a sociology of knowledge or intellectual ecological perspective. In this categorisation, three types can be identified: the subject of reflexivity is either the family (e.g., a certain family practice or process),[34] or the underlying assumptions behind research or educational methods,[35] or the social (academic) milieu that the examined academic community is exposed to.[36]

Another approach to the employment of paradigm refers to *area* in a geographical sense. This can pertain either to a certain geographical region (usually a specific country) or to a rather *global* context.[37] It can be assumed that the former practice is the mainstream, due to the strong embeddedness of the social sciences in the national framework. This can be seen in the emergence of national sociologies in the early twentieth century that take the nation-state as the unit for analysis, and which then came to shape the characteristics of sociology.[38] Nonetheless, it can be argued that family research in the global context shows a strong orientation towards (or even dependence on) the way research is conducted in Western Europe and North America, both in terms of actual conditions and the related research theories and methods. Thus, scholars in two adjacent countries may be more familiar with the family conditions and the

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[34] Such as in Evans and Smith (1969), Reiss and Oliveri (1980, 1983), Oliveri and Reiss (1981), Constantine (1986), Ward (1997) and Hoisington (2011).
[35] Such as in Beutler et al. (1989), Hanson et al. (1992), Allen and Demo (1995), Bahr and Bahr (1996), Ferree and Hall (1996, 2000), Mann et al. (1997), Hidalgo (1998), Larson and Almeida (1999), Thornton (2001, 2005) and Barton and Bishop (2014).
[36] Such as in Howard (1981), Ochiai (1989, 2013) and Rajkai (2014).
[37] Such as in Thornton (2001, 2005).
[38] This is despite the promising formation of a global sociology in recent years, which takes the global society as its analytical unit.

related theories and methods employed in geographically (and perhaps also culturally) remote Western countries than about the conditions in each other's countries. Another area in relation to the employment of paradigm refers to *academic field*. Similarly to area in a geographical sense, there are studies that focus on paradigms within a specific discipline, whereas other studies discuss paradigms in a more general sense, not limited to any academic field. It can be ventured to say that the former may be more dominant, due to strong scholarly diversification and specialisation. On the other hand, it can also be assumed that a growing call for multidisciplinary research in family studies may increase paradigm research in a cross-disciplinary context.

An additional approach to the use of paradigm refers to its characteristics in terms of being practical[39] or theoretical,[40] empirical[41] or ideological (often emancipatory),[42] each suggesting a different type of reflexivity. In a close relation to this, reflexivity can also be examined from two basic research approaches: descriptive approach (i.e., how things *are*) and normative approach (i.e., how things *should be*). Whereas it can be assumed that both appear in all research studies, their proportion varies greatly, with more ideological implications when the normative approach is being used. In relation to this, it seems to be useful to distinguish values and beliefs that unavoidably underly paradigmatic assumptions, as suggested by Barton and Bishop (2014), from when underlying ideals are being used for *making the world better*. This is strongly related to the academic dilemma whether natural sciences and social sciences differ in their basic characteristics, and if so, how and to what degree. Kuhn (1962) for instance makes a parallel between scientific and political revolutions in terms of paradigm shift, but he seems to underscore the difference between the scientific and political worlds, just as he fails to properly distinguish the social and natural sciences as well. The distinction between the two sciences, however, appears to be highly relevant for family studies, since family often becomes a place of ideological debates, especially when seeking for cultural (national) identity, or for the empowerment of disadvantageous groups or individuals. It can be argued that it is this (sometimes emancipatory) ideological belief regarding social issues (i.e., the belief that *we can change the world*) that makes the striking difference between social and natural sciences.[43] On the other hand, it can be assumed that

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[39] Especially in studies related to a family paradigm, as discussed above.
[40] Such as for instance in Thornton (2001, 2005) and Barton and Bishop (2014).
[41] Such as in Larson and Almeida (1999).
[42] In, for instance, Allen and Demo (1995) and Hidalgo (1998).
[43] The powerful influence of ideology in social sciences can also be seen in their ability to reverse paradigmatic shifts, just as the case of the above-mentioned reverse to pre-socialist, Christian values in postsocialist Hungary suggests.

natural scientists aim to make the world better as well, by making use of the physical (natural) laws to directly or indirectly help develop new devices, medicines, etc., but they do not (or rather *cannot*) change the physical (natural) laws per se. Thus, compared to social sciences, ideology seems to be differently set in natural sciences.[44] In this sense, Kuhn's conceptualisation of paradigms and paradigm shifts needs to be carefully approached when applying them to social sciences (including family research). Though several studies[45] discussed in this article refer to Kuhn and his conceptualisation of the paradigm, most of them do not question this concept's applicability to family research.[46] Furthermore, while some studies use the concept of the *paradigm* in relation to "normal science" (as suggested by Kuhn), *paradigms* in other studies seem to be simply referred to as a specific *model* or methodology, or just a certain perspective, without claiming them to be functioning as the boundaries of "normal science".[47] The authors of these studies appear to tacitly refer paradigm to its original meaning in Greek, i.e., a pattern, example or sample.

Concluding Remarks

The diversity in the employment of paradigm in family-related studies, as explored in this article, suggests a remarkable multidimensionality of scholarly reflexivity, as well as a high degree of academic creativity. In relation to this, it can be argued that theoretical studies (especially from a philosophical approach), as well as emancipatory studies with a strong normative approach reveal high scholarly self-reflexivity, where the focus is either on the academic community, or on the applied research methodology and underlying research assumptions, rather than on a specific family practice or process. On the other hand, this multidimensionality and creativity appear in rather fragmentary forms in distinct studies, thus hindering the increase of scholarly awareness about latent research potential. By reviewing various types of studies in connection to paradigm, this article aimed to improve this scholarly awareness. Nonetheless, further studies are needed to clarify the characteristics of knowledge production through introspective studies on the thus far less addressed ecological environment of individual scholars and academic communities, for which the perspective of

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[44] One of the rare examples of ideology having influence on natural science refers to the ban on genetics in the Soviet Union, which argued that it was a bourgeois science.
[45] Such as Beutler et al. (1989), Ochiai (1989, 2013), Bahr and Bahr (1996), Ferree and Hall (1996), Mann et al. (1997), Barton and Bishop (2014) and Rajkai (2014).
[46] For a detailed discussion on the applicability problem of Kuhn's paradigm concept to social sciences including family research, see Rajkai (2014).
[47] Such as in Hanson et al. (1992), Hidalgo (1998) or Larson and Almeida (1999). In contrast, studies revealing paradigms behind specific family practices and process appears as an exception since the subject of the discussed paradigms in these studies is not the academic community, but the actual conditions of families in the everyday life.

intellectual ecology, as a specific form of scholarly (self-)reflexivity, appears as an especially promising tool.

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