Ideas for Social Researches − Chapter 2 − Family Anthropology

Author: Kamil Rafikov
ORCID: 0000-0002-7828-2488
Email: mailbox@kamil-rafik.com
This document is distributed under CC BY 4.0 license.
DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.3364008

Table of Contents

Ideas for Social Researches − Chapter 2 − Family Anthropology....1
1 − Different types of modern families where females play leading role....1
2 − Females choosing marriage partner outside of close circle of contacts....2
3 − Legal abortions as a positive legacy of "communistic" regimes....3
4 − Matching of ideal spouse stereotypes between Ashkenazi Jewish and Chinese cultures....3
5 − Mixed families consisting of Ashkenazi Jews and ethnocultural groups without historical experience of communication with Ashkenazi Jews....3
6 − Marriages for "whitening", semitization, and sinization of the future offspring....3
7 − Family relationships between descendants of genocide criminals and genocide victims....4
8 − Delayed childbearing in social scientists....4
9 − Problems of children of social scientists....4
10 − Flexibility in using names as cultural phenomenon....5
11 − Families in transition from gerontocracy to neontocracy....5
12 − Real level of state penetration into parent-child relationships in developed countries....6
13 − Influence of relationships with parents on fertility parameters....6
14 − What can you give her: core approaches to relationships in different cultures....6
15 − Being cared as the most important part of relationships....7
16 − "Territories" explored through "inherited" style of thinking....7
17 − Leaving parents' home in developing countries....7
18 − Marriage between person grown up as single kid in family and person grown up with extremely large number of siblings....8
19 − Females limiting fertility due to accessibility of genetic paternity testing....8
20 − Ethnic stereotypes caused by ethnicity of parents in mixed families....8
21 − Psychological, social, and neurophysiological maturation of females....8
22 − Classification and quantification of cultural basements and elements used in multicultural families....8
23 − Professions of parents/grandparents improving survival rate and life quality of kids living in countries of 2nd and 3rd worlds....10
24 − Why mothers in some traditional families do not provide to daughters even basic knowledge of gynaecology, like information about menstrual cycles etc?....10
25 − International marriages in artificially separated ethnocultural groups....11
26 − Double marriage in long-term temporary migrants....11
27 − Community-controlled neontocracy vs state-controlled neontocracy....11
28 − Long-term personal projects as a barrier for successful family relationships....11

1 − Different types of modern families where females play leading role

Using my experience of interpersonal communication and theoretical knowledge about different societies, it is possible to implement the following global classification of families where females

play leading role (only for cases when leading role is taken within cultural domain, I do not include cases when it is taken on the basis of physical abilities, level of hormones etc):

- families based on strict legal system penetrating interpersonal relationships up to "bed level"; such legal system requires absolutely equal rights for both genders, but in fact it puts females into leading roles;
- families based on traditional culture giving leading roles in relationships to females;
- families formed in the societies that suffered from war, genocide, or strict political system pressing down males since teenage years or eliminating significant portion of high-quality males completely.

It would be interesting to describe differences between all these types of families in the scope of psychological and sexological research. Also, it would be interesting to describe cases of marriages between females and males coming from different types of families where their mothers played leading roles. (The idea is based on my personal experience: I grew up in the family of mixed second and third types; in adult age, sometimes, I communicated with females from the first world who grew up in the first type of family.)

Dates: 1990's, 2000's, 2010's.

2 − Females choosing marriage partner outside of close circle of contacts

Upon long-term passive and active search of females for marriage in several tens countries of 2nd and 3rd worlds with different cultures and in travelling females from other countries, it has been noticed that the most part of females in the modern world still prefer "to be chosen" instead of choosing by themselves; also, the most part of females prefers to search relationships within the close circle of contacts. I'm chosen as "high quality candidate" on absolutely different and unpredictable criteria in each case. It would be interesting to find some regularities pushing females to search marriage partners outside of their close circle of contacts or to extend their vision of "close circle" to previously unknown males.

These "discoveries" may be obvious for a person grown up in extended family or in a yard of provincial town; but for me, as a person grown up on classic literature and mass culture and in mainly nuclear mixed family living in the city with 1M population, such observations do not look obvious at all. Speaking shortly, my expectations before start of active travels were completely different.

It should be noted that I'm of mixed ethnocultural origin: from Western Europe to East Asia, and from Northern Europe to Middle East. And physiologically, I prefer females from Southern border of this geographic range (or even further to the South, up to tropical Africa and Southern Indostan). So, females from other ethnic groups were chosen by psychological criteria mainly. Obviously, all this made the described global "field research" significantly biased.

Dates: 2004 − 2019.

3 − Legal abortions as a positive legacy of "communistic" regimes

If you will look at the map of countries with the present and past "communistic" regimes, and if you will look at the map of countries with legalized abortion, then you will see that they intersect well. It is supposed, there is a chance to discover good natural experiments in relation to this fact and in relation to the same ethnic groups dispersed to neighbor countries after falls of "communistic" regimes. Also, it may be interesting to research the attitude to abortions in local populations; and to question them with a purpose to find whether they understand that abortions are "inherited" from the former "communistic" regime.

Dates: 2010's.

4 − Matching of ideal spouse stereotypes between Ashkenazi Jewish and Chinese cultures

In the process of global search of female for marriage, it has been "discovered" by me that Ashkenazi Jewish males are extremely popular for some Chinese females exactly because of cultural stereotypes. The stereotype of "smart Jewish boy" almost ideally matches Chinese stereotype of ideal husband. At the same time, East Asian "tiger mom" stereotype matches some qualities of the stereotype of ideal wife for some Ashkenazi Jewish males. This phenomenon and its consequences may need deeper research.

Dates: 2017 − 2018. Locations: communication with two Chinese female tourists in Central Europe.

5 − Mixed families consisting of Ashkenazi Jews and ethnocultural groups without historical experience of communication with Ashkenazi Jews

Ashkenazi Jews is an ethnocultural group having very specific history and social role in the modern world. Its relationships on the level of mixed marriages with other European ethnocultural groups should be well-researched already. But starting from the mid of 20th century and until the current time Ashkenazi Jews are mixing with different ethnocultural groups not having historical experience of communication with them. In this context, it would be interesting to research such mixed families. (The idea is based on personal family experience.)

6 − Marriages for "whitening", semitization, and sinization of the future offspring

It is not a secret that in the societies differentiated by ethnic origin with a preferences towards so-called "White" population, some ethnic groups prefer marriages with "Whites" for "whitening" the future offspring. It would be interesting to determine real share of "whitening" motivation in multiethnic marriages in different regions of the planet.

At the same time, on some peripheries of Islamic and Chinese worlds there were always such trends as semitization and sinization. I'm not sure that these trends have been researched well enough. For example, I know that semitization trend exists even in the modern Spain in the circles of young females descending their origin from Arabic conquerors coming to Spain in the early Middle Age; after being considered as Spaniards and Catholics for hundreds years, now they start marrying modern Arab immigrants and convert to Islam. Similar interesting cases in other parts of the planet may be discovered too, as I suppose.

Also, it would be interesting to perform comparative study of all these three trends in relation to similarly affected aspects of the social life in particular countries, where all these trends evolve simultaneously: for example, you may look at some parts of the modern Africa that were historically influenced by Arabs, then controlled by Europeans, and currently are under expansion of Chinese business circles.

And finally, it may be interesting to research situations when some ethnocultural groups enter these trends unexpectedly for themselves: for example, communication with Jewish migrants and local population in Tatarstan (Russia) where Jews took the place of Arabs/Persians; or, for example, communication between Eastern European travellers/migrants (not having Western European stereotype of "White man" in their heads) and local population of former colonies in Africa.

(I use the term "whitening" instead of the term "Europeanization" because almost all people in the modern parts of this world are affected by Europeanization already.)

Dates: 2000's, 2010's.

7 − Family relationships between descendants of genocide criminals and genocide victims

How the dark historical experience of 20th century affects chances of successful sexual and family relationships between modern descendants of genocide criminals and genocide victims? Interviews should be performed with people who had negative attitudes to such relationships initially, but then changed their decisions (couples and their relatives), and vice versa.

8 − Delayed childbearing in social scientists

In the book "Childlessness in Europe: Contexts, Causes, and Consequences" by Michaela Kreyenfeld and Dirk Konietzka, there is a note in statistics reports from one European country that female social scientists have later childbearing age than females of other professions. I suppose, the majority of researched females grew up in patriarchal families, and the same topic may be researched for male social scientists who grew up in families with dominating mothers. If results will be the same, then I suppose, delayed childbearing age in both cases may be caused by combination of subordinate role in family (in relation to the parent of the opposite sex) in conjunction with self-distancing from the center of society (which is required to research the society from aside). But in case of leading role in family in relation to the parent of the opposite sex such self-distancing may not affect childbearing age.

9 − Problems of children of social scientists

In informal online communication on dating website with an adult young amateur prostitute, it was found that her father is sociologist (the parents were divorced). So, there was a guess that "inherited" self-distancing from the center of society required for every social scientist to research the society may in some cases lead to pushing kids of these scientists into marginal social groups (like prostitutes etc). This idea may require additional research.

Dates: 2018. Locations: Kazakhstan.

10 − Flexibility in using names as cultural phenomenon

In several generations, me and my ancestors have used names very flexibly.

- Family of one of my grandfathers changed surname in the period of Soviet repressions against priests (one of my grand-grandfathers was a Muslim priest before the collapse of Russian empire in 1910's).
- One of my grandmothers changed her first name to make it looking "less Jewish" in the period of Soviet repressions against Jews.
- My father had two first names since the period of elementary school till graduation from high school: one Tatar (official) and another one Russian (unofficial). It was a period of Russification of ethnic minorities in USSR; and teachers in some schools gave unofficial Russian names to all kids from ethnic minorities.
- I used unofficial literary name (with minimally changed surname) in the period of active artistic activities.

It is supposed that such flexibility in using names within single family in several generations is not exceptional, and you may find many other similar cases. All such cases may be explored as a separate cultural, psychological, or genetic phenomenon, but not just as a part of larger historical processes.

11 − Families in transition from gerontocracy to neontocracy

As you can probably guess, transition from gerontocracy to neontocracy in family structure is not immediate; it may take up to several generations, including multiple steps forward and back. In this context, it would be interesting to research different combinations of family rules from these opposite types of families, and effects of these combinations on behavior of offspring up to several generations. The most interesting cases are the following, from my point of view:

- differences between patriarchal neontocratic families and matriarchal neontocratic families, including all possible subtypes of patriarchal/matriarchal families (see the idea #1 to find some subtypes of matriarchal families);
- participation of neontocratic/gerontocratic grandparents in family lives of their kids (including raising of grandchildren) in cases when kids use an opposite type of the family stricture;
- participation of neontocratic/gerontocratic professional child caretakers in raising kids from opposite types of families;
- physical and psychological punishment of kids in neontocratic families;
- artificial shortening of adolescent period in neontocratic families;
- lifestyle of people with gerontocratic parents and neontocratically raised kids (these people need to spend their life resources in double direction);

- lifestyle of people with neontocratic parents and gerontocratically raised kids (these people extract resources from parents and kids simultaneously);
- switching to gerontocracy by people who grew up in neontocratic families;
- all listed above mixed together and in application to different ethnocultural groups.

12 − Real level of state penetration into parent-child relationships in developed countries

In the second half of 2000's in Russian mass media (including blogosphere), there was a campaign highlighting attention to the topic of penetration of state in parent-child relationships in developed countries. Scientifically speaking, "Western juvenal justice" was described by mass media as a punishing system that forcefully pushes newly arrived immigrant families practicing minimal amount of gerontocratic rules into completely neontocratic life style. Practically speaking, the mass media reports concentrated at cases when kids were taken from immigrant families into orphanages or into adoption in the following situations: minimal physical punishment of kids (light ass slapping, for example), insufficient (by neontocratic standards) amount of toys purchased for kids, obligatory daily chores for kids. Also, mass media concentrated at cases when kids were taught in schools to submit phone reports to child protection services on parental behavior when this behavior does not conform to neontocratic standards (you should understand that since the Soviet period in Russian history reporting to authorities in case of minor crimes in close circle of contacts is considered as inappropriate anti-social behavior). All this was described as methods used by "Western" societies to destroy traditional families and place newly arrived immigrants into the roles of "slaves".

Obviously, the primary purpose of this propaganda was to stop the flow of highly educated migrants leaving Russia. But the question is whether penetration of state is really so painful and deep as mass media described, or it is made in critical cases only when parents practice cruel punishments, clearly anti-social behavior (for example, alcoholism) etc? I stopped tracking Russian mass media much time ago (except several relatively independent blogs); that's why I don't know how situation changed during the latest 10 years. And I could not meet such negative reports in "Western" literature and blogs.

13 − Influence of relationships with parents on fertility parameters

As a continuation of idea to research fertility parameters of social scientists grown up in the different types of families, it would be also interesting to research dependencies between all aspects of fertility and subordinate/leading position in family in relation to the parent of opposite sex (including people who grew up in same sex families).

14 − What can you give her: core approaches to relationships in different cultures

Several times in my life, when I tried to discuss my dating problems with different Russian-speaking people, they asked me simple question "What can you give her?" with a purpose to push my attitude to relationships from sexual and romantic directions into practical one. It is supposed that in every culture there is a similar core approach to relationships that can be expressed

with a single phrase. It would be interesting to research sexual and family relationships from this point of view.

Date: 2000's, 2010's.

15 − Being cared as the most important part of relationships

In informal live and online communication with young females from Morocco and Zambia it was found that both of them consider "being cared" either as the most important part of relationships or as one of the most important parts. The term "being cared" covers all parts of relationships: non-verbal, verbal, financial. It is obvious that in strict patriarchal cultures, in absence of social support for youth, and because of low level of economic development, the financial and personal care from male partner becomes one of the most important parts of life. This observation gives the general idea to compare primary necessities in relationships in different cultures and countries.

Dates: 2019.

16 − "Territories" explored through "inherited" style of thinking

In case if parents use significantly different styles of thinking, "inheriting" both of them in conjunction with developing own third style may allow to explore some life "territories" that are completely unreachable through style of thinking of another parent or own style of thinking. The simplest example that I could see in my life is that applying consequently different styles of thinking "taken" from mother and father, I entered geographic locations and communities that would be completely unreachable for myself or through style of thinking of another parent. In the process of rotating these styles, I regularly was completely exhausted, and sometimes, balanced on the edge of my real abilities. Not sure how this observation may be extended or applied to scientific research, but it may be definitely useful for getting better understanding of extreme behavior in humans.

17 − Leaving parents' home in developing countries

The process of leaving parents' home by young people in developing countries may be rather complicated due to economic situation and particularities of local cultures. Sometimes, it may be forced by parents and other relatives; sometimes, it may be postponed by them; sometimes, it may be even more quick and early than in developed countries; sometimes, it may be stretched for many years with making steps in different directions; sometimes, it requires immediate establishment of friendly relations with multiple people of the same age; sometimes, it requires active search of sexual partner with higher financial capabilities etc. It would be great to perform deep research of this part of life in the boundaries of cross-nation and cross-culture study.

Dates: 1990's, 2000's, 2010's. Locations: Russia, global online communication (mainly with Chinese citizens), Uganda.

18 − Marriage between person grown up as single kid in family and person grown up with extremely large number of siblings

In my trip to Uganda, I had a chance to date several young adult females grown up with extremely large number of siblings, up to 8-16 (the last case was in polygamous family). In conjunction with this fact, it would be interesting to understand all aspects of marriage between people grown up as single kid in family and person grown up with extremely large number of siblings: psychological aspects, sexological aspects, attitudes towards childrearing and the process of childrearing, general perspectives of success of such marriages. (My case cannot be used for self-ethnographic research, because I grew up with two younger siblings and met couple of cousins several times in childhood.)

Dates: 2019. Locations: Uganda.

19 − Females limiting fertility due to accessibility of genetic paternity testing

It is well-known that some females in the past used such evolutionary strategy of survival as having offspring from multiple males with being in official marriage/cohabiting just with one of these males. Accessibility of genetic paternity testing probably stopped such practice completely in developed countries at least. Question: what is percentage of females who decided to limit fertility or stay childless exactly because of impossibility to practice aforementioned evolutionary strategy?

20 − Ethnic stereotypes caused by ethnicity of parents in mixed families

In my parents and grandparents, only my father has "almost completely Asian" eyes. As a result of this, such type of eyes is considered by me instinctively as masculine one, like big muscles; and females of Central Asian and East Asian origin look for me like female bodybuilders; moreover, I expect from them instinctively some stereotypical "male qualities" of character. At the same time, my mother has partially Mediterranean ethnic visual type. Sometimes, it affects my instinctive style of communication with males of Mediterranean origin; some of them feel themselves like sexual objects in personal communication with me, although I'm not gay at all. I'm not sure whether it is my personal particularity, or it is standard for people grown up in mixed families.

21 − Psychological, social, and neurophysiological maturation of females

It is well known that starting from teenage years, females are regularly "attacked" by attention from multiple males who may be 5-30 years older. Obviously, such communication may affect psychological, social, and neurophysiological maturation of females significantly; and the effect may be opposite depending on circumstances. Cross-nation and cross-culture study of this topic would be extremely helpful for describing all possible effects of such communication.

22 − Classification and quantification of cultural basements and elements used in multicultural families

Firstly, to illustrate the idea I will describe cultural basements used in family of my parents/grandparents (for raising me and my siblings), and cultural basements that have been extracted by me (for using in the future for my own family) from mass media, classic literature, and popular science literature when I was kid and teenager. For each listed cultural basement of family a set of elements is given, because only limited amount of elements were used/extracted.

Explanations are given after the lists. (Elements marked with yellow color have been added in subsequent editions, I just "found" them in several weeks after publishing the idea.)

Cultural basements used by my parents/grandparents to raise me and my siblings:

- Ashkenazi Jewish family − strict monogamy, concentration at education and self-learning, being either business-oriented or science-oriented or arts-oriented in professional life, females playing dominant role in family relationships, basics of kashrut used occasionally;
- general Central Asian family − village-style thinking, high fertility, obedience to state, acceptance of superiority of Islamic culture and generally Semitic cultures;
- Russian/Soviet family − internationalism (Soviet ideology of multiculturalism limited to USSR and friendly countries), separating ordinary life stream from official state ideology stream, using Russian language as primary one in family relationships, being Europe-oriented;
- general Islamic family − obedience to supernatural forces in daily life ("InshAllah", "Allah berse"), considering knowledge of Arabic language as desired, so-called "Islamic/Semitic internationalism" (the term created by me to describe transition of Soviet internationalism ideology to the whole Islamic/Semitic world), giving Arabic first names to kids.

Cultural elements extracted by me from mass media, classic literature, and popular science literature when I was kid and teenager with a purpose to build my own family in the future (some elements may look strange, but you should understand that I grew up in 1980's and 1990's in the situation of economical/political collapse and expansion of Western cultures into Russian/Soviet mass media, also you should understand that the following list does *not* reflect my current vision of family relationships, it is more like memories from my teenage years):

- Mediterranean family − deep relatedness between family members, being arts-oriented in professional life, public demonstration of affection and sexuality, considering Mediterranean region residence or US residence as prerequisites for family building;
- Protestant family − labour-based life philosophy (up to using "labour" as one of sexual sublimation methods), individualism, nuclear family, considering US residence as prerequisite for family building;
- modern US family − multiculturalism, high mobility, considering residence in one of international megalopolises as prerequisite for family building, obedience to laws, regular sportive training;
- traditional families from exotic cultures − using elements of traditional visual cultures and lifestyles as elements of sexual play between spouses, orientation towards living in nature and "being green" in daily lifestyle, using science as basement for family relationships, giving "exotic" first names to kids (I had not and I have not kids, but the idea about giving "exotic" first names was thought by me in teenage years).

It is all I could remember by now. So, what numeric values do we have in results? Each used/extracted cultural basement consists of 4-5 elements, and there are 4 basements in each of used/extracted combinations of basements. The total of elements in each of combinations is 17. (I don't know why, it just "happened by itself"; obviously, the lists are based on my perception, some elements were used by my parents/grandparents unconsciously without purpose to educate kids, but I remembered them as if they were included into conscious cultural education.)

All this gives us the following questions for quantitative research:

- are all people growing in multicultural families able to perform the same analysis like mine provided above, or my analytical approach is unique? (you should note that my parents were also deeply interested in cultures and linguistics, and one of my grandmothers was a doctor, that's why I was trained from the birth to perform such analysis)
- what is quantitative distribution of number of cultural basements used in multicultural families?
- what is quantitative distribution of number of elements in cultural basements used in multicultural families?
- is it possible to categorize and standardize used cultural basements and their elements upon surveying people grown up in multicultural families?
- are there any measurable principles underlying the process of extracting particular elements from each cultural basement by spouses building multicultural family and by kids/teenagers growing up in multicultural families?
- do monocultural families use the same total amount of cultural elements from single culture that multicultural families take from several cultures?
- does number of ethnic groups (officially documented and found by genetic testing) in ancestry of family members correlate somehow with number of used cultural elements?

I guess, professional psychologists and anthropologists may raise some more questions upon digging deeper in the provided direction.

23 − Professions of parents/grandparents improving survival rate and life quality of kids living in countries of 2nd and 3rd worlds

One of my grandmothers was a doctor, and it is supposed that this fact affected my survival chances and further life quality significantly. Probably, there are some other professions that give the same effect. And probably, it is good topic for a research.

24 − Why mothers in some traditional families do not provide to daughters even basic knowledge of gynaecology, like information about menstrual cycles etc?

Just respond the question in the subject of the idea.

Dates: 2010's. Location: Kyrgyzstan.

25 − International marriages in artificially separated ethnocultural groups

In informal communication in Badakhshan (Tajikistan), it was found that marriages between local population and Afghan population are not practiced (in spite of the fact that linguistically, ethnically, and religiously it is single group separated by Russian Empire, Afghanistan, and British Empire in 19th century). It would be interesting to research similar cases in different parts of the world and understand underlying reasons of each case in conjunction with trends of changes.

Dates: 2019. Locations: Badakhshan province, Tajikistan.

26 − Double marriage in long-term temporary migrants

In informal communication and in one TV report I heard stories that long-term migrants coming to Russia from the Southern part of ex-USSR enter double marriage/co-habiting, in the country of origin and in Russia (all such marriages may include making kids). Such double marriages are probably widespread in multiple communities of migrants over the whole world and need more research.

Dates: 2000's, 2010's. Locations: Badakhshan province, Tajikistan.

27 − Community-controlled neontocracy vs state-controlled neontocracy

It is supposed that in all current sociological, anthropological, and pedagogical literature the term "neontocracy" means in fact "state-controlled neontocracy", because it is obvious that society ruled by children cannot exist in real modern world (in contrast to multiple gerontocratic societies). That's why in all future researches it is strictly advised to use the term "state-controlled neontocracy" instead of "neontocracy" to make the results of researches looking more correct. And in addition to resolution of this terminological issue, I would like to offer to include in all researches of neontocracy the concept of "community-controlled neontocracy": with this term, I describe the society built in according to general neontocratic principles, but implementing these principles in completely different ways depending on situation and requirements of particular communities (neighborhoods, ethnocultural groups, towns, villages, cities, regions etc), instead of using national laws and national law enforcement agencies. I'm not sure that community-controlled neontocracy is implemented anywhere in the modern world, but moving to this social structure would be rather beneficial for the society in general, as I suppose.

However, it should be noted that informal community-controlled neontocracy within limits of some ethnic group or some social circles obviously existed and exist. Moreover, it is how state-controlled neontocracy started to develop. That's why your research should include historical excursions.

28 − Long-term personal projects as a barrier for successful family relationships

It is supposed that some people may practice unconsciously some kind of long-term personal projects that make the lifestyle extremely complex, and these complexities may be strong barrier for building successful mutually satisfactory family relationships either between spouses or between relatives. So, psychological counseling should include methods for uncovering and verbalization of these "projects" for finding common language between family members. The projects may consist

of reaching some state of psychological satisfaction obtained in youth from books, movies, or communication, and later searched in adult life.