

# CONSUMER SOCIETY, HEDONISM AND HEALTHY SELFISHNESS ON DINK -DOUBLE INCOME NO KIDS- COUPLES IN THE CITY OF MEDELLIN, COLOMBIA

Cómo citar este artículo:

Bernal-Vélez, I. C., García-Villa, S., Tabares-David, A. & David-Salas, J. (2019). Consumer society, hedonism and healthy selfishness on DINK -Double Income No Kids- couples in the city of Medellín, Colombia. *Revista Latinoamericana de Estudios de Familia*, 11 (2), 157-170. DOI: 10.17151/rlef.2019.11.2.8.

ISABEL CRISTINA BERNAL-VÉLEZ\*  
SANTIAGO GARCÍA-VILLA\*\*,  
ALEJANDRA TABARES-DAVID\*\*\*  
JUANITA DAVID-SALAS\*\*\*\*


*Recibido: 20 de marzo de 2019  
Aprobado: 28 de mayo de 2019*

**ABSTRACT:** Objective. To inquire about the characteristics, dynamics and perspectives of the phenomenon of the DINK (Double Income, No Kids) couples in the city of Medellín (Colombia). Methodology. It was qualitative research. Results and conclusions. 11 DINK couples were identified, the presence of hedonism and the constant search for healthy selfishness was meaningful, which invites couples to have a lifestyle marked by self-realization.


**KEY WORDS:** healthy selfishness, hedonism, dink couples, consumer society.

---

\* Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Medellín, Colombia. E-mail: isabel.bernal@upb.edu.co

 [orcid.org/0000-0001-6223-904X](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6223-904X). **Google Scholar**

\*\* Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Medellín, Colombia. E-mail: santiagoogarciavilla@gmail.com

 [orcid.org/0000-0002-1586-822X](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1586-822X). **Google Scholar**

\*\*\* Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Medellín, Colombia. E-mail: alejandra.tabares@upb.edu.co.

 [orcid.org/0000-0002-6672-7419](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6672-7419). **Google Scholar**

\*\*\*\* Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Medellín, Colombia. E-mail: juanita.david@upb.edu.co.

 [orcid.org/0000-0003-3722-0587](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3722-0587). **Google Scholar**

## **SOCIEDAD DE CONSUMO, HEDONISMO Y EGOISMO SANO EN PAREJAS *DINK* -DOBLE INGRESO SIN NIÑOS- EN LA CIUDAD DE MEDELLIN, COLOMBIA**

**RESUMEN:** Objetivo. El presente artículo nace de la investigación realizada por el Grupo de Investigación en Familia de la Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana y su semillero de investigación, el cual buscó indagar sobre las características, dinámicas y perspectivas de las parejas *DINK* (Double Income, No Kids) que se constituyen bajo esta modalidad en la ciudad de Medellín (Colombia). Metodología. La investigación se desarrolló bajo el enfoque cualitativo y la información se obtuvo por medio de entrevistas semiestructuradas. Resultados y conclusión. A continuación, se presentan algunos resultados que surgieron en la categoría de consumo dentro de los cuales se destacan el egoísmo sano como práctica a través de la cual quienes conforman estas parejas buscan su bienestar integral, así como también su preferencia por utilizar el tiempo libre para el disfrute de actividades novedosas y placenteras. Los *Dinks* manifiestan importantes dinámicas para la utilización del dinero, las cuales se encuentran mediadas por el hedonismo, influenciadas por el individualismo y facilitadas por su alta capacidad de compra.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** egoísmo sano, hedonismo, parejas *dinks*, sociedad de consumo.

### **Introduction**

This paper is based on the qualitative research called “Couples with no kids in Medellín: modalities, options and agreements made around this decision.” It was developed by the Family Research Group of the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana in Medellín with the purpose to raise awareness about the influence of the consumer society in *DINK* (Double Income, No Kids) couples, who currently are part of a continuously increasing structure in the country in the last several years (National Planning Department of Colombia, 2015). However, in the national academic literature, to date, there are few works of research that address this population segment and its relationship with the consumer society, which currently takes force and affects its social, cultural, religious perspectives and practices, among others. The analysis of this phenomenon, with still insufficient documentation, allows the development

of new research possibilities in family understanding, therapeutic intervention, the market, and the consumer society.

It is important to highlight that “couple” is a category of analysis that can be studied, questioned and debated because of its constant changes that deserve to be research objects. The goal is to identify new relational modalities that diversify and contribute to the way of understanding the structure, dynamics and couple concept, which has been traditionally perceived as monogamous, with defined roles, and with an intrinsic procreation purpose.

The changes in roles that have occurred since women entered the academy and the world of work, thanks to the efforts of feminist movements and their struggles for rights and for the achievement of personal fulfillment and freedom of women (Valdivia, 2008), influenced the composition of new types of couples such as LAT couples (Living Apart Together), open couples, polyamorous couples and DINK couples, among others.

Regarding DINK couples and their relationship with consumption, there are some works of research in the local context such as the ones carried out by Roldán-Piragua, Martínez-Rodríguez and Otero-Gómez (2015) focused on the characterization of consumption behaviors in the city of Villavicencio. Besides, Sampayo Gómez (2016) diagnosed the viability of a mobile application aimed at DINK couples in Medellin.

The research from which this article is derived allowed to explore the topic and relate it to consumer society by analyzing the practices of couples around it, and how their context can influence their relational dynamics. Those practices include their lifestyles, roles assumed and assigned and how these are permeated by the characteristic elements of the global era, such as the importance of the academic level, the constant desire to acquire goods and services, and the importance of achieving self-realization.

The findings of this work of research complement the existing academic knowledge about DINK couples and their relation with consumer dynamics that are appropriate in their relations with society and with healthy selfishness. This phenomenon, in some cases, justifies individualistic lifestyle and even hedonism of DINKS and it is perceived thanks to their interest in enjoying pleasant innovative and non-routine experiences.

### Conceptual references

In order to address the influence of consumer society, healthy selfishness and hedonism in DINK couples within the context of globalization, it is important to clarify the definition of the cross-sectional categories of this article.

DINK couples are those that do not yearn to “establish a family with children, until some self-fulfillment needs, considered by them as a priority, are fulfilled before acquiring commitment and responsibility with a third party” (Roldán-Piragua et al., 2015, p. 107). This leads us to affirm that the lifestyle adopted by the DINK couples is oriented to the search for their self-realization, which can be assumed during a partial or definitive period of time characterized by the absence of an emotionally oriented project to start a family. “DINK couples decide not to exercise paternity or maternity and their professional development is generally a priority” (Rondón-Rincón, 2015, p. 10).

Regarding the concept of globalization, according to Giddens (cited in Loyo, 2011): “(...) there is intensification of social relations throughout the world where distant places are linked in such a way that local affairs are affected by events that occur many kilometers away or vice versa” (p. 68). The main characteristics of this modern phenomenon are interconnection and information flow through elements such as advances in information and communication technology.

Likewise, Lipovetsky and Serroy (2010) refer to globalization as the hypermodern world, which is organized in four structural poles: I) hyper capitalism, in which there is growth of the financial sector, expansion of privatization and free trade among nations where the human being is seen as a “homo economicus”; ii) hyper technification, in which the techno-scientific world begins to be created, there is dissemination of instant information, and the protagonist is the “techno sapiens”; iii) hyper individualism, in which the pluralistic and individual order is privileged, and there is the premise of “homo individualis”, hedonism; and iv) hyper-consumption, in which the individual seeks happiness through excessive shopping, brands and leisure.

The new interactional dynamics of people in a globalized world lead to living in a consumer society, defined by Bauman (2006) as: “The society of excess and waste” (p. 114). This justifies its existence with the promise of satisfying human desires, as no other past society managed to do it or even dreamed of doing it. However, that promise of satisfaction can only be seductive insofar as the desire remains unsatisfied or, more importantly, to the extent that desire is suspected as not fully and truly satisfied (Bauman, 2006, p. 110).

In addition, Bauman (cited in Perales, 2013) claims that: “We live today in a global consumer society and consumer behavior patterns inevitably affect all other aspects of our life, including work and family life” (p. 88).

Furthermore, Echeverry (cited in Rendon-Rincón, 2015) argues that the concept of family will begin to gradually de-institutionalize, since the values usually connected to it will be marked by individualism, consumerism and hedonism. Consumer society has been implemented as a lifestyle without any alternative, in which the established guidelines must be followed if acceptance and progress are intended within the consumerist logic, which raises its own success classification scale.

In turn, public spaces have become exhibition places where people show themselves with the ambition to expose their material acquisitions to others, in which they place their trust to interact.

As stated above, it is important to keep in mind that, within that context, according to Chaumier (2006), Rojas (2014) and Wang & Wilcox (2017), the couples that belong to this relational segment are people who consensually decide not to have children, both work and invest their time and money in everything that provides them with personal and work growth, as well as the enjoyment of their free time as a couple. Moreover, they are not necessarily united by marriage, since they consider this formality something “unnecessary”. This allows us to think that DINK couples replace parenthood with travel, brand clothing, state-of-the-art technology and luxury they can afford thanks to their jobs that generate high monetary income.

Likewise, the ideal context is created so that couples can live their healthy selfishness, understood as a way of thinking and acting imbued with a high dose of recognition, compassion and self-interest, which (...) is the key that opens the door to a life of freedom. Thus, the opinions and demands of others are not allowed to control us, the voices inside our heads and the echoes of childhood when we might have been tired, criticized and unfairly blamed are also ignored (Heller & Heller, 2007, p. 19).

Healthy selfishness is one of the most important elements when couples decide not to have children, since it encompasses a life of freedom. That is a joint decision that allows the couple to place more importance on each other, enjoy and take care of their own interests without worrying about the issues of being parents.

The contemporary society recognized by Lipovetsky is the hypermodern society, is distinguished by three fundamental characteristics: consumption, the settlement of individualism and the constant technological development (Alcalá & Montero Ariza, 2013; Ruiz-Sánchez, 2010). These distinctive features are reflected in the development and commercialization of personalized products and services, promoted through advertising, which fosters the incessant search for pleasure and well-being through consumerist practices.

Therefore, it is evident that a lifestyle oriented to the relentless pursuit of novel and pleasant experiences, mediated by consumer practices, and promoted through various stimuli of the context becomes one of the greatest ideals of contemporary society. It coincides with the vision of the Cyrenaians about hedonism (Alcalá & Montero Ariza, 2013), while perceiving pleasure as an individual enjoyment that only takes place today; it is an instant that lies in the present and is isolated from both the past and the future.

Therefore, hedonic consumption can be defined as “that facet of consumer behavior related to sensory, fantastic and emotional aspects, which awaken the experience of using products or services aimed at obtaining pleasure” (Auletta & Dakduk, 2013, p. 12).

In conclusion, self-realization is the epicenter of the DINK couples lifestyle, which is based on the execution of consumption of products and services that allow to experience new and authentic experiences in unknown places and outside the routine. It explains their interest in travel and in the symbolic communication of status and class, through luxurious and avant-garde items.

## Methodology

As stated earlier, the base work of research for this article is called “DINK couples in Medellín: modalities, options and agreements made around this decision” and it followed a qualitative approach. According to Bonilla Castro & Rodríguez Sehk (2005), the main characteristic of this approach is that it tries to perceive reality as the subject conceives it in his own context. “It does not start from theoretically derived assumptions, it rather seeks to conceptualize reality based on the actions, knowledge, attitudes and values that guide the behavior of the people studied” (pp. 85-86). This approach to reality was obtained thanks to the possibility of interviewing eleven people who come from relationships that have made the decision not to have children. Eight women and three men, with ages ranging between 27 and 45 years and high educational levels in various areas of knowledge, such as engineering, social sciences, and teaching. Some of them are employees and others are independent workers; ten participants have income equal or greater than six current minimum monthly legal wages.

The information was obtained from a semi-structured interview, since this technique, according to Hernández & Fernández (2014) “(...) is based on a guide questionnaire and the interviewer is free to introduce additional questions to specify concepts or obtain more information” (p. 403). The snowball technique was used to recognize possible interviewees; key participants were identified and asked if they knew other people who could provide more data or expand the information, they were also included when contact was established (Hernández & Fernández, 2014).

The interviews conducted with each of the participants were recorded in audio and transcribed. A hermeneutical analysis was carried out based on the discourse of the people and how they gave support to the theoretical references or, in some cases, differed from the conceptual approaches studied.

The narratives of the participants were codified in order to delve deeper into them. In this article, they were named as follows: E, interviewed, followed by the interview number and accompanied by the letter D (DINKS).

It is important to clarify that the participants signed an informed consent on data use and treatment as well as on confidentiality to use their narratives in the research for academic purposes not to create any type of affectation.

## Findings and discussion

The findings focus on thematic axes previously discussed in the conceptual referents, as described below:

### *Consumer Society*

In order to know the relationship between DINK couples and the consumer society, an analysis on globalization was conducted considering that consumerism is a phenomenon that emerges due to economic, social, political and cultural processes.

As mentioned by Lipovetsky and Serroy (2010), and according to interviews conducted with DINK couples, the presence of “hyper individualism” materializes in their speeches. The participants claimed that not wanting to have children is a selfish vision of the world, based mainly on the non-sacrifice of delights; time was seen as the main good. One of the participants stated that: “Somehow, it is a selfish perspective, I do not want to sacrifice my time for another person, well (...) for a child” (E3D, personal communication, 04/10 /2017).

Another participant said: “I consider that it is a selfish position, I have always considered that selfishness is sometimes good. I would like to be very selfish, but when I am with my nieces, I become very protective and suffer a lot” (E1D, personal communication, 25/09/2017). The desire for independence and the rejection of subjection is another factor for making this decision:

I am very selfish, very focused on me. In order not to enter into debate, I am very selfish because life cannot be conditioned by children; one can also approach others, dedicate oneself to others, it does not have to be your children; they can be students, the children of your classmates, your other nuclear and extended family. You can also take care, accompany and strengthen other ways that do not have to be those of children (E2D, personal communication 09/10/2017).

### **Healthy selfishness**

On this regard, one participant reports that one of the greatest benefits of not having children is that “I can think of myself all the time; my priority is not another person, because yes, I love my partner, but he is not first, it is me” (E4D, personal communication, 28/10/2019).

Likewise, you can see the increasing tendency of egocentrism in couples, they delay marriage and have children in the third or fourth decade of life, or choose not to have children. By leaving procreation for later, men and women are free to dedicate to their professional goals and enjoy the pleasure of a relationship, before taking responsibility for a family (Heller & Heller, 2007, p. 28). One of the interviewees stated: “I do not want to have children because I do not want to change my lifestyle,

I live very well, I am okay, and I have also started to think what awaits children... so complex” (E5D, personal communication, 23/10/2019).

Another interviewee considers that his decision is not selfish, since he is also thinking about the effects of having a child; he mentioned that there are many things that have become more difficult, the world is overcrowded, there are too many people living in the world, so in the end it is a matter of generosity not to bring one more person to the planet, in addition the resources are increasingly limited for people. (E6D, personal communication, 23/09/2017).

In contrast, families with offspring believe that the consumption needs of children, such as: food, clothing, shelter, education, medical care, and emotional support must be first, and these needs are not negotiable because they weigh more than any desire for healthy selfishness of the parents, and they are part of family consumption (Heller & Heller, 2007). Therefore, having children makes it difficult to guard the interests of the parents since parent-child relationship has become the prototype of self-denial: “Being a mother means having less space and time for me, it is something I would not want to give up for a child” (E1D, personal communication, 25/09/2017).

Also, the results obtained in the work of research show the constant search of the DINK couples for a new type of “selfishness”, a different one, one that does not harm anyone on purpose, one that respects their needs and preferences and that, at the same time, favor the opportunity for development, happiness and lasting success for the involved parties; a healthy and balanced selfishness to put into practice in daily life: self-interest without guilt. All of it is evidenced by the desire to experience freedom, to verify the well-being that each act of independence brings, and to discover the satisfaction of a life marked by such selfishness (Heller & Heller, 2007).

Just the opposite of healthy selfishness is self-denial, which is defined as “the sacrifice of our needs, preferences and desires in order to meet the needs, preferences or desires of another person” (Heller & Heller, 2007, p. 19). It is a fundamental point in the discourse of the interviewees, who state that one of the main reasons that influence the decision not to procreate is the desire to avoid commitment, duties or to watch over the needs of another person. Although, healthy selfishness can be implemented, even with offspring, it is clearly a factor that makes it difficult to maintain such a lifestyle, which was expressed by the couples.

## **Hedonic consumption**

In hypermodern society, free time is projected as the ideal space to gain new experiences and the execution of hedonic practices. In the case of DINK couples, this space is used for tourist activities, entertainment through online platforms and technological devices, as well as leisure activities with friends. Therefore, one of the



narratives states that: “We like to watch movies and series a lot, sometimes we just play music and do nothing, we play with our cats, go out with friends or just talk” (E3D, personal communication, 04/19/2017). Another participant said that his priority is “to walk on vacation, sometimes when we really want to walk, we go somewhere” (E1D, personal communication, 25/09/2017).

Studies such as those conducted by Ignis Media and Communication of Argentina (cited in Rondón-Rincón, 2015), concluded that some characteristics of DINK couples are:

(...) That they are not necessarily married, they are not traditionalist, they have intellectual interests, they dedicate much of their time to reading, sports, travel, among other activities, and they are perceived as hedonistic and selfish people when they invest their salary in themselves mainly. (p. 10)

The preference for carrying out this type of activities has a direct relationship with the pluralization of pleasures, described by Lipovetsky (2007), in which hypermodern society is immersed, and where individuals seek to satisfy desires. In this case, the aspirations to enjoy free time are framed by the pleasure of living new experiences in a social and entertainment context. Regarding free time, one of the interviewees said that he enjoys “Reading, we go out with friends, walk the dog, go to farms, and go to friends’ and watch television” (E6D, personal communication, 23/09/2017).

Silverstein & Fiske (2003) proposed the existence of four emotional dimensions, through which middle-class consumers intend to meet their needs. One of these dimensions is oriented to the search for innovative experiences, which translates into the interest in escaping the routine and an attraction for the sensations of adventure, which are finally identified as motivations that drive the realization of tourist activities. DINK couples clearly evidenced a high motivation for tourism. One of the stories announces that both members of the couple “love to travel, we have proposed trips” (E6D, personal communication, 23/09/2017) they also recognize that they want “economic independence and travel” (E7D, personal communication, 27/10/2017)

However, in certain cases tourism may be a pleasant activity to enjoy as a couple or even a life project that gives meaning to the relationship of DINK couples. Consequently, tourist activities play an important role that acquire relevance among the priorities of those couples and prevail over their reproductive plans. For DINKS, the gestation and upbringing children is, to a large extent, an obstacle to their tourist activities, because “they love to travel, we like to travel, and (...) sometimes we travel and it is magical, that completely changes our life projects like having a child” (E3D, personal communication, 04/10/2017).

The search for self-realization is one of the main objectives in the relations of DINKS, and it is evident because they have a marked interest in enjoying activities such as tourism and audiovisual entertainment or rest in their free time, among others. These actions lead to the rejection of the traditional family project, which involves procreation, and also to the affirmation of individualism assumed as a couple.

DINK couples show a constant search for pleasant experiences and consumption of entertainment (hedonism) during leisure time. They have a way of thinking and acting focused on one's well-being, *i.e.*, "healthy selfishness" and on a high educational level, which in turn enables well-paid jobs and a relevant purchasing capacity. "The case of women who decide not to have children is closely linked to labor market insertion, and to the increase in income levels and schooling levels" (Chacón-Onetto & Tapia-Ladino, 2017, p. 198).

It was also evident that the use of technological devices, such as cell phones, computers, and iPads, in the case of the participants, does not have such an important role as claimed by some theorists of the subject, because the use of media is rational and limited to situations that require it. In contrast, Zicavo (2014) affirmed that DINK couples have common characteristics, such as the love for technology. It is important to specify that, based on the interviewees' stories, a new category of analysis and discussion called "buy time" emerged. This concept will be expanded later.

Regarding hedonism, the study suggests that the motivations of DINKS are aligned with the search for novel experiences, a dimension established by Silverstein & Fiske (2003), which explains preferences for doing tourist activities. In many cases, these activities occupy a privileged place in their leisure time, acquiring such relevance that they direct and make sense of the life projects assumed as a couple. Thus, procreation and the raising of children are assumed as an obstacle for trips, evidencing the priority of DINKS to enjoy their free time periods through the experience of hedonic sensations, provided by tourism, instead of worrying about the generational relay through reproduction.

Although this research shows that DINKS are not distinguished by a high motivation to be at the forefront of technology purchase, a search for enjoyment is evidenced through the consumption of home entertainment, which is encouraged by the use of massive technological devices. Therefore, the DINK home becomes an ideal space for the pursuit of pleasure, through technology during their leisure time, which facilitates the achievement of fun moments. The aforementioned fact has a direct relationship with the search for pleasure and fun through the use of goods and services, which is a characteristic of the hypermodern society mentioned by Lipovetsky & Serroy (2010) in their book "The culture-world: response to a disoriented society".

Today, not having children in the relationship has completely modified the way of living and leading the life cycle of people whose ideals are oriented to achieve professional and academic goals. The priorities of DINK couples are aimed at self-realization and professional development, educational growth and the acquisition of material goods that allow them to position themselves socially (Roldán-Piragua et al., 2015, p. 106). The interviewees evidenced such factors; they have at least a university degree and demonstrate economic income greater than six current minimum monthly legal wages.

Although the occupations of the interviewees are diverse, it is important to highlight the employability of all participants, who, according to their comments, are actively working in the labor market, either as employees or independently. There are many changes introduced by the consumer society in the family; the expansion of education and training cycles have played a fundamental role. "These lead women and men to postpone more the decision to form new families and to make the decision not to form a family unit" (Gómez & Guardiola, 2013, p. 247). People rather invest their time and efforts in education in order to meet the levels required to be competent in the context.

However, a university degree does not immediately guarantee a high purchasing capacity, but after some years these couples can obtain well-paid jobs, which subsequently allow not only to satisfy their basic needs, but also to facilitate the purchase of goods and services aimed at individual enjoyment. Also, as couples, they pursue traveling, property, clothing, dining out and entertainment -parks, cinemas, among others-. It is also important to consider the constant investment that these people make in their academic training.

Also, the new category of analysis called "buy time" emerged from the interviewees discourses; it refers to tasks that, due to their occupations, DINKs cannot or simply do not want to perform and, therefore, are delegated to third parties. Sometimes DINKS resort to their families to have meals, to buy gifts, and even to do some types of personal errands; they may also hire people to do household chores. Although it means a monetary expense, they decide to pay for it and invest the time in other types of activities.

Since time is considered very important for well-being, today a large number of products are available to save it; they are quite promising when it comes to improving happiness (Dunn & Norton, 2014, p.57). For instance, the use of banking apps and online shopping pages are not strange in the daily life of these couples who seek to prioritize their time together. Other types of couples also use such resources according to their needs. Dunn & Norton (2014) say that, in theory, it is possible to use money to "buy" more time because it can be used to do what people like the most, *e.g.*, exercising, reading or playing the guitar (...) Money can be used to "buy" free time, outsourcing daily tasks such as cooking, cleaning or buying.

Hence, the purchase of time promotes happiness, in this case, of DINK couples as explained by Whillans, Dunn, Smeets, Bekkers & Norton (2017) who claim “that people who spend money on services that save time report greater satisfaction with life” (p. 8523).

## Conclusions

The influence of the consumer society on DINK couples is mediated by various factors, such as structural changes in the concept of family as an institution for procreation, the incorporation of women into the working world and the consensual distribution of roles at home. It is also evident that this type of couples is characterized by their dedication to academic training, which in most cases allows to reach a high purchasing capacity, and facilitates the creation of spaces of healthy selfishness, hedonic consumption, constant trips and, sometimes, “buying time” to deal with other preferred activities. All these aspects arise as a result of the various social and cultural transformations of recent times.

According to the narratives of the participants interviewed about their life as a couple, healthy selfishness is a visible practice in their daily lives in which they constantly seek for their own integral well-being (physical, interpersonal, cognitive and spiritual). Self-recognition and freedom are fundamental characteristics in the life of these couples. Likewise, the desire to escape the sacrifice of their own desires, projects or dreams to meet the needs of other people is identified; such desire is a feature of individualism, a trend that marks the wish to achieve personal satisfaction, mediated by self-sufficiency.

In addition, it is evident that DINK couples use their leisure time, to a large extent, to carry out activities that bring about novelty, pleasure and fun, That is why DINKS prefer tourist trips, which is thought to give meaning to their relationships, and influence their decision not to have children because they would be an obstacle for that activity. In addition, home entertainment, a habit facilitated by the development of technological devices that favor the acquisition and reception of audiovisual content, is attractive for these couples, according to their stories.

The lifestyles of some of the interviewed DINK couples is mainstreamed by the constant search to enjoy hedonic experiences during periods when they are not working. DINKS are also oriented to the pursuit of pleasure through products and services, which is influenced by their purposes of not procreating to facilitate, from an economic point of view, the enjoyment of their relationship and the satisfaction. of their individual desires.

The new category of analysis called “buy time” showed that DINKS can invest their resources not only in their basic needs and desires, but also in delegating some of their responsibilities, such as housework, errands and the purchase of certain

goods. As a result, they can dedicate their time and effort in other activities, such as academic or leisure activities.

Moreover, DINK couples exhibit a high level of education, a characteristic of globalization in the family and reached because they decided not to have children. Academic training and employment status contribute to such decision, the couple decides to become the center, motivation and responsibility of their own lives in order to achieve success in their jobs. Such success would be difficult if they had to balance the parental world and the labor world.

The base work of research for this article is an academic contribution to the field of social sciences and especially to the study of the family, since it focuses on a type of DINKS couple that has been little studied in our context. It also relates the focus of study with categories of analysis such as healthy selfishness and hedonic consumption, which contribute to create a different view of the relational phenomenon of people in the consumer society and globalization.

Additionally, new lines of research are opened from the emerging "buy time" category, which can be analyzed in other contexts and in other groups of couples either DINKS or other types such as LAT (Living Apart Together), open or polyamorous couples.

Insufficient academic documentation about DINK couples within a Colombian context represents a limitation to know the history, carry out an exhaustive analysis, and generate debate about this typology, including the lack of self-recognition of the couples. That deficiency generates a moderate debate on the issue, because DINKS ignore that they belong and represent such typology, therefore, they do not establish an identity with it. DINKS visibility in the city of Medellin would contribute to the increase of studies and the enrichment of the research of couples without children.

## References

- Alcalá, R. R. & Montero-Ariza, M. (2013). Repensar el hedonismo: de la felicidad en Epicuro a la sociedad hiperconsumista de Lipovetsky. *Éndoxa: Series Filosóficas*, (31), 191-210.
- Auletta, N. y Dakduk, S. (2013). Bienestar del consumidor: un recorrido por la salud, el hedonismo, la espiritualidad y las relaciones. *DEBATES IESA*, 18(2) 10-14.
- Bauman, Z. (2006). Consumidores en la sociedad moderna líquida. En Z. Bauman. (Ed), *Vida líquida* (pp. 109-153). Barcelona, España: Paidós.
- Bonilla-Castro, E. & Rodríguez-Sehk, P. (2005). *Más allá del dilema de los métodos: la investigación en ciencias sociales*. Bogotá Colombia: Editorial Norma.
- Chacón-Onetto, F. & Tapia-Ladino, M. (2017). No quiero tener hijos (as)... continuidad y cambio en las relaciones de pareja de mujeres profesionales jóvenes. *Polis Revista Latinoamericana*, (46), 193-220.

- Chaumier, S. (2006). *El nuevo arte de amar*. Madrid, España: Alianza.
- Departamento Nacional de Planeación. (2015). *Tipologías de familia en Colombia: Evolución 1993-2004*. Retrieved from [https://observatoriodefamilia.dnp.gov.co/Documents/Documentos%20de%20trabajo/D3-tipologias-evolucion\\_dic3-\(1\).pdf](https://observatoriodefamilia.dnp.gov.co/Documents/Documentos%20de%20trabajo/D3-tipologias-evolucion_dic3-(1).pdf)
- Dunn, E. & Norton, M. (2014). *Happy money: The science of happier spending*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Gómez, E. O. & Guardiola, V. J. V. (2013). Reflexiones sobre la evolución de los conceptos de familia y de las uniones familiares de hecho en la globalización. *Advocatus*, (21), 243-255.
- Heller, R. & Heller, R. (2007). *Egoísmo sano: cómo cuidar de uno mismo sin sentirse culpable*. Barcelona, España: Urano.
- Hernández, R. & Fernández, C. (2014). Baptista Lucio Pilar. *Metodología de la Investigación*, 4.
- Lipovetsky, G. (2007). *La felicidad paradójica*. Barcelona, España: Anagrama.
- Lipovetsky, G. & Serroy, J. (2010). *La cultura-mundo. Respuesta a una sociedad desorientada*. Barcelona, España: Anagrama.
- Loyo, E. B. (2011). Anthony Giddens: consecuencias de la modernidad. Una interpretación de las transformaciones Asociadas a la Modernidad. *Razón y Palabra*, 16(75).
- Perales, F. P. (2013). Mundo consumo. Ética del individuo en la aldea global-Zygmunt Bauman (reseña). *452°F: Revista de Teoría de la Literatura y Literatura Comparada*, (8), 160-161.
- Roldán-Piragua, L., Martínez-Rodríguez, I. F. y Otero-Gómez, M. C. (2015). El mercado en el segmento de las parejas sin hijos en Villavicencio (Colombia). In *Vestigium Ire*, 9(1), 105-119.
- Rojas, N. (2014). *El nuevo arte de amar*. Bogotá, Colombia: Planeta.
- Rondón-Rincón, N. (2015). *Nosotros decidimos ser dos: Familias sin hijos/as por elección*. Bogotá, Colombia: Universidad Santo Tomás.
- Ruiz-Sánchez, J. C. (2010). *De Guy Debord a Gilles Lipovetsky: el tránsito de la categoría de lo social* (Phd. thesis). Córdoba University, Córdoba, Spain.
- Sampayo-Gómez, S. (2016). *Investigación de mercados en el segmento de los DINKS con el fin de determinar la viabilidad de una aplicación móvil de cocina en la ciudad de Medellín* (master's thesis). Universidad EAFIT, Medellín, Colombia.
- Silverstein, M. J. & Fiske, N. (2003). Luxury for the masses. *Harvard business review*, 81(4), 48-57.
- Valdivia, C. (2008). La familia: conceptos, cambios y nuevos modelos. *La Revue du REDIF*, 1, 15-22.
- Wang, W. & Wilcox, W. B. (2017). *The Millennial Success Sequence: Marriage, Kids, and the success Sequence Among Young Adults*. Charlottesville: Institute for Family Studies.
- Whillans, A. V., Dunn, E. W., Smeets, P., Bekkers, R. & Norton, M. I. (2017). Buying time promotes happiness. *PNAS Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 114(32), 8523-8527.
- Zicavo, E. (2014). La opción no reproductiva en la Argentina y su abordaje en los medios de comunicación: impactos sociales, representaciones y mandatos culturales. *Questión*, 1(43), 393-404. Retrieved from <http://perio.unlp.edu.ar/ojs/index.php/question/article/view/2236/1994>