

## ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE: SUBJECT WORKER USAQUÉN (BOGOTÁ)

<sup>1</sup>Pedro Nel Valbuena HERNÁNDEZ, <sup>2</sup>Llanet Suárez GALEANO, <sup>3</sup>Leidy Yolanda GONZÁLEZ

<sup>1</sup>Universidad El Bosque, Cl. 12 #1-17 Este, Bogota, Colombia  
*Pedronelvalbuena@yahoo.com*

<sup>2</sup>Universidad Antonio Nebrija, Pirineos, 55  
28040 Madrid, Madrid, Spain  
*llasunet@gmail.com*

<sup>3</sup>Universidad Nacional San Martín, Matheu 3910, Buenos Aires, Argentina  
*leidyjpm04@yahoo.com*

### Abstract

This paper seeks to describe the socioeconomic profile of the workers from case studies in Usaquén (Bogota). The study is descriptive, contrasting contexts that define the contemporary worker and the dynamics of labor in the locality. The distinctive features of workers in Usaquén were identified in terms of most flexibility and new ways of control. It is evident that the administration of life is a practice daily in job relations.

**Keywords:** Employee subject, management of life, socioeconomic profile, flexibility, entrepreneurial.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This document is one of the results of a research project "Characterization of the working subject of contemporary enterprise: management of self and administration of life". The process of inquiry was based on the need to identify the profile of workers who are associated with an activity considered as contemporary, according to social and economic characteristics. To the extent that there exists a particular representation of the working subject with a dynamic within the organization or the company, which are homogeneous within the dynamics of its surroundings, the forms of control, and the administration of work and life itself. Hence, the objective was to develop a socioeconomic profile based on case studies within the framework of the subject worker of the town of Usaquén.

The sources were people who worked in a dependent way in companies that were part of the general research project. It was instrumented through a structured type survey within a framework of closed questions that identified social and economic aspects, depending on the general objective of the research project. This allowed the identification and survey of 30 dependent workers in a type of study considered descriptive. A context analysis was made from these representative cases.

We are then under a new dimension of the working subject where the disciplinary devices are not configured in the traditional forms of control and domination, but in the appearance of the maximization of freedom, an aspect that is establishing a self-discipline, a self-administration of individuals with effects on their lives and relationships with others. The forms of independent work, autonomous or relatively flexible, establish behaviors and norms that make the individual worker an independent person with a collective behavior. In the end, these individuals are part of a single social body, apparently diverse, dispersed, and with an incredible invisibility for the forms of administration and control of life, not only of work.

## **2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION**

The theoretical perspective of this article has been the result of the reflection, in the last years, of the investigators, especially in the matter related to the administration of life and the administration by itself. It is considered that the sciences of administration have been permeated by economic logic in the objectivist relation, calculation, and instrumental rationality of the subjects (methodological individualism). This article proposes an approach based on an intersubjective relationship.

This article starts by taking a notion of business as a form of entrepreneur of itself, a subject "who is his own capital, his own producer, the source of his income" (Foucault, 2000, p. 265). It is recognized the working subject within a subjective order detached from the traditional consideration of productive factor according to social relations (divergent from the perspective of value theory), or as an object that combines with capital (functional to the theory of efficient allocation of resources). Expressions of work within the discourse of human capital are examples of flexible work, self-employed or independent, subjective forms of the company or the entrepreneur itself. It is also an instrumental form of objectivation of control relations in what subjects are part of the rational expression, which can only be expressed in a subjective way, namely: greater freedom, the greater enjoyment that cannot be expressed or valued as simple ordinal categories.

Understanding the dynamics of the working subject leads us to an exploration of lines of research work in Economics and Administration under interdisciplinary perspectives that are disconnected from traditional research. "The fear of questioning business rationality in terms of profit and profitability precludes any scientific evolution of the disciplines of the company" (Aristizabal, 2015, p.56). When referring to intersubjectivities, it is a question of approaching the processes of subjectivization according to "the conditions, practices regimes (discursive and non-discursive) that make possible the change of our ways of life and, mainly, create new forms of existence " (Grinberg, 2009, p. 298). Hence, a new form of subject subsisting in the structure that reproduces and redefines it in the context of global culture.

The man of capitalism is not Robinson but Ulysses, the cunning commoner, the average man who lives in the big cities, an autochthonous proletarian or a foreign immigrant who throws himself into the infinite movement (Deleuze, 1993, p. 100)

The man of capitalism is not circumscribed to a particular and/or fortunate elite, but rather his condition as an average man; he is empowered as a manager of oneself, as an entrepreneur of oneself.

The subject of work that is analyzed in this article is not to be restricted exclusively to a particular category. What interest us is not to inquire about the processes or formal methods used by a company, but capture the trajectories and the particular motivations of the subject (training, Competencies, skills) that have been configuring as an entrepreneur of one's own life.

### **3. THE COMPANY AS A FORM OF SUBJECTIVATION IN THE REGIME OF NEOLIBERALISM**

Foucault talks about how in neo-liberalism the conception of the homo economicus is to be redefined; it is no longer assumed as a partner of exchange but as an entrepreneur, a subject "who is his own capital, his own producer, the source of their income" (Foucault, 2007, p.265). According to the intentions of biopolitics and rational calculation, a particular mentality is developed based on institutions, social relationships, and cultural configuration. In other words, "economic rationality captures society and the State by considering that the reason for the existence of human capital is the practice of freedom of economic reason (...) the society and the State admit the imprisonment to which they are subjected and are constituted in homo economicus" (Sánchez, 2010, p.69), consolidating a representation of competitive, successful and productive subject.

However, this economic subject is no longer governed by the logic of law but acts in function or in accordance with objectives that are not necessarily agreed by social contract but are adapted according to circumstances and spaces. This re-structuring of social relations is expressed in a differential condition between the subject of rights and economic subject, the first "is integrated to the set of subjects of law by a dialectic of renunciation, or the transfer of rights (...) On the contrary, economic man is integrated with the other economic men, by a spontaneous multiplication of interests and not by a transfer of rights" (Lazzarato, 2010, p. 83). So the logic that drives it is not to yield and integrate, but to remain and compete.

Thinking about the constitution of the contemporary subject in the control society, the individual as an entrepreneur, it requires to recognize that it is no longer the individual oneself the "object" to study, but its actions and / or the multiple elements that come together, so that this subject behaves in a certain way and not another. Constitution of a subject that no longer goes through the designs of a superior that objectifies it, but it is made in the autonomy and freedom of each one.

Therefore, to determine the mechanisms that subjective it, supposes a double fold; on the one hand, withdraw the subject looking in its practices or concrete actions what, through the devices, expresses it or configure it as an entrepreneur; but at the same time, to return to the subject to inquire about how the "freedom" and "autonomy" (characteristic of the capitalist system) enhance the production of self (self-entrepreneur) even without the devices acting.

#### **4. THE FORCES OF THE DEVICES**

The statements and practices that are carried out in a given context respond to systems of power, that is to say, "they are immanent an entire organization that articulates them when specifying their conditions to operate the selection and the stabilization. That is why power systems do not have their own ends, but their acts have particular effects" (Zuleta, 1997, p. 19). The effects provided by the devices do not have a single address nor do they conduct the subjects in a certain way on a regular basis; hence, not all responsibility, to speak of the subject as an entrepreneur, falls to the power of devices.

The actions of the subjects give an account of the management, the calculation, and the economic rationality of its action. Under the belief of a free spontaneity are inscribed a set of practices, which given in a specific historical context, configure modes and states accepted as just natural and normal. "We do not act directly on the individual and its body, as disciplinary techniques do, but on the environment, since the individual is not the absolute origin of the action" (Lazzarato, 2007, p. 25). The elements that determine the action come from everywhere, and as the action materializes takes shape and the intensity is evident.

It seems that the actions that are observed in the scenario of the public result from what once corresponded to the scenario of the private. Domestic activities, executed within the family, overflow into the space of the outside. As an economic strategy, the domestic is integrated, managed and thrives on a dynamic of forces and freedom. "The advent of control removes the forms of subjectivization from the interior of the family to completely install them on the outside" (Zuleta, 2009, p. 24). When talking about the control society, a characteristic is usually recurrent: the clear difference between the inside and the outside has disappeared. "The modern dialectic of the inside and the outside has been replaced by a set of degrees and intensities, hybridization and artificiality" (Hard, 2005, p. 23). Some sense will have the constant affirmations that express that love is a company, the family is a company, or faith is a company. What these expressions show are announcements of how dimensions that were considered of the order of the intimate of the subject have overflowed to the outside, and have ended up becoming economic variables object of calculation and economic rationality.

This project is based on these theoretical references and tries to use them to see from a critical view the mechanisms under which new subjectivities are formed around the economic rationality that operates in the contemporary scene. Addressing the research problem from a theoretical and qualitative perspective allows

accounting for nuances and complexities that are not solved by the mere fact. When crossing the category work with the category of quality of life are phenomena that show the precariousness of jobs in Colombia as well as the reduced, in some cases null, space that can have a subject to access decent living conditions, both in the economic as well as the social.

### 5. METHODOLOGY

This study was descriptive – analytical. Here it is presented the aspects of characterization of the subject of workers in Usaquén (Bogotá). For this investigation, subjects from different social class and professions were approached in order to contrast the multiple forms of the subject worker (regardless of their profession), in relation to the administration of life according to the dynamics of the company. Its development took place in three phases: first, to recognize the primary theoretical positions from which the research problem was approached, also the considerations for the design of the tools with which the fieldwork was carried out. Second, field work was developed from semi-structured interviews. Finally, we proceeded to the systematization and analysis of the information obtained.

### 6. RESULTS

The context of transformations in recent years, economically and culturally, has largely defined the dynamics of work, subject to the institutional transformations and the conditions that defined the labor relations, in the past, the welfare state. Continuous movement, restructuring, and uncertainty, have been the framework of the current labor relations. Technological change, labor flexibility, and the global capital market have left behind the stability and social cohesion of labor, fragmented and condemned to the volatility of these uncertain times. The work is transformed and adapts to the new organizational and exchange dynamics. For example, (Whittier, 1997), referring to the continuous rotation of work, affirm: "Cohort replacement contributes to change in social movements. During periods of high recruitment or personnel turnover, high level of change are expected in the ongoing organization, the multiorganizational field, and the collective identity of the movement" (p. 764).

The new forms of work, which construct the contemporary working subject, show a more marked dynamic in the lower age ranges. Younger age cohorts have greater difficulty inserting into working life. The participation global work for Colombia correspond to 64,1 %, for males 75,0% and females 53,7% (National Administrative Department of Statistics 2017. DANE, for its acronym in Spanish). Also, in people under 25 years of age the working population is 68.7 percent for men and 42.5 for female (DANE, 2012), accordingly, implying a very wide gap between the two cohorts. This is consistent with unemployment rates. Unemployment in the lower social class for men is only the 5.8 percent and in women is 11.2 percent; while the younger population, men have an

unemployment rate of 12.6 percent and 22 percent for women (p. 7), being significantly high compared to the overall unemployment rate in countries on crisis or economic backwardness.

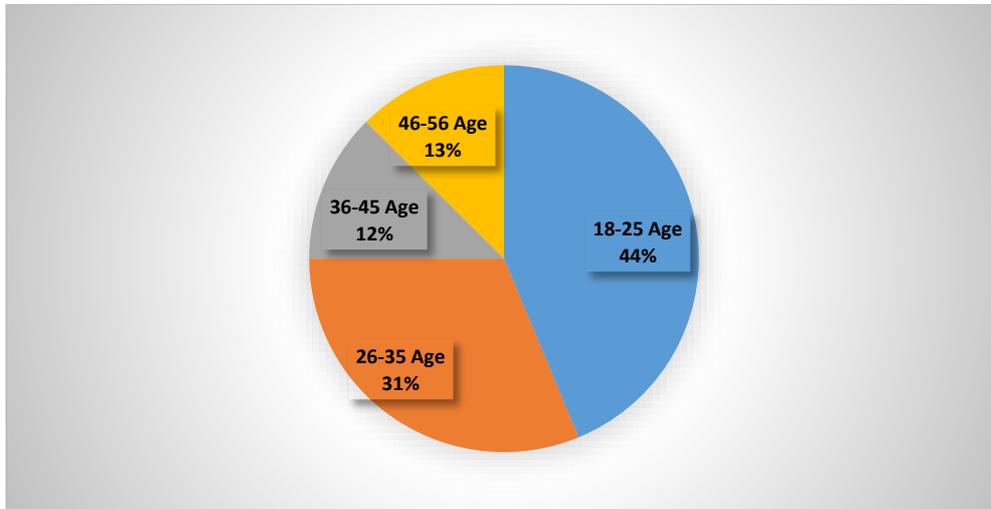


FIGURE 1 - DISTRIBUTION AGE RANGE. SOURCE: AUTHOR'S OWN CONSTRUCTION

It is not surprising that the population defined in the category "new worker", in this study corresponds to the youngest population, 44 percent and the lowest to the adult population, between 46 and 56 years old. This may mean that the accumulation of human and symbolic capital, experience, and margins of labor transition, make the Economically Active Population (PEA for its acronym in Spanish) older, maintain some characteristic of more stable jobs and better paid. However, despite this, it does not imply that a large part of the population the older age is not affected by these new realities of work.

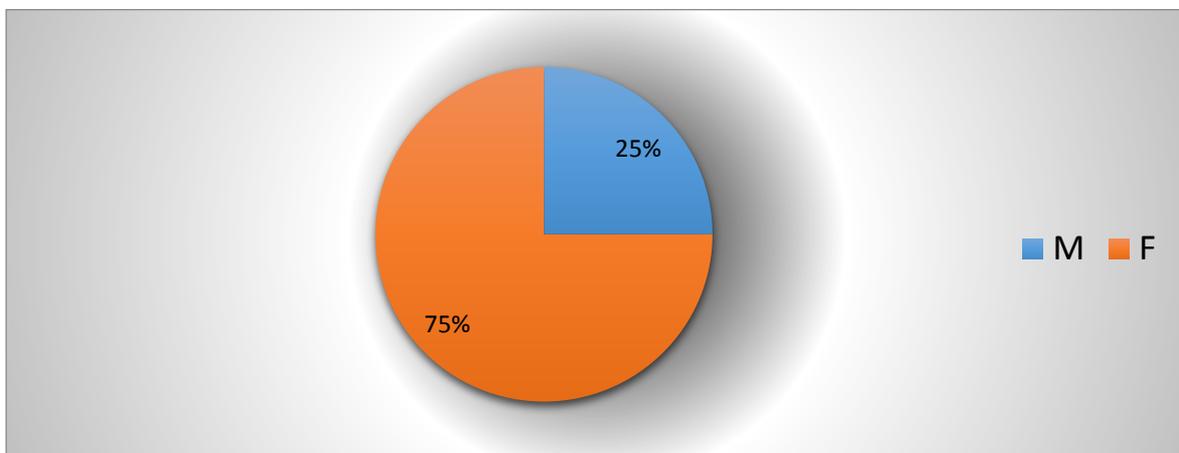


FIGURE 2 - DISTRIBUTION BY GENDER. SOURCE: AUTHOR'S OWN CONSTRUCTION.

However, the national context indicates a labor insertion gap for women. An aspect that has forced a structural change in her position as a working woman. Improved educational conditions, lower birth rates, and structural

change in the role of the family have led women to forge a dynamic work life by undertaking a variety of independent and more autonomous work.

In Colombia, the labor participation rate for women with primary education barely reaches 40 percent, for the secondary level 60 percent, and 66 percent for women with some degree of professionalization. The change is significant when women with professional qualifications are observed, reaching 86 percent (Pineda and Acosta, 2009, p.9). If we look at the income level, the participation in the family income for men is 72 percent and for women 54 percent, for quintile 5 (20 percent of the highest income), but in quintile 1 (20 percent of the lowest income), men 67 percent and 46 percent women (10). The data of The International Labor Organization (OIT for its acronym in Spanish), noted by these authors, indicate that between 2001 and 2008, it shows a reduction in the gap in the highest income cohorts, but the gap between the lower social class is very significant, and in general a reduction of the average of the gap is only 1.4 points, between genders.

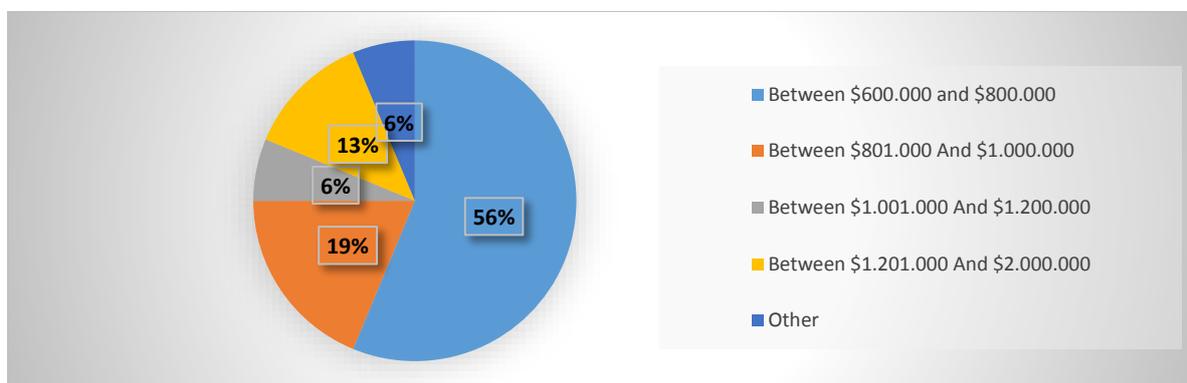


FIGURE 3 - DISTRIBUTION INCOME LEVEL. SOURCE: AUTHOR'S OWN CONSTRUCTION.

The results show that although most of the income (81 percent), contribute to the total income, the workers have to develop other activities to increase them. These revenues are mainly associated with rents and trade, both correspond to 12 percent. In general, there is a perception of acceptable satisfaction with the correspondence between the developed activity and the perceived income (75 percent); however, the degree of satisfaction to be engaged in these activities is very high, 94 percent. Even though 53 percent would not want to change activity, certainly the motivation of labor mobility of 47 percent, would be influenced by their need to increase income. In any case, there is a strong labor mobility, 44 percent hardly meet a year in the activity, only 25 percent, reach three years, which would demonstrate a continuity of work. In addition, more than 81 percent of the total income received by these activities does not exceed two minimum wages.

It is important to note that the 43 percent of the interviewed are responsible for most of the family income. In addition, 75 percent belong to low socioeconomic class (2 and 3). Only 13 percent spend time in studies, and most people must combine work with household activities (25 percent). This tendency corresponds to (Pachón 2007) affirmation, regarding the structural change of occupations by gender: "when the woman became an

economic supplier, the specialization detected at the beginning of the century with a man supplier and a woman caretaker became a responsibility economic situation shared by the spouses and in many cases assumed by the woman, without a redistribution of tasks in the home” (p.154).

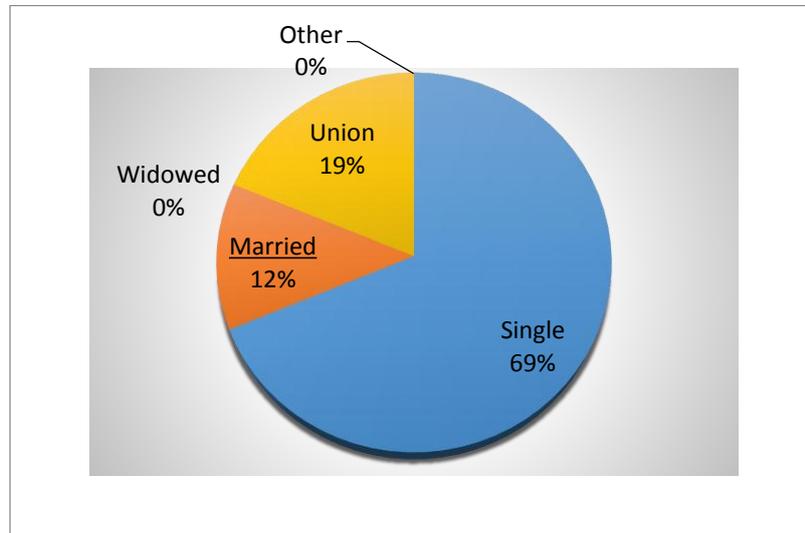


FIGURE 4 - CIVIL STATUS DISTRIBUTION. SOURCE: AUTHOR'S OWN CONSTRUCTION.

The correlation of ages and marital status is consistent. The youngest population is the majority segment of the population interviewed and is proportional to the population that is single. This is because young people have delayed their age of independence from the family nucleus since 38 percent live with their parents. On the other hand, 25 percent corresponds to a population with children. In general, the data point out to us, that the family nucleus corresponds to a traditional family; however, it should be pointed out that the fact that there are other non-traditional forms, for the case of 19 percent, suggests structural changes in population dynamics. The evidence is clear regarding the existence of unipersonal type families, they are a characteristic of the structuring of the family in metropolitan cities like Bogota.

Among the people interviewed for this study is noted a high rate of single people. The age, education, and income are determinants in the social differentiation, an aspect that is deepened when we observe cohorts by gender. On the other hand, the marital status and number of children are factors that reinforce a withdrawal of social mobility and limitations to improve the quality of life of people and their families.

The birth rate, meanwhile, has dropped substantially, by the middle of the last century was 7.04 children on average per family, the current trend and consistent with the projections towards 2025 (Banguero and Castellar, 2011, 132), indicate that the average number of children is reaching two children per family. The National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE for its acronym in Spanish) has estimated that the fertility rate per woman increased from 3.42 children in 1985 to 3.15 in 1993 and 2.48 in 2005, which means that fertility in Colombia has decreased by 27.5 percent in just twenty years (2009, p. 32).

As far as education is concerned, it is considered that as the levels of study are advanced the possibilities of insertion in working life are increased such as expressed in the most significant social increase for women in recent years. This is due to the fact that women have spent more time accumulating human capital, as well as independent ways of undertaking economic activities and sometimes assuming the role of head of household as an income generator. This also implies that their expectations of establishing a traditional family and having children become smaller, especially in the younger age of any economic social class.

However, a trend that seems to be widespread in Latin America structural change can lead to counterproductive economic and social factors: the aging of the population, the pressures on the retirement, the disappearance of the traditional family that underpinned social cohesion, and the expulsion of young people from rural to urban centers, generating imbalances in the dynamics of the territory and demographic in the local order and regional, among other aspects. In the case of Chile, these significant changes have been associated with a rooting of anti-values such as machismo, as suggested by (Contreras, and Plaza, 2010). According to (Pachón, 2007) “the structural changes suffered by the extended and patriarchal family lost their relevance in large parts of the country due to the structural transformation of society, which during the 20th century undermined the economic, political scaffolding, and culture that had created it. At the ideological level, the loss of power of the Catholic Church and the weakening of religion as a support for ethical values, as well as the higher levels of schooling reached by the population, distanced broad social sectors from the religious tutelage that was the basis of the male autocracy and its domination over the family” (p.153). In any case, the social institutions, in the case of women, which we define within the category of the contemporary working class continue to be factors that have retarded their rise and social mobility for those regions that globally have not managed to overcome the social backwardness and economic.

“Institutional setting, social institutions, and cultural practices (laws, norms, tradition, and codes of conduct) can hinder women’s access to resources (land, credit, and capital) and limit the building of human and social capital” (Contreras and Plaza, 2010, p. 46).

Nevertheless, the expenditure structure of the working subject shows that most are between 30 and 100 dollars in food, and 50 dollars in public services. The health expenditures reach 30 dollars, and in recreation and sport up to 30 dollars. In clothes up to 50 dollars, being significant the segment that spends up to 30 dollars (50 percent). Of the 43 percent of the population that has bank debts, 25 percent must allocate up to 100 dollars of their income for this debt; this is significant if we observe that the income of this population that does not exceed the two monthly minimum wages in force in Colombia, which is approaching 230 dollars by 2016. Education costs reach 250 dollars for 6 percent of respondents, a significant part of them (50 percent), reach approximately 80 dollars, an aspect that contrasts with the capacity to accumulate human capital. In short, low incomes limit access to education, reinforcing barriers to social mobility. This condition in itself is critical, is deepened if we

take into account that 38 percent of the population interviewed cannot access educational services that allow them to improve or update their level of education to boost social mobility and better well-being.

## 7. PROFILE OF THE SUBJECT WORKER

Most of the related activities in the labor sphere are related as workers directly linked to production (37 percent). It is followed by activities related to the management of the company (25 percent), customer service (19 percent) as well as general services of the company (19 percent). The characteristics of the working subject imply a very significant link with the technologies. At least 75 percent depend on the computer and the cell phone, only 25 percent of the computer. 44 percent should use computers outside the formal activity of the company. External use is done in order to meet the assigned hours and targets (75 percent), 25 percent consider that it is done with the objective of accomplishing goals or achievements of its activity. This implies a decentralization of the work in spaces other than the location of the company. This trend also indicates a form of spatial flexibilization of work. In fact, 87 percent of people consider that this type of relationship greatly relaxes the development of their work.

This is also associated with other factors exogenous to the typical activity of the working subjects. If we consider, for example, that the Capital District (Bogotá) suffers from a structural mobility problem, which makes it difficult to move the workforce, increasing time and costs, as well as reducing the quality of life and generating work stress significantly affecting the dynamics of work. In this sense, the flexibilization and offshoring of work somehow minimize these effects.

It was found that workers use public transportation (75 percent) and the exclusive use of Transmilenio is only 19 percent; 6 percent have a private means of transport, especially motorcycles, considered the means of transportation of lower cost, but with the highest risk to the integrity of people due to the high level of accident and saturation factor of the road mesh.

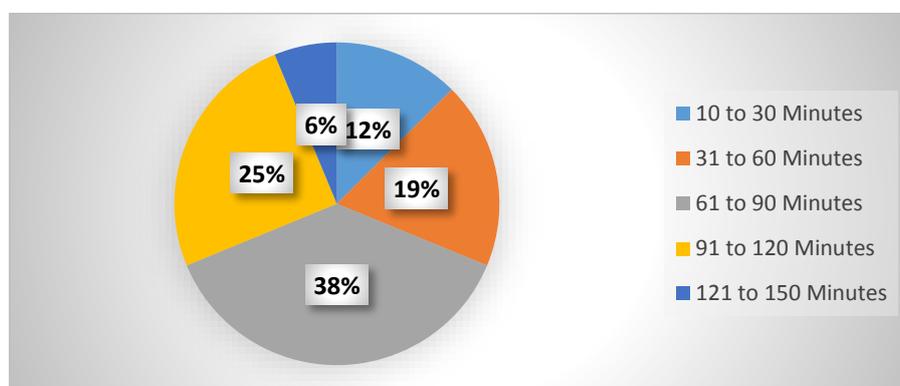


FIGURE 5 - DISTRIBUTION MOBILITY TO WORK. SOURCE: AUTHOR'S OWN CONSTRUCTION.

The times and spaces of the mobility are discouraging for the cases that were studied. Only 31 percent of people take less than an hour to move to their places of work. 25 percent of the population spend between an hour and

a half and two hours; significantly, the largest segment of people interviewed spend between one hour and an hour and a half (38 percent). If we consider what (Avellaneda and Lazo, 2011) affirm, "the crisis of transport and transportation of individuals living in the city is generating increasingly congested cities and a reduction of the mobility that is translated, especially for the more vulnerable sectors, forced mobility, and poor quality " (p. 49), these conditions make it clear that mobility phenomena with precarious conditions of work and quality of life of the working subject.

Mobility appears to be a determining factor in the development of the city's dynamics, making it an important means of promoting social inclusion for the poorest groups, insofar as it allows them access to opportunities and services which the city offers, thus generating greater integration. The above imposes a theoretical conceptualization that integrates the dimensions of daily mobility and exclusion processes (Avellaneda and Lazo, 2011, p. 48).

This becomes more complex inasmuch as Bogotá "is experiencing a process of deindustrialization of the economy represented in the expansive effects of tertiary activities located in the central zones that generate changes in the land uses and increases in the prices of the same (...) The process of outsourcing of the economy of Bogotá is reflected in the greater participation of employment from commerce and services and to a lesser extent in the industry (Gutiérrez, 2011). The phenomena related to the localization of economic activities generate a fracture of the city, as (Díaz, 2008) points out; the city is concentrated around the dominant economic centers, especially the financial sector. The same author points out that this results in processes of land revaluation, as well as conflicts, tensions and social and economic fragmentation of urban space.

## **8. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION**

We have found economic activities that shape the characteristics of the contemporary working subject. Beyond the materialist critique that supports the relations of work in critical theories, we are faced with forms of subjectivity that give way to the administration of life, expressed in an individual conflict that has overcome the classic notion of collective conflict.

The 'rejection of a world that we feel to be wrong, negation of a world we feel to be negative' (...) manifests itself, here, as the release of the spontaneity of individuals with both a sensuous and cognitive make-up through the assertion of 'our self-confidence, our sexuality, our playfulness, our creativity' (Masquelier, 2013, p. 401).

It is not only the establishment of a model based on the rational calculation of utility or maximizers, it is not the reduction of all subjectivity to simple methodological individualism. The ways of administering life turn out to be a sort of fetishization. (Masquelier, 2013) affirms that we are witnessing a "diffusion of the relations of exchange to all domains of social and personal life that is to say" confidence in ourselves, our sexuality, our joy, our creativity".

Consequently, the new subjectivities express a new conflict scenario around the biopolitics of the 21st century. The forms of control of life and its administration permeated by the values of organizations and economic rationalism under conditions of structural change of work away from the collective forms of organization and institutional formalization of the welfare state, insights and meanings.

The very fact that the emergence of biopolitics has been accompanied by legible of romanticism in its official genealogies suggests that the current scholarly concern with life as an object of power, far from simply indicating a loss of romanticism, marks its radical survival (Hunt and Rudolf, 2012).

It has been emphasized that women, beyond the victimization of the historical process, also assumes as creative subject and creative processes of emancipation of their condition that allow an effective social mobility. At the same time as the conditions of the working subject in the post-Fordist stage: they delocalize, decentralize and continually de-structure the subject and objects; the subjective of the objective; the circulation and the exchange notice new symbolic elements in the relations of work of the human and of its nature of its emancipation and liberation.

Like women, then, ethnic minorities are victims of the treatment of the other as a natural being to be dominated. In sum, therefore, while the experience of injustice (social critique) and the obstacles to human emancipation (artistic critique) do vary among the different oppressed groups, unity between them can effectively be identified if the prospects of justice, security and emancipation are treated as matters depending on the reconciliation of humanity with nature. (Masquelier, 2013, p. 408)

The idea of freedom and greater flexibility of workspaces are seen as a usual element of the evolution of work within liberal societies, greater autonomy, and the appearance of less dependence on direct control guarantee a functional role of the subject worker within the dynamics that imposes on him a greater instability and strong rotation of the work, only possible with the institutional changes within the perspective of space of freedom and governmentality of Foucault.

Foucault's work on disciplinary power and bio-politics, I argue, provides a useful critique that reveals how the space of freedom is actually constituted by specific political practices and how the production of this space assumes a specific kind of liberal subject (Davis, 2005, p. 87).

The research process yielded results that are consistent with the formulations that were established some of them discussed in this article. Explore a dimension of the working subject that begins to recognize itself within the global changes that emerge from the economic processes and the consolidation of a discourse of the administration of life that in appearance promotes greater freedom and flexibility of the labor relations. By principle, the maximization of freedom in the working subject expressed in the "control" of its time and space of material reproduction; it establishes devices that alter their lives and relationships with others within the

consolidation of a model of society, increasingly governed by the instrumental principles of administration and the logic of current accumulation of the economy. The forms of independent work, autonomous or relatively flexible establishes behaviors and norms that make the individual worker a form of work and collective behavior that in the end are part of a single social organism, apparently diverse, dispersed, invisibility, and astonishing by the forms of administration and control of life, not only of work.

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