

Instructions for authors, subscriptions and further details:

<http://mcs.hipatiapress.com>

Masculinities in Transit: The Voices of Motorcyclists

Johanna Burbano-Valente, Martin Emilio Gafaro-Barrera, Angelica Paola Torres-Quintero & María Teresa Dominguez-Torres¹

1) Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia

Date of publication: June 21st, 2019

Edition period: June 2019 - October 2019

To cite this article: Burbano-Valente, J., Gafaro-Barrera, M.E., Torres-Quintero, A.P., Dominguez-Torres, M. (2019). Masculinities in Transit: The Voices of Motorcyclists. *Masculinities and Social Change*, 8(2), 145-170. doi: 10.17583/MCS.2019.3933

To link this article: <http://doi.org/10.17583/MCS.2019.3933>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

The terms and conditions of use are related to the Open Journal System and to [Creative Commons Attribution License \(CC-BY\)](#).

Masculinities in Transit: The Voices of Motorcyclists

Johanna Burbano-Valente Martin
Pontificia Universidad Javeriana

Martin Emilio Gafaro-Barrera,
Pontificia Universidad Javeriana

Angelica Paola Torres-Quintero
Pontificia Universidad Javeriana

María Teresa Dominguez-Torres
Pontificia Universidad Javeriana

Abstract

This paper reports on the construction of masculinities in the narratives of 11 motorcyclists in Valledupar - Colombia. The aim was to establish the ways masculinities are expressed and recreated by motorcycle riders and the importance of motorcycles in these expressions. To do this, semistructured interviews were conducted to search for the evolution of their personal stories as men and on their relationship with motorcycles. We found that their masculinities are currently “in transit” : they vary from hegemonic manifestations to peripheral masculine ways of expression. Evidence of these transits can be grouped around four emerging categories: risk behavior, amusement settings, sexual expression and roles in public and private settings. Results show that, in some of these categories, the hegemonic patriarchal masculine logic prevails, especially through risky behaviors and motorcycle riding. However, other disruptive ways of expressing masculinities were found, motivated by the social transformations in equality policies, changes in interpersonal relationships and the participants’ own experiences. Supporting the transition process of masculinities is a large responsibility in social interventions seeking for a more equitable and fair society.

Keywords: masculinities, motorcycling, biographical narratives, qualitative research, Colombia

Masculinidades en Tránsito: Las Voces de los Motociclistas

Johanna Burbano-Valente Martin
Pontificia Universidad Javeriana

Martin Emilio Gafaro-Barrera,
Pontificia Universidad Javeriana

Angelica Paola Torres-Quintero
Pontificia Universidad Javeriana

María Teresa Dominguez-Torres
Pontificia Universidad Javeriana

Resumen

El artículo expone las conclusiones sobre la construcción de las masculinidades encontradas en narraciones de 11 motociclistas de Valledupar - Colombia. El objetivo era establecer las formas como las masculinidades se expresan y actúan en los motociclistas, y la importancia de la moto en estas expresiones. Para ello, se realizaron entrevistas semiestructuradas, para profundizar en el desarrollo de su historia personal como hombres y en la relación con las motocicletas. Se identificó que las masculinidades se encuentran en tránsito, oscilan entre manifestaciones hegemónicas y formas de expresión masculinas periféricas. Las manifestaciones de estos tránsitos se agrupan en torno a cuatro categorías emergentes: conducta de riesgo, espacios de diversión, expresión sexual, y roles en escenarios públicos y privados. Los hallazgos muestran que, en algunas de estas categorías prevalecen la lógica masculina hegemónica patriarcal, especialmente en las conductas de riesgo y en la conducción de motos. Sin embargo, se pueden evidenciar otras formas disruptivas de expresar las masculinidades motivadas: por las transformaciones sociales en las políticas de equidad, los cambios en las relaciones interpersonales y las propias vivencias. Apoyar el proceso de tránsito de las masculinidades es una responsabilidad en intervención social en procura de una sociedad más equitativa y justa.

Palabras clave: masculinidades, motociclismo, relatos biográficos, investigación cualitativa, Colombia

In 1987, Connell formulated the concept of hegemonic masculinity to refer to the dominant social role of males. Then, in 2003, he introduced the concept of peripheral masculinity to explain the transit that has been developing over the past few decades, through which the most traditional ways of being a man have started to shift, giving rise to different alternatives to express masculinity. This article aims to describe some of the changes occurring among males in Valledupar, Colombia, and those hegemonic social constructions that continue to be rooted in masculinities. It may be said that being a man nowadays includes divergent masculinities that pave the way to social transformation (Tellez & Verdú, 2011).

The concept of hegemonic masculinities refers to a social stereotype whereby males occupy a privileged position in society, in line with their physiology and their physical strength and endurance. It also suggests that men, due to their “natural” anthropological conditions must adjust to certain attitudes (Connell, 1987). According to Fernandez-Alvarez (2014), there are four different ways to express masculinity: hegemonic, subordinate, marginal and complaisant, which have been changing according to the socialization conditions of every culture and the globalization of cultural forms that are reflected on the transformation of social constructions. However, the research of masculinity has shown that hegemony involves a social construction of meaning with different levels of analysis and different implications, since masculinity has a level of identification of local costumes, but also a global dimension. Hence, both universal and particular social meanings mix to make up ways of being and becoming a man in different territories (Berger et al., 2016; Pante, 2014; Tarrant et al., 2015, Thompson, Edward & Bennet, 2015; Wetherrell & Edley, 2014; Whitehead, 2002; Zell et al., 2016). That is, it is not possible to consider a single form of masculinity; on the contrary, the diversity and complexity of expression of masculinities and feminities are a marked feature in our time.

Consequently with its social structure, the constructions of masculinities, its forms, acts and standings, are evident in specific social interactions. As a matter of fact, the review of current researches shows and interest to study

specific realms and themes where these expressions can be situated. This study is not an exception; it focuses on the constructions of masculinities regarding daily activity: riding a motorcycle around the city.

Working with this population enabled us to understand the tensions and transitions of being and becoming a man in the studied territory; these aspects are the focus of discussion of this paper. Results show that, in some of these categories, the hegemonic patriarchal masculine logic prevails, especially through risky behaviors and motorcycle riding.

Theoretical Framework

A review of recent literature helps define some broad research trends that are considered part of masculine subjectivity, related to: their forms of socialization as providers; the contained expression of their emotions; the permanent search for admiration on their success, and the will to reaffirm physical prowess through risky behaviors (Dávila, Marín & Medina, 2018). In gender studies, we can see how the sociocultural dynamics of masculine role reproduce practices of social organization that give shape to certain ways of being and becoming men and define a form of behavior that is reflected on a social identity.

The first trend is the search for hegemonic masculinities. The concept of hegemonic masculinity was used in different research and topics since 80`s. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) reformulated it to give priority to critical voices of psychology and feminisms: “It embodied the currently most honored way of being a man, it required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it is ideologically legitimated” (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p.4). Hegemonic masculinity is characterized by being a process of patriarchal power over others, social historical construction on gender relations, are in permanent reconstruction and have multiple meanings.

The concept emphasizes the relational character of gender, to indicate that the ways of being and becoming men are constructed in situated and historical contexts and within the framework of power relations with other

men and with women. This analysis in the diversity of meanings and practices associated with the experiences of being a man and implies talking about "masculinities" in plural, in order to move away from essentialist conceptions that fix masculinities as static and transhistorical identities.

Hegemonic masculinities refer to patterns of practices associated with ideals, fantasies and generalized desires to be and become man, which are associated with a patriarchal order and are usually dominant in certain historical and cultural contexts. In this sense, it is not a single pattern of hegemonic masculinity but a fabric of multiple patterns that combine to sustain that patriarchal social order in a constant process of negotiation, translation and reconfiguration.

From this research we may conclude that males have been given the function of producing the means for the well-being of societies and families. This is related to the concept of private property and to privileges such as making decisions on the distribution of resources and the control of the family heritage (Tarrant et al., 2015; Whitehead, 2002). Treviño-Siller, Villanueva-Borbolla, Marcelino-Sandoval and Álvarez-Guillén (2010) affirm that the notion of being born a man places some demands on a person, from whom high standards related to strength, bravery and "manliness" are expected. The authors point out that these demands are sometimes reflected on risky behaviors, framed as self-demand, which are forced upon oneself and others, since men, to show their bravery, get involved in risky behaviors in places where there are other people.

A second trend of research studies the emotional setting in depth, especially, the common social representation that "men don't cry". As strong and domineering beings, the expression of emotion in men is a sign of a challenged masculinity and weakness; it is assumed that this type of man has a lower capacity to control social life (Berger, Shawab, Addis & Reigeluth, 2016).

Likewise, keeping emotions under control, not expressing them, as rational beings, appears as real masculine expectations. Denying emotions is accompanied by the exaltation of reason as the proper vehicle to organize and make sense of the world. Some research has concluded that men are

evasive regarding situations of stress or problems involving difficult emotional command, as they do not have the tools to face these problems because of a constant avoidance of their emotions (Berger, Shawab, Addis & Reigeluth, 2016, Balgane 2013, Ramírez Rodríguez, Gómez González, Gutiérrez de la Torre, & Sucilla Rodríguez 2017).

Regarding the emotions linked with risk situations, research shows a close connection between hegemonic masculinity and risk on the road; a situation that leads to high rates of deaths and injuries among men. Krahé and Fenske (2002) examined the impact of age, the “macho” personality and the power of automobiles in the study on road accidents, elements that were considered as predictors of risk behaviors in the road setting. Özkan and Lajunen (2006) studied the association existing between risky driving behaviors and the role of gender among young drivers in Turkey. They identified the search for strong emotions as the predominant cause leading men to undertake risky behaviors, especially when driving. Their male stereotype endows men with more highly developed perceptive-motor skills, and this creates excess confidence in drivers, a fact that may lead to road accidents.

In several countries and settings, a relationship has been found between risky behavior and hegemonic masculinity, whereby males decide to place themselves at risk to reaffirm their male identity, especially in the eyes of other men. Studies like the ones conducted by Lonczak, Neighbors, and Donovan (2007) focused on road rage, speeding tickets and road injuries. Schmid et al (2008) explored the connection between the construction of masculinity and road risk through a simulator, to find the connection between masculinity and excess speed among men in Switzerland. Rhodes and Pivik (2011) studied differences in risky driving in terms of sex and age among teenagers. Geldstein, Di Leo, and Ramos Margarido (2011) show how the promotion of risk behaviors and interpersonal violence, and the current social stereotypes of gender affect current and new generations of drivers, within the framework of the surrounding social discourse, especially the one highlighting the social preponderance of males.

Merlino, Martínez and Escanes (2011) studied the relationship between the social representation of male gender norms and the driving practices of men in Argentina. They found a high connection between the demonstration and legitimization of masculinity and risky, aggressive behaviors, and driving at high speed. Rivas (2003) and Treviño-Siller, Villanueva-Borbolla, Marcelino-Sandoval, and Álvarez-Guillén (2010) designed mixed studies involving stages in order to explain the connection existing between road accidents and men, starting from the way in which masculinity and its relationship with risk and reckless behavior are constructed.

In studies that have dealt specifically with the construction of masculinities and motorcycle riding, researchers have pointed out the relevance of sensations. For example, Mahecha, Ramírez and Páramo (2013) identified the fact that speed, adrenalin, pleasure, madness and promptness were permanently found in the discourse of motorcyclists.

In contrast with the line of research that highlights these hegemonic characteristics, in the past few years new knowledge has been produced around the concept of Peripheral Masculinities (also referred to as emerging or other masculinities). This concept is used by McMahon (1999) and Comas (2016), when they ask themselves about care and self-care by men as a social dimension that transforms the roles and models of family; also by Pease (2000); when presenting the connection between post-modern relativity and masculinities; Bonino (2001), as he analyzed the attitude of males in the face of domestic chores; Pante (2014), when suggesting that masculine roles were also a form of colonization in Asia.

Findings from several studies reveal a transition in the construction of masculinities, the possibility to trace other ways of becoming men. As proposed by Vargas (2013), there seems to be an intention to transform the models of hegemonic masculinities to account for a vision of gender equality. This research focuses on these types of studies, with the interest of finding elements from the traditional hegemonic culture and the possibilities for emerging lines that can help us understand the ways in which other masculinities appear. Influencing the transformation of masculinities might

reduce social and vital risks, and at the same time offer alternatives to build up equality-based relationships between men and women.

Method

What we present in this paper is part of a broader research programme with a Colombian sample in Valledupar, the capital city of the Department of Cesar, a province on the Colombian Atlantic Coast. The purpose of this research was to establish possible connections between male risky road behavior and motorcycle riding. Valledupar was chosen because of its high rate of road accidents and fatal injuries among male motorcycle riders. The probability of death caused by road accidents in this city is 4.7 times higher among men than women; motorcycle riders make up the highest number of casualties in these accidents (46%) (INMLCF, 2015). This article focuses on a specific objective of the research, which aimed to understand the ways in which masculinity is expressed in the city.

The study involved a biographical design with 11 male motorcyclists between aged 21 to 53 who underwent in-depth interviews; they were selected with the following criteria: having ridden a motorcycle for five or more years, at least four days per week, and using it for different purposes (transportation, amusement, work, travel, among others), and having been involved in at least one road incident or accident. The research was approved by the Research and Ethics Committee at the Institute of Public Health at Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogota, Colombia (Proceedings, session 72, 2015).

Twenty-two semi-structured interviews were conducted at two different times, between May and July of 2016, after socializing the purpose of the study and getting the written informed consent from the participants. The interviews were conducted by two male researchers, one of whom was a local resident and acted as observer. Every interview lasted approximately two hours. They were conducted at different times, with different purposes. The first interviews explored the constructions of masculinity in different socialization settings in their daily lives: the school, the street, the family, at

work and during leisure time. The main question guiding the conversation was: what do men do in these settings? The following interviews focused on exploring their relationship with the motorcycle, becoming a motorcyclist, as well as risky behaviors and road accidents, making use of a timeline to facilitate the chronological account of the story.

Data were processed using Nvivo11®, with open and axial coding (Strauss, Corbin, & Zimmerman, 2002). Matrices of meaning were crafted, building up social representations for the general analysis of the research; for the particular analysis of masculinities, emerging categories were used, around which this analysis is structured.

Findings

The argument put forward by this work suggests that masculinities are currently in transit, oscillating between hegemonic manifestations and the emergence of other ways of being and becoming a man. The analysis of the biographical stories of participants shows that, in their territory, their masculinity is constantly questioned. It is repeatedly tested in the social setting, a reason for the need for permanent demonstration.

This demand leads to a constant display of behaviors considered to be chiefly masculine in this culture; however, from the analysis of results we infer that some ways of expressing masculinity are starting to appear, giving way to new alternatives for living masculinity. In this sense, masculinities have started to experience a transition.

Four settings in which it is possible to observe this transition are presented below: risky behavior, amusement settings, sexual expressions of men and the roles they take up in the public, and the private and domestic domains.

Risky Behaviour

The first aspect is risky behavior, which most strongly shows the hegemonic constructions of masculinity. Risky behaviors are defined as those behaviors that place a person in a risk situation. These behaviors are displayed to show

strength or courage. The most notorious risky behaviors are exhibited in early youth, mainly riding motorcycles without the proper safety conditions, as one of interviewed narrates.

As we were heading home the police started to follow us, oh, that was a moment of high adrenalin. I think it was the best day of my life on the motorcycle, the changes of direction, the skill, I pushed it all to the limit because I knew if we fell down or get caught, they were going to beat us up (Herre, interview 2).

Narrations like Herre's, shows that riding a motorcycle provides the feeling of being adults; it reinforces a version of autonomous masculinity, because the subject has a perception of freedom, the possibility to move in and out of the city without restrictions. In addition, a perception of invulnerability is observed, associated with confidence in the ability to successfully face difficulties, obstacles and risks. Motorcyclists take up different risky behaviors on the street, such as riding at high speed, riding on sidewalks, changing lanes, and ignoring stop signs or red lights. All these actions challenge regulations and authorities; in their own terms, they give them a surge of adrenalin.

Under the effect of adrenalin, body sensations and the perception of themselves and of reality change. As they feel more powerful and dominating, rational information on the risk of certain practices is deactivated. As one of them decisively states, "I can overcome death" (El Cami 8, Interview1).

The sensation resulting from riding at high speed limits the adoption of care and protection practices: "I don't know; maybe adrenalin itself makes you do these things "(Herre, interview 1). Another participant stated that "youngsters and teenagers are at that age when there is a rush of adrenalin and they wish to do many things with the motorcyle, to feel that their hearts are popping out of their chests " (Pirulo, interview 2). This adrenalin rush intensifies when challenging the authority: "I feel the excitement running through my veins when I'm riding at 60, or 80 kilometers in the motorcycle

[...] I don't care who is by my side: neither the police, nor control chiefs" (Herre, interview,1).

This feeling of invulnerability is associated with a contempt for protection measures such as the use of the helmet; wearing a helmet clashes with their ability to overcome risk, and at the same time, with the image of masculine appeal they wish to project, as one of interviewed narrates:

[...] I have a helmet but I don't wear it [...] I don't like it because I feel it spoils my hairstyle, or I feel this weight on my head, or I can't see when the police are coming, or things like that. I like to look handsome on the motorcycle (Chino, Interview 1).

The narratives of interviewees about motorcycles feature a deep feeling of affection, and a need for control. The motorcycle is regarded as a friend, a companion and accomplice; it contributes to keep up the masculine image they wish to project; it undergoes anthropomorphization and therefore turns into an object of special care. The need for control over the motorcycle allows men to undertake situations of risk and to get money, as they use the bike to work. Both achievements make it a great ally to comply with the hegemonic context in the masculine construction of men in Valledupar.

According to the interviewees, the male family figures, such as fathers and uncles, also play an essential role; they encourage youngsters to ride motorcycles: "My father used to tell my mother; this is something that will help him grow up" (Pirulo, E1). From an early age (between 13 and 15), sons are expected to start riding a motorcycle, with the support of other more experienced men. Adult males lend them their motorcycles and doing this is a token of trust in them. The ritual of learning how to ride the motorcycle is masculine, and it takes place as a generational process. Through it, young men train on their courage and bravery. For example, they tell how they *se volaban*, ("fled") or took out the motorcycle without fathers authorization to develop their skills. Taking risks is done without too much awareness.

A shift in hegemonic justifications of courage and risk appears when we mention the experiences of road accidents in which the interviewees faced

that supposed invulnerability. They expressed they felt emotionally affected by fear and powerlessness. One of them states, "I was shaking and my mind went blank when I felt I'd just had a close encounter with death" (Chino, interview 2). Other subject points out: "I felt helpless, anxious, scared, anguished; we were heading to the floor and one is never ready, no matter how many times you rehearse how you're going to fall" (Patotas, interview 2).

Although in their narratives interviewees recognize emotions of vulnerability and somehow, the dangers associated with the motorcycle, they also tell who they overcame, like a battles motorcyclists face in their daily lives and help them get small medals that ratify their manhood as they managed to overcome a situation where life itself was at risk. For example, the narrative on the first accident, generally occurring in adolescence, is told as if it was an adventure worth sharing, a feat, and mischief at the same time. It may be stated that, although there is a little shift in recognizing a certain emotional level of suffering, this feeling is soon turned into a joke, an adventure to explain a social construction of masculine hegemony where being a risk-taking motorcycle rider is one of the most functional ways of showing off one's manhood.

Amusement Settings

In relation to amusement settings, interviewees expressed that there are leisure settings aimed almost exclusively at men, which appear in a spontaneous way in their daily lives, that is, they are unplanned: "...so, sometimes neighbors can pop in, I mean, we are very close, then, an invitation to party, we are in right away, we just join the party." (Pirulo, Interview 1).

The most relevant leisure activity is soccer. It is the favorite sport among men, and it is a key way of showing one's masculinity / heterosexuality. One of the interviewees declared that he does not particularly like soccer and he is not very good at it, but for him it is a pretext to get together and share with friends. In Valledupar, playing soccer is one way to show that you are a

man. Youngsters must learn how to play and enjoy the matches, watch soccer games and try to be tough in the field, a sign of their masculinity. Women, in turn, do not take part in this activity by playing, but they go to the matches, they support and encourage men. In this way, soccer is masculine, and it is a way to be seen by women. One of the participants said: “Here in Valledupar, when a man doesn’t like soccer, you immediately wonder. You start thinking that maybe he doesn’t like women” (Pirulo, interview 1).

A second feature associated with leisure amongst males is the lack of discipline and being rebellious (*la mamadera de gallo*: an expression referring to joking and having fun). These characteristic elements in men from the Caribbean Coast in Colombia are associated with an outlook on life related to extraversion and easily creating bonds of closeness and trust. It also has to do with the enjoyment expressed through the games and jokes appearing in different conversations. Subjects consistently report that as children, they were restless and prone to making jokes and playing pranks on their classmates and teachers.

The third element characterizing the leisure time expressions among men in Valledupar is *la parranda* (partying). According to the interviews, men can easily spend three days listening to Vallenato (typical music from the region) and drinking alcohol. Alcohol consumption serves as a mediator in social relationships. It helps create and hold bonds, and it is also a means for social pressure as a sign of masculinity. One participant commented:

You get to Alfonso López Square and there are at least ten couples drinking; and you go along the avenue on Friday and you find like fifty bars and at least one thousand people drinking. If you go to the river for a get together, people say: ‘We have 200,000 pesos! And they split it: 150 for rum and 50 for food’. And suddenly somebody says: ‘That’s a lot of money for food! Let’s spend 160’ [laughing]. That’s how we have fun here. But it’s very nice; you get to a liquor store, park your bike, and when you get off they are already calling you: ‘Come here, have a drink! This one’s on me!’ And when there are a few of us left, they say: ‘let’s carry on at home’. There you turn

on your boombox, whether it is a holiday, or Sunday, we just go on. So here, la parranda goes on and on (Yedato, interview 1).

La parranda is part of the social relationships at home or in the neighborhood, involving friends, neighbors and family. In the parrandas you mostly find men, among the musicians and among those taking part in it. If women attend these parties, they play the role of caregivers, by regulating the intake of alcohol and providing food for those attending. As it is a public social and cultural gathering, a macho culture is observed in the region, as men are the center of the party, while women and children are in the periphery.

In cultural terms, there is admiration and cult for iconic figures of *la parranda*, such as vallenato singer and songwriter Diomedes Diaz, who, in the words of the subjects, represents and merges two features of a typical Costeño man: a womanizer and a partygoer.

In contrast, there are still some voices of criticism against these forms of amusement, particularly among older men, like Patotas:

Our men, in our culture, they like to drink. People like to share at weekends and they are always drinking. There is a generalized probability to be irresponsible; people here are very irresponsible. When they have children, they try to comply with their duties, but they like their drinks, parties, la parranda, folklore (Patotas, interview 1).

Thus, the meaning of parranda starts to shift from being the center of fun, to an activity with connotations of irresponsibility, in two ways: the high consumption of alcohol and the time spent away from their families because of the party.

Alcohol consumption is also related with inappropriate behavior; that is why many times they drink and drive: "many of them like rum, and mixing it with gasoline is a common cause for accidents" (El Flaco, interview 1). Interviewees admit to have drunk liquor before the most shocking accident

in their lives. In many of those cases, alcohol consumption was associated with riding their motorcycles at high speed. Despite the accidents experienced, interviewees have not stopped the practice of drinking and riding; on the contrary, they have introduced popular practices to avoid sanctions, like drinking a lot of water in the belief that in this way they will be able to dilute the levels of alcohol in their blood:

I'm always very careful with that. There is always the possibility that I have a drink sometimes, but I do it not to reject a drink from a friend; so that he is not mad at me later as I did not accept a drink all night. But then I drink water, and more and more water, and I go home with all my senses (Pirulo, Interview 2).

It has been observed that these amusement settings are mainly male; women show up to look at men, to admire and serve them. However, narratives are starting to show some elements that mark the transit to other ways of relating: women have started to make an incursion into vallenato singing (thus becoming the center of the parranda); there are narratives of parties in which dancing between men and women is mentioned, and women have taken some steps into sports like enduro (riding motorcycles in unpaved roads, with a high risk of falling). That is, there are amusement settings in which women participate, without detriment to the male socialization settings.

Sexual Expressions

The third aspect is the sexual expression of men, which is configured in two interwoven properties: sexual orientation and the number of sexual partners. Although there is a higher level of acceptance of sexually diverse populations among the younger subjects, and an abandonment of the practice of having several homes, a habit in this region until recently, heterosexuality and a multiplicity of sexual partners continue to be predominant expressions of male virility.

Right now, I don't [have a girlfriend]; some little flings here and there and girls who cross my way. Friends with benefits, girls who cross my way. Sometimes some women would say: 'Hey, I really like you', so I don't know, 'well, let's have something, but with no commitments. We're friends with benefits but that's it. You do not demand anything from me, and me neither (El Flaco, interview 1).

You are “more of a man” if you feel attracted to women and if you have as many partners or experiences as possible. They get used to parallel relationships even when a home has been established and formalized. These extra-marital relationships are usually promoted from a very early age; these behaviors are tolerated and even valued in a positive way exclusively for men. In the words of one of the motorcyclists interviewed “In Valledupar, men live heterosexuality by being womanizers. Apparently, having several simultaneous relationships with women is an indicator of virility” (Andrés, interview 1).

Exercising heterosexuality involves learning and implementing repertoires associated with *conquest* and seducing women, including different types of actions and strategies that allow them to: a) show an interest in a woman; b) make women feel loved and wanted; c) demonstrate their financial capacity through gifts, invitations, clothing, places they visit and the status they show.

Some narratives show a breakup due to having several sexual partners; this transit seems to be associated with two elements: feelings of abandonment and financial situation. Many of the participants have separated parents, in situations ranging from mothers that were abandoned by their partners to the existence of parallel homes. Hence, among younger experienced abandonment or getting little attention from their fathers. The experience of growing up without a father, or with an intermittent father, seems to have significantly marked some subjects' life plans in terms of their projected fatherhood.

Consequently, they state that a man who responsibly takes care of his woman and his children is more of a man, but they preserve the

representation of provider, a feature of the hegemonic mandate of masculinity.

Here in Valledupar, and I think this happens everywhere, or in the places I have been to, there are guys who have their home and they like to have a mistress, a friend, a girlfriend, [...] I've never agreed with that; and I've lost friends because of that [...] I lost this friend because I used to tell him that one day he was going to lose his family, he was going to lose everything, and so he did, because for him girlfriends, friends, little friends, "bad girls" were more important than his wife (El Gordo, interview 1).

In addition, the financial ability to keep both a relationship and parallel homes has been gradually reduced. This may be due to changes in public policies in two ways: the ones demanding the exercise of paternity (family name and alimony), and those protecting the rights of women. In consequence, this is not necessarily a shift in power relationships, but rather a strategic use of them. Therefore, the strategies resorted to by women to be economically supported by men are reflected in the narratives. The accounts include references, most of them pejorative, to women who seek being financially supported by men; they are referred to as interested, and in extreme cases, as *prepago* (a term used to refer to a certain type of prostitution).

Roles of Man on Public, Private and Domestic Realms

The last aspect of the analysis is that related to the roles of men in the public, private and domestic domains. The interviews reveal interesting changes regarding what the model of hegemonic masculinity prescribes. Partly because the economic conditions in the area have changed, and partly because the contemporary discourse on social inclusion has been slowly permeating the society. Nonetheless, some attitudes still reinforce the idea that it is the job of men to support the family economy, at least to a larger extent than their partners. Due to this demand to be providers, they feel

obligated to do whatever they deem necessary. As one of the participants says,

Here in Valledupar we face up to whatever comes up; here you tell somebody; “my friend, would you do this?” and nobody says no, most of us do it. Say “I need you to paint this for me”... “Sure! I’ll paint it for you!” Say “I need to have this patio painted”... “Sure, I’ll do it” ...I need somebody to do this job”... This is something that characterizes us Vallenatos. We measure up to whatever comes up; in this aspect of job alternatives (El Cami, interview 1).

In order to reaffirm masculinity in adulthood, the work setting is quite relevant, as it makes it possible to fulfill the role of family provider -when there is a couple and children and being autonomous in their life projects. However, this concern to maintain the home is in tension with some of the men’s practices in the region, such as drinking the money they earn and leaving women with the responsibilities of the expenses

One of the problems men face is a scarcity of job opportunities in the region and in Valledupar, an argument used to explain why they end up doing activities referred to as *rebusque* (informal economy) or “illegal” (motorcycle taxis, smuggling). This situation is stressful and leaves subjects in a position of vulnerability and risk.

However, this situation is shifting towards a more significant balance between men and women; some of the interviewees state that they agree with the fact that women are working to contribute with the expenses at home and to provide economic support, and even recognize that women have the same skills as men, they say:

[...]The idea that both the physical and intellectual conditions of women at work were not the same as men’s, that’s over. I think women are already in the condition to do any type of job; in fact, we have been seeing, in the past 8 or 10 years, in the mining sector you would not find a woman at all; and mining is a high-risk job; the risk factor in a mine is outstanding; and the equipment is to be handled

with care; the operation of a machine in the mining sector is highly demanding; those are two-storey high megamachines (Ricardo Rojas, E1)

Although women have been joining the workforce in large numbers, the idea that house chores are to be performed by females still prevails; that is, while men make the decisions, they do not take part in the house activities.

- ¿What? He can also sweep the floor!”

- “No, because he is a man!” tells the father to the girl. Here he is already passing on his authority: ‘When I’m not home you are the one in command’. You grow up with this authority, and when you are a teenager, when you feel you have the power, mostly men pass on the macho education we have received (Cebollita, Interview 1).

To sum up, to be/become men from childhood itself, the role of males, both children and adults, is “to do nothing” regarding house chores such as sweeping the floor or cooking, among other tasks. They themselves recognize these aspects as having been instilled into them by the males in their families and by the macho traditio

Finally, it is important to mention another type of traffic that begins to appear in some work roles little by little of the participants perform jobs that are typically considered female: nursing and hairdressing. They say that when they made this decision, their masculinity was called into question. However, with time and many demonstrations of their manhood they managed to attain a social place, free from mockery. An example of these transitions is found in the social public sector of culture.

Upon revising the four elements, in three of them there are clear signs of a transit from a hegemonic male culture towards other less hegemonic ways to relate: these transits have become evident in other cultures as the “natural” preponderance of males has started to fall apart (Bonino, 2001; Berger et al 2016; Hernández, 2014, Vargas 2013).

Conclusions

The ways in which the participant subjects express masculinities indicate important changes in different societies. Marina Subirats (2007) suggests the hypothesis that this traditional model of masculinity founded on violence has become obsolete, although it has not vanished completely. In addition, the author alerts on the dangers this masculinity of risk and strength poses for males, in view of the high mortality and morbidity rates it represents.

Transformations in the structures favoring the authority of men in the Vallenato culture may be found in the discourse of the male motorcycle riders interviewed. As mentioned earlier, some of these changes begin with the political transformations of the State, as there is a proliferation of laws related to equality and social equity to protect women and children, especially within the configuration of families. Consequently, parallel homes have undesirable financial repercussions and single mothers who no longer feel the need to be subordinated to a man in order to survive are protected. In other words, there is an overlapping between the construction of public policies for gender equality and the transformation of male stereotypes (Vargas, 2013).

On the other hand, the cultural disassembling of the divisions regarding work, amusement, sports and actions as being typically feminine or masculine has been transforming places of gathering, changing the possibilities to be part of daily life, both for women and men. These considerations coincide with what other studies have found (Whitehead, 2002, Wheterrell & Edley, 2014).

Finally, the influence of several social elements has gradually built up a different form of masculinity. For example, the appearance of expressions of emotions associated with vulnerability before events that may be considered traumatic. This study found that men recognize their emotions and they express how vulnerable they felt in the accidents they suffered; these results differ from the findings of Balgane (2010) and Berger et al. (2016), who affirm that men do not connect with their emotions at difficult times. There is, however, a persisting element: risky behavior, a vital topic in the discussion on male well-being and public health. On the streets, showing the

ability to drive, of going over the limit and taking risks is part of feeling more masculine, stronger and better; these behaviors are displayed by many drivers, and even the risky behavior of female motorcycle riders would worth exploring in detail. Apparently, this behavior is the trace of the hegemonic masculinity in the public setting. These results match with the findings of most studies on road safety and masculinities conducted in the past few years, namely: Lonczak, Neighbors, and Donovan (2007), Rhodes and Pivik (2011), Geldstein, Di Leo, and Ramos Margarido (2011), Merlino, Martínez and Escanés (2011) and Mahecha, Ramírez and Páramo (2013).

It may be pointed out that hegemonic masculinities of male motorcyclists in Valledupar are currently enduring a transition; they have moved from the comfortable places occupied before, learned from their fathers and grandfathers, to start a nomad transit, towards other forms of masculine configuration that nonetheless coexist with some hegemonic ones, showing tensions and ambivalences, which allow us to recognize that subjective and identity constructions are never definitive, nor fixed as Braidotti refers (2000). This nomadism is evident in three aspects: role of father, domestic work and fidelity to one home. On the other hand, there are behaviors that do not change, the main one: taking risks in the motorcycle.

The path suggested is to find other ways to be/become a man, an effort to deconstruct the essentialist versions of male identity, with a larger possibility to find others, ultimately to find themselves, away from the notion of a masculine subject focused on their physical conditions and on the features of their sex. In short, away from the permanent demonstration of their masculinity.

References

- Balgane, C. (2013). Macho se hace a los golpes. *Revista Tram[p]as de la comunicación y la cultura*, 74, 85-90. Retrieved from <http://www.youblisher.com/p/672380-Macho-se-hace-a-los-golpes/>
- Berger, J.L., Schwab, J.R., Addis, M.E., & Reigeluth, C.S. (2016). Silence and (In)visibility in Men's Accounts of Coping with Stressful Life

Events. *Gender & Society*, 30(2), 289–311 doi:
[10.1177/0891243215602923](https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243215602923)

- Bonino, L. (2001). Los varones hacia la paridad en lo doméstico. En C. Sanchez Palencia, & J. Hidalgo (Eds.), *Masculino plural: construcciones de la masculinidad*, (pp. 21-76). Lleida: Universidad de Lleida.
- Braidotti, R. (2000). *Sujetos Nómades. Corporización y diferencia sexual en la teoría feminista contemporánea*. Buenos Aires: Paidós
- Comas d'Argemir, D. (2016). Hombres cuidadores: Barreras de género y modelos emergentes. *Psicoperspectivas*, 15(3), 10-22. doi:
[10.5027/psicoperspectivas-Vol15-Issue3-fulltext-750](https://doi.org/10.5027/psicoperspectivas-Vol15-Issue3-fulltext-750)
- Connell, R. (1987). *Gender and power: Society, the person and sexual politics*. Cambridge: Polity Press..
- Connell, R. (2003). *Masculinidades*. México D.F: Universidad Autónoma de México.
- Connell, R.W., & Messerschmidt, J.W. (2005). Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept. *Gender & Society*, 19(6), 829–859. doi:
[10.1177/0891243205278639](https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243205278639) .
- Davila, C.D., Marin, V., & Medina, J.F. (2018). *Vivencia de la masculinidad en hombres de tres generaciones*. Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales. Pontificia Universidad Javeriana-Cali
- Donaldson, M. (1993). What is Hegemonic Masculinity? *Theory and Society*, 22(5):643-657. doi: [10.1007/BF00993540](https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00993540)
- Fernandez-Alvarez, O. (2014). Non-Hegemonic masculinity against gender violence. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 161, 48-55. doi:
[10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.12.009](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.12.009)
- Geldstein, R.N., Di Leo, P., & Ramos Margarido, S. (2011). Género, violencia y riesgo en el tránsito. La dominación masculina en los discursos de automovilistas de la ciudad de Buenos Aires. *Physis Revista de Saúde Coletiva*, 21(2), 695-720. Retrieved from
https://www.scielo.org/scielo.php?pid=S0103-73312011000200019&script=sci_abstract
- Hernandez, F. (2014). El ser varón y el diseño de políticas públicas e intervención social con perspectiva de género. *Revista mexicana de*

- ciencias políticas y sociales*, 59(222), 209-234. Retrieved from http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?pid=S0185-19182014000300009&script=sci_arttext&tlng=en
- INMLCF. (2015). *Forensis 2014 datos para la vida*. Bogotá: Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal y Ciencias Forenses
- Kornblit, A. (2007). Historias y relatos de vida: una herramienta clave en metodologías cualitativas. En A. Kornblit (Ed.), *Metodologías cualitativas en ciencias sociales* (pp. 15 - 33). Buenos Aires: Paidós.
- Krahé, B., & Fenske, I. (2002). Predicting Aggressive Driving Behavior: The Role of Macho Personality, Age, and Power of Car. *Aggressive behavior*, 28(1), 21-29. doi: 10.1002/ab.90003
- Lonczak, H.S., Neighbors, C., & Donovan, D.M. (2007). Predicting risky and angry driving as a function of gender. *Accident Analysis & Prevention*, 39(3), 536-545. doi: 10.1016/j.aap.2006.09.010
- Mahecha, M., Páramo, D., & Ramírez, E. (2013). La accidentalidad de los motociclistas en Neiva: entre cultura y cognición. *Revista Entornos*, 26(2), 239-254. doi: 10.25054/01247905.489
- Martin, J. (1997). Register and Genre: Modelling Social Context in Functional Linguistics: Narrative Genres. *Primera Conferencia Internacional de Análisis de Discurso* (págs. 305 - 344). Lisboa: Colibri / Portuguese Linguistics Assn.
- Merlino, A., Martínez, A., & Escanés, G. (2011). Representaciones sociales de la masculinidad y agresividad en el tránsito. La ira al conducir en Argentina. *Barbarói*, 35, 199-217. doi: 10.17058/barbaroi.v0i0.1906
- McMahon, A. (1999). *Taking Care of Men*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Montoya, S.M., Rodríguez, J.M., Albavera, C., & Valero O.M. (2016). Evidencias para la prevención y control de lesiones en motociclistas. *Revista Cubana de Salud Pública*. 2016;42(4): 630 - 645. Retrieved from https://www.scielosp.org/scielo.php?pid=S0864-34662016000400628&script=sci_abstract
- Otegui, R. (1999). La construcción social de las masculinidades. *Política y Sociedad*, 32, 151 - 160. Retrieved from

<http://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/POSO/article/viewFile/POSO9999330151A/24698>

- Özkan, T., & Lajunen, T. (2006). What causes the differences in driving between young men and women? The effects of gender roles and sex on young drivers' driving behaviour and self-assessment of skills. *Transportation research part F: Traffic psychology and behaviour*, 9(4), 39–56. doi: 10.1016/j.trf.2006.01.005
- Pante, M.D. (2014) A Collision of Masculinities: Men, Modernity and Urban Transportation in American-Colonial Manila. *Asian Studies Review*, 38(2), 253-273. doi: 10.1080/10357823.2014.902034
- Pease, B. (2000). *Recreating Men. Postmodern Masculinity Politics*. London: Sage.
- Ramírez Rodríguez, J.C., Gómez González, M.P., Gutiérrez de la Torre. N.C., & Sucilla Rodríguez, M.V. (2017). Masculinities and Emotions as Sociocultural Constructions: A Bibliometric Review. *Masculinities and Social Change*, 6(3), 217-256. doi: 10.17583/mcs.2017.2734
- Rhodes, N., & Pivik, K. (2011). Age and gender differences in risky driving: The roles of positive affect and risk perception. *Accident Analysis & Prevention*, 43(3), 923-931. doi:10.1016/j.aap.2010.11.015
- Rivas, H. (2003). ¿El varon como factor de riesgo? Masculinidad y mortalidad por accidentes y otras causas violentas en la sierra de Sonora. *Revista: Estudios Sociales*, 13(26), 28-65. Retrieved from <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=2056864>
- Rodríguez, D., Santana, M., & Pardo, C. (2015). *La motocicleta en América Latina. Caracterización de su uso e impactos en la movilidad en cinco ciudades de la región*. Bogotá: CAF: Banco de Desarrollo de América Latina.
- Sanfélix Albelda, J., & Téllez Infantes, A. (2017). Lógicas Prácticas en el Proceso de Construcción de la Masculinidad de los Hombres Valencianos: Calle, Riesgo, Fútbol y Arca. *Masculinities and Social Change*, 6(2), 96-118. doi: 10.17583/MCS.2017.1937

- Schmid Mast, M., Sieverding, M., Esslen, M., Graber, K., & Jäncke, L. (2008). Masculinity causes speeding in young men. *Accident Analysis & Prevention*, 40(2), 840-842. doi: 10.1016/j.aap.2007.09.028
- Strauss, A. L., Corbin, J., & Zimmerman, E. (2002). *Bases de la investigación cualitativa: técnicas y procedimientos para desarrollar la teoría fundamentada*. Medellín: Universidad de Antioquia
- Subirats, M. (2007). Ser Hombre. En Castell, M. y Subirats, M., *Mujeres y hombres ¿Un amor imposible?*. Madrid, Alianza Editorial.
- Tarrant, A., Terry, G., Ward, M., Ruxton, S., Robb, M., & Featherstobne, B. (2015). Are male role models really the solution? Interrogating the ‘war on boys’ through the lens of the ‘male role model’ discourse. *Boyhood Studies. An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 8(1), 1-37. Retrieved from <http://oro.open.ac.uk/id/eprint/45216>
- Tellez , A., & Verdú, A. (2011). El significado de la masculinidad para el análisis social. *Nuevas tendencias en Antropología* (2), 80 - 103. Retrieved from <http://www.revistadeantropologia.es/Textos/N2/EI%20significado%20de%20la%20masculinidad.pdf>
- Thompson Jr., Edward H., Bennett, & Kate M. (2015). Measurement of masculinity ideologies: A (critical) review. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 16(2), 115-133. doi: 10.1037/a0038609
- Treviño-Siller, S., Villanueva-Borbolla, M., Marcelino-Sandoval, Y., & Álvarez-Guillén, F. (2010). Masculinidad, accidentes viales y políticas públicas. *Gaceta Médica de México*.
- Vargas, R. (2013). Primera parte: Enfoque equidad de género para el trabajo con hombres: concepto clave. En: Gerard's, D. Vargas, R. Ariza, G. & Gaviria, s. (Eds) *Hombres cuidadores de vida: modelo de sensibilización y formación en masculinidades género-sensibles y prevención de las violencias hacia las mujeres*. Medellín: Colombia. Alcaldía de Medellín.
- Wetherell, M., & Edley, N. (2014). A discursive psychological framework for analyzing men and masculinities. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 15(4), 355-364. doi: 10.1037/a0037148

Whitehead, S. (2002). *Men and Masculinities: Key Themes and New Directions*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Zell, E.; Strickhouser, J, Lane T &Teeter, S. (2016). Mars, Venus, or earth? Sexism and the exaggeration of psychological gender differences. *Sex role*, 75(7), 287–300. doi: [10.1007/s11199-016-0622-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-016-0622-1)

Johanna Burbano-Valente is assistant professor of Psychology at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia

Martin Emilio Gafaro-Barrera is assistant professor of Psychology at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia

Angélica Paola Torres-Quintero is assistant professor of Institute of Public Health at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia

María Teresa Dominguez-Torres is assistant professor of Institute of Public Health at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia

Contact Address: Direct correspondence to Johanna Burbano-Valente, Faculty of Psychology, Carrera 5^a No. 39-00 - Edificio 95 - Manuel Briceño Jauregui, S.J, Bogotá, Colombia, email: jburbano@javeriana.edu.co