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# The dual career process in the Brazilian perspective: Unraveling typologies

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## RESUMO

### O processo de *dual career* sob a ótica brasileira: desvendando tipologias

Um fenômeno que surge estreitamente relacionado às mudanças nos âmbitos social, econômico e cultural, e que cresce à medida que os anos caminham, vem despertando a atenção de pesquisadores para o desenvolvimento de estudos que envolvem tanto o campo individual quanto o organizacional. Denominado como *dual career family*, esse fenômeno enfatiza um movimento conjunto de marido e mulher (casal) na esfera familiar e no desenvolvimento da carreira de ambos. Dessa forma, a fim de conhecer como essas relações estão se estabelecendo, propôs-se neste estudo a investigar quais os fatores determinantes que constituem o fenômeno da *dual career* no contexto brasileiro. A pesquisa contou com 340 participantes, todos ex-alunos de uma universidade pública, que deveriam ser casados ou viver maritalmente. Os resultados permitiram caracterizar, por meio de estatísticas descritivas, o perfil dos casais de *dual career* no cenário brasileiro e verificar quais os tipos de *dual career* existentes no País. Obtiveram-se cinco tipos de *dual career*: familistic coordenada, familistic convencional, carreirista coordenada, carreirista convencional e acrobata.

**Palavras-chave:** casais, *dual career*, famílias, fenômeno, tipos.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

There are two concepts considered as organizing axes of human life – work and family. These two social spheres (family and work) are undergoing transformations that are the result of the changes occurred in recent decades, especially in the economic and social field. The changes in work-family relationships are linked to transformations in economic activity, which, in turn, interfere with the hierarchical relationships of the family (Montali, 2003). A motivator of this change is the gradual increase of women's participation in the job market. This fact raises questions about the roles and responsibilities of men and women within the family, making them more evident.

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There is a vast literature on gender (Abramo, 2007; Bruschini, Ricoldi & Mercado, 2007; Costa, Sorj, Bruschini & Hirata, 2008; Cramer, Cappelle, Andrade, & Brito, 2012; Drew & Humbert, 2012; Glauber, 2012; Hirata & Segnini, 2007; Kassenboehmer & Sinning, 2014) showing the changing role of women in society and in the labor market. In this context, it is worth mentioning those studies, since this achievement in the women's field, more than generating strong changes, favors the emergence of a phenomenon: a (married) woman also happens to have opportunities and to be able to develop a career jointly with her husband, in a dual career family or dual career couple. It is important to point out that in Brazil there is still no expression portraying this phenomenon. In translating the term as "double career", one can understand that a single person has two careers, which is rather usual in Brazil. In international literature, it is possible to verify that "dual career" reflects solely the career of a couple. In Brazil, it does not. So for this article, we shall use the term in English – dual career.

This term was created decades ago (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1976), but has never been so present in today's society. Its essence lies in the fact the couple (husband and wife) develop their career together, that is, both partners take on family responsibilities simultaneously with the occupation. In this approach, it is essential to pay attention to three issues: gender, family and work. Indeed, this practice interferes with the structural bases of each of these concepts, since it is based on the idea that the spouses have their own careers. This has implications for family structure by questioning the status of women as "just" a housewife and also to encourage a more autonomous position within several arenas, especially those related to the job market.

The thematic on dual career stimulates discoveries, first because of all the social, economic, cultural and political transformation society has experienced, especially in the new millennium, and secondly, for the need of reconstruction of the dual career concept, as seen in new approaches about career nowadays (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Boudreau, Gibson, & Ziskin, 2014). There were no experiences in Brazil highlighting or characterizing this movement.

The choice of the theme was made considering some relevant aspects in the social context: first, because there was not, up to the time of completion of this work, an empirical study carried out in the country on this subject; and, secondly, because we wanted to collaborate with the collection of information, providing an understanding of what are dual career couples, how they behave and what are their characteristics in the Brazilian context.

Therefore, the main purpose of this paper was to explore the dual career phenomenon in Brazil, identifying some factors associated with it. For this, two specific objectives conduct the research and will be detailed in the course of the paper, namely: raising sociodemographic variables and their association with

dual career, and identify the different types of dual career in the Brazilian scene.

We expect, with the results obtained, to add information to the studies already conducted and contribute to new knowledge in both individual and organization fields. In the individual field, we intend to contribute to the identification of the profile that characterizes the dual career couples, what they prioritize, how they organize themselves in relation to family and profession. In the organizational field, from the conclusions, we intend to provide a mapping of who these couples are. This is because dual career has become a new challenge for companies, due to the competitiveness they face daily in their people management (Abele & Volmer, 2011; Bagger & Li, 2014; Dunphy & Stace, 1992).

## 2. THEORETICAL REFERENTIAL

Literature review was conducted in order to demonstrate and theoretically support the main themes involving the study. Before the proposed scopes, we surveyed, in general, the matters related to career and their consequences. The discussion dealing with career highlights aspects of the understanding of their definitions, considering the various conceptual approaches of authors in that area. Above all, we focus the dual career context and the parameters surrounding it.

### 2.1. From the career to the phenomenon "dual career"

Although there are different approaches to the study of careers, scholars of the subject generally agree that a career can be defined as "[...] the evolutionary sequence of experiences of a person over time" (Arthur, Hall & Lawrence, 1989, p. 8). Studies in the mid-70s from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) also contributed to the construction of the career concept by presenting four major themes. First, the establishment of a universal notion of career, extended to all workers and all kinds of organizations. Then, the recognition of time as a key mediator of the relationship between an individual and an organization. The other two themes are the interdisciplinary studies involving career construct and the recognition of objective and subjective perspective. Under the subjective perspective, the individual is who interprets his own career; under the objective perspective, the interpretation comes from the organization or institution (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996).

London and Stumph (1982) point out that career can be treated from two perspectives – organization and individual. Traditionally, career is defined as an individual's relationship with the organization where he works. That career, taken as linear, occurs in a context of stable organizational structure (Levinson, 1978; Super, 1963), in which people progress hierarchically in the company, in order to obtain extrinsic rewards (Rosenbaum, 1979). This model became popular

in the 50s and 60s and, according to Sullivan and Crocitto (2007), benefited from finding an economic and working environment characterized by the introduction and growth of new technologies, as well as norms and social structures that backed and sustained the view of man as “breadwinner structure” of the family. The established relationship between employee and employer was characterized by workers’ loyalty, implicit in the promise of security at work by the organization (Rousseau, 1989).

However, over the years, other environmental changes, such as globalization, increased diversity in the workforce, increasing use of outsourced labor and part-time and temporary work, changed this traditional organizational structure, both in employee-employer relationship and in the work context. This, in turn, raised changes in the way individuals structure their careers (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009).

These changes in the relationships between companies and people stressed the importance of academic research, specifically career theory. Several authors have sought to do research about career and its various dimensions (Chanlat, 1995; Defillipi & Arthur, 1994; Hall, 1996; Van Maanen, 1977).

Among these dimensions, two of them following opposite directions are worth mentioning. The first one refers to the objective dimension of career (Chanlat, 1995; Evans, 1996; Van Maanen, 1977). This dimension is related to the traditional view of career, focusing on the hierarchical model of the improvement of positions in the organization, i.e. the companies where individuals work manages their careers. It is worth mentioning the emphasis on the external vision, i.e., the tangible aspects of career (payment, promotions, hierarchical status, job mobility) of the individual (Hughes, 1958). The other dimension of career, considered subjective (Hall, 1996; Van Maanen, 1977), is based on the perception and individual expectations. The meaning attributed by individuals leads the different facets of their own career (Walton & Mallon, 2004). We observe, in recent years, an effort to demonstrate the relevance of the subjective dimension in the new scenario of organizational changes (Hall & Chandler, 2005).

Features of the subjective dimension can be seen in the new career models that have emerged over the past decades, in order to meet the demands of a “metamorphosed labor world”. All this evolutionary context of understanding the career, as well as its definitions, is relevant in this article, they design the understanding on dual career. To understand that career today is not only seen from a single point of view (the organization’s), justifies, in part, the behavior of couples who choose to develop a career.

Over the past three decades, there has been an increase in studies on changes in the interface between work and family (Bagger & Li, 2014; Guitián, 2009; Hall, 1989; Sanz-Vergel, Rodríguez-Muñoz, & Nielsen, 2014). These studies reveal that the changes occurring in the labor world intervene, strikingly, in family relations and vice versa, and also that the sexual

division of labor, prevailing both in the productive and in the family sphere, ends up articulating these two social spaces.

The gradual interest by the academy is due, firstly, to the growing number of women who, right after World War II, began to combine motherhood with paid work (Edwards, 2001). This led directly to a recomposition of the nuclear family (Polk, 2008; Thompson & Prottas, 2005) – father and mother assume jointly the role of protagonists for housekeeping, i.e., functions previously distributed and practiced according to gender are reconfigured, shaping a new scenario. In this new scenario (husband and wife going out to work), numerous concepts appear to feature this relationship, defined according to the wishes of the couple.

The term understood as dual career originally coined by Rapoport and Rapoport (1976), consolidated the outcomes of the discussions on the division of gender work, in which men and women have assumed new roles and share equal responsibilities, both in professional and family field. As a result, a number of dilemmas emerges in the family environment, especially the impact of the position that the figure of the woman now occupies in this new context. These dilemmas can be grouped as follows, for better understanding: a) overload in the role dilemmas (resulting from the various functions performed by the married couple, friends, relatives, etc.); b) normative dilemmas (resulting from differences between the dual career lifestyle and normative behavior determined by society); c) identity dilemmas (resulting from the confusion between the roles determined by society and the roles acquired in the lifestyles of dual career families); d) social network dilemmas (resulting from the reduced time available for social interaction); e) role cycling dilemmas (resulting from the conflict of decision about whether work or family should be preferred in certain situations).

The increase in the number of dual career couples demanded, in a way, a review of the concepts of these couples, since the presence of two careers in a family results in more complex processes for developing it, especially families with children (O’neil & Kinsella-Shaw, 1987; Pixley & Moen, 2003; Sultana, Tabassum, & Abdullah, 2014). Decisions taken by one of the spouses will certainly affect the career of the other, which is why the attempts to build individual careers end up forcing each member to consult each other in order to reconcile aspects such as travel, promotion, number of hours spent at work and sharing household chores (Budworth, 2008; Fider, Fox, & Wilson, 2014).

Literature shows that, in the study of dual career, a major focus of the researchers is the balance between work and personal life, because it is believed that many intellectual, emotional and psychological benefits are related to what is characterized as a “lifestyle” of dual career couples (Barnett, 1998; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Harvey, Novicevic, & Breland, 2009).

Rapoport and Rapoport (1976), pioneers of the study, collected information that allow us to observe important

features in order to build a new family structure – the dual career family – defined by them as “[...] the type of family in which both heads of household pursue careers and at the same time maintain a family life [including children] together” (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1976, p. 18).

When speaking for the first time on dual career families, Rapoport and Rapoport (1976) conceived them as the pioneer and separatist “creative variants” of the man as provider and the woman as housewife stereotypes. In the 70s, this situation has become more frequent as a result of an increasing participation of women in the job market, reinforced by legislation, ensuring more equal opportunities and greater acceptance of this insertion by public opinion (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1976, p. 23).

Recognizing that there is a variation between genders in the behavior in their roles and coping strategies, i.e., the way couples act before this variation, we can see in the literature an effort by researchers to organize and sort dual career families by typologies or identifiable subgroups. Such an organization is according to the level of involvement at work and/or with the family (Hall, 1979), the key priorities of life and function of the structure (Hunt & Hunt, 1982), as well as the role order (Sekaran, 1986).

Some types present in literature shown below served as the basis for the development of this paper. However, it is important to point out that, for the model developed here, existing typologies were adapted, thus generating different nomenclatures.

### 2.1.1. Typologies

In an initial typology, Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) based their studies on the evaluation of dual career from the perspective of factors involving man and woman. From the perspective of man, the assessment is the emphasis degree that he gives to career, considering that he also has a family life in which he seeks satisfaction. In the woman’s perspective, the evaluation of dual career takes place according to her degree of commitment to it. Thus, the authors describe four types of dual career families: familistic, careerist, conventional and coordinate.

- **Familistic** – both partners are key stakeholders in the domestic world, i.e., have careers, but the priority is related to home if there is need for choice. In this type, both (husband and wife) are turned to the family.
- **Careerist** – inversely to familistic, careerist type is characterized by couples who invest primarily in their respective careers, i.e., husband and wife prioritize career exclusively.
- **Conventional** – represents the traditional family in which the woman plays her role as housewife (activities directed to the family) and the man performs his role as provider (activities aimed at his career). It is important to note that

the fact that the woman is making domestic activities does not prevent her to have a career, since dual career couples necessarily sought to develop themselves with a career each. However, if it happens, this couple is no longer conventional, and becomes another type.

- **Coordinate** – suggests a careerist husband, willing to cooperate in the domestic sphere, and a woman-centered in family, with career guidance (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971).

Hall and Hall (1980) also identified four dual career types, determined by the degree of involvement of partners in career versus home. These are the accommodators (type I), adversaries (type II), the allies (type III) and the acrobats (type IV).

- **Type I (Accommodators)** – suggests a pattern in which one partner has high participation in career and a low one at home, and the other has these priorities reversed. Thus, the degree of involvement of each partner complements the other.
- **Type II (Adversaries)** – both partners are usually too involved in their careers and do not manifest any involvement with home, family nor any support function to his partner. The main identification of each partner is defined on the basis of his or her career. A house and a well-ordered family are valued by adversaries, but they are not willing to sacrifice their careers to fulfill this role.
- **Type III (Allies)** – it can be seen that these couples are usually very involved with career or home and family, but not with all functions (they unite in a priority). Both partners can have a strong focus on family and less identification with the career, or the reverse of these actions. In this type of dual career, authors believe to be easier to set priorities and minimize conflicts, because conflicting demands in any area can be easily resolved, since the choice of priorities is given in agreement between the couple.
- **Type IV (Acrobats)** – it is a pattern in which the couple is usually very involved in all their roles. For them, the relationship with the family functions is just as important as their careers. They have satisfaction in both areas – home and career. As in type II (adversaries), they are able to experience conflict between career and other demands, however, in type IV both are also too concerned about home and family. For acrobats, it is likely have a high conflict experience in trying to meet all of their demands.

Hall and Hall (1980) affirm finally that the role structure in these four types is not stationary, since the partners can change and move the structures of the roles.

All types registered here are important because they indicate that, for every choice of the couple, there is a classification that varies according to some aspects (gender, career, work, family).

Other authors who propose (from the key priorities of life and gender roles determined by society) types to feature dual career family are Hunt and Hunt (1982). Unlike the



authors mentioned above, which highlight four types, they have a threefold typology of couples or lifestyles, called: traditionalists, prioritizers and integrators.

- **Traditionalists** – it represents a conventional home, with divisions of roles and gender: the female is associated with the housework and the man as the provider. They resemble the conventional type stressed by Rapoport and Rapoport (1976).
- **Prioritizers** – it refers to couples who reject the notion of gender and the determination of roles. They see the possibility of choosing between work issues and family functions. They can prioritize career or adult relationship (not necessarily marriage) and can delay or prevent maternity/paternity. Others may limit the involvement with work due to the prioritization of children. By comparison, this model resembles the adversaries and allies types (Hall & Hall, 1980) and the careerists and familistics (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1976).
- **Integrators** – it refers to couples who have marital and parental roles as well as working roles (i.e., they are oriented both for work and for family roles). They work together in the same professional field and can be colleagues in the same area, owners or operators of their own business, or a team that combines different functions or skills. This type differs from any type described by Hall and Hall (1980) and Rapoport and Rapoport (1976), however there are studies in literature that characterize the partnership when it comes to “love” and when it comes to “work” (Marshack, 1994) as a subgroup of dual career couples known as *copreneurs* (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969; Thomas, Albrecht, & White, 1984).

The mention of this subgroup (Integrators) in this discussion was made only to show other existing forms of partnership between husband and wife within a dual career context, however it will not take part in the subject matter, since the demands that this double profile develops for the goals of this research.

Figure 1 summarizes the types mentioned so far, focusing their definitions, the main priorities for each type and the implications arising from the family of each of the types.

Thus, we will show below the relevant methodological approaches for the purposes of the work.

### 3. METHODOLOGICAL PATH

This section is intended to present the methodological procedures to the study. Aspects related to research strategy, as well as to methods and techniques used, will be detailed based on the following topics: the type and approach of the research, the presentation of the population and the defined sample, the instrument for data collection and finally the techniques used for data analysis.

#### 3.1. Type and approach of the research

In light of the proposed scopes for this article, it is understood that the most relevant and appropriate study is exploratory and descriptive. Thus, the exploratory study is the more suitable, because it is a survey that provides greater insight about an area (Selltitz, Wrightsman, Cook, & Kidder, 1987) still poorly investigated in Brazilian literature, such as the dual career phenomenon; and descriptive, to perform a “[...] description of the characteristics of a given population or phenomenon [...]” (Gil, 1996, p. 44) and also “the establishment of relationships between variables” (Gil, 1996, p. 44). Finally, there is the collection method or survey as a means of obtaining information from research participants.

We chose the quantitative method. Given that this method is structured on scientific procedures (data collection, analysis of results), data is based on a measurement by numerical means guided by statistical evaluations, thus determining models in which it is possible to perceive how as a population behave. In addition, it is a way to answer the formulated research questions (Creswell, 2009). Thus, quantitative approach seems the most appropriate technique for the purposes of this study: to study sociodemographic variables in order to meet the dual career population behavior patterns in Brazil and the association between the variables through statistical analysis.

#### 3.2. Instrument preparation for data collection

The instrument used for the process of data collection was self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire was available on a Web page, and the group of respondents defined for the survey was informed via e-mail. The developed questionnaire was composed of two parts: the first one considered aspects related to personal data of the couple and the second identified the most common dual career type among the participants.

The main type of question in the questionnaire used was the closed questions (the question is presented with several alternatives to choose). However, in the first part of the questionnaire, where we seek information about facts, there were also open questions (the question is presented and there is a blank space for the respondent to write). This kind of question was used only for the type of occupation, number and age of children, because, usually, open questions, according to Selltitz, Wrightsman, & Cook (1976), require clarification on the fact presented. Furthermore, still in this first part, there were some questions considered to be related or dependent (the question is presented and depends on the other response).

In the first part, the questionnaire sought to gather information on the socio-demographic variables of the couple, exploring aspects related to personal (gender, age, type of relationship, number and age of children, daily time spent on housework), academic (education level) and professional data

Types	Definition	Couple's Priorities	Implications to family
Careerist	The couple invests primarily in their respective careers.	Career	Not mentioned
Conventional	Represents the traditional family, in which the roles are based on gender. In this type, the woman plays the role related to domestic activities (home, children, etc.) and the man plays the role of provider. However, the man's role as provider is closely linked to the development of his career, characterizing it as a kind of dual career.	Traditional family model (woman – family; man – career)	Not mentioned
Coordinate	It suggests a careerist husband, but willing to cooperate in the domestic sphere and a woman centered in family, with career guidance.	Family/career (equity in functions)	Not mentioned
Familistic	Both partners are involved in the domestic sphere.	Family	Not mentioned
Accommodators	In this type the partner has a high participation in career and a low one at home, and the other has these priorities reversed. The degree of involvement of each partner complements the other.	Family/ career (equity in function)	Minimizes conflicts Greater satisfaction for the couple
Acrobats	The couple is very involved in all their roles. For this type, the relationship with the family functions is just as important to their careers.	Family <b>and</b> career	Satisfaction in both domains (home and work) Prepared for conflicts Maximizes the conflicts when trying to satisfy all demands.
Adversaries	Both partners are usually too involved in their careers, and do not manifest any involvement with home, family or any support function to his partner.	Career	Considerable stress increase
Allies	Couples are usually very involved with career or with home/family, but not with all functions. Both partners can have a strong orientation to family and less identification with the career, or reverse.	Career <b>or</b> family	Ease in setting priorities
Prioritizers	It features couples who reject the notion of gender and the determination of the roles. They can choose the issues of work and family duties. Husband and wife have the same role.	Career <b>or</b> family	Diversified interests The actions are taken according to that they consider to be a priority at that moment
Traditionalists	They represent a conventional home, with divisions of roles and gender, where the female is associated with the housework and the man is the provider. In this type, the emphasis on career is given only to man.	Traditional model of a couple (woman – family, man – career)	No conflicts The couple have well-defined roles
Integrators	These couples have marital and parental roles, besides working roles. They develop jointly a professional practice and can be colleagues in the same area, or owners of their own business, or a team that combines different functions or skills. Enterprise and its related not mention.	Achievement and similar	Not mentioned

Figure 1: Typologies

(profession, position, size, nature and sector of the company where he works, weekly hours spent on the job, income). Variable information regarding the age of the child and the time spent by spouses (in hours per week) with the family and work were taken from other studies (Gilbert, 1985; Pixley & Moen, 2003) that already demonstrated as necessary for the research on dual career. It is important to note that the level of education of respondent's spouse was relevant, since, as stated, it classifies the couple as dual career. The second part identified the different types of dual career in the studied population. This part covers two variables of the research – family and career. The theory points out that from the moment that one of these variables, or both, becomes priority in married life, a kind of dual career is identified. For this reason, in order to make such identification possible, we prepared twelve cases where we intended to find the combination of the two variables, the most present typologies among respondents. Established situations demanded of respondents a value in percentage of how much they saw themselves in a particular situation or agreed with it, beyond the perception that they had (in percentage) on the spouses when those were placed in that same situation. Through percentage, it was possible to verify how much a spouse is more participatory or prioritizes certain matters in comparison to another one on a given fact.

The sum or combination of these values indicates the type of dual career correspondent to this couple. In cases where the percentage is close to 50% for both spouses, it is clear that, for this couple, family and career have the same priority in their lives, which classifies them as an acrobat couple. For cases in which the percentage is high for issues involving family, the couple is familistic. This kind, combined to gender, can be of the coordinate type (woman) or conventional (man), and vice-versa for the case where the percentage is high for the matters surrounding career that, combined to gender, may give rise to coordinate careerists (man) or conventional (woman). Figure 2 shows the types from the combination of the variables.

Still on the preparation of the questionnaire, it is worth mentioning the realization of the pre-test, considered the last step for the improvement of the outcome of future research

(Cooper & Schindler, 2003). Malhotra (2006) points out that a pre-test must cover and test all aspects of the questionnaire, such as the content of the question, the wording and order of the questions, the format and the instructions. Considering these aspects and the fact that the questionnaire was designed exclusively for this research, the application process required extra care and attention, since there was the need to also validate the instrument. Cooper and Schindler (2003) reveal various ways to test the instrument in order to refine it by suggesting from more informal kind (discussion and review with colleagues) to a similar to the study itself.

Thus, the pre-test took place at two different times; with a group of people focused on people management area and another with a similar sample to the defined population (except the fact that they were former *Faculdade de Economia, Administração e Contabilidade da Universidade de São Paulo* [FEA/USP] students).

The first group (people working in people management area), consisting of seven people, was asked to answer the questionnaire and then we held an interview with each respondent, in which we presented the research purposes and the key concepts involved in the analysis instrument in order to identify the perceptions of it. Regarding the content of the questions, that is, the information that they wanted to obtain, there was no doubt that the respondents fell into either in Part 1 of the questionnaire, either in part 2.

In a second moment, we applied the pre-test in another group composed of 25 people, according to the literature, living as dual career couples. We reserved a big space in which people could be comfortably accommodated, so that the researcher could explain the purpose of the meeting. Then we presented the questionnaires, which took 10-15 minutes to be answered. After that, we began a conversation about possible questions, suggestions and difficulties in responding. The group was unanimous in understanding the issues, how they were presented and the time to answer them. This allowed us to consider that the questionnaire was worded in a clear and objective way, favoring the understanding of those who had to respond it, fulfilling what the studies show as indispensable for

Variables	Dual Career Types
Family	Familistic (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971)
Family	Careerist (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971) Adversaries (Hall & Hall, 1980)
Family and Career	Acrobat (Hall & Hall, 1980)
Family/Career (equity in the functions)	Coordinate (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971) Accommodate (Hall & Hall, 1980)
Family (woman) – Career (man)	Conventional (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971) Traditionalists (Hunt & Hunt, 1982)

**Figure 2: Combination Between the Variables**



the development of a data collection instrument (Selltiz *et al.*, 1987; Gil, 2006). The variables reliability index was acceptable.

### 3.3. Population and sample

For convenience, we selected a non-probabilistic sample in this work (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). We selected as the population for this study former undergraduate and postgraduate students of the courses of Business Administration, Economics and Accounting of a reputable Public University of São Paulo, married or living together, registered in the database of the Relationship Program with Alumni. The database had approximately 3000 registered and updated emails. Respecting the established profile, we obtained 361 completed questionnaires, of which 21 were excluded, coming from respondents whose spouse had education below the upper level. This exclusion is due to the fact that high education is considered one of the aspects that characterize the dual career phenomenon. Thus, the final sample consisted of 340 cases. It is important to note that were obtained 655 responses, but only 361 of them were answered in full (55.1%), or 44.9% of the collected questionnaires were blank questions, and so were excluded from the final sample.

### 3.4. Techniques for data analysis

As analysis techniques for data we chose the use of descriptive statistics, Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney's average test, correspondence analysis, cluster analysis, ANOVA and factor analysis. Starting from the assumption that dual career involves two major variables – career and family, to think about them separately or in combination with other variables gives rise to the characterization of some dual career types (Hall & Hall, 1980; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971).

For analysis purposes, we established for this study that the gender variable also influences the classification of other types of dual career, and that, for each type, there are situations that reflect benefits and/or conflict/dilemma, as already informed.

Given the restriction that this study presents in providing verification from the perspective of only one of the spouses (and his/her perception of the other), the adjustment of some variables of the model concerning gender are justified.

For the first objective, which was to characterize dual career population investigated social and demographically, we used the technique of exploratory data analysis, through a frequency distribution by means of which information and observations could be sorted in various ways (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). The cross-tabulation was also a method used in this first part of analysis of the results, considering the need to synthesize “simultaneously” the data for the two variables (Anderson, Sweeney, & Williams, 2003, p. 59). In addition, some variables were studied through correspondence analysis. It is important to remember that, given the characteristics of the sample, all

respondents were already graduate; however, the question in which the respondents had to fulfil with the education degree of his/her spouse, there was the possibility that the spouse did not be a graduate. Such identification was made subsequently to data collection, at the time of tabulation and elaboration, and all cases where the spouse had no higher education were removed from the sample. Respondents were required to inform about them and also about their spouses in order to characterize the couple.

In order to correctly meet the second objective proposed, we defined as a method for analysis an interdependence technique called *cluster analysis* (Hair Jr., Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2009), aiming to recognize patterns and make clusters by distances (Hair Jr. *et al.*, 2009). It should be mentioned that no cluster exploratory analysis was made; a confirmatory analysis was made instead, because, to use a cluster analysis, it is necessary to have an argument to justify the choice of variable (Hair Jr. *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, and assuming that this research was based on theoretical proposals on dual career typologies, who already have a set of predetermined types, the use of the analysis already mentioned is justified.

Given the existence of a prior theory of dual career typologies and on the assumption that these types arise from certain arrangements between couples, we made a non-hierarchical cluster analysis (Kmeans) with three groups. Data were run in the SPSS software, from which we obtained the results. For the analysis, two extreme cases were excluded from the database, which totaled 338 cases at the end. A variable that was also not significant for the differentiation of the groups was excluded from the analysis.

## 4. DISCUSSION AND RESULT ANALYSIS

Before the central purpose of the study, the presentation of the results will be outlined from the specific objectives: to collect sociodemographic variables and their association with dual career and identify the different types of dual career in the Brazilian scene. This draft seeks to facilitate and organize the understanding of the results regarding the studied population, since, at first, it presents their social and demographic characteristics, seeking to relate them to the profile predetermined by literature for couples who practice dual career. Thus, the next step was to demonstrate what are the dual career types identified in Brazil.

### 4.1. Collection of sociodemographic variables and their association with dual career

#### 4.1.1. Sample profile

It is possible to observe that, in our sample, there is a predominance of male respondents (61.2% of cases). The average age of the respondents is 38 years (standard deviation

= 9 years; coefficient of variation = 23%). It also possible to note that female respondents have an average age of 36 years (standard deviation = 7 years; coefficient of variation = 21%), while male respondents have an average age slightly higher, 40 (standard deviation = 9 years; coefficient of variation = 24%).

There were no studies in literature establishing an age range (minimum or maximum) to feature dual career couples. About this, Wilcox-Matthew and Minnor (1989) only mention that couples in their twenties and thirties suffer increased distress, since this is a period in which, typically, these couples are starting a conjugal relationship and seeking to establish themselves in the career. This allows us to say that the variable age was not yet perceived as a factor that characterizes this kind of couple or causes some kind of implication in their relationship. However, the variable age deserves greater attention in the researches, since it may interfere in matters relating to people who are at the beginning of their careers, planning to have children, in the age difference between the couple (different professional and personal expectations) among others.

It was also possible to consider that couples who live dual career are, for the most part, legally married (78.8%), and that there is a balance between those who have children (48.2%) and those without children (51.8%). For those who chose to have children, it was noticed that the number of children for each couple is around one to two at most. As for the education level, it became clear that couples (especially respondents) are seeking to specialize in their professional activities, which justifies a large number of couples in which both spouses are developing some kind of work, for the most part out of home.

Another well-discussed variable in the researches on dual career is the compensation factor (salaries). Dual career couples benefit from the duplicity of salaries, which contributes positively to their relationship; but the salary in dual career goes beyond that because, according to Duxbury, Lyons, & Higgins (2007), high salaries act as indicators of this practice. However, the salary is not regarded as a main benefit for the couples of the sample, since they prioritize career development and see in compensation the recognition of the activity performed. Therefore, it was found that the income of the respondents is between R\$ 5,000.00 and R\$ 15,000.00, while for spouses income corresponds to an average of up to R\$ 10,000.00.

When crossing the variable revenue with gender, in order to observe whether there were differences in the gain between men and women, it was noticed that, for the respondents, the bigger frequency is between men with monthly income from R\$ 10,000.00 and more. This means that men are still getting higher salaries when compared to women. In literature on gender, although there are major developments and achievements in the labor market for women (Bruschini *et al.*, 2007), it still register some caveats to the lack of wage equity between men and women (Abramo, 2007), which also can be felt in this population.

Regarding the number of hours devoted to work in relation to domestic activities, there was a close frequency, which shows that men are more involved in activities thought to be uniquely for women.

The results presented so far allow us to infer that dual career has specificities that deserve attention, since it features a public endowed with wishes, desires and priorities; in particular, can make a difference in personal choices and directions, especially professionals.

## 4.2. The different types of dual career in the Brazilian context

Turning to the second goal, which was to identify the different types of dual career, we recognized that there is a change in the behavior of roles and coping strategies in labor and family relations (especially when considering the genre) when it comes to dual career couples. For this reason, studies have sought to organize these couples in what they call identifiable types or subgroups.

### 4.2.1. Identification of the dual career types

Initially, three groups have been identified, classified as **career**, **acrobat** and **family**. It is worth mentioning that, for the group in which the focus is on career, the respondent's gender will direct the classification of dual career as a **conventional careerist** or **coordinate careerist** type. About the acrobat group, given what it has already been explored, it is known that gender does not cause influence this kind, since the couple is equally dedicated to both domains. Finally, for the group that sees the family as a priority when related to career, respondent's gender will also classify the type of dual career couples as **conventional familistic** or **coordinate familistic**. The frequency for the three main groups found is distributed as follows: career (27.2%), acrobat (49.7%) and family (23.1%).

People who gave a high score to career variables were classified as careerists; people who gave a high score to family variables were in familistic group and people who had scores around 50% for the variables career and family were classified as acrobats.

When crossing the gender variable with these three groups, we get the following distribution between men and women: a strong concentration of men in careerist type (95.7%) – Group I (career); a slight predominance of men (64.3%) in acrobat type – Group II (career and family); and a significant presence of women in the familistic type (87.2) – Group III (family).

Considering some particularities that concern the groups I (career) and III (family), we decided to start the discussion from the group II (acrobat).

**Group II (acrobat)** – This group has 168 cases (49.7%), i.e., almost half of the sample investigated is part of this type. When crossing the gender variable with this type, as already

noted, a male predominance is obtained (64.3%). However, it is noteworthy that the sample had a higher number of men respondents than women. This male preponderance may indicate a change in behavior of men in relation to family care, i.e., there is a greater willingness and participation of men to the domestic sphere. These data confirm a demographic trend in the new environment of workforce performance and reinforce the need for studies in the career field, which incorporate issues where work and family are linked (Mui-Teng Quek, Knudson-Martin, Orpen, & Victor, 2011). This justifies, in a way, the low level of agreement found in one of the variables, which measures the view that the responsibility of childcare is directly linked to women. Thus, we demonstrate that the woman is ready to leave home to work and already sees consensually the division (between the partners) of childcare.

A high acrobat type number indicates that couples are increasingly seeking involvement in all their roles. The satisfaction of this kind is to act in both domains (family and career), implying children, domestic routines, demands at work, i.e., factors associated with the domestic sphere and the work sphere constantly boiling in the couple's life.

Given the results of this sample, without generalizing, it is possible to say that Brazilian couples are increasingly likely to live this context of duality in their functions, characterized as the **acrobat** type of dual career, in which home and work occupy the same step in life of a couple. By having the same desire for these two spheres, the couple ends up "declaring" that career achievements are important from the moment they fit in family demands. This resets a scenario gives a merit in seeking balance in functions and roles (man and woman – career and family) that can be reflected in organizations by requiring from these at least more attention to such behavior.

Knowing that the dual career couples may live in constant readjustment of family and career domains (Mui-Teng Quek *et al.*, 2011; Sekaran, 1986), the various types are formed. Besides the already described ones (careerist – acrobat – familistic), it was possible to identify two types, as already highlighted, known as coordinate and conventional.

The coordinate type brings a more equitable view of gender as a result of changes in the performance of the roles of each spouse, i.e., the husband is directed to the development of his career, yet he is willing to act in the domestic sphere. The woman, in turn, focuses on family, however she can seek to develop her career the moment she thinks is appropriate. The conventional type has its roles based on gender, therefore characterized as one in which the woman in the couple gives support to domestic activities only (home, children, supermarket, school), and man gives the financial support, from his work usually outside home. It is necessary to show that, in the conventional type the woman, even though she may have a career, is willing to act only in the family domain.

Guided by conceptual definitions, the analysis of results for identification of the two aforementioned types considered

the respondent's gender as an item for definition, i.e., having known whom in the investigated sample was career, family or both (acrobat), we crossed types with the gender variable.

Therefore, when the respondent was of the careerist type and a woman, she was classified as conventional careerist; when the respondent was of the same type, but man, he was called coordinate careerist. The same logic was followed for respondents family type. Thus, the familistic woman was classified as coordinate familistic, while the man belonging to the same group was characterized as conventional familistic.

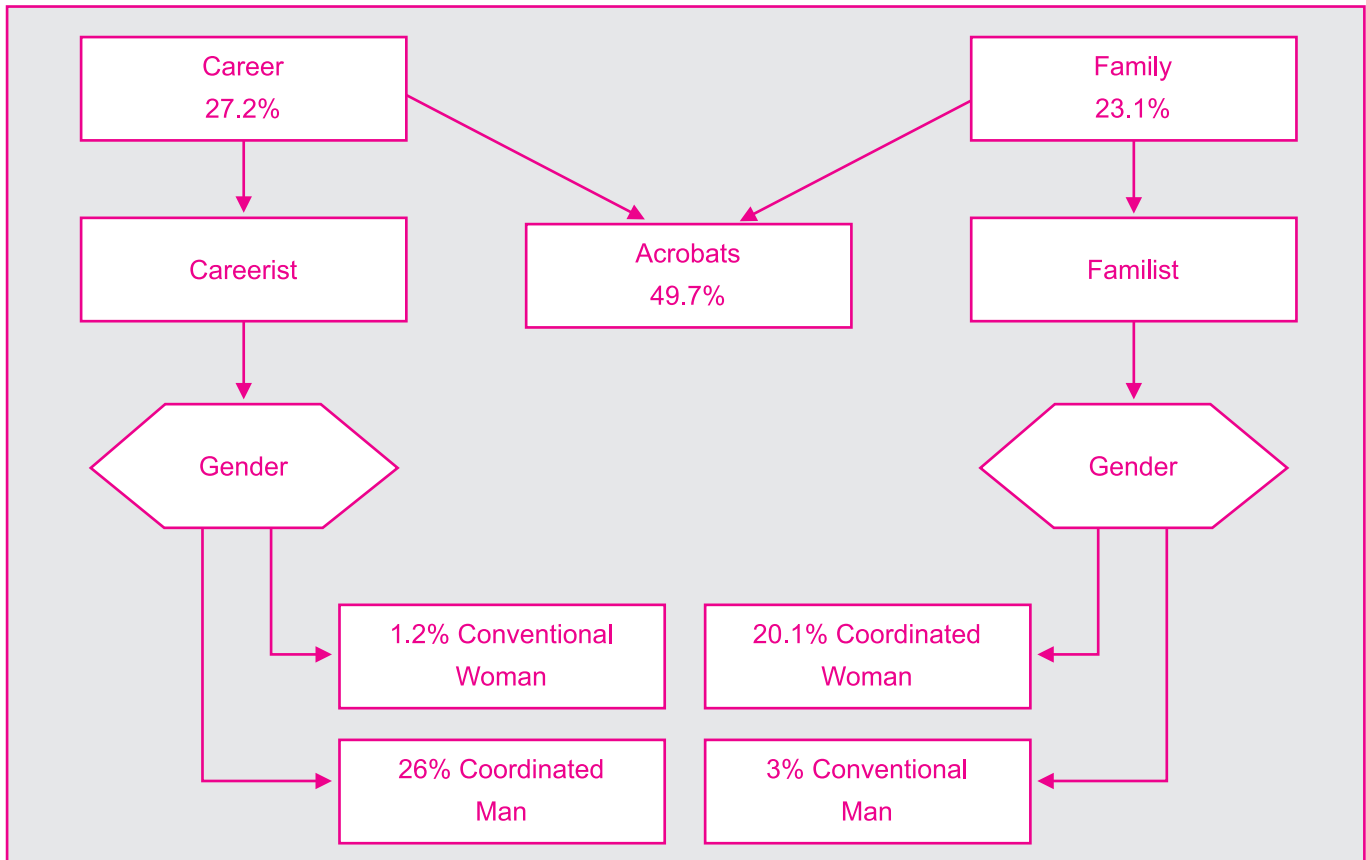
We established as conventional careerist the woman who has a more traditionalist view about the division of roles according to gender, so that it does not bother her to take care of household chores and giving up her career, since "going to work" is a main role of the husband, in view of this wife. As coordinated careerist, we mean the man who develops his career, but is willing to swap roles if necessary, i.e., there is willingness on his part to cooperate with housework and everything that involves it.

In familistic view, these situations are reversed, since for conventional familistic man is the holder of a firmer stance on the culture of man/provider and woman/home. For this type, the role of housekeeper is women's exclusive and, man's, to provide money for home and the development of his career. This type is unwilling to act in this area (family). For coordinate familistic, the woman has no problem in taking care of the house and all that involves, but seeks to develop her career together with her husband and is prepared to act in the two areas (family and career). The model (Figure 3) depicts the types identified along with the percentages of each component.

As we already know, the predominant dual career type is the acrobat. The analysis also allows to say that the coordinate careerist (26%) and coordinate familistic (20.1%) types have significant numbers with respect to conventional careerist (1.2%) and conventional familistic (3%) types. This makes possible to point out that men are increasingly willing to participate in the domestic sphere, while women confirm the researches (Bruschini *et al.*, 2007) pointing their big entry into the labor market and search for the development of their own careers.

It is also possible to say that equal division of roles was something major between genders because the types in which fairness is recommended were the most expressive, thus showing an agreement of spouses in taking over home and work systems (Mui-Teng Quek *et al.*, 2011). With this, the family model proposing a vision based on traditionalism gives way to a more cohesive structure between spouses. In addition, it confirms the studies that point out that dual career couples develop a strong potential in the ways they share the tasks, the performance and responsibilities of each partner (Duxbury *et al.*, 2007; Mui-Teng Quek *et al.*, 2011; Pixley & Moen, 2003).

Before the technologies identified in this study, it is important to figure out how these groups behave in the Brazilian



**Figure 3: Model for the Analysis of Results with the Percentages Obtained**

scene. Therefore, it is useful to make a crossing with some variables in order to check how the types align to them.

#### 4.2.2. The dual career types and their variables

The variables that directly influence the dual career families and will be highlighted below, for each type, are: children, number of hours worked at home and outside home, age, level of education and level in the company in which he/she operates.

##### • Familistics – Coordinate and Conventional

With regard to children, an interesting information refers to a low average for conventional familistic; the highest average of number of children is for coordinate familistic, i.e. in familistic group there are two extremes: fewer children (conventional familistic) and higher number of children (coordinate familistic).

Regarding the number of hours worked, the lowest average was observed for coordinate familistic. Knowing that this type is characterized in having a woman working in both domains (family and career), it is natural that the number of hours devoted to work is less, given the demands of the journey home.

Also with regard to the time spent on activities, it sought to know the average hours devoted to household chores (home, garden, school, supermarket, children, etc.). It was found that the highest average of time spent on household activities is presented by coordinate familistic. This average time (hours per week) dedicated to work and home shows that this type is the one who emphasizes more the domestic demands. This aspect confirms the fact that this type is characterized by feminine gender, since it is possible to realize that women are trying to balance the functions (career/family), but still with an inclination towards greater dedication to family sphere. We note that the hours worked variable shows a high dispersion for familistics. Compared with other types, not just those related to familistic type, it is possible to note that the coordinate familistic is the type that spends more time on activities at home. The coordinate familistic is the type in which there is the largest number of younger persons (36 years).

##### • Careerists – Coordinate and Conventional

About children, conventional careerist has a lower average compared to the coordinate careerist. However, in general, it was found that the number of couples with children, in this



type, is much lower. This trend may be a reflection of what some studies have already signaled: in a way, the couple's career postpones maternity/paternity; however, in most cases it is not fully extinguished the couple's plans (Gilbert, 1985). The "pure" careerists couples are a type of dual career couples who tend not to have children because they prioritize too much career.

Regarding the number of hours devoted to work, the careerists have the highest average, specifically the conventional careerist. This result is justified given the fact that this type (conventional careerist) is fully dedicated to his work and does not need to commit with other parallel activities, because, besides being able to prioritize the career, he can also rely on a person (wife) for care related to family field. This is even more legitimate to note that this type also obtained the lowest average and dispersion in the variable hours devoted to household chores, reinforcing the conventional careerist spend more time with professional work. In particular, it is worth mentioning that conventional careerist is the one that spends less time at home, when compared to other types.

The conventional careerist is still the type that concentrates people with a higher average age (47 years), i.e., 25% of the cases are between 57 and 60 years. In addition, this group has the lowest quantity of people in the younger age groups.

#### • Acrobats

This type presents a high dispersion in relation to children. The figures show a large concentration of couples who do not have children yet. With respect to work hours at home and out of home, there is a smaller dispersion, and acrobats show greater balance in the division of this time. They are aged between 30 and 40 years. It is interesting to note that the age of the types also features a change in trend, since the couples in which the woman takes on her autonomy, leaving the exclusive domestic work to develop her career, are perceived to be of a younger generation, due to the impact of all socioeconomic and cultural change present in the labor market and also on issues related to managing the career.

In general, considering all types, we note that when analyzing the results on the level of education and grade of their positions at work, it was not possible to identify any dominance for the groups. This means that there is not a type, among the five presented, that stands in relation to degree study, nor the grade of their positions, which makes this a little significant variable in the characterization of the types. Comparing these two variables (education level and level in the company in which it operates), one can say that the types found (acrobat, conventional careerist, coordinate careerist, conventional familistic and coordinate familistic) do not follow characteristic patterns of dual career theory, which emphasizes the dual career families high levels of education and high positions in the company (Duxbury *et al.*, 2007; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971).

These results show that women and men are further realizing the importance of work and family. This implies more people willing to seek ways (companies to work in a special way) to encourage and enable act responsibly in relation to the family without neglecting the development and career commitment (Theunissen, Vuuren, & Visser, 2003).

## 5. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Dual career phenomenon is gradually increasing, and, with it, several changes in the social and economic context are perceived. Therefore, the challenge is to find strategies that provide knowing the behavior of these families who have opted for dual career. One of these strategies is to identify the main priorities of the couples in order to understand what are their most important needs in personal and organizational field. Therefore, to get to know who they are (profile) and how to characterize the dual career couples in the Brazilian scene is a viable alternative to understand how people (couples) who choose this lifestyle act.

For these couples, a relevant aspect that must be noted is that factors such as career, family and other interpersonal factors still affect them directly, and men and women in a different way. These differences are translated in the reactions of these men and women to crises, expectations and career opportunities throughout life. This shows that the dual career studies touch on tangible and also intangible aspects, demanding a closer look at the factors involving it, since "for dual career couples, family choices can affect career mobility, and career commitment can impact on family choices" (Stoltz-Loike, 1992, p. 5).

Until the completion of this work, no research seeking to identify the types of dual career was found in literature. In this research, the results have led to identify five types of dual career: coordinate familistic, conventional familistic, coordinate careerist, conventional careerist and acrobat. The acrobat type was prevalent among the respondents, indicating that couples have their relationship guided on consensus and balance between the fields of career and family. This shows that the sample couples tend to seek career development, yet they also want and prioritize family demands, and thereby maximize the conflict, in order to search for balance in both areas. We also identified couples with types of dual career more focused on careers (coordinate and conventional careerist) and, in a lesser extent, familistic type of couples (coordinate and conventional), that emphasize much more the domestic sphere. This shows that couples tend to prioritize more their careers when not working together as a family, as in the case of the acrobat.

These types of dual career express the importance of the interface between work and family and support the discussion of the importance of both domains in people's lives (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1997).



Thus, there are dual career couples with different types and these types arise from some combinations (gender, priority between family and/or work), favoring to know and guiding the ambitions that these couples seek in their lives. This, in turn, allows us to check how these couples understand and deal with the most frequent situations in a relationship of this type.

Given the novelty of dual career theme in the field of research in Brazil, the results of this article still give short steps considering the range of approaches and discussions on it can provide in the national context.

It is worth mentioning that the present study has limitations. First with regard to the profile of the population and the sample, a first limitation relates to the fact that the sample was non-probabilistic and was made of former students of a college in the area of Administration, Economics and Accounting of a public university. This can influence the results, given that this population tends to be more geared to business area and is composed of more men than women. It is important to say that the responses that identified the types of dual career were provided from the perspective of only one spouse, who presented his/her perception of his/her partner. In addition, the study examined the phenomenon only in the individual perspective, since it did not seek to verify how organizations deal with this matter, or recognize in its management processes. This, however, is relevant, complementary to research and suggested for further study, since empirical studies were not

found in Brazil to discuss the dual career theme in any of these points of view (individual and organizational). Such a statement is possible considering the detailed search in known databases, such as Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) and *Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior* (CAPES) on that matter. Thus, we decided to meet the individual vision, in order to produce information to organizations in a second moment.

For future studies, we suggest an investigation focused on the organizational environment. We notice that there is a considerable increase in studies aiming to understand the dual career of practice by the companies, especially regarding people management (Duxbury *et al.*, 2007). The next step, based on the results obtained with this research, would be to investigate how Brazilian companies behave before dual career phenomenon.

A more detailed comparison between genders is also an important variable and deserves attention, because, based on the impact of gender studies on dual career, investigating how men and women see themselves in a relationship such as dual career could favor the identification of the major concerns of each gender before the family and career fields. Literature recommends that the couple is seen as one; however, it should be noted that, in the national context, men and women are at the mercy of various economic, social and primarily cultural influences, that impact directly on the lives of everyone, thus encouraging a closer look at each genre specifically. ♦

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## ABSTRACT

**The dual career process in the Brazilian perspective: Unraveling typologies**

A phenomenon closely linked to changes in social, economic, and cultural context is growing and growing as the years go by and attracting the attention of researchers for the development of studies involving both the individual and the organizational field. Named as “dual career family”, this phenomenon emphasizes a joint move from a husband and wife (a couple) in the family sphere and in the development of both careers. Thus, in order to know how these relationships are being established, this study set out to investigate what are the determining factors that compose the dual career phenomenon in the Brazilian context. The research involved 340 participants, all former students of a public university, married or living in a marital status. The results allowed to feature, through descriptive statistics, the profile of dual career couples in the Brazilian scene and check what are the types of dual career in the country. We obtained five types of dual career: coordinated familistic, conventional familistic, coordinated careerist, conventional careerist and acrobat.

**Keywords:** couples, dual career, families, phenomenon, types.

## RESUMEN

**El proceso de doble carrera en Brasil: revelando tipologías**

Un fenómeno que aparece estrechamente relacionado con los cambios en el contexto social, económico y cultural, y que sigue creciendo a lo largo de los años, ha atraído la atención de investigadores en el sentido de desarrollar estudios que incluyan tanto al individuo como el campo organizacional. Conocido como familias de doble carrera, este fenómeno pone de relieve un movimiento conjunto de marido y mujer (pareja) en el ámbito de la familia y el desarrollo de la carrera profesional de ambos. Con el fin de saber cómo se establecen estas relaciones, en este estudio se investigan los factores que constituyen el fenómeno de doble carrera en el contexto brasileño. La encuesta ha contado con 340 participantes, todos ex alumnos de una universidad pública que deberían estar casados o hacer vida marital. Los resultados permiten identificar, por medio de la estadística descriptiva, el perfil de las parejas con dos carreras en el ámbito brasileño y comprobar qué tipos de doble carrera existen en el país. Se han obtenido cinco tipos de doble carrera: familista coordinada, familista convencional, centrada en la carrera coordinada, centrada en la carrera convencional y acróbata.

**Palabras clave:** parejas, doble carrera, familias, fenómenos, tipos.

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