Social representation of work by women and girls with intellectual disabilities

Sandrine Gaymard

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Abstract

Work is what enables inclusion even more so for individuals with intellectual disabilities, since work plays an essential part in their quality of life. The social representation approach illustrates the appropriation of an object by a social group according to their background, values and practice, but the term "work" has never been studied as an object of social representation among persons with intellectual disabilities.
In this perspective, we met 30 young girls in a centre for children and young people with disabilities, and 29 women in a sheltered employment centre, so that they might express themselves spontaneously on their representation of work. The results of a free association test show two distinct "operational" representations of work. The item "earning money" is a central element of representation for both groups. The periphery of the representation brings out elements in relation to daily life, vocational and social skills, feelings of job satisfaction, and also differs according to the groups. The representation by women could be

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the result of a transformation of the object work with age and entry into active life.

1. Introduction

1.1. The concept of Social Representation (SR)

In the first study in which the concept of SR appears, Moscovici (1961, 1976) shows how psychoanalysis has permeated French society and what becomes of a scientific and technical discipline when it passes from the specialist domain to the public domain. According to Moscovici and Vignaux, (1994), SR are "*Systems of interpretation of events and the world, thus, essential vehicles of opinions, judgements and beliefs, aiming to guarantee the relevance and regularity of our bonds and behaviours in the community*" (Moscovici & Vignaux, 1994, p. 27). Social representation can be considered to be a "functional vision" of the world which will enable the individual and the group to understand reality and to adapt to it. Representations allow individuals to give a meaning to their behaviour and to understand the environment according to their own system of reference.

Moscovici's first works gave rise to several directions of research and to a large quantity of literature on SR (Farr, 1987; Wagner, 1996; Hewstone & Augoustinos, 1998; Bauer & Gaskell, 1999; Joffe, 2003). According to the structural approach known as "central core theory of social representations" (Abric, 1976, 1993, 2000; Flament, 1989, 1994a; Gaymard, 2013), SR is related to a socio-cognitive system which consists of two complementary entities. First, a consensual and non-negotiable central core (Moscovici, 1993) whose functions are to organise and make sense of the representation, and then a periphery linked to individual practices which constitutes the operational part of the representation (Gaymard, 2000). Thus, this framework allows the integration of the individual and collective aspects of the representation. The evolution of research in this field shows that the periphery of the representation is the most appropriate to illustrate the normative aspects because it is of a conditional and flexible character, corresponding to the characteristics of social norms (Flament, 2001; Gaymard, 1999, 2007, 2009, 2013; Gaymard, Allain, Osiurak, & Le Gall, 2011). When comparing two groups, the similarity between the constitution of the representation's core makes it possible to confirm the existence of a single representation for both groups. The presence of one or several different elements in the core leads to the conclusion that there exist two different representations (Flament, 1996a). Another fundamental dimension, which must be included in this model, is the question of practices inseparable from the representations (Abric, 1994). In this field, several

studies have been based on the free association test. For example, Gaymard (2003) studied the representation of higher education by women of Maghrebian origin settled in their families and women of the same origin not in higher education, who have broken with their families and settled in shelters for social rehabilitation. The author shows that despite different practices (students vs non students) this representation is shared, and rests, above all, on the specificity of biculturalism among these women of Maghrebian origin. Professional ambitions to surpass the parents' social background and the fight for women's freedom belong to this representation. Gaymard (2006) studied the representation of elderly persons among health workers with experience of dependent elderly people and among lay and catholic university students[2] who only had family relations with their healthy grandparents. The results show that the representation's central core of the elderly person includes the two imaginative poles of old age: Healthy old age with the items "experience", "wisdom", and disabled old age with the term "dependence". The term "dependence" is more important in the representation of nursing staff, which is directly linked to their occupational practices. The periphery gives a more negative representation of the elderly with terms defining the two central dimensions of the stereotype (Cuddy & Fiske, 2002). Still with the same method, Gaymard and Bordarie (2014) studied the social representation of the ideal neighbourhood. They showed that the central core was composed of elements linked to residential satisfaction and that the implementation of the "street use code" could meet certain expectations of the residents to improve quality of life.

In the framework of this structural approach, several studies can be cited which deal with the object "work". Beyond the definition of work as a SR object (Salmaso & Pombeni, 1986; Flament, 1994b; Roussiau & Le Blanc, 2001), this research is based on several questions such as the relationship between the object work and other objects such as unemployment, employment, occupation (Flament, 1994c, 1996b; Milland, 2001, 2002; Márquez & Friemel, 2005; Cartaud & Labbé, 2010) or the question of the transformation of the SR of work (Flament, 1996b; Vidaller, 2007). Concerning the structure and the organization of the SR of work, Flament (1994b) carried out a meta-analysis working from different questionnaires and showed that this representation is organized around two quantitatively comparable elements: pay and pleasure. The difference between these two elements can be seen from a qualitative point of view. The pay aspect

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[2]There is a great difference in university fees between the state and the catholic universities. This explains the differences in background between the lay students and more privileged catholic university students.

effectively appears essential whereas pleasure associated with work remains secondary. Flament concludes that the item of pay could be the only element of the representation's central core. In another study, Flament (1996b) compared younger and older people, both workers and unemployed, skilled and unskilled. For the group of older people, the results revealed that work is useful, image-enhancing, and contributes to social integration whereas for younger people, it is more of a constraint and finances their free time. In a study that appeared in 2007, Flament looks into social representations of work and non-work among unskilled young males from underprivileged areas. Drawing up a questionnaire with the items he calls "conformist" (for example, "Work serves to be recognized by society"), and "anti-conformist" (for instance, "Better not to work and stay with one's friends") allows two extreme sub-populations to be identified. On one hand, there are the individuals who talk of the normative necessity of work, and on the other, those who give value to non-work. Another study by Roussiau and Le Blanc (2001) was concerned with the SR of work among final year grammar school students who belong to different "baccalauréat" courses: general, technological and vocational[3]. The results showed differences in the central zones. For high school seniors doing general subjects, the representation of work is strongly linked to school (homework, school, studies), and refers to a distant future whereas seniors doing technological subjects situate work in a near future with a more negative connotation (unemployment), and seniors doing vocational subjects associate the terms employment and independence with their representation.

Several studies based on social representations of work and unemployment highlight the thematic relationship between these two objects, and the autonomy of these social representations. Thus, Flament (1994c, 1996b) showed that the items "earn one's living" and "be integrated in society" characterized the object work whereas the items "financial problems" and "social exclusion" characterized the object unemployment. Milland (2001, 2002) showed that the representational fields of work and unemployment shared common themes: insertion, investment, future and money, but the theme "dynamism" was linked to work but not to unemployment; the theme concerned with well-being (formulated for example "tired of life") was linked to unemployment and not to work. He concluded that these two representations were autonomous. Vidaller (2007)

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[3]In France the final year is the third and last year of senior high school. The "baccalauréat" is a national diploma that marks the successful conclusion of secondary education (students have an average age between 17 and 18). It constitutes a prerequisite for access to higher education.

carried out a longitudinal study among students to confirm the hypothesis that the SR of the object work was transforming. Over three years (2002, 2003 and 2004) the author noted that the central elements of the representation were different. In 2002 "work" was socially useful and permitted social relations; in 2003 it contributed to social integration and in 2004 it became a necessity.

These different examples evidence not only the interest for researchers to study work as an object of SR among various populations and/or according to practices, but also the relevance of studying the relationship that work bears with other objects of representation such as unemployment. However, none of these studies has been concerned with the SR of work among individuals with intellectual disabilities while for this population work represents an important stake in the quality of life and social inclusion. Moreover, it must be noted that in the studies on SR of work cited above, the specific question of work for women was not approached.

1.2. *Work: Quality of Life (QoL) and socio-professional inclusion of individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ID)*

The concept of Quality of Life (QoL) is associated with the concepts of "normalisation" and "de-institutionalisation" (Cohen, 1985; Hatton, Emerson & Kiernan, 1995; Eggleton, Robertson, Ryan, & Kober, 1999; Young & Ashman, 2004); it is fundamental for improving the human rights of people with ID (Verdugo, Navas, Gómez, & Schalock, 2012). According to the authors this concept must be assessed using both objective and subjective measures (Felce, 1997; Beyer, Brown, Akandi, & Rapley, 2010). The first can be measured by different socio-economical indicators and the second is based on individual perception.

The importance of work for the QoL of persons with intellectual impairment is highlighted by different studies. For example, Lovett and Harris (1987) interviewed 48 adults with "mild to moderate mental retardation" in order to know the skills which they considered important for successful community living. These results show that vocational and social skills were seen as most important above personal, academic and leisure skills. Studies comparing people's QoL in relation to the work environment, sheltered, open or competitive, tend to show that the latter can intellectually improve QoL by furthering the development of certain skills (Inge, Banks, Wehman, Hill, & Shafer, 1988; Sinnot-Oswald, Gliner & Spencer, 1991; Eggleton *et al.*, 1999; Kober & Eggleton, 2005; Beyer *et al.,* 2010; Kober, 2010). For example Eggleton *et al.* (1999) compared the QoL of a group of

people with an ID placed in open employment to other individuals looking for work in a sheltered environment. They found that those working had higher scores for QoL than the job-seekers. They also observed that individuals working in a competitive environment and who had previously worked in a sheltered environment report significant higher QoL scores in comparison with a group who were unemployed and attending a sheltered workshop. Beyer *et al.* (2010) compared subjective and objective QoL and different work environments for persons with ID and non-disabled workers in community employment. Their results show that supported employment brings constructive occupation and improved QoL to people with ID. They also note that non-disabled workers testify comparatively to higher objective QoL and autonomy at work. Petrovski and Gleeson (1997) started from the hypothesis that satisfaction or dissatisfaction at work influenced satisfaction in life. They checked this among workers with an ID in competitive employment who testified that they were happy and positive about their jobs.

However, the use of satisfaction as a measure of QoL among people with ID is questioned by certain authors. For Hensel (2001), satisfaction is a stable psychological concept and it should be used with caution to evaluate the QoL.

But these results can also be interpreted in the light of another concept, that of "self-determination". According to Wehmeyer and Bolding (2001), this construct groups two meanings: "(1) the sense of the phrase as pertaining to the rights of a collective group, usually citizens of a country, to self-governance; and (2) the use of the phrase as a personal construct referring to having control over one's life and destiny" (pp. 371-372). According to this approach, certain types of environments such as more competitive ones or smaller community-based residential settings, can accentuate the perception of control by offering more choices of experiences (Wehmeyer, 1994; Robertson, Emerson, Hatton, Gregory, Kessissoglou, Hallam *et al.,* 2001). During the last two decades, research confirming the importance of self-determination in the QoL of individuals with ID in all stages of life and that in practices in the field of education and rehabilitation has multiplied (Davis & Peck, 1996; Wehmeyer & Garner, 2003; Wehmeyer & Palmer, 2003; Lachapelle, Wehmeyer, Haelewyck, Courbois, Keith, Schalock *et al.*, 2005; Nota, Ferrari, Soresi, & Wehmeyer, 2007; Branding, Bates, & Miner, 2009). Research carried out among young people with intellectual disabilities has established a link between great self-determination and more positive entry into adulthood (Wehmeyer & Palmer, 2003). Nota *et al.* (2007) showed that self-determination, QoL and social

skills were lower among people with more severe ID. Before that, Wehmeyer and Palmer (1997) had shown that young people with mental retardation were more external than their peers with learning disabilities or without disabilities.

Over the years it has been noted in the literature dealing with intellectually disabled individuals' inclusion in the working world, that training is done more and more in a perspective of placement in an open environment rather than sheltered. Moreover, the model of supported employment presents numerous advantages such as salary and the possibility of promotion, but equally the possibility of relations with non-disabled individuals; this can improve social skills and therefore QoL. The concept of self-determination refers to intra-individual and environmental resources at one and the same time (Nota *et al.*, 2007). These different studies show that socio-professional inclusion improves the objective QoL, but subjective measures can seem contradictory.

2. Aims and hypotheses

These different studies confirm the importance of investigating the social vision of work among women and girls with ID. In this study, our aim is to highlight our participants' opinions and beliefs toward work and what it represents to them. We compare the representation of a group of teenage girls training for future work with a group of women working in a sheltered environment who were formerly in the same type of institution for children and young people with disabilities. We will thus be able to follow their representations from one generation to the other.

In this study we put forward the following hypotheses:

1. The financial aspect (as for a population with no disabilities) represents a central element in the representation of work in both groups.
2. As representations are linked to practices, the representation of work by adult women working in a sheltered environment will be anchored in manual tasks.
3. The periphery of the representation which reflects individual practices will be articulated more around aspects of daily life and different skills (for example, what work allows access to in concrete terms, accommodation or other; and certain skills required for work, such as respecting time schedules).

3. Method

3.1. Tool: free associations

We used the free associations method frequently applied in the structural approach of social representations (Abric, 2003; Gaymard, 2003, 2006; Gaymard, Boucher, Greffier, & Fournela, 2012; Gaymard & Bordarie, 2014).This method has the advantage of being very straightforward during the test procedure; it relies on spontaneous representation. It is necessary for the proposed inductor to constitute a stake for the group concerned. The object of SR must effectively be of interest to the group (whether in the present or future) in such a way that when the individuals are questioned they feel necessarily concerned.

Working from an inductor word or expression, this method consists in asking the person to produce all the words or expressions which come to mind. In the structural approach, this method called "prototypical analysis" (Vergés, 1992; Abric & Vergés, 1994) rests originally on two criteria: frequency of the terms used and their ranking order (Tab. 1). According to this approach, a term frequently quoted and in the first ranks is an element which can belong to the central core. Still, according to this approach, an element frequently quoted and in the last ranks, and an element infrequently quoted and in the first ranks belong to the first periphery. Finally, a term infrequently quoted and in the last ranks belongs to the second periphery, which does not enter into the analysis of social representation. Although it was subsequently considered that this method should introduce the criterion of importance of the word for the person (Abric, 2003), Vergès' initial approach (1992) is a method which proves to be more fitted and accessible for specific populations. For instance, Gaymard and Joly (2013) chose the prototypical method since the young adults interviewed from an underprivileged background who had done no studies did not understand the question of ranking by order of importance.

In this study, the use of free associations appears appropriate for several reasons. First of all, it is straightforward to use and understand in its prototypical form. Next, it is important for individuals with ID to be able to express their needs and expectations, which this method allows as it leaves complete freedom in the answers. Finally, this method has never been used among people with ID while the inductor "work" has been the object of several studies of social representations among people without ID. A

comparison of the same object can thus be made among persons with or without ID.

Table 1 - *The representation's central core and periphery**.

	First ranks	Last ranks
More frequent	Central core	First periphery
Less frequent	First periphery	Second periphery

* The software presents the results in the form of a table with 4 boxes.

3.2. Institutions and populations concerned

In this study, the women and girls who participated belonged to two institutions specialized in disabilities. The first is a centre for children and young people (community health centre) and the second is a sheltered employment centre. The community health centres are approved to provide a specialized upbringing and education for children and teenagers with ID. This type of institution offers the child adapted schooling with educational activities as well as individual care. The structure in which we carried out our interviews accommodates young people aged 14 to 20. It is a co-educational institution with boarding and half boarding facilities. These young people are not in a work situation but training to join the world of work. Some of them have already done work placements. This group is composed of 30 teenage girls, average age 17.07 ($SD = 2.23$).

The vocation of a sheltered employment institution is to help toward occupational and social insertion of individuals with ID. The facility where we carried out the interviews offers sheltered occupational activities in the field of "sub-contracting", packaging, cleaning, park and garden maintenance etc. This group is composed of 29 women whose average age is 36.52 ($SD = 9.70$). These individuals are all employed and carry out a specific manual task.

3.3. Contact and instructions

Firstly, both institutions concerned gave their approval for this research to be carried out despite the occupations of the young people and working adults (it was necessary to interrupt the professional activity). Then the people were given an informative hand-out so that they could understand the

process; in this hand-out the aim of the study and the anonymity of the replies was made clear. The individuals willing to take part had to present themselves to a student doing a placement. Among the interested persons, certain filled in the tool by themselves and the others were helped to complete their answers. The instruction was: "When you hear the word "work", what are the words or expressions which come spontaneously to mind?".

Table 2 - *Frequency and mean ranking order of appearance of the words and expressions for girls with intellectual disabilities "When you hear the word "work", what are the words or expressions which come spontaneously to mind?".*

	First ranks < 2.5		**Last ranks ≥ 2.5**	
Frequency ≥ 5	Earning money	23*(2.34**)	Having accommodation	5 (3.00)
	Working	14 (1.43)	Shopping	5 (4.20)
Frequency < 5	Apprenticeship	2 (2.00)	Helping people	2 (3.50)
	Having a job	4 (1.00)	Having fellow workers	2 (2.50)
	Having a salary	4 (2.25)	Having projects	2 (3.50)
	Being with my pals	3 (2.33)	Having a private life	2 (3.50)
	Doing things	2 (2.00)	Having a car	3 (3.33)
	For my future	3 (2.33)	Paying the rent	4 (3.75)
	Working hard	2 (1.50)	Paying the bills	4 (3.75)
			Keeping busy	2 (3.50)
			Being able to indulge myself	2 (4.50)
				4 (2.75)
			Getting out of the institution	2 (3.00)
				3 (3.66)
			Working to live	2 (4.00)
			Being on time	
			Being autonomous	

* Frequency
** Mean ranking order

3.4. Analysis strategies

The items gathered were ranked according to 2 indicators, the frequency at which the word appears and the average rank of appearance. By cross-checking these two criteria according to thresholds determined by the researcher, the 4 zones can be established within the representation (Vergés, 1992). To process the data, we used the "Evoc" program (Vergès, 2005).

The "Evoc" (for evocations) program is a software package which was developed specially to analyse evocations (Grize, Vergès, & Silem, 1987; Vergès, 1992). Notably it allows lexicographic analysis with the study of frequency and rank as well as the analysis of important words.

4. Results

The associative production gathered rests more on expressions which have the advantage of contextualizing *verbatim*.

Concerning young girls, we obtained a total of 123 words or expressions, 47 of which were different. Words quoted at least twice were retained for the analysis and presentation of the 4 box table. Words quoted only once can be found in the appendix. We isolated two words or expressions which could be part of the central core: "earning money" and "working". In the periphery we note terms relating to daily life and social skills such as: "having accommodation", "shopping", "being with my pals" or "for my future" (Tab. 2).

Concerning women with ID working in a sheltered environment, we gathered a total of 140 words or expressions 60 of which were different. We isolated 3 words that could belong to the central core. They were "doing tasks", "earning money" and "working". In the periphery, we find terms related to daily life such as "having accommodation", but also terms defining vocational skills such as "doing one's work well" or "being on time" and also job satisfaction: "working is good", "doing one's work well" (Tab. 3).

5. Discussion

The aim of this study was to investigate the SR of work among women and girls with ID. Work and employment status appear in several studies as contributing to improving the QoL of disabled persons and especially in open environments which would promote the best practices (Inge *et al.,* 1988; Wehmeyer & Bolding, 2001; Verdugo *et al.,* 2012). But working in a sheltered environment remains a reality. The study of social representations in this specific environment can help to clarify the relations that individuals with ID maintain with this context; that is, what impact the latter has on their representations of work. Research effectively shows that SR is contextualised and anchored in practices (Gaymard & Tiplica, 2012; Gaymard, 2013; Gaymard & Tiplica, 2014). Moreover, the SR of work

among young girls in a centre for children and young people with disabilities can enlighten us on their expectations, and how they project themselves into adult and professional life.

Table 3 - *Frequency and mean ranking order of appearance of the words and expressions for women with intellectual disabilities "When you heard the word "work", what are the words or expressions which come spontaneously to mind?".*

	First ranks < 2.5		Last ranks ≥ 2.5	
Frequency ≥ 5	Doing tasks	13*(2.23**)	Having accommodation	5 (3.80)
	Earning money	9 (2.11)	Being on time	10 (2.70)
	Working	8 (1.75)	Having a salary	6 (3.16)
			Doing one's work well	7 (2.85)
			Changing work	6 (3.00)
			Working is good	10 (3.50)
			Keeping busy	5 (3.00)
Frequency < 5	Making centering tools[1]	2 (2.00)	Having projects	2 (4.00)
	One must work	2 (2.00)	Unemployment	4 (2.75)
	For my future	2 (2.00)	Sub-contracting	3 (3.33)
			Not making mistakes	2 (3.50)
			School	2 (3.00)

* Frequency
** Mean ranking order
[1]A centering tool is a part used in car manufacturing for example.

In the frame of the central core theory (Abric, 1976), the object "work" has already been studied as an object of SR among individuals with no disabilities without distinguishing the problem of men and women. This is, therefore, the first study resting on this theoretical framework that is carried out with individuals with ID, and focusing on the problems of women.

The results of the free association test show first that there, indeed, exists a SR of work among young girls with disabilities and among women working in a sheltered employment centre. These two representations are very "functional" (Lynch, 1960), and directed toward concrete advantages provided by the work: money, skills, activity, and management of daily life. Furthermore, women report feelings of job satisfaction.

First of all, it was put forward as a hypothesis that the financial aspect will represent a central element in the representation in both groups. This hypothesis is verified and confirms the importance of money associated to work in the representation. The item, "receiving a salary", which is found in

the first periphery of both groups, reinforces the weight of the financial aspect in this representation. It can be said about this aspect that individuals with ID do not differentiate themselves from individuals with no disabilities (for example Flament, 1994b). In the representation of women and girls "earning money", this constitutes a central and non-negotiable element in the representation of work. One works first of all to earn money because its allows access to the rest and thus, to live. When comparing the two groups it can be seen that the girls who are not yet working have greater money earning expectations than the women who are working. Moreover, in their associations they refer more often to the fact of paying or spending money. This can be explained by their age and the fact that in apprenticeship they idealise the possibility of earning money when they enter active life. On leaving school, however, they are faced with the problem of limited work possibilities, and finally find themselves in a sheltered working environment (Black & Meyer, 1992) or without work (Burnham & Housley, 1992). These findings also show that women with experience, working in a sheltered environment seem more realistic than girls toward remuneration linked to work. It is indeed a known fact that remuneration is relatively low, and that women with intellectual disabilities earn even less than their male counterparts (Olson, Cioffi, Yovanoff, & Mank, 2000; Crooks, 2004; O'Reilly, 2007), but money still remains a strong motivation to work (Reiter, Friedman, & Molcho, 1985; Li, 1998).

A parallel can be drawn between these results and those of Flament (1996b) among non-disabled persons. In his study, he made a comparison between the representation of work by a population of younger and older people, both workers and unemployed, skilled and unskilled. He found that for the younger people, work was more a constraint and served to finance their spare time. This aspect of constraint is not really to be found in the representation of work by young girls with ID who even refer positively to "working hard" (1st periphery). The girls we met also give the impression of being more "mature", responsible, because they also mention expenditure concerning their spare time less than expenditure needed for daily life (shopping, paying the bills etc.). In the field of locus of control (Rotter, 1966), already previous results concerning young people without ID showed differences between girls and boys. Claes (1981) thus notes that girls aged between 13 and 15 assume responsibility for their failures more often than boys of the same age who blame outside circumstances more. Family responsibilities shouldered by girls could partly explain these differences. These results could equally echo those of Nota *et al.* (2007) who observe,

this time among women with ID, that they have higher scores of self-determination than men.

The other central item shared by both groups is linked to the action of working. Their representation of work thus appears very functional, relating to "doing" and even more so for women: here the core differs from the girls by the presence of the item "doing tasks". In order for the two social representations to be different, they must be organized around two different central cores. The item "doing tasks" - specific to the representation by women - confirms that the representation of work is different for each group, and allows the validation of our second hypothesis according to which the representation of work by adult women working in a sheltered environment would be anchored in manual tasks. The item "doing tasks" is directly linked to the work practices of women with ID, and attests to the importance of these practices in the attribution of significance and organization of the representation. This importance of work practices can be found in Gaymard's study (2006) in which she used the same methodology to identify the structure of representation of an elderly person. The author identifies the item "dependence" as a central element, quoted significantly more often by nursing staff than by young students who had no experience with dependent elderly people. In this study, the item "doing tasks" can give a certain idea of monotony in the job, which is a characteristic identified in a sheltered environment, notably explaining why this type of environment does not promote QoL (Bernstein, 1970). This repetitive and monotonous character of work can be found through certain references on the periphery such as "making a centering tool". In a recent study, Nota, Santilli, Ginevra and Soresi (2013) were concerned with the attitudes of employers and showed that they considered "realistic and conventional tasks" to be suitable for employees with disabilities. Here we see the importance of representations that can be influenced by normative or reference models (Gaymard, 2009; Gaymard & Bessin, 2014). The SR of work among women with ID may rather reflect the expectations and beliefs of employers.

Finally, the third hypothesis we put forward is also confirmed. The peripheral elements of the representation of work are linked to aspects of daily life and skill acquisition for both groups. Thus in the periphery of the representation by girls items such as "having accommodation" and "shopping" can be found, which illustrates their desire for autonomy and having a life "like everybody else". The item "being with my pals" is a reminder that in adolescence, peers constitute for boys as for girls a reference model to be found in their representation (Gaymard & Andrés, 2009; Gaymard & Bessin, 2014). Girls associate their pals with work

because these are important relationships in their daily life. This social aspect can be found in the second periphery with the presence of the item, "having fellow workers". Among the girls interviewed, we noted rare references to private or family life which do not appear fundamental in the representation because they belong neither to the central core nor to the first periphery. Thus, in the second periphery the item, "having a private life", is observed. Other items are quoted once such as "building a family" and "having children" (Appendix). It seems difficult to interpret since we do not know if girls with no ID would have associated work with private or family life. Nevertheless, Mokhtari's works (2008) on experiences of friendship among intellectually disabled teenagers show that sharing secrets, private details and feelings and being supported emotionally were limited to best friends with disabilities, in the same age group and classroom. Finally, the second periphery also comprises items concerning social and professional skills, such as "having a car", "paying the rent", "paying bills" or "being on time". The peripheral elements of the representation of work among women are equally linked to accommodation (first periphery), which shows their preoccupations with this field. Compared with girls, they associate work with professional skills and expressing feelings of satisfaction more. These differences can be attributed to their actual practices of work. Thus, the first periphery provides more subtleties and softens the interpretation that could be made of the representation of work with the item "doing tasks" in the central core. Moreover, in this periphery the item "changing work" can be found, which gives an idea of a certain diversity of the tasks. The item "keeping busy", which appears in the second periphery in the girls' representation, is placed in the first periphery in the women's representation; the latter thus express the importance of the activity. The acquirement of vocational skills in this group appears clearly via the item "being on time", quoted 3 times as much by the adults as the girls for whom the item appears in the second periphery. The item "doing one's work well" attests to the desire they have to succeed and develop their skills. Three items were quoted only once and are linked to the idea of a certain challenge in work: "not making a mistake", "succeeding the first time" and "working faster" (Appendix). The positive aspects for self esteem corroborate the feeling of satisfaction they express through the item "work is good". This item can be linked to another important item identified in the representation by individuals with no ID; this is the item "pleasure", considered to be peripheral in the representation (Flament, 1994b). It can therefore be said that the periphery of the representation reveals job satisfaction even if this work takes place in a sheltered environment. Moreover, in the second

periphery references to working conditions quoted only once there can be found such terms as "taking breaks" or "not working on public holidays" (Appendix). In women's representation, social relationships do not belong to the first periphery unlike in girls'. Some items quoted only once can be found: "knowing lots of people", "talking to people", "OK with superiors" (Appendix). Moreover, as for the girls, there is no reference to private life unless anecdotally ("sharing an apartment with my boy friend" quoted only once, Appendix). But it must be pointed out that the SR of work among non-disabled populations does not refer (or very little) to relations with others (Flament, 1994b; Roussiau & Le Blanc, 2001; Flament, 2007; Cartaud & Labbé, 2010).

According to Serajul Haq (2003), for women with intellectual disabilities work is important for three main reasons: "(a) for economic independence and successful living, (b) for a sense of self-worth, dignity and contribution to society and (c) for integration into the mainstream non-disabled community" (p.77). In our study, the representation of work by women with ID is linked to money, "doing tasks", the acquirement of vocational skills and feelings of satisfaction. We cannot speak of inclusion in the non-disabled community since these women work, and have always been in a sheltered environment. Nevertheless, the integrating value of work can be found in the associations produced. Working is earning one's living, being active, having one's own accommodation, but it also provides satisfaction ("working is good") and increases self-esteem faced with accomplishing a task ("doing one's work well"). Thus the item "doing tasks" in the central core can constitute pride in achieving something for these women. This study challenges the consideration that the sheltered environment does not promote job satisfaction, and some studies have also noted this tendency. For example, Robinson & Fitzgerald (2001) found that all workers in sheltered workshops expressed high levels of job satisfaction despite previous education or previous employment experience. In our study, the SR of work is specific to each generation; it is linked to age and practices. For young girls, work is seen as the possibility of getting out of the institution, earning their living and being independent; it could be said that it is their dream. The representation by women could be the result of a transformation of the object work with age and entry into active life. It can be supposed that new practices in sheltered workshops have led to the integration of the item, "doing tasks", in the central core. They interpret the work situation as being satisfactory, because they prefer this situation to their previous situation in a community health centre ("not the same as the institution"), and also

because they know it is difficult to find a job (for instance one woman told us: "It is by chance having a job here").

6. Conclusion and perspectives

This study confirms the importance of work for women with ID, and the importance of vocational guidance for young girls (Nota, Ginevra, & Carrieri, 2010); knowing their SR of work appears to be an important stage in this perspective. Several paths of thought to promote the inclusion of persons with intellectual impairment in the world of work and thus improve their QoL can be proposed. Contextualisation of SR explains why it is necessary to be concerned not only with the environment, but also with the importance of normative models. Favouring inclusion in work for individuals with ID thus requires also working on the social representations of employers. Their beliefs have an impact on the SR of individuals with ID. Then the comparison with studies among non-disabled populations seems important, because it shows that disabled individuals have the same expectations from work (first earn money), and they can also be more motivated to work. It is, indeed, the value of work (and not the reference to "non-work", Flament, 2007) that emerges from this study, since young girls and women express a real desire to work and we observe no negative associations or feelings toward work. All sheltered workshops are not identical and feelings of satisfaction go beyond the characteristics of the workplace (Robinson & Fitzgerald, 2001), which research into self-determination also shows (Nota *et al.,* 2007). Nevertheless, work experiences felt positively in a sheltered environment merit further consideration. Finally, there is always a process of comparison in play. In a period of economic crisis and high unemployment, the women in our study are aware that they are even more exposed than men to the risk of not finding a job.

The main limit of our study rests on the lack of research concerning the SR of work specifically by women and/or girls with no ID. This aspect of comparison was missing in the interpretation of the results, above all, for the periphery. A future perspective would be to study the SR of work among women with ID in an open environment or men with ID working in a sheltered or open environment to put in comparison with these results. The SR of work could thus be compared with regard to gender and environmental context among individuals with ID.

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APPENDIX

Girls: List of words and expressions and frequencies.

Helping people (2)	Apprenticeship (2)
Having fellow workers (2)	Having children (1)
Having projects (2)	Having a job (4)
Having accommodation (5)	Having a job I like (1)
Having a salary (4)	Having working clothes (1)
Having a private life (2)	Having a car (3)
Looking for a job(1)	Unemployment (1)
Knowing your job (1)	Building a family (1)
Different from the institution (1)	Being autonomous (2)
Being with my pals (3)	Being with my cat (1)
Doing the workshops (1)	Doing things (2)
Shopping (5)	Doing training courses (1)
Upkeep of the premises (1)	Doing things required by the boss (1)
Finishing your studies (1)	Earning money (23)
To buy what you want (1)	For my future (3)
Paying the rent (4)	Paying the bills (4)
Keeping busy (2)	Being able to cook (1)
Being able to indulge myself (2)	Professionalism (1)
Notifying when you are ill (1)	Satisfaction (1)
Getting out of the institution (4)	Working (14)
Working after school (1)	Working hard (2)
Working in the classroom (1)	Working to live (2)
Working in the factory (1)	
Being on time (3)	

Women: List of words and expressions and frequencies

Buying what I please (1)	Learning new things (1)
Learning new techniques (1)	Learning to do a little bit (1)
Learnt lots of things difficult at first (1)	Having fellow workers (1)
Having leisure activities (1)	Taking breaks (1)
Having projects (2)	Sharing an apartment with my boyfriend (1)
Having accommodation (5)	Having a position to respect (1)
Having a salary (6)	Having working clothes (1)
Doing one's work well (7)	Good atmosphere (1)
It's the factory that pays (1)	Changing work (6)
Unemployment (4)	Sticking on labels (1)
Concentration (1)	Knowing a lot of people (1)
People who give work (1)	Different from the institution (1)
Doing other things (1)	Using the computer (1)
Doing activities (1)	Making centering tools (2)
Going out (1)	Doing tasks (13)
Shopping (1)	Doing lots of things (1)
Earning money (9)	Scratching materials (1)
You must work (2)	Sub-contracting (3)
Working is good (10)	Not working on public holidays (1)
You can go on strike (1)	Talking to people (1)
Going home early (1)	Not making mistakes (2)
Not the same as the institution (1)	OK with the superiors (1)
Paying bills (1)	Paying the rent (1)
Thinking of holidays (1)	Station position (1)
Work station (1)	For my future (2)
Keeping busy (5)	Taking your time (1)
Succeeding the first time (1)	Getting out of the institution (1)
Working more (1)	Working (8)
Working faster (1)	Getting up every day (1)
School (2)	Being on time (10)