

Career stability despite mobility norms: Work identification as a source of both dependence and free will

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Abstract. Remaining in the same job or with the same employer for a long time, or even an entire career, is not viewed favorably in the dominant managerial discourse. Yet this is the reality for many employees in Europe. What are the mechanisms used by employees to assume this stability in the face of career norms that favor mobility? What is new in this research, with regard to the existing literature, is that it explains the career stability of employees in terms of identification mechanisms, in particular identification with the content of their work. Several results were obtained using the coding method to process the data collected in an association operating in the social sector. We began by distinguishing between four modalities of work content identification: normative, cognitive, emotive and performative. We went on to highlight two effects of work identification: the free will of agents, made possible by the argumentative resources they provide, and dependence on their work through the integration of structural constraints. Three types of arguments (factual, existential and normative) are identified which enable employees to adopt unique positions in relation to their career in the face of today's mobility norms: distantiation, conciliation and conformity. The process-based model proposed contributes to a dialectical reading of careers—between structural and agentic effects—emphasizing the social mechanisms used by employees to “cope” with pressure to embrace career mobility.

Keywords: career, career stability, mobility, identification, work content, norms, positioning.

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INTRODUCTION

A study in France revealed that 54% of the 800 private-sector employees interviewed (aged over 30) had not experienced any career mobility within the five previous years (Conseil d'orientation pour l'emploi, 2009: 52). In 2005, the European Commission reported that the average duration of a job with the same employer was 10.6 years in Europe, compared to 6.7 in the United States and 12.2 in Japan. It also observed that 25% of workers interviewed had never changed employer and that 54% did not intend to change jobs over the following five years (European Commission, 2006). The number of employees described as stable is in fact on the rise (Amossé & Ben Halima, 2010). Far from being a type of

behavior that simply lacks inter-job or inter-company movement, career stability is an attitude that can be defined, borrowing from the work of Hughes (1937), as the state of mind of those who see themselves in the same job in the distant future and are not contemplating any career mobility, at least not for a long time.

In managerial terms, this issue merits further study in order to inform employers about the attitudes of their employees, whom they encourage to embrace mobility so as to constantly adjust their organizations in response to changes in their environment (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). The resilience of career stability is at variance with the prediction that opportunist attitudes among employees would become widespread in a labor market that favors career mobility (Guest & Sturges, 2007).

In academic terms, it is an issue that remains largely overlooked. This disparity between the lack of academic research and the social reality can be explained by the prevalence in the debate of the concept of “boundaryless careers”, which overvalues mobility behaviors, both intra-firm and inter-firm (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Yet several critiques have pointed out that this theory fails to adequately account for the current context (Guest & Sturges, 2007). Another more balanced approach has since been applied to the study of careers (Moore, Gunz & Hall, 2007), considered as an expression of individual will (agency) on the one hand and of the constraints inherent in the social structure on the other. When applied to the study of attitudes to careers, this “dialectical” approach—traditionally used in sociology (Seo & Creed, 2002)—highlights a tension between dependence on and independence from structures or boundaries (Tams & Arthur, 2010).

So far, this dialectical “agent–structure” approach has above all been used to study the capacity of employees to build their mobility in a restrictive social environment (Rodrigues, Guest & Budjanovcanin, 2016). In contrast, this paper illustrates how the capacities of agents are mobilized in a way that allows them not to “budge”. Career stability is not only a passive attitude among employees facing social embeddedness (Ituma & Simpson, 2009), it also reflects their life plans and individual career positioning, which cause them to depart from prevailing mobility norms (Dany, Louvel & Valette, 2011). Our research aims to understand the mechanisms used by employees to embrace their career stability in the face of a career norm that encourages mobility. More specifically, it builds on this dialectical approach to careers by demonstrating the role of the work identification mechanism, which can be seen as a source of both dependence and independence. There are two reasons underpinning our choice.

First, several authors have highlighted the lack of research on careers that includes analysis of resources (Dany, et al., 2011; Valette & Culié, 2015): we point out that work identification can generate strategic resources (Zilber, 2002). Second, the literature surprisingly contains little research on the role of the identification mechanism in the decision made by employees to remain in the same job or with the same firm (Miscenko & Day, 2015), with the notable exception of Rothausen, Henderson, Arnold and Malsh (2017). The cognitive and social nature of this process is well known, but further investigation is needed to reveal the role it plays in this type of career attitude, and in particular the importance of the workplace experience that results in people defining themselves by what they do at work (Pratt, Rockmann & Kaufmann, 2006). We therefore aim to explain the contradiction observed between career stability and normative pressure favoring mobility by 1) conceptualizing the mechanism through which people identify with their work content and 2) specifying two effects:

the embeddedness of employees in their work and their agentic capacity to position themselves in relation to career norms.

In the first section we present the existing research on career stability, career norms and work identification. We go on to describe our methodology in processing the data collected from employees in an association operating in the social sector. Finally, we present our results, summarized in a process-based model that explains the different positions adopted, followed by our contributions to the existing research on work identification and careers.

CAREER STABILITY DESPITE CURRENT NORMS

PRELIMINARY EXPLANATIONS

Several different types of career stability can be observed among employees, but the most commonly studied form is where an employee remains with a single organization (the same employer) but with internal mobility (Hausknecht, Rodda & Howard, 2009). Amossé and Ben Halima, for example, describe stable workers as those who “have spent more than three quarters of their career with the same employer” (2010: 3). However, the duration of one’s presence in a particular job or firm is an imperfect measurement. First of all, this is because temporal norms vary from one country and one period to the next (Peltokorpi, 2013).

Second, employees can be with a firm for a very long time without necessarily wishing to remain in their job or with their employer (Hom, Mitchell, Lee & Griffeth, 2012). Conversely, it is possible to have recently joined a company and foresee a long future with that employer—an indicator of career stability. It is therefore important to include another criterion in this measurement: choice, with varying levels of impetus on the part of the employee, since the labor market and the constraints of one’s personal life may not be conducive to external mobility (Guest & Sturges, 2007).

Furthermore, career stability may be associated with psychological mobility, whereby skills development occurs without any physical change in one’s work (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). Career stability is more than an objective fact; it is also subjective and reflects the state of mind of employees, who consider their work in respect of their overall career trajectory (Hughes, 1937). Indeed, when researchers interview respondents, they usually obtain information about a certain expectancy, formulated within the context of a particular situation (Dany, 2003). We therefore consider career stability as an attitude linked to career perceptions and held by employees who defend a choice that runs counter to the social norm of physical mobility.

CAREER NORMS SYNONYMOUS WITH FLEXIBLE DETERMINISM

The existence of career norms that favor stability in bureaucracies was revealed by Weber and later by Hughes (Moore, et al., 2007). This normative model is no longer valued by today’s organizations, which expect greater flexibility from their employees in their work and career mobility (Inkson, Gunz, Ganesh & Roper, 2012). Norms for the maximum duration for which a position can be held have even been identified (Lawrence, 2011). These influence attitudes towards careers without determining them.

Employees are embedded in a particular social context (Ituma & Simpson, 2009) and self-impose certain boundaries (Inkson, et al., 2012;

Rodrigues, et al., 2016). However, as shown by Dany, et al. (2011), although career trajectories are influenced by norms of promotion, employees can refuse to conform and make alternative choices. These authors adhere to this nuanced approach to careers—between a structural effect and the initiative of “individual agents”—first developed by Moore, et al. (2007). They highlight the cognitive process for the integration of institutional norms, but also a political process that lies in the capacity of employees to establish a unique position in relation to their career by drawing on the resources of the organization and their social networks (Dany, et al., 2011; Ituma & Simpson, 2009; Valette & Culié, 2015). Offering a “dialectical” reading of the choices made by individuals (Seo & Creed, 2002), between social constraints (structural effect) and the freedom to act (agentic effect), these authors suggest that employees use justifications from their specific context in defense of their positions, making them strategic actors (Dany, et al., 2011). The inventors of the “boundaryless careers” concept themselves recognize the appeal of this balanced approach, considering that the capacity of employees to be agents in their own career is constrained and that there are as many indicators of independence as of dependence on institutional and cultural context (Tams & Arthur, 2010).

The phenomenon of career stability can therefore be understood using this “structure–agent dialectic”. On the one hand, employees remain in their job or firm because their context encourages them to do so (Dany, et al., 2011). On the other, they also display a certain amount of freedom by choosing not to respect the prevailing mobility norms.

Perceptions of these norms vary from one individual to the next, with differing interpretations of the information available—an expression of singularity (Lawrence, 2011). Pressure from employers who favor mobility—backed up by institutions—is such that to stick to their intention to stay in the same post over the long term, employees must exercise a certain liberty and display a capacity as strategic actors (Dany, et al., 2011). They can make choices by distancing themselves from the social norms in organizations and even transform them or create new ones (Hardy & Maguire, 2008). This is a difficult position to adopt and employees must justify themselves (Lawrence, 2008; Oliver, 1991).

However, this dialectical approach to careers fails to provide adequate indications of the mechanisms through which agents mobilize resources to cope with their situation. The researchers cited above have called on others to move up to another level of analysis and include an exploration of resources (Dany, et al., 2011), which can come in different forms. For some, these are financial, political and organizational (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006). Knowledge acquired, information, trust, interconnections and networks are also resources that have been included in interpretive schemas (Feldman, 2004), allowing for unique positions to be taken up in order to modify norms (Hardy & Maguire, 2008). This agentic capacity is also stimulated by the meaning attributed to one’s work, a further resource for employees (Zilber, 2002). The influence of identification on this capacity has been rarely dealt with in the literature; it is in fact the reverse relationship that is most often highlighted (Sainsaulieu, 1988). Yet work identity appears to partly shape schemas of comprehension, through which experiences are used to define career choices (Grote & Raeder, 2009).

THE EFFECTS OF WORK IDENTIFICATION

Work identification: a resource for the agent ...

For Ashforth, Harrison and Corley (2008), one's professional identity is established in large part through work identification, which is a cognitive and affective process of self-categorization enabling the individual to achieve and maintain self-esteem. They argue that this process involves producing meaning (sensemaking) to define the self, influenced by an individual and/or social groups, who are considered references. Employees interpret the meanings attributed (sensegiving) by "targets" in their workplace and incorporate them into their identity (Vough, 2012). These targets may be colleagues, a team, the organization or the relevant profession (Ashforth, et al., 2008).

Employees also construct their identity through the "solitary" relationship they have with their work practices, accepting the signals produced by work scenarios that project an image of themselves which they accept when positive (Pratt, et al., 2006). This type of identification occurs when the individual recognizes the image of a capable being who has developed unique skills to achieve a certain job (Sainsaulieu, 1998). Here, the employee defines himself by what he does or manages to produce through his activity, which is a source of pride and corresponds to "work-based identification" (Ashforth, et al., 2008: 326). Becker and Casper (1956) showed, albeit not in the exact same terms, that identification with one's work content is synonymous with a keen interest in the task at hand and is an expression of pride in relation to the skills acquired, resulting in employees defining themselves by what they are capable of doing, which is not without consequence for their career choices. By producing meaning, this identification mechanism generates resources for employees (Zilber, 2002), which they can mobilize to become "career agents" (Tams & Arthur, 2010). But work identification also leads to dependence on one's work.

... or a source of dependence?

The concept of embeddedness was developed to explain why employees choose to remain in their job or firm. This approach is appealing because it identifies facts, testing the influence of the individual's context and organization. The greater the number of links that are difficult to break (with colleagues, the profession, family, etc.) and proximities (in terms of values, goals, skills and careers) between the job and the individual's personal life, the less that individual will be likely to choose to leave his employer (Lee, Mitchell, Sablinski, Burton & Holtom, 2004). The entwinement between work and the individual's life—through multiple links that constitute social networks—will result in a departure from the organization being perceived as a sacrifice (loss of colleagues, interesting projects, a benevolent supervisor, career opportunities, financial advantages, etc.). Some of the relevant publications (Das, Nandialath & Mohan, 2013; Hausknecht, et al., 2009; Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski & Erez, 2001; Ramesh & Gelfand, 2010) explicitly aim to identify the determinants of the intention of employees to stay in their job or firm, with a negative impact on their effective departure (Price & Mueller, 1981). They thereby stand out from research on staff turnover. Demographic variables (marital status, property ownership, spouse's situation, number of children, seniority) and attitudinal variables (satisfaction, commitment, organizational support, attachment) are tested. However, if the word "stay" appears in the

title, the dependent variable in their model is the intention to leave the organization.

It is nonetheless worthwhile to use the concept of embeddedness, which can reveal that the determinants of career stability are not necessarily those of mobility (Mainhagu & Castéran, 2016), since in this case norms and social networks play a crucial role, inhibiting any tendency towards departure (Hom, et al., 2012). Furthermore, while seeking to stand out from social identity theories (Mitchell, et al., 2001), the embeddedness perspective provides measurements that are linked to the identification mechanism, which produces links and cultural proximities. The items used to interview respondents include “I like the members of my work group”, “My coworkers are similar to me”, “I fit with the company’s culture” (Mitchell, et al., 2001: 1121), “This was the kind of work I was most interested in doing” (Holtom & Inderrieden, 2006: 449), “I feel attached to this organization” (Crossley, Bennett, Jex & Burnfield, 2007: 1035; Ng & Feldman, 2013: 102).

Ng and Feldman (2013) note the existence of a link between organizational embeddedness, measured by feelings of attachment to the employer firm, and the difficulty of leaving. While it is interesting to distinguish the factual variables of context from those relating to individual perceptions, it appears that the existing models lack precision when it comes to defining their variables. They combine the notions of attachment and embeddedness and overlook the identification mechanism, particularly that of work content identification, in their efforts to understand career stability.

This overview of the literature reveals that research studies linking the theme of work identity to that of career stability remain at a fledgling stage (Rothausen, et al., 2015). By showing how work content identification generates dependence, and also provides agents with resources, our research helps move beyond the current state of knowledge about career choices using a dialectical approach.

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH CONTEXT

To explore career stability, we conducted our research in a field in which this phenomenon is often observed: the social sector. In “public interest” roles (Audier & Bacache-Beauvallet, 2007) and regulated professions, employees more often remain in their occupation than in other sectors (Simonnet & Ulrich, 2009). This field has seen changes comparable to those observed in the public and semi-public sectors, with the adoption of norms imported from the commercial sector (Pettigrew, McKee & Ferlie, 1988), such as those favoring career mobility. As is often the case, access to the field was facilitated by an approach described by Pettigrew (1990) as “planned opportunism”: we contacted an association in the social sector which turned out to be affected by our research topic.

This association was created after World War II in response to the rising number of youths without a fixed abode. It was entrusted with a public service mission in the emerging “sector for disadvantaged childhood” in France. Two activities were subsequently developed to care for people suffering from disability or social difficulties. More recently, the association has absorbed other establishments under pressure from the public authorities who are looking to rationalize the sector by reducing its allocated resources. When we met them for the first time, the association’s directors were looking for solutions to favor the internal mobility of their

staff so as to adapt the organization to changes in the demands of their financial backers, but also to prevent the psychosocial risks associated with the professional strain on social workers, who are often reluctant to leave their designated area. The appeal in research terms of this association is that its staff are pushed by management towards career mobility in a social context that is perceived by its employees as promoting this norm. The employees we spoke to therefore spontaneously referred to these mobility norms, which they have accepted due to this dual “pressure” (managerial and societal). Some of the association’s different entities (around 30 in total) are marked by a high level of career stability (especially staff working on disability and the protection of children in “open units”). How do these employees manage this contradiction? We compared their discourse with that of employees in other structures where the rate of turnover has traditionally been high (in particular child protection in “closed centers”), making it possible to specify the phenomenon studied (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Pettigrew, 1990).

INFORMATION SOURCES

Several sources of information were used, the most important being the accounts of 75 employees working in five different structures: one working in child protection in an “open unit” (34% of the association’s personnel according to its 2012 annual report), one other on child protection in a “closed center” (12%), two on disability (40%) and one on social rehabilitation for adults (4%). These respondents volunteered after the project was presented during a staff meeting. We interviewed 55 social workers, 9 directors and department heads, 6 secretaries and 5 other employees (psychologists, cooks and a night watchman). In 2012, educational staff members represented 63% of the association’s personnel, with administrative staff representing 11%. Most respondents were women but in a lower proportion than the overall staff numbers for the association (Table 1). However, the average seniority in the population studied was higher than the overall average.

	Women	Men	Average age	Average seniority
Studied population	64 %	36 %	41.32	11.84
Total population	71 %	29 %	41.25	952

Table 1. Profile comparison of interviewees with the total population of the association

We identified a total number of 49 people in our sample who assume their career stability in their position (Table 2). They expect to remain in the same job for the foreseeable future and are not considering career mobility, as one educational worker told us: *“As long as it suits me, I’m staying”* (interviewee n°2). A managerial assistant also commented: *“Dwelling on career changes, I don’t worry about that at all right now, I really don’t. I’m fine right where I am”* (n°28). In contrast, 23 respondents said they wanted to leave. Finally, three were too indecisive to be categorized either way.

	CPO	CEC	SRA	Disability	Total
Number of assumed stability cases	8	12	7	22	49
Number of desired mobility cases	9	4	9	1	23
Number of undecided	1	2	0	0	3
Total	18	18	16	23	75
Average workplace seniority	7.47	15.9	7.73	12.2	11

Legend: CPO = Child protection open unit; CEC = Closed education center; SRA = social rehabilitation for adults

Table 2. Seniority and interviewee intention by sector

Most of the employees with career stability (69%) work in the two sectors (child protection services) where turnover is often low. The majority of respondents had held several different jobs in their careers so far: 13 described previous situations of stability in positions they held for at least six years; 46 of them outlined the reasons for their past departures. We also used data from documents relating to 2011 and 2012 (two annual reports, eight minutes from works committee and health and safety committee meetings, two departmental projects, and three tables displaying staff numbers), which we were able to obtain by participating in meetings and regularly visiting the premises, enabling informal discussions. This information helps us understand the context of the individuals concerned and better appreciate—and therefore categorize—the meaning of their comments, with respect for the meanings produced by the employees themselves.

DATA COLLECTION METHOD

We used semi-structured interviews to record the employees' stories. This is an appropriate method with which to understand a new and complex mechanism (Creswell, 2007). All interviews were conducted on the association's premises and were recorded and transcribed as the work advanced so that the questions asked could be modified accordingly (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). They lasted between 24 and 144 minutes (47 minutes on average), representing a total of almost 60 hours.

We took care to establish conditions of trust in order to encourage honest accounts. Before beginning our discussion on the research topic, we used questions in relation to an everyday activity that would facilitate familiarity with the respondent (Rothausen, et al., 2017). At all times we displayed an interest in every aspect of each respondent's professional life, adopting a non-judgmental listening approach (Kaufmann, 2007). This qualitative method, which respects the meaning produced by interviewees, avoids the construction of an *a priori* analytical model (Suddaby, 2006). During the introduction, we outlined the purpose of the interview, explaining that the respondent's information would be useful for improving academic understanding of the reasons why employees choose to remain in a job or leave. This introduction usually suffices to correctly orient the account provided without the need for further intervention other than the use of prompting sentences or exploratory questions (Appendix 1). When we did speak, it was to target "narrative statements" (Blanchet, Ghiglione, Massonnat & Trognon, 1985), steering the respondent towards past events in order to avoid general comments that would be of little use.

For informal discussions (five chance encounters with social workers or managers) and meetings (seven with staff teams in the different structures, one with the works committee, two with the MD and HR department), notes were taken during and/or immediately after each event to maintain as comprehensive and accurate a written trace as possible.

Taken together, all of these discussions formed a corpus of data which we then coded, writing additional comments in the form of memos. The documents, which were obtained from management and the association's website, were used to understand the context.

DATA CODING

We used the inductive methodology for data analysis recommended by advocates of grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The first author coded the interview transcripts as the work advanced, following an analytical path that led to key concepts (Silverman & Marvasti, 2008). This approach makes it possible to identify emerging themes, which were then used to guide subsequent interviews and data coding as part of an iterative process (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). A coding table was produced with codes, categories, dimensions, properties and definitions. Gioia's methodology was adopted with five stages (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton, 2012; Langley & Abdallah, 2011). Stage 1 is open coding, which identifies *in vivo* codes that emerge from the data, usually expressions used by interviewees. This generated more than 250 codes. Stage 2 involves establishing first-order themes, including the codes, based on similarities in the higher conceptual-level headings (Figure 1). We eschewed categories deemed too far removed from our subject of interest or which presented proximities with variables already identified in the literature (context, choice of orientation, work content and procedures), retaining 29 themes that related to perceptions of work and careers.

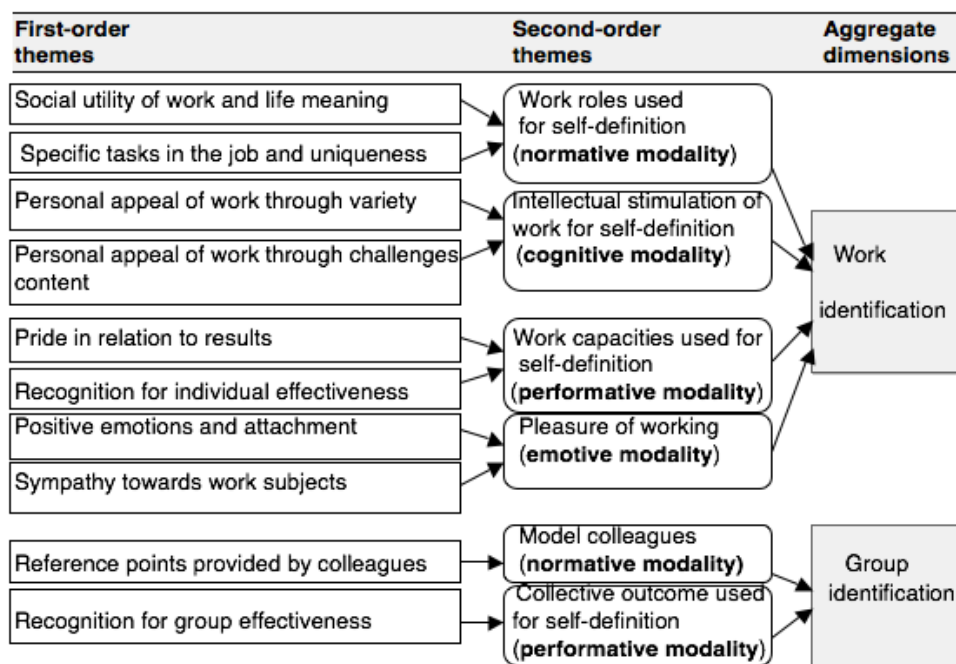


Figure 1. Data structure

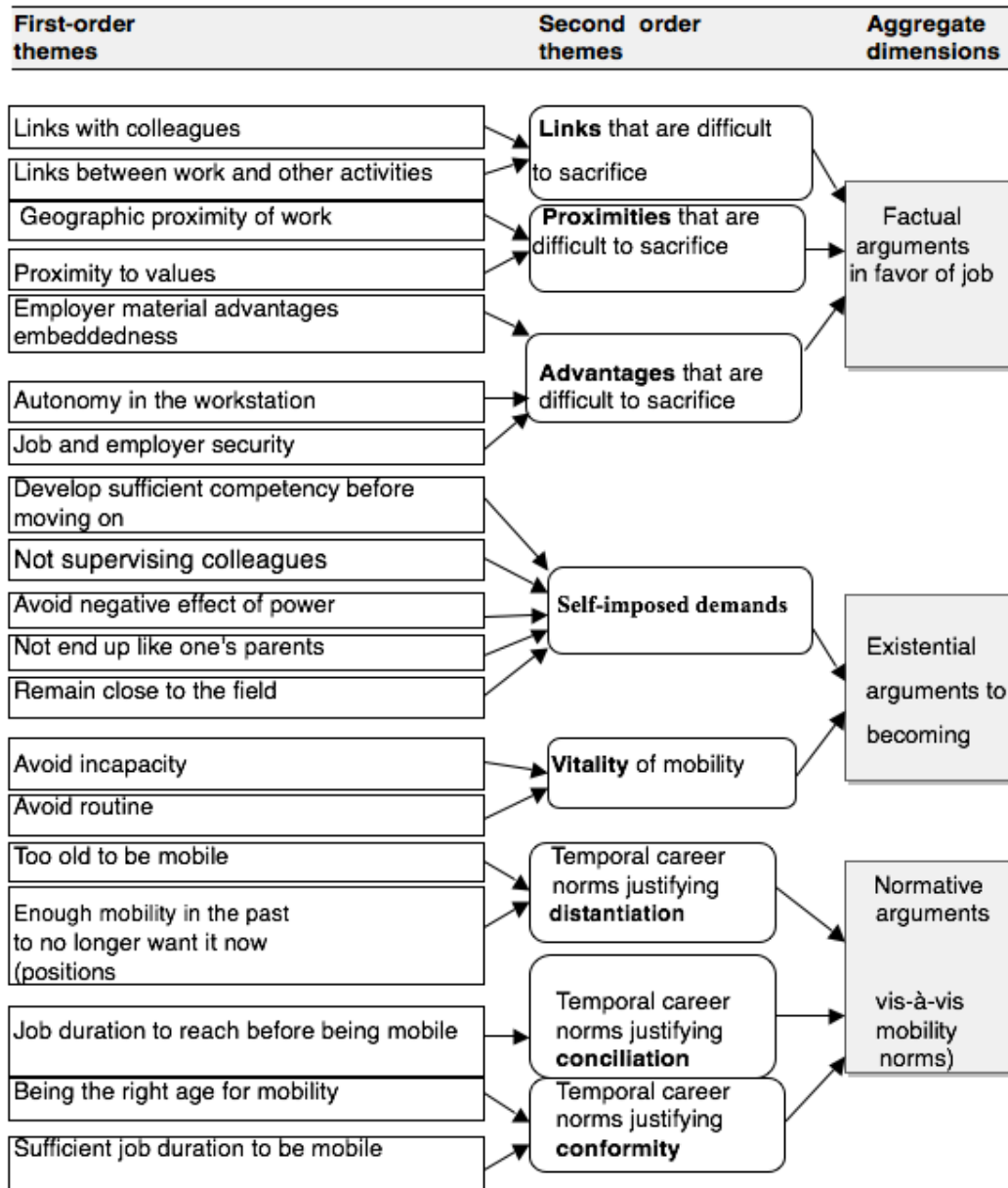


Figure 1. Data structure (continued)

All the interviews were then recoded using the latest batch of second-order categories. Correspondence between the verbatim extracts and the themes (Table 3) was controlled for by the two other researchers as part of a “reflexive process” (Pettigrew, 1990). Stage 3 is axial coding. Here, the researcher establishes links between the different categories by placing them under second-order themes: in our study, 14 codes were identified.

Theme 1. Work roles used for self-definition (normative modality)	
Social utility of work and life meaning	<i>This work has given meaning to my own life. I feel useful. I'm doing something for these children (4). All this time I spend with the children is fulfilling (53).</i>
Specific tasks in the job and uniqueness	<i>I think you don't fall into this job by accident. There is something about it, an experience in my personal life that has brought me where I am today. You do need to have certain human qualities. Either you're right for this job or you're not, you shouldn't just end up doing it by chance (55). My mission is to make people happy, if they don't go on to make progress, the most important thing is that they feel good about themselves (64).</i>
Theme 2. Intellectual stimulation of work used for self-definition (cognitive modality)	
Personal appeal of work through variety	<i>The appeal of this work is above all about the people you meet, who change constantly. Our interventions really don't take place on a fixed basis, that might be one of the things that attenuates the phenomenon of professional strain (37). What makes this work interesting is that the tasks are so diverse (72).</i>
Personal appeal of work through challenges	<i>For me it was a great job to get, it's really interesting, that's the appeal of the work: significant autonomy, a lot of responsibility, individualized support, you're backed up by a team (17).</i>
Theme 3. Work capacities used for self-definition (performative modality)	
Pride in relation to results	<i>I'm proud to have achieved things with the children (63). It was gratifying because I could see that my work was developing, I was beginning to have a real effect (41).</i>
Recognition for individual effectiveness	<i>When the trust you are given is rewarded by your work. What I appreciated was that there was a climate of trust and honesty. The director said to me: I trusted you and I was surprised by the outcome (66).</i>
Theme 4. Pleasure of working (emotive modality)	

<p>Positive emotions and attachment</p>	<p><i>If it were about the money, with €1,600 I wouldn't go far... You need to be able to stay in this profession not because of what you're paid, but because you love it (71). Something really big would have to happen for me not to show up any more, because I really love what I do (72).</i></p>
<p>Sympathy towards work subjects</p>	<p><i>It's also important to do what you love, to be passionate about it so that the children can sense that, then something wonderful takes place when that happens. We're talking about disabled children, there are moments of joy and laughter (53).</i></p>
<p>Theme 5. Model colleagues used for self-definition (normative modality)</p>	
<p>Reference points provided by colleagues</p>	<p><i>When I started out I was under her supervision, she showed me how to draft written documents, how to manage the activities we were putting in place, how to ensure a balance between motor skills, sensorial and cognitive activities. I took a lot of inspiration from her experience, which I then reproduced with my own character, and my dreams, my understanding of the job (59).</i></p>
<p>Theme 6. Collective outcome used for self-definition (performative modality)</p>	
<p>Recognition for group effectiveness</p>	<p><i>Some of the young people were really appreciative, sending letters from where they were staying, thanking us for what we had done (8).</i></p>
<p>Theme 7. Links that are difficult to sacrifice</p>	
<p>Links with colleagues</p>	<p><i>My stability is linked to my department, to all the links I have established there and my desire to ensure harmony between my professional and family lives (43).</i></p>
<p>Links between work and other activities</p>	<p><i>I use my position as an elected representative to get information about the public concerned. There are synergies in place. The appeal of this kind of work is to be able to find time to fulfill my obligations as an elected representative during my work time (38).</i></p>
<p>Theme 8. Proximities that are difficult to sacrifice</p>	

Geographic proximity	<i>I like being able to look after the children properly, and the fact that I'm not too far from home or the school is important to me (72).</i>
Proximity to values	<i>It's important to have a good team and that we can work together and share the same values (23).</i>
Theme 9. Advantages that are difficult to sacrifice	
Material advantages	<i>Because leaving... The association is a good organization to work for, if only in terms of the works committee (55).</i>
Autonomy	<i>What I like about my job is that there is a certain amount of freedom in the way I'm supported, because the management trust us (75).</i>
Security	<i>It's a solid association, not the kind of employer that is likely to close down (74).</i>
Theme 10. Self-imposed demands	
Develop sufficient competency before moving on	<i>I want to develop experience as an educational worker before taking on other responsibilities, you have to develop a good sense of what the work is about (11).</i>
Not supervising colleagues	<i>Supervising colleagues from one day to the next is very difficult (26).</i>
Avoid negative effect of power	<i>People aren't aware of what it means to hold power. You can very quickly find yourself in a position where you no longer question things (6).</i>
Not end up like one's parents	<i>My mother stayed with the same firm for more than 35 years and that's something I don't understand, because I feel everyone needs change (16).</i>
Remain close to the field	<i>There are times when I could see myself as the head of the department, and there are times when I think it's good to be in contact with members of the public (24).</i>
Theme 11. Vitality of mobility	
Avoid incapacity	<i>For me, spending your whole career with the same institution is a kind of sclerosis (39).</i>
Avoid routine	<i>At some point you might find yourself going in circles and behaving mechanically. That's a really bad thing, so it's very good to change (6).</i>
Theme 12. Temporal career norms justifying distantiation	

Too old to be mobile	<i>I'm at an age where if something is going to change it will have to be soon, because I wouldn't do it any later. After 50 people don't budge, it seems to me (47).</i>
Enough mobility in the past	<i>The rule used to be: you start at the boarding facility and then you work with children in open custody (17).</i>
Theme 13. Temporal career norms justifying conciliation	
Job duration to reach before being mobile	<i>And then I thought to myself: I have to stick with it for 3 years, then I'll have this initial experience that will allow me to move on (7). Three years seems to me to be stable, especially on a CV (11).</i>
Theme 14. Temporal career norms justifying conformity	
Being the right age for mobility	<i>But if I were 20 I wouldn't say that. If that were my goal, to stay at the shelter for 40 years, it would be a bit sad (laughs)! (9).</i>
Sufficient job duration to be mobile	<i>I didn't see myself staying. When I started out at the shelter, I thought I would stay between 3 and 5 years (16).</i>

Table 3. Comments illustrating first-order themes

We returned to the coded interviews several times, first without categorizing the different structures and then looking at the interviews conducted at each organization, paying attention to the specific context. The five aggregate dimensions, associated with the second-order themes (Figure 1), were deduced through this process and then refined using comparisons with the literature (Stage 5). These are work content identification (characterized by the cognitive, normative, performative and emotive modalities); group identification (normative and performative modalities); factual arguments in favor of job embeddedness (links, proximities and advantages that are difficult to sacrifice); existential argumentations (self-imposed demands and vitality of mobility); and normative arguments (positions in relation to mobility norms: distantiation, conciliation, conformity). This method can be used to identify the variables that account for the social mechanisms (work identification and embeddedness) that explain how employees cope with the pressure to embrace career mobility (positioning). This process ensures that the explanatory theoretical model is based on the data (Gioia, et al., 2012). For this reason, the results are presented in accordance with the arborescence of the coding.

RESULTS

IMPORTANCE OF WORK FOR SELF-DEFINITION IN ONE'S CAREER

The first result of this research, which emerges from our coding arborescence (Figure 1), is that employees think about their careers by referring to their work experience, which feeds into the construction of their identity. Two types of work identification are revealed: one category, which is new to the literature, relates to work content, while the other is well known and relates to the group formed by one's colleagues (aggregate dimensions).

Work content identification

Our respondents spontaneously spoke about their work content, i.e. what they have done at work, as a way to explain their career trajectories. The partly solitary relationship they have with their work helps them to define themselves and project themselves into the future: *"That's how I see myself, how I see my job"* (n°28, managerial assistant). This established parallel between their work content and self-definition can be understood through four second-order themes. These correspond to certain modalities in the way the self is defined in relation to work based on roles (normative modality), intellectual stimulation (cognitive), skills development (performative) and the pleasure of working (emotive).

Work roles used for self-definition: normative modality

We identified a category that relates to work roles used for self-definition based on two first-order themes. The first is the social utility of work, which feeds into the meaning our respondents attribute to their lives. Several interviewees explicitly said they had found meaning in their lives thanks to the work they do. They produce meaning (sensemaking) about their place in society (the purpose they serve), which helps forge an identity along their career trajectory: *"It's true that I feel good here and compared to my past I feel I have a place here and can offer something to the kids"* (n°8, educational worker).

These employees take inspiration from the meaning generated by professional scenarios (sensegiving) to establish a self-definition that suits them. The self-image projected by positive scenarios feeds into the construction of their identity: *"When you see young people developing properly, you appreciate it. Sometimes, despite their defiance, some of them have a sense of humor and you say to yourself: well done! They have their own type of intelligence. I have a motto: at the same time as I am teaching them, they're teaching me too. I've learned an awful lot with them, that's important, it's like a mirror"* (n°68, educational worker). This process that leads an individual to develop his identity in reference to meaning produced by a given situation is the identification process (Ashforth, et al., 2008).

The second first-order theme that falls into this category is the specific tasks of the job, which are used in a unique way for self-definition. The meaning produced through work may already be conceptualized in the rules established by the relevant profession: *"If you can't find that meaning, you won't stick it, because it's our job to endure some of that suffering, it's what we call transference"* (n° 4, department head). This covers recurring values: *"I wanted to do this job because of its human values"* (n° 49, educational worker). However, employees build up their role through a

unique work experience, interpreting what they do in their own way. The comments made by one secretary are revealing, as she produces meaning without being able to rely on the discourse constructed by a profession: *“Here the telephone and reception are vital, by listening to these people, they feel they are being looked after. It’s about being an intermediary between the public and the social workers. You might say we’re like a sponge that absorbs everything, an octopus with many arms that creates the link”* (n° 36).

Ultimately, our interpretation of the discourse in relation to this second-order theme is that roles, partly constructed by the employees, are used for the purposes of self-definition. We believe this is a normative modality of work content identification, since these people are appropriating and even developing career norms which they then integrate into their identity.

The link between reflections on work and identity-building is not always explicit, but it is always implicitly understood when respondents express their pride in relation to their work. They believe that the person they are—playing a positive social role—matches what they want to be: *“For the moment I feel fulfilled in what I’m doing, providing something as much to the individuals as the families and, I hope, to my colleagues. As long as I can experience that dynamic, I want to stay because I feel I still have things to learn and discover. Another thing that is reassuring is to be able to support them properly, to help them discover new things”* (n° 75, educational worker). This employee sees herself in the same job in the future because she identifies with what she does and because the meaning produced suits her for the purposes of self-definition. Self-reflection—fueled by one’s work, which makes sense—takes place in reference to a career trajectory, which in turn results in a position being adopted on one’s future work situation.

Intellectual stimulation at work used for self-definition: cognitive modality

In the discourse of the association’s employees, we identified another second-order theme associated with work content identification. It relates to intellectual stimulation. Two first-order themes can be noted.

The first is the personal appeal of work based on the variety of professional scenarios dealt with by employees, as explained by one social worker: *“Here, it is the problems that shift. We work in every type of social milieu. It’s enriching, the nature of the work is vast”* (n° 38). This is an argument regularly used to justify career stability and is evocative of the concept of “psychological mobility” (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006): *“Mobility can be defined in many different ways. There’s mobility in the work itself, we move around an awful lot. We constantly move from one situation to another. We have a huge number of partnerships. It’s very time-consuming, requires a lot of mobility and a permanent ability to adapt. Each family is unique”* (n° 40, social worker). The second first-order theme is the personal appeal of work based on the challenges it presents. Employees develop stimulating and demanding projects. These challenges are linked to novelty but also to complexity, as one managerial assistant explained: *“I like the complexity, I like the challenges. That’s also what I’m looking for, which explains the idea of a change. Some people will see it as a constraint having more departments, not for me because, on the contrary, I like the research and the reflection. This applies more to an assistant than to an accountant. It’s also a question of character. I have a*

colleague who doesn't share this mindset. That's how I see myself, how I see my job" (n° 28).

The different professional scenarios described by respondents are perceived as interesting in themselves, but also because they fuel self-reflection and improve self-knowledge: "*I'm interested in reflection. I couldn't do my job as a routine, something without a soul or intellectual appeal. I feel as if I am looking for myself*" (n° 41, educational worker). Based on this, we interpret this second-order theme as the manifestation of intellectual stimulation at work, which can be used for self-definition. The complexity and variety of the activity, which often constitutes challenges, stimulate the intellect and favor self-reflection. Employees see themselves as reflecting on their work as a way to improve self-knowledge: this is the expression of the cognitive modality of work content identification.

Work capacities used for self-definition: performative modality

The third second-order theme associated with work content identification relates to the work capacities used for self-definition. Two first-order themes can be noted.

The first relates to pride in relation to the results achieved by the employees. Our respondents use their past successes to promote who they are. They have a positive self-image when accounting for the performances of which they are capable over time: "*I developed my skills as I went along. That is true of my work practices, investing in young people, my experience with the kids, but also everything to do with teamwork: pushing beyond your limits, developing self-confidence through work practices, everything you can establish at the same time, this path that gives you greater confidence because of the experience and skills you develop. If I look back a few years, in terms of respect with the kids, I've come a long way. And at a team level now as well: to be able to say things, push beyond your limits, question yourself, because it's not easy to challenge yourself, and through dealing with people, shrinks, who often challenge themselves. It's not straightforward for everyone, it might be unique to our profession, to constantly try to remind yourself that nothing can be taken for granted. Everything must be built up. [...] There's a lot of hard work that goes on in our team. It's not about changing others but coping with what you have and trying to challenge yourself*" (n° 1, instructor/educational worker).

The second first-order theme is recognition for individual effectiveness. The path described above is made possible through the validation of skills by others, in particular colleagues and superiors. Autonomy is proof that one's performance has been recognized: "*What I approve of here is that when you do your work properly you are given a certain amount of autonomy; that's how I see it*" (n° 71, specialist educational worker). Recognition is also obtained from the beneficiaries of the services provided: "*I'm always in awe when they show up with a smile. I tell myself that ultimately I've achieved something*" (n° 75). People remain in their job because they have acquired a positive self-perception by achieving favorable outcomes—the fruit of their labor: "*I've been here a long time and I'll tell you why! I managed to change people's mentalities and open up a second class; now we have three classes, we have put in place a totally different timetable*" (n° 65, teacher). Like Sainsaulieu (1998), we believe this is the expression of a form of identity-building based on a result ("output"). Here, the employee identifies with the performance, i.e. the best achievement of which he is capable: I'm the one who did that and

I'm proud of it, I define myself through the results of my work. This is the performative modality of work content identification.

The pleasure of working: emotive modality

The fourth second-order theme associated with the mechanism of work content identification is the pleasure of working. Our interviewees often used terms that describe the emotions they experience while working. Two second-order themes can be noted.

The first relates to positive emotions, a feeling of well-being experienced while working. Employees sometimes reveal this affective link they have with their work, using the term "attachment": *"I really am attached to my job here and to leave would mean leaving what I have here, leaving a job I like, and that's not a trivial choice"* (n° 34, social worker). This type of argument can be used to justify career stability, as expressed by this specialist educational worker in relation to a period of stability in a previous position held: *"The reason for that stability was that I was doing a job I liked"* (n° 41). The comments made by respondents were not always so explicit, but when talking about the stability of their professional situation, they used non-neutral verbs: "love", "suit", "appreciate", "adore" or "attach", often associated with adjectives such as "good", "great", etc.

The second first-order theme is employees' feelings of sympathy towards their work subjects. The work of an educational worker is defined in part through their relationships with others, those for whom they are responsible: *"These kids are always full of life, full of expectations. They're really lovely people and I take great pleasure in my work"* (n° 61, medical/psychological assistant). Such emotional expressions are recognized as necessary in the profession, using psychoanalytical concepts such as transference, even though certain limits must be established. However, the feelings of sympathy experienced by educational workers is not constrained but rather spontaneous. They feel a certain proximity to their work subjects: *"It might seem silly but I can actually recognize myself in these young people, I think I have autistic tendencies"* (n° 70, educational worker). The respondents expressed their feelings for their work as something that is close to their identity. Our interpretation of this second-order theme is that it corresponds to an emotive modality of work content identification.

Overall, these four second-order themes correspond to the different modalities of the work content identification mechanism (aggregate dimensions). This distinction is useful for analytical purposes, but in the real lives of those concerned (and in their discourse), these modalities are necessarily intertwined and form "a chain or an aggregation of problematic situations and habitual responses" provided by actors (Gross, 2009: 369, cited by Dumez, 2016). Our respondents gave us information about what they are: someone who successfully performs socially useful work, thereby giving them a positive image of themselves, and who finds renewal in the intellectual stimulation generated by that activity. They recognize the image they have of themselves in their "solitary" relationship with their work. This mechanism of identifying with their work content is itself linked to the mechanism of identifying with a group.

Group identification

Two second-order themes relating to the influences of one's group of colleagues, in some cases including one's superiors, emerge from our coding tree. They correspond to the two ways in which people define

themselves in relation to their colleagues (normative modality) and collective results (performative modality).

Model colleagues used for self-definition: normative modality

The first-order theme that corresponds to this category relates to the reference points provided by colleagues. Employees establish a parallel between what they are and the meaning produced by certain colleagues, who serve as an exemplary model: *"I was trained by people who did an awful lot for me in terms of the meaning I associated with my work, the importance of my work in relation to the end users"* (n° 61).

This theme is similar to that of social utility, which relates to the construction of a role in one's work activities. It also has a parallel with effectiveness, as achieving certainty about one's skills depends in part on the possibility of accepting the scrutiny of colleagues, who are held up as models: *"She's the one who recruited me. We worked together for years, it was a real collaboration, real team work. She really did a lot for me in every aspect of the job, she always had the right questions to challenge me"* (n° 72, secretary).

Collective results used for self-definition: performative modality

The first-order theme that corresponds to this second category relates to the recognized effectiveness of the group, a source of pride. Identity-building also takes place in relation to one's group of colleagues, based on collective achievements which employees use for self-definition, as explained by one social worker: *"We're one of the first departments in France to have done it, and it's something we are proud of. What we did was we asked for an analysis of our practices as a team in the presence of a psychologist, and that was an extremely beneficial experience. It taught us a lot and it also brought the team together, which meant that we remained very stable as a team, we have been together a long time with very little mobility because the team has been strong and supportive, and we have also constantly tried to move forward in terms of assessments"* (n° 40). The skills development process throughout one's career goes hand in hand with a process of self-reflection, which is particularly advanced in the educational sector, where collective discussions take place to analyze work practices.

These identity-building mechanisms, where colleagues are used as reference points, are well known and relate to the concept of identifying with one's reference social group (Ashforth, et al., 2008). We reveal that they have the same properties as the work content identification mechanism, with which they are partly intertwined.

The different themes relating to these two types of identification (group and work content) include arguments used by employees to justify their decision to remain in their job despite managerial and societal pressures to embrace career mobility.

CAREER-BASED ARGUMENTS

In several accounts, respondents used arguments to explain why they intend to stay (or have stayed) in their job. We also recorded arguments to explain the decision to leave a job. Their experiences of work identification have provided them with explanations for their career paths so far. They use their past work experience and self-reflections to justify

their choices. We have identified three types of arguments in favor of career stability or mobility (aggregate dimensions): factual, existential and normative.

Factual arguments in favor of job embeddedness

Our respondents relied on facts that were then categorized in our arborescent schema. Several first-order themes constitute factual arguments to justify the decision to stay. These can be regrouped into three second-order themes, which correspond to the categories of job embeddedness (Mitchell, et al., 2001): links, proximities and advantages that are difficult to sacrifice.

Links that are difficult to sacrifice

Such links are regularly mentioned as a justification for career stability—an expression of job dependence. Two first-order themes were used to form this category: links with colleagues and links between work and other activities.

The first first-order theme relates to friendships built up with colleagues, which are difficult to undermine and make it hard to consider career mobility. The case of one employee clearly reveals the presence of such links. Following a short period with another of the association's structures, she returned to the department where she spent almost her entire career: *"They asked me to stay but I returned to my old team because we had a very strong connection which I couldn't bring myself to break. That's how I understand it, survey work was part of who I am"* (n° 40). The arguments used reflect one's self-definition, i.e. work content identification (*survey work was part of who I am*) and group identification (*we had a very strong connection which I couldn't bring myself to break*). Friendships were mentioned by other respondents as the result of an experience of informal guardianship by a colleague seen as a model, but also the experience of success or a collective struggle—a source of pride (Figure 1).

The second first-order theme relates to the links between one's work and other activities. These links are formed not only through work content but also the workplace, as in the case of this educational worker who lived in an apartment provided by her employer, since turned into an office where she now works: *"I kind of feel at home here"* (n° 29).

Proximities that are difficult to sacrifice

Some employees also referred to proximities, another category of job embeddedness. Two first-order themes are identified in our arborescent schema. The first relates to geographic proximities, as illustrated by these comments: *"I work near my house, which is why I've been able to manage all these years. To be at work at 8 AM, I leave at 7.50, which makes it easier. It's a source of comfort. That's it, too, leave all that... I'm sick of traveling across the whole city. My parents are also getting older, so you just say no"* (n° 49).

The second first-order theme relates to proximities with values, as explained by this social worker: *"With the previous management, I felt they were in line with my values, my vision of the work, respecting people, accounting for all of their characteristics, is about building things up over time"* (n° 47). Here a parallel can be drawn with the social utility of work, which gives meaning to the lives of employees. There would appear to be

a link between work identification and the presence of proximity with one's work.

Advantages that are difficult to sacrifice

The third second-order theme relates to the advantages that are used to justify career stability. Three first-order themes can be noted. The first concerns material advantages. Employees are aware of the value of such advantages, which discourages them from being mobile, as explained by one social assistant: "Sometimes you think: I have my little corner here, I'll hang on to my office and won't budge anymore. Of course there is also this comfort. [...] It's a big association, if people stay on it mustn't be too bad. [...] When I started out, I said to myself: I would like to stay with this association. And it has suited me: convention 66 [1966 collective bargaining agreement]. And I had a job I liked. There is a certain amount of freedom, we are free to schedule our work as we see fit, there aren't too many constraints" (n° 49).

Taken together, the three second-order themes just described constitute factual arguments used to justify job stability, which appears as a form of job embeddedness—an expression of dependence.

Existential arguments about a future path

However, our respondents did not only use factual arguments. They also used "existential"¹ arguments to support career stability or mobility. They provided indications about what they do or do not want to experience, about what does or does not stimulate their lives, framing the different possibilities for their future career. This aggregate dimension contains two second-order themes: self-imposed demands and the vitality of mobility.

Self-imposed demands

In our arborescent schema, five first-order themes make up the category of self-imposed demands, understood as personal norms. The first relates to the need for experience before changing jobs. This is something that employees expect of themselves and of others: it works both ways. It can be used to justify career stability with a view to mastering certain skills, especially before becoming a manager, as explained by one educational worker: "*I don't feel I have enough perspective to take on a position of responsibility*" (n° 15). It also serves to argue in favor of mobility with a view to acquiring new skills, as another educational worker saw it: "*You need to experience several different organizations if you want to move up*" (n°25). For these employees, the norm of mobility may be "self-evident", but it also facilitates compromise by moderating the influence of the norm of stability.

The second first-order theme that emerges from the interviews is the need to avoid the negative effects of power. This causes people to fear responsibilities and having to take on difficult situations, as one educational worker who turned down a managerial position explained: "*Out of loyalty I'm going to have to put pressure on the bottom of the hierarchy and I'm going to find myself in delicate situations that are going to hurt, that are going to weigh on me*" (n° 41).

The third first-order theme is the need to avoid supervising colleagues. One social worker refused to become a manager in her

1. Of or pertaining to existence, especially human existence, as opposed to the essence of things (Oxford English Dictionary).

department: “I don’t feel like being the boss here, my colleagues are friends, that’s why I applied for a job in another city where the staff are just acquaintances” (n° 34).

The fourth theme is the need to avoid ending up like one’s parents, as one educational worker who has two parents working in the sector explained: “I’ve tried not to do the same thing as my two parents (...). I constantly heard my father, who worked in the same area, bringing his worries home, my mother worked in the sector too, the conversation always revolved around it” (n° 12).

The fifth theme relates to the need to be close to the field and the values that go with it. One educational worker explained: “You lose a lot [by becoming a manager], it creates a big distance from the educational world, which is a fascinating area to work in. I’m a bit afraid of that and, in terms of hierarchy, I don’t operate in a very ambitious way” (n° 66). One department head referred to values when justifying why she would not like to become director: “I don’t want to give up the human side of things” (n° 7). Values were often referred to by our respondents. They are emphasized by the association in its annual report and on its website. The reverse situation can also be observed, as in the case of one employee who had to leave her job even though she had set herself a fixed duration, because she did not feel exposed to the same educational principles that she had acquired during training: “After a year and a half it didn’t feel right because it was quite hard for me to work with people who didn’t have any diploma and struggled to listen when we introduced a bit of theory. It was hard for me, fresh out of school with loads of grand ideas, to run up against brick walls, people who didn’t want to change their practices, who had been working like that for 20 years, some of them had kids they favored. A colleague and I tried to change that kind of thing but it was almost impossible. I told myself I would have to stick it out for a few years there, but I didn’t last long” (n° 25, educational worker). In this case, these self-imposed demands resulted in this employee reneging on her plans to remain in the job for a certain duration.

The vitality of mobility

The second second-order theme relating to existential arguments is the vitality of mobility. On several occasions, our respondents described changing jobs as a source of life and dynamism for their own development. They see career stability in negative terms, as a form of stasis, failed existence and loss of identity. Two first-order themes can be noted. The first is incapacity. Mobility is justified by some employees as a way to avoid the loss of performance, which can be brought about by an organization’s inertia, for example: “*We have very few ways to express ourselves, to share our positions. We can spend hours on an issue and ultimately nothing we discussed would be taken into account. I feel smooth I feel as if I no longer have a professional identity*” (n° 62, educational worker). Mobility is a way for employees to achieve renewal and greater dynamism in their skills and in their identity.

The second first-order theme is routine and avoiding professional strain, which is done by changing jobs, as one educational worker told us: “I think you need to start afresh from time to time in your career, to challenge yourself, people tend to establish a certain routine that always takes place in the same way, even though that can bring a certain amount of security and a certain career comfort, you have to take on new challenges, experience life in other structures, renew your motivation, and that’s why I’m changing organization. Unless I could move up the ladder, I

don't see myself being an educational worker in the same structure for 20 years. I'm not sure the level of motivation is as high as at the beginning" (n° 11). In contrast, there are employees who feel they have had enough vitality in their work by developing their work practices and experiencing a variety of situations, which "attenuates the phenomenon of professional strain" (n° 37, psychologist). This position is similar to the notion of psychological mobility (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). Ultimately, both scenarios correspond to a form of identity dynamics at work, either in the same job or in different positions. Employees use existential arguments to position themselves in relation to career mobility norms.

Normative arguments used to establish a position on mobility norms

Several testimonies reveal normative arguments (aggregate dimension), i.e. which are constructed based on temporal career norms (Lawrence, 2011). An explicit position can be observed in relation to ambient norms that favor career mobility. The presence of career norms was detected in respondents' use of terms indicating an obligation or prohibition: "have to", "must", "can't", etc. They are used by interviewees to argue in favor of career mobility (conformity) or career stability (distantiation). An intermediary position (conciliation) was also identified. These positions constitute three second-order themes: temporal career norms justifying distantiation and conciliation and conformity.

Temporal career norms justifying distantiation

In this category in our arborescent schema, we placed normative arguments against mobility, thereby justifying the career stability of our respondents. Two first-order themes can be noted.

The first relates to the argument used by interviewees that they had passed the age of career mobility. Beyond the age of 50, it is no longer straightforward to change jobs and be mobile, as explained by one secretary: "*I really don't want the association to tell me: 'go here, there or there', and that's it! In that regard, no!*" (n° 9). She continued her case in favor of career stability by referring to another norm, which is that having been mobile in the past she is now exonerated from mobility. This is our second first-order theme, illustrated by the following comment: "*Maybe it's a question of age, when I was younger I was more mobile. Now I've made it, I've worked in 4 departments. So that's it, it was because I was starting out, now I wouldn't do it*" (n° 9). This respondent referred to the frequency of mobility in the past to justify her current career stability. Other employees referred to norms of mandatory transitions imposed by the organization and the profession, requiring several stages in one's career or the acquisition of a particular status before occupying a position. This "mandatory" career path provides a legitimate basis for an entitlement to stability once arrived in the targeted job.

Employees use these normative arguments to explicitly oppose the ambient norm favoring career mobility. Many of them are seeing their departments undergo restructuring, a controversial issue raised several times by staff representatives (minutes of works committee meetings). They challenge the perception of their director, who criticizes their lack of mobility: "*When people dig their heels in because of their seniority, then when you ask people to adapt, to be flexible in their position, it's not easy*" (n° 19).

One department head (n° 21) had planned to end her career in her previous job, but her organization was then integrated into the association

and she was forced to change jobs. She identified with her work and had found a suitable work/life balance. She had experienced mobility in her career, adhering to the norm she had applied to herself, but beyond the age of 50 she now has a different perspective and favors stability, making the transition difficult: *“If ever they asked me to move, I’d say no, because I know very well what they’re entitled to ask me”*. Having now acquired a new career stability, she is gradually finding meaning in her work but does not subscribe to the current mobility norm: *“It’s true that there is currently an emphasis on being mobile, personally I feel that even if I spent 20 years in the same store, I don’t feel I became part of the furniture. I develop projects. Staff mobility is rubbish [laughs], I mean when you are fulfilled in your work, when you work under good conditions and do what you love, you’re ready to start over, to go back to the drawing board 1,000 times if you have to, and make sense of what you do, find pleasure in it, etc.”*

This distanciation from mobility norms is justified by a process of self-reflection leading to the view in relation to temporal norms that it is “normal” to remain in a job beyond a certain age and when one has been mobile in the past. The department head quoted above also used the argument of vitality, explaining that her work practices and identity had evolved throughout her career without her necessarily changing jobs. It can be considered that she is referring to stability norms, which oppose those in favor of career mobility. Stability norms are inventions or arrangements which can be used to justify career stability. They have been forged by employees experiencing the process of work identification in its various dimensions, an experience which generates justifications. Other self-imposed demands, such as proximity with the field or the rejection of power, can serve as arguments to criticize mobility norms and justify career stability, in some cases with a certain militancy.

Temporal career norms justifying conciliation

The first-order theme associated with this category is the job duration one must complete before being mobile, as employees often use this argument to justify their career stability as a necessary stage before changing jobs. They feel they must master the necessary skills of their profession before they can promote themselves to another employer or move up in the internal hierarchy.

Several social rehabilitation educational workers embrace their career stability and appreciate the rules laid down by their director, requiring them to work on several different schemes and display a certain amount of flexibility, regularly changing their designated work. This way of operating brings them dynamism, allowing them to acquire new skills that correspond to their career plans. The argument based on vitality is therefore put forward. Yet these employees have accepted the prevailing mobility norms and believe that in time they will change jobs: *“I’ve never really wondered about my career, partly because I’m young in this profession and don’t have much experience. When I reach the 5-year mark, I’ll begin to think about new career moves”* (n° 28). They first accepted a temporal norm favoring stability on the basis that a certain amount of time is necessary in their job in order to acquire the skills needed to move on. Here, mobility norms are compatible with career stability, which for these employees is desirable. They see it as a way to shape their identity. They consider themselves mobile because they are progressing internally on a psychological level. The process of work content identification brings mobility, even though this does not appear as a

career change from the outside, since the employees concerned remain in the same job (psychological mobility).

Similarly, two directors (n° 17 and n° 30) spoke favorably of mobility norms, having moved up the ladder by seizing opportunities, drawing on training resources and those of their professional networks. However, they are not thinking of leaving and have not explored all dimensions of the job, believing that it is necessary to remain in the position for a significant duration. They accept mobility norms as “self-evident” and reconcile them with their career stability based on the argument that a minimum amount of experience must first be acquired.

The intention to leave one’s job may be uncertain as self-imposed demands reduce the influence of mobility norms. Two department heads (n° 6 and n° 7) told us they believe it is normal to regularly change jobs, but wonder about the alternative of remaining in a position of expertise or moving on to a position as director. They are reluctant to abandon their contact with the field, worried that they would “lose their soul” in the world of management. They try to reconcile their self-imposed demands with the mobility norms which they have accepted. These demands—or vitality—can be seen to have a moderating effect on mobility norms, leading to a position of conciliation.

Temporal career norms justifying conformity

Two first-order themes, which correspond to two temporal norms, can be noted. The first first-order theme is the right age for mobility. Several respondents associate youth with mobility, identifying a limit at the age of 50 in view of the difficulties of being recruited in France beyond that age: “*After 50, people don’t budge*” (n° 9).

The second first-order theme relates to the job duration deemed sufficient for mobility. The employees concerned have accepted this norm as self-evident, believing their employers would take a dim view of their decision to remain in the same job for a long time, as explained by one specialist educational worker: “Even when I was a little girl, I thought to myself that my life would be made up of several different lives. My model is my mother, who spent more than 35 years in the same company, and that’s something I don’t understand, because I think people need to change, not even in terms of their career, but just to see different segments of the population, different people, to progress professionally, so I didn’t think I would stay. When I started at the shelter, I thought I would stay between 3 and 5 years” (n° 16, educational worker). Here, the mobility norm is strengthened by a self-imposed demand (not ending up like one’s parents) and the vitality argument (Figure 1). This educational worker promotes the mobility norm that currently prevails in society, criticizing the attitude of those who have chosen career stability, in contrast to her own attitude.

AN EXPLANATORY MODEL FOR POSITIONS ON CAREERS

The accounts of the employees we interviewed reveal a diverse range of positions on the norm favoring physical mobility. We reveal the existence of a position of conformity, with employees who say they fully accept this norm, considering it “self-evident” and therefore reproducing it (structural effect). Others had more nuanced views, partially applying the mobility norm but adapting it (conciliation), while others opposed it explicitly (distantiation). This finding reveals an agentic capacity to transform norms (agentic effect). The employees we interviewed used different types of arguments, generated by their experiences at work, with which they

identify. In this regard, we reveal that the work content identification mechanism, associated with the group identification mechanism, produces argumentative resources. We can highlight the links—in some cases explicitly identified in the accounts provided by our respondents—between these arguments to justify their careers, career stability in particular, and the way they presented their identity, forged through work. Work identification can therefore be considered a social mechanism that produces argumentative resources which are then used to justify a particular position in relation to a career norm, which at the current time is the norm of physical mobility. These resources serve as much to justify career mobility, by criticizing those who remain, as career stability.

It is therefore possible, using this method, which allowed us to extract data from first- and then second-order themes, to summarize our results in a process-based model (Figure 2). This model suggests relationships between the five aggregate dimensions: the identification mechanisms (with work content and with a group) and arguments (factual, existential and normative) that are used to establish a position in relation to the “physical” career mobility norms currently valued by society (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006).

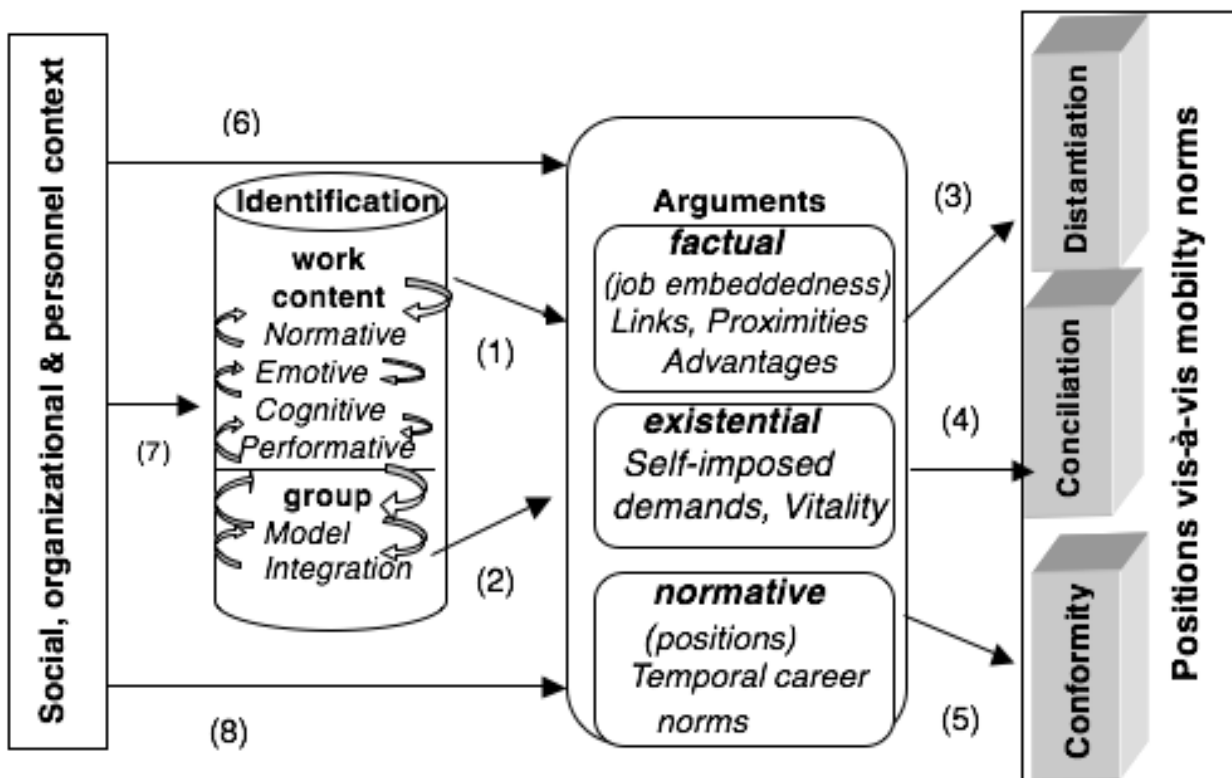


Figure 2. Process-based model of positions vis-à-vis mobility norms

Work content identification, associated with group identification, plays a central role in this model. The chain of work identification mechanisms described above can be represented as a spiral process as it combines four different modalities which act on different targets (Vough, 2012): one’s work content and group of colleagues. This allows us to understand that an employee’s career path is the result of a process of

self-reflection that is fueled in reference to his work content and group of colleagues. Taken together, these instances of work identification provide certain arguments (arrows 1 and 2).

We have shown that behind factual arguments lie aspects based on experiences of work content and group identification. Similarly, the arguments based on self-imposed demands and vitality relate to a process of reflection on one's identity that is fueled by the relationship with one's work content and group of colleagues. For example, the variety of their work enables employees to justify their vitality and take up a position in favor of career stability, taking certain liberties with the prevailing mobility norms.

In this way, the work identification mechanism provides argumentative resources that allow employees to cope with the pressure to embrace career mobility (positioning) in three ways: distantiation, conciliation and conformity (arrows 3, 4 and 5). The first of these corresponds to a scenario in which employees believe that the mobility norms advocated by management are incompatible with their self-imposed demands and the stability norms which they have created based on their work identification experiences. They also use factual arguments in reference to job embeddedness—an expression of dependence (Mitchell, et al., 2001). Adopting a position of conciliation means employees believe that mobility norms are compatible with their self-imposed demands, requiring temporary career stability. Finally, conformity corresponds to employees who have accepted mobility norms as self-evident, using normative and existential agreements to justify their position. The second-order themes (links, proximities, advantages, self-imposed demands; vitality of mobility and temporal career norms) constitute arguments that favor both "physical" mobility (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006) and career stability. There is a certain symmetry in these arguments (remaining three to five years in a job to acquire skills being equivalent to leaving in three or five years once these skills have been acquired). These positions are constrained by personal context and the context of the organization due to the presence of links, proximities and advantages that are difficult to sacrifice (arrow 6). The career of one's spouse, the presence of young children or dependent parents, etc. are aspects of personal context that determine one's position. These are constraints on mobility and indicative of the dependence of employees on their job (Mitchell, et al., 2001). Similarly, the context of the organization and the relevant profession has an influence on employees, as do the presence of mandatory transitions, the social climate, regulatory changes, timetabling, etc. Context also influences the work identification mechanism directly through professional roles (normative modalities), as well as the management style adopted by senior employees who favor autonomy and recognition (arrow 7).

Social context also acts as a constraint via temporal career norms, which provide "ready-to-use" arguments (arrow 8). Employees can reproduce mobility norms. They justify their position based on their own work identification experience. They can moderate the influence of mobility norms by temporarily choosing job stability. Finally, employees can oppose these norms by relying on arguments constructed through the work identification mechanism, sometimes creating alternative norms that favor career stability and arguing for psychological mobility. The diverse range of positions on careers cannot therefore be explained solely by the variable of context (structural effect), but also by the work identification mechanism, which is partly an agentic mechanism that provides employees with resources to define a unique plan for the future that departs from the prevailing norm (agentic effect).

DISCUSSION

CONTRIBUTIONS

The aim of this research is to better understand the phenomenon—rarely studied—of elective career stability by demonstrating the role played by work content identification. To do this, we collected data from employees in an association working in the social sector. This work makes several contributions.

Contribution to the literature on work identification

Our first contribution is to clarify the definition of a new category of work identification, related to work content, building on the earlier work of sociologists from the Chicago school (Becker, 1960; Becker & Carper, 1956; Hebden, 1975). The complex nature of this social mechanism is laid out, with a description of four modalities: normative, cognitive, performative and emotive. These modalities correspond to the intertwined processes of identity-building in the context of a relationship with work that is partly solitary.

Employees construct their identity as part of a solitary relationship which they develop with the content of their work. They interpret the meanings generated (sensegiving) by the work scenarios in which they see their actions lead to an outcome. They analyze this image they have of themselves and integrate it as a reference with which to shape their identity (sensemaking). This is an activity of self-categorization that involves establishing a parallel between one's self-definition and a "target" (Ashforth, et al., 2008), which in this case is the image of the self acting through work (Figure 3).

Pratt, et al. (2006) describe this process among doctors who evaluate themselves against their self-image at work, although they do not address the consequences in theoretical terms. They reveal that medical interns receive signals generated by workplace scenarios. Doctors obtain images of themselves through their work, which they accept as references when they show them to be capable beings with unique skills that enable them to achieve a result—a source of pride (Sainsaulieu, 1998).

Ashforth, et al. (2008) refer at one point to the existence of this category with the expression "work-based identification" (p. 326). But this remains subordinate to other categories, in particular occupational identification (Figure 3).

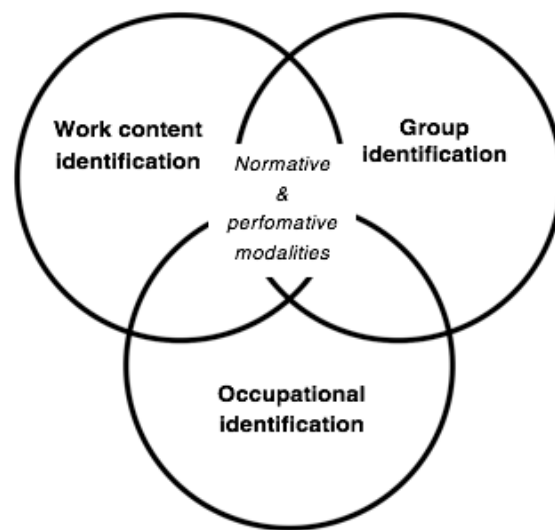


Figure 3. Identifications at work

Peer groups, such as colleagues, only provide employees with some of their reference points, which are used to build their identity. Employees appropriate the meaning provided by their reference social group (sensemaking) and adapt it in accordance with their work experience.

Furthermore, we show that the work content identification mechanism is social, cognitive and affective in nature, like other types of work identification (Ashforth, et al., 2008). It is cognitive because the analysis of work scenarios, where employees see themselves working, is a mental process, such as those involving self-comparisons with a reference social group (Ashforth, et al., 2008), and also because the expression of one's interest reveals an intellectual activity stimulated by work (cognitive modality). This identification mechanism is also affective because emotions play a role in this identity-building process, as our respondents' discourse reveals. Finally, it is social because the meaning produced by employees is partly constructed in reference to rules defined by groups of colleagues or the profession itself (normative modality). This social aspect can also be seen in the performative modality, whereby employees obtain information from colleagues and peers about their capacities (Pratt, et al., 2006).

The work content identification mechanism is therefore only partly social. References provided by groups complement those generated by work scenarios, which employees accumulate in a way that is individual or solitary. Our case study relates to "work on others" (Dubet, 2002), which is an eminently social activity. It is easy to imagine that this process occurs particularly in any profession in which employees are confronted with a material object, requiring little social interaction. The work content identification mechanism can therefore be considered partly independent from and partly dependent on other types of identification, with shared boundaries linked to the influence they have on this mechanism (Figure 3).

We show how the four modalities of work content identification are intertwined in a causal chain of processes (Dumez, 2016) associated with the other types of identification. This set of mechanisms is represented by a spiral shape in Figure 2. The introduction of a specific work identification

category allows us to consider its consequences. Here, we provide results to explain attitudes towards careers.

Contributions to the dialectical analysis of careers

As well as offering theoretical clarifications of the concept of work content identification, this research proposes a process-based model that explains how career stability is constructed and relies on work content identification. This model contributes to the literature on careers by explaining a particular position that has so far received little attention: career stability. The state of mind of employees who see themselves remaining in their job for the foreseeable future and do not consider the option of career mobility can be understood as an expression of a personal plan by people who have found a favorable context for the construction of their identity. In this way, we establish new links between the literature on careers and the literature on identity or identification.

This builds on the work by Rothausen, et al. (2017), who used a small sample of “stayers” to show that if an organization facilitates identity-building, employees commit to their job and prefer to stay. We use a significant number of interviews with career-stable employees to show that they develop a positive self-image based on the available sources of social support in the organization, including colleagues, as the literature has traditionally confirmed, but also due to the harmonious relationship they have developed with the content of their work, which provides them with four modalities of work content identification. This complements the elements of the identity-building process described by Rothausen, et al. (2017). Furthermore, through our process-based model, we show how work identification makes employees dependent on their job (structural effect) and also provides them with argumentative resources (Zilber, 2002) to justify their position on mobility norms (agentic effect).

This finding can be linked to dialectical analyses of careers (Rodrigues, et al., 2016; Seo & Creed, 2002; Tams & Arthur, 2010) which highlight the interaction between structure and individual will (Dany, et al., 2011; Moore, et al., 2007; Rodrigues, et al., 2016; Tams & Arthur, 2010; Valette & Culié, 2015). However, far from simply validating these approaches, our balanced reading of career choices (Moore, et al., 2007) builds on this analytical framework in three ways.

First, our analysis of career stability establishes the originality of this career management approach. Although the same mechanism of tension between structure and individual will is present, it is expressed differently. Borrowing from the terminology of Oliver (1991), our study differentiates between three positions on careers, two of which constitute alternatives to the prevailing mobility norms and justify career stability: distantiation and conciliation. Employees reveal their ability to develop alternative positions on their careers in the face of institutional constraints produced by society which consider physical mobility as “self-evident”, a norm that is backed up by the state and company management, who create regulations in favor of such mobility (Schmidt, Gilbert & Noël, 2013). Such positions that act as alternatives to the norm of mobility are an expression of freedom on the part of the employees which can even extend to the creation of new career norms (agentic effect). Even when the norm is reproduced, revealed by a position of conformity (structural effect), employees put forward arguments that have been enriched by their unique experience of work identification (agentic effect).

The capacity to produce a norm is not only a collective phenomenon; it is also individual and enables “internal regulation” that is achieved through “confrontation with the self”, an individual demand about what one does or does not want to be. Our approach emphasizes the importance of this individual dimension. Without denying the existence of the social norms that embed individuals in a particular social environment or job and determine their choices, (Inkson, et al., 2012; Ituma & Simpson, 2009), this study reveals both the possibility of existing as an individual who questions social norms and the way in which individuals construct themselves as subjects of their careers who are out of sync with their social environment. Remaining in a job is not only an expression of dependence (embeddedness) but also the result of free will.

Second, this shift in the analysis in favor of the individual results in more in-depth reflection on the resources underpinning career choices, an area in which existing research remains limited (Moore, et al., 2007). Whereas Valette and Culié (2015) highlighted the role of social position, our analysis emphasizes the mechanism of work content identification, revealing that it generates strategic resources contained within cognitive schemas (Feldman, 2004). This result helps move beyond the current state of knowledge about the role played by resources in career choices.

The literature pays more attention to the resources used by employees to build their identity (Ashforth, et al., 2008; Miscenko & Day, 2015). The idea that we have developed here is that work identification also *generates* resources. In particular, we show that employees’ experience of work content identification produces certainties about how they want to be, which provides them with arguments (Feldman, 2004) to cope with calls for career mobility. The four modalities of work content identification relate to concrete experiences whereby work has provided meaning, vitality and social performances, giving strength to the arguments used by employees to distance themselves from social norms and even create new ones. Our research also shows, through the theme of self-imposed demands, which are the result of reflections on one’s identity, that employees have a desire for authenticity that orients their positions on their careers (Guest & Sturges, 2007; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009).

Third, one of the theoretical contributions of this research is that it offers an understanding of career management that begins with the individual, as in the case of “boundaryless” career approaches, but with the difference that here the individual’s freedom is not synonymous with physical mobility but rather psychological mobility. We unpack the concept of psychological mobility developed by Sullivan and Arthur (2006). This is the expression of an identity dynamic generated by a situation of career stability. It is developed in contact with one’s work content, not only through the acquisition of skills (performative modality), but also thanks to the vitality generated by work, which creates challenges for people and gives them intellectual stimulation, giving their lives meaning and making their utility a source of pleasure. Through this internal mobility at work, it is possible to remain in the same job for a very long time despite pressure to embrace mobility.

We have also revealed that work content identification goes hand in hand with psychological mobility. If one’s work no longer enables psychological mobility, then physical mobility is considered as an option. Employees then develop a position of conformity in relation to mobility norms. In this case, stability norms are no longer argumentative resources that can justify the decision to stay. However, it is possible to have plans to be mobile in the future, while still identifying with one’s work content, at least partially.

Our work establishes that through the position we have described as conciliation, mobility norms can even be associated with job stability: to develop skills over time and prepare for their future physical mobility, employees look for mobility in their work by varying their activities, which feeds into a perception of psychological mobility, thus adhering to the flexibility imposed by their superiors. These employees perceive career norms as symmetrical (two sides of the same coin), because they both favor biographical continuity. They accept managerial flexibility because it is in their interest with a view to acquiring new skills and building a professional identity that will be recognized by their peers. Career stability is legitimate because it prepares the ground for their future mobility (Clarke, 2013). This conciliation between managerial norms and career norms appears to be virtuous.

MANAGERIAL PERSPECTIVES

In managerial terms, two recommendations emerge from this paper. The first is to proscribe the stigmatization of employees who do not adhere to mobility norms, as they can alter the work identification process. Such a practice, observed in particular in one of the association's five entities, was a source of embarrassment for management and anger and even suffering for employees, as expressed by their representatives during works committee meetings (this was clear from the minutes).

Such stigmatization carries several risks: discrimination against the organization's most senior members, but above all the devaluation of psychological mobility, which creates meaning and confidence. We have revealed the presence of a virtuous link between employee attitudes and managerial flexibility norms. But this model cannot be applied to all employees. A more virtuous practice in this regard is possible; this was addressed in a document we submitted to the works committee.

Our second recommendation is the introduction of a system to support career transitions. Such a system could be extended to other employees during exchanges with their manager, as part of their professional meeting. The classification of the different work identification modality developed in this article could facilitate career discussions. If management can detect factual, existential and normative arguments, this could improve the quality of these face-to-face meetings, making it possible to test an employee's position in respect of career norms and attenuate some of the resistance against changing jobs. This is particularly true when mobility is unavoidable but not desired by employees. The classifications that we establish herein could also help managers determine what employees could see themselves doing in other jobs, based on what makes them want to stay. In this way, the resources generated by the identification mechanism can be used to choose mobility. One possible strategy for managers in this case would be to reduce job embeddedness by creating links with another job chosen in collaboration with employees, who little by little would identify with it. Such an ethical practice would facilitate the commitment of employees to modify their position on career norms before changing jobs.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH AVENUES

This research carries certain limitations but which point to possible future research avenues. First, the qualitative nature of this study, as well as the specificities of the social sector (Dubet, 2002)—underpinning our empiricism—limit its external validity (Gioia, et al., 2012). However, we feel

that in related contexts involving services to outside parties, for example healthcare, teaching or professions that enjoy a certain social prestige, such as doctors and pharmacists (Rodrigues, et al., 2016), our model could be challenged. It would be useful to explore a sector such as engineering, with highly technical work content as a source of identification; IT in particular, which is often given as an example to illustrate the notion of “boundaryless” careers and where the number of people choosing career stability is sharply rising. Other information collection methods could be considered, based on work scenario observations and reports written by employees, subsequently leading to discussions over a period of several years. Such a longitudinal analysis of work content identification could better account for interactions and identify “career agent” capacities (Tams & Arthur, 2010). The influence of organizational context, in particular career management policies, could also be studied in an effort to reveal the normative pressure in favor of career mobility and the ways in which employees position themselves by using argumentative resources, which they acquire through their experiences of work identification. Lastly, it would be possible to establish a link with research on resistance, making good use of this paper’s contributions to develop a more refined understanding of the origin of argumentative resources used by “resistants”.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this research was to answer the question: through which mechanisms do employees actively opt for career stability in the face of career norms favoring mobility? Our results show that the mechanisms of work content identification play an important role in the positions adopted by employees with regard to mobility norms. Four modalities of work content identification are outlined: normative, cognitive, emotive and performative. With group identification, this set of social mechanisms produces two complementary and contradictory effects: the free will of agents made possible by the argumentative resources they generate for employees, and job dependence through the integration of structural constraints. We identify three types of arguments (factual, existential and normative) that enable employees to take up specific positions with regard to mobility norms: distanciation, conciliation and conformity. The process-based model we propose based on the data sheds new light on the topic of identification and careers.

To the literature on identity, we add a new category of identification that can be linked to group identification and an inverted relationship with resources. To the literature on careers, we bring an improved understanding of the role played by identity dynamics in employees’ positions on their careers—between structural effects and agentic capacity. The job dependence produced by work content identification can occur alongside independence from career norms. By proposing a dialectical vision, this research contributes to recent efforts to reach a less ideological understanding of careers. The identity dynamics developed by staying in the same job are likely to stimulate employees to improve their work practices and innovate. Might not the call for mobility be heard more effectively by employees and be more beneficial for organizations if it also favored psychological mobility?

APPENDIX

INTERVENTIONS DU CHERCHEUR LORS D'UN ENTRETIEN (INTERVIEWÉE N°33)

Introduction : Comme vous le savez, cette recherche porte sur la carrière, qu'est-ce qui fait choisir un métier, un emploi ? Qu'est-ce qui fait qu'on reste dans un poste ou qu'on le quitte ? Je vous propose de présenter votre parcours depuis votre formation professionnelle jusqu'à votre situation actuelle.

Questions : Tout d'abord, pourquoi avoir fait le choix de ce métier ?
Pourquoi avez-vous postulé dans cet établissement et à ce poste ?
Maison d'enfance, c'est quoi ?
Vous êtes toujours en CDD ?
Parce que vous vous plaisez dans cet emploi ?
Vous sentiez que le directeur faisait des démarches pour vous ?
Ce qui vous avait donné envie de changer, si j'ai bien compris, ce sont les conditions de travail ?
Le sentiment de routine a donc été un signal pour vous ?
Donc, si je comprends bien, vous êtes restée cinq ans et après vous avez occupé cet emploi ?
Vous êtes restée dans la même structure pendant 11 ans ?
Vous m'avez dit à un moment donné que vous aviez la côte, donc ce qui vous a fait rester, c'était les bonnes relations avec la hiérarchie ?
C'est à cause de cette reconnaissance qu'il a fallu deux ans pour prendre la décision, c'est ça ?
Lorsque vous dites, j'ai grandi là-bas, vous voulez dire quoi ?
Quand vous dites 'on', c'est qui ?
C'est toujours la même direction ?
Et ils vous ne vous ont pas proposé un poste pour évoluer ?
Comment avez-vous construit les compétences nouvelles qu'il a fallu acquérir ?
Vous y avez pensé à un moment donné, mais aujourd'hui vous vous dites j'aime bien ce que je fais et je n'ai pas envie de changer, c'est ça ?
Peut-être avez-vous gagné en bien-être ?
C'est plus facile pour votre entourage ?
Aujourd'hui, c'est trop récent pour vous projeter dans l'avenir ?
Vous avez peur de vous ennuyer à terme ?
C'est une activité très différente de celle que vous aviez, non ?
Et dans cette activité, l'écrit a beaucoup d'importance ?
C'est donc une compétence et vous l'avez travaillée comment ?
Ce travail de correction c'est aussi un travail avec votre chef de service, c'est ça ?
Donc vous construisez vos repères ?
Même si vous êtes autonome, c'est quand même un travail collectif ?
J'imagine que vous n'êtes pas seule ?
Vous continuez à faire des formations, pourquoi ne pas devenir formatrice ?
La chance dans ce secteur, c'est que c'est plus facile de changer d'emploi, non ?

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