TRAINING AND VOCATIONAL VALUE OF APPRENTICESHIPS FOR ITALIAN WOMEN GRADUATED IN HUMAN SCIENCES

Riccardo Sartori – Assistant Professor, University of Verona, Italy
Massimo Bellotto – Full Professor, University of Verona, Italy

Introduction
Women graduated in human sciences experiment major problems when looking for a job (Favretto & Meneghini, 1999; Marini & De Simone, 2002; Moro, 2001), not only in Italy. In line with this assertion, some works (Mihail, 2006; Smith & Wilson, 2004; Norcross, Stevenson, & Nash, 1986; Spruill & Pruitt, 2000; Taylor, 1988) show the utility apprenticeships can have in order to help women graduated in human sciences to find a job. Indeed, apprenticeships can have both training and vocational values (Hoeben, 1996; Elfering, Semmer, Tschan, Kalin & Bucher, 2007). So it becomes interesting to know how women who have experienced an apprenticeship after graduating in human sciences evaluate their experience in terms of perceived utility and work impact. This poster presents part of the results of a survey carried out in Italy.

Aim
The aim of the study is to investigate how Italian women graduated in human sciences evaluate their apprenticeship. Participants were asked to express themselves in relation to:
1. Perceived utility, in terms of a) Coherence between the project on the paper and the apprenticeship in the field; b) Changes in women’s knowledge, abilities and professional attitudes;
2. Work impact, in terms of a) how many graduated women have found a job after the apprenticeship and b) kinds of jobs.

Participants and Procedure
84 women (mean age: about 26 years; SD: about 2 years) graduated in: Foreign Languages and Literatures (n = 18), Law (n = 16), Communication Sciences (n = 14), Political Sciences (n = 10), Philosophy (n = 6), Training Sciences (n = 6), Sociological Sciences (n = 6), Psychological Sciences (n = 4), Sport Sciences (n = 2), Art Music and Show Business Disciplines (n = 2). Mean duration of apprenticeships was 3.5 months (SD = 0.85).

Instrument
A telephone interview was administered by following an ad hoc grid. It is composed of 15 items, 13 closed and 2 open (alternatives in parentheses), divided into two sections. See right window.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>How was the coherence between activities on the paper and activities in the field?</td>
<td>0 (n=4)</td>
<td>3 (n=26)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>How was the coherence between your studies and the activities in the field?</td>
<td>0 (n=6)</td>
<td>3 (n=34)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.

Results
The 84 graduated women say apprenticeships are useful, with a mean grade of 7.1 on the 1-10 utility scale. 66 women say they have found a job after the apprenticeship and they give an even better evaluation of utility (more than 8). The 18 women who have not found a job yet give the lowest evaluations of utility (near five in average).

Adding up the percentages of the alternatives “enough” and “good”, the results are 83.3% for question number 1, 76.2% for question number 2. Moreover, about 80% say they have improved their knowledge and abilities, even if they do not know what to say about professional attitudes (maybe more difficult to understand than knowledge and abilities). Finally, one third spontaneously say they have found a job thanks to the apprenticeship and almost 80% has one after six months the apprenticeship is finished. Nonetheless, jobs are temporary rather than regular (90.9% vs 9.1%, see graph 1).

Main References