



# 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 experience 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.

## Instrument

### Perceived utility

- Do you think your experience has been useful? (yes; no);  
 If yes, in what sense/why?; If no, in what sense/why? (open question);  
 On a 1-10 scale, where 1 = not at all and 10 = at all, what is your evaluation of utility?;  
 Would you do the experience again or would you suggest that a friend of yours did a similar experience? (yes, even in the same organization; yes, but in another organization; no);  
 If yes, in what sense/why?; If no, in what sense/why? (open question);  
 How was the coherence between activities on the paper and activities in the field? (no coherence = 0; little coherence = 1; enough coherence = 2; good coherence = 4);  
 How was the coherence between your studies and the activities in the field? (no coherence = 0; little coherence = 1; enough coherence = 2; good coherence = 4);  
 Do you think that thanks to the apprenticeship your knowledge is... (the same; a little bit better; highly better);  
 Do you think that thanks to the apprenticeship your abilities are... (the same; a little bit better; highly better);  
 Do you think that thanks to the apprenticeship your professional attitudes are... (the same; a little bit better; highly better);

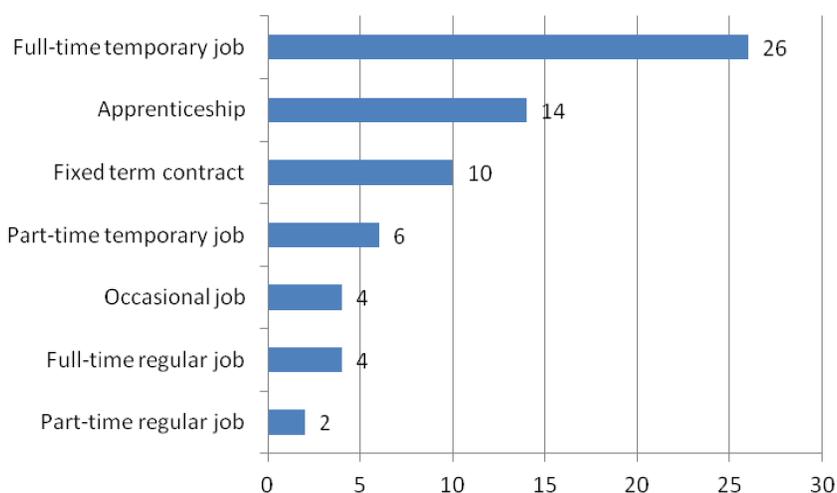
### Work impact

- Did you get a job thanks to the apprenticeship? (yes; no);  
 If not, how would you describe your current situation? (unemployment; another apprenticeship; other);  
 If yes, how would you describe your current situation? (apprenticeship; training and work; occasional job; fixed term contract; full-time temporary job; part-time temporary job; full-time regular job; part-time regular job; maternity; other);  
 Do you think your current occupation is coherent with the apprenticeship? (yes; no);  
 Do you think the apprenticeship have helped you to find a job? (yes; no).

The interviews were carried out after about 6 months the apprenticeship was finished.

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

Table 1.



Graph 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). As for the coherence, it is good on the whole (see table 1).**

**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

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