



# THE INTERSECTION OF VOCATIONAL INTERESTS WITH EMPLOYMENT AND COURSE ENROLMENTS

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# Underlying thesis of this paper

- To find out what one is fitted to do and to secure an opportunity to do it is the key to happiness. Nothing is more tragic than failure to discover one's true business in life, or to find that one has drifted or been forced by circumstance into an uncongenial calling. A right occupation means simply that the aptitudes of a person are in adequate play, working with the minimum of friction and the maximum of satisfaction. (p. 240)

# The relationship between interests and achievement

- 66% of students were best at the subject that was their first preference;
- 72% were best at a subject that was consistent with their vocational choice;

# The relationship between interests and achievement

- The preference rank for best subject was 0.84 (ranks varied from 0 to 1); and
- The preference rank for the weakest subject was 0.19 (ranks varied from 0 to 1).

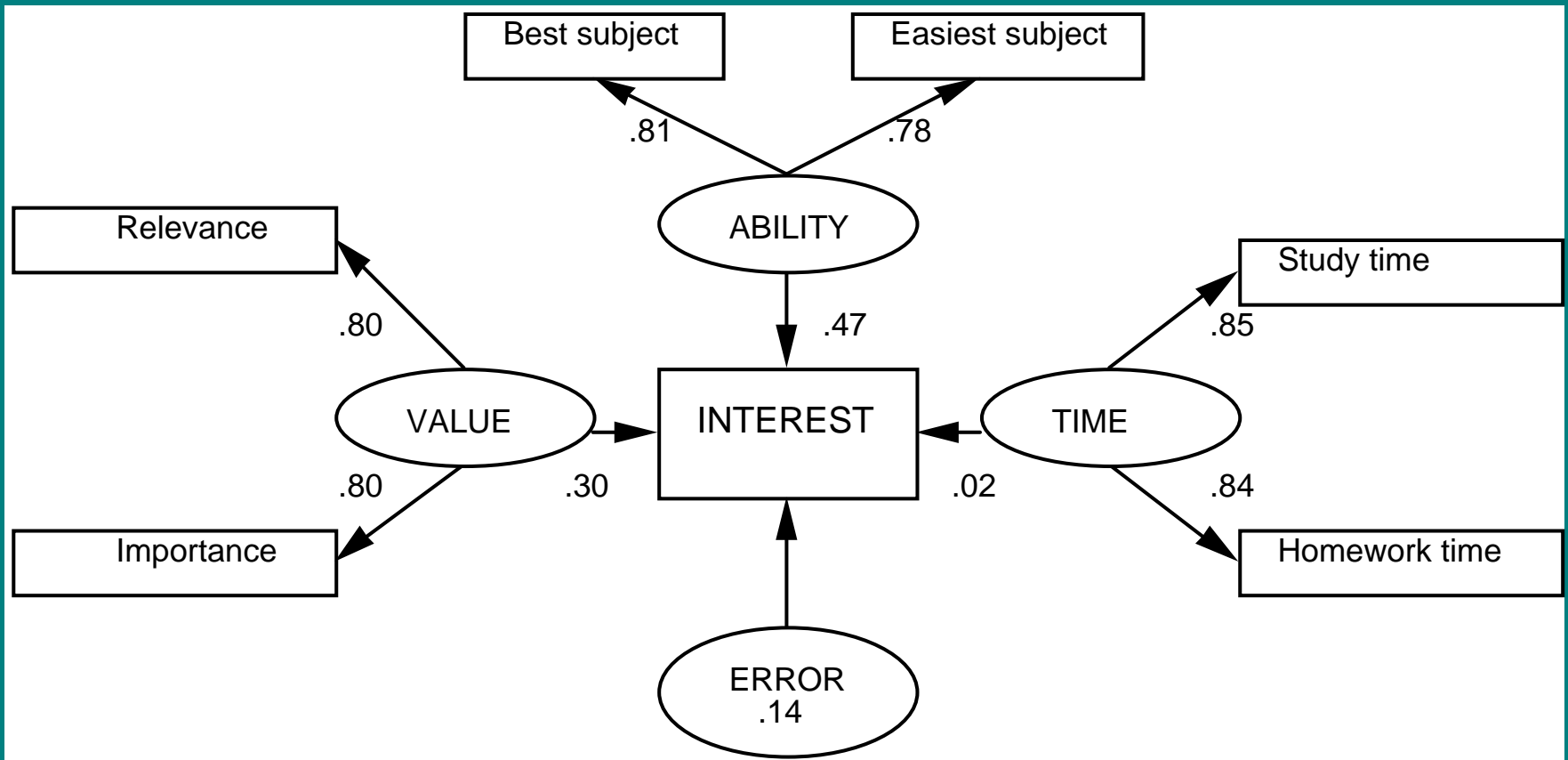
# Why assess interests?

- a component of career development especially when people have some freedom of choice



# Why assess vocational interests?

- interest assessment is founded on a person-environment fit theory that categorises both occupations and people in parallel ways
- other things being equal - people possessing interests similar to a particular occupation will probably find that type of employment rewarding



The implication is that in talking about interests we might actually be including components of ability, values and effort

# Gottfredson's Theory of Compromise

- tried to explain why people often follow careers that do not match their interests
- looked at the external barriers that restrict our goals and opportunities



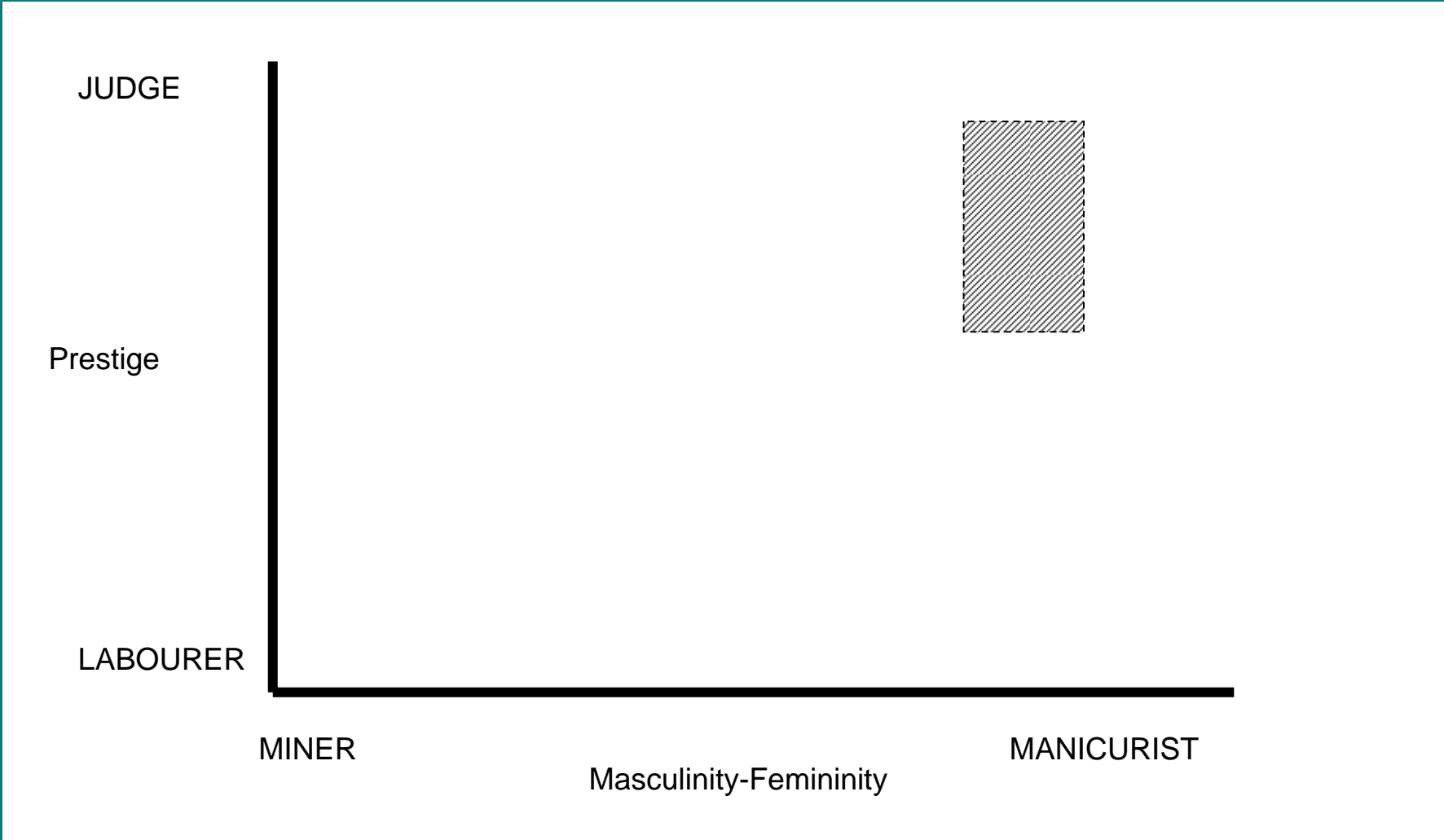


# Gottfredson's Theory of Compromise 2

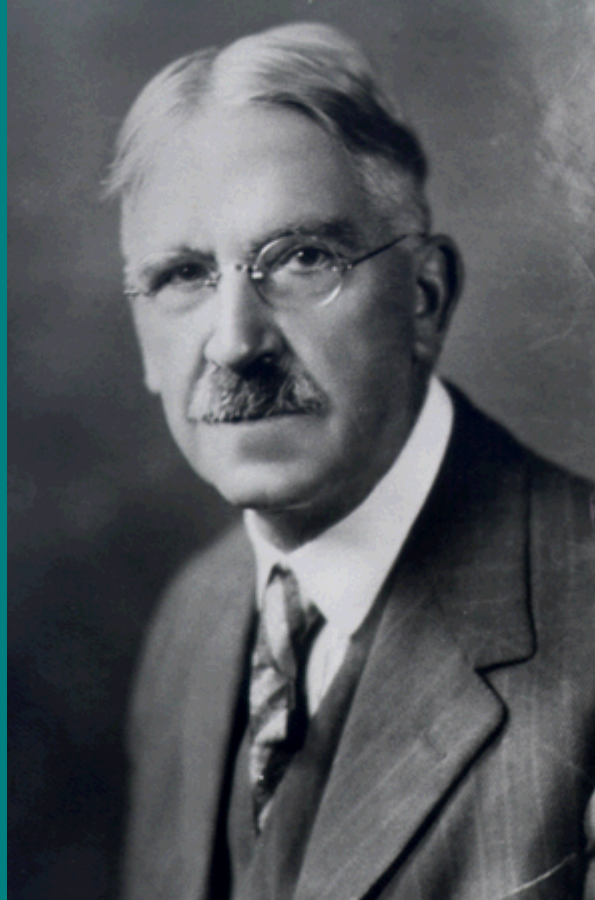
- when people have to compromise their aspirations the sacrifices that they make are firstly in terms of their interests, next their prestige and finally the sex-typing of the occupation

# Gottfredson's Theory of Compromise 3

- For Gottfredson each individual develops a zone of acceptable alternatives
- Career development (i.e., work) was seen as a way of becoming a social self and it emphasises the public aspects such as gender, social class and intelligence
- Gottfredson treats occupational choices as a process of eliminating options and narrowing one's choices and she sees that process beginning in childhood



# John Dewey





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## Questionnaire

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Read each pair of work tasks. Think which one you would like the most. Mark the circle that matches your answer. If you are not sure, then just guess what is best for you. You have to choose one, and you cannot leave any blank.

Would you rather:

- |                              |                                  |                    |                                                        |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Grow Crops                   | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <a href="#">or</a> | <input type="radio"/> Fix Machines                     |
| Diagnose an Illness          | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <a href="#">or</a> | <input type="radio"/> Fly a Plane                      |
| Design Buildings             | <input type="radio"/>            | <a href="#">or</a> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Work in a Science Lab |
| Help Families With Problems  | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <a href="#">or</a> | <input type="radio"/> Paint Portraits                  |
| Prepare Tax Returns          | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <a href="#">or</a> | <input type="radio"/> Be in Charge of Workers          |
| Visit Customers              | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <a href="#">or</a> | <input type="radio"/> Look After Children              |
| Measure Blocks of Land       | <input type="radio"/>            | <a href="#">or</a> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Sell Medicines        |
| Make Diamond Rings           | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <a href="#">or</a> | <input type="radio"/> Fix Lights                       |
| Help Sick People in Hospital | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <a href="#">or</a> | <input type="radio"/> Massage Sore Muscles             |
| Organise Travel Plans        | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <a href="#">or</a> | <input type="radio"/> Play in a Band                   |
| Teach in a School            | <input type="radio"/>            | <a href="#">or</a> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Design Bridges        |
| Train for Sport              | <input type="radio"/>            | <a href="#">or</a> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Act in a Play         |
| Own a Shop                   | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <a href="#">or</a> | <input type="radio"/> Fix Computers                    |
| Defend Someone in Court      | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <a href="#">or</a> | <input type="radio"/> Treat Sick Animals               |
| Manage a Library             | <input type="radio"/>            | <a href="#">or</a> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Write for a Newspaper |
| Look After Forests           | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <a href="#">or</a> | <input type="radio"/> Help People with Injuries        |



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## Results

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Below are listed the interest groups in order of your preference. The score next to the name shows how strongly your answers indicate an interest in that group. You can take a look now at some suggested occupations/career fields by clicking on the links at the bottom of the page, and you can combine these results with others in the next section (Exploring) to refine your choices.

### **Business** 12

You like meeting people, talking, discussing, and leading others such as in law, politics, buying and selling. This involves business relations with people, as with travel agents, shopkeepers, executives and managers.

### **Office** 11

You like working indoors with clerical tasks which involve organising and being accurate. This may involve planning and controlling. Clerical jobs such as secretary, office worker, receptionist, bank clerk and computer operator are in this category. Also, this means you like to work with numbers and do calculations such as in finance or statistics. A high interest in this area means that you might like such office jobs as computer programmer, barrister or economist.

### **Practical** 9

You like to work mainly with tools and equipment, making and fixing things as well as operating machines. Jobs in this area include pilots, factory workers, technicians and engineers.

### **Scientific** 9

You like to discover ideas, observe, investigate and experiment. This includes medical and health occupations. Doctors, pharmacists, zoologists, dentists, chemists and physicists have high scientific interests.





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- ⊕ LATEST CAREERS
- ⊕ REAL LIFE PROFILES
- ⊕ READ ABOUT IT
- ⊕ GET INVOLVED
- ⊕ LINKS
- ⊕ GAME
- ⊕ HELIX SCREENSAVER
- ⊕ STAFF ROOM



## CAREER WIZARD

The Career Wizard questionnaire is divided into sections on jobs, courses and hobbies. Read each question carefully. Think which option you like the most and mark that circle. If you're not sure then just guess what is best for you. You have to choose one and you can't leave any blank.

### JOBS

Step 1 of 3

- 1 GROW CROPS  OR  FIX MACHINES
- 2 DIAGNOSE AN ILLNESS  OR  FLY A PLANE
- 3 DESIGN BUILDINGS  OR  WORK IN A SCIENCE LAB
- 4 HELP FAMILIES WITH PROBLEMS  OR  PAINT PORTRAITS
- 5 PREPARE TAX RETURNS  OR  BE IN CHARGE OF WORKERS
- 6 VISIT CUSTOMERS  OR  LOOK AFTER CHILDREN
- 7 MEASURE BLOCKS OF LAND  OR  PHARMACIST-CHEMIST
- 8 MAKE DIAMOND RINGS  OR  FIX LIGHTS
- 9 HELP SICK PEOPLE IN HOSPITAL  OR  MASSAGE SORE MUSCLES
- 10 ORGANISE TRAVEL PLANS  OR  PLAY IN A BAND
- 11 TEACH IN A SCHOOL  OR  DESIGN BRIDGES
- 12 TRAIN FOR SPORT  OR  ACT IN A PLAY
- 13 OWN A SHOP  OR  FIX COMPUTERS
- 14 DEFEND SOMEONE IN COURT  OR  TREAT SICK ANIMALS
- 15 MANAGE A LIBRARY  OR  WRITE FOR A NEWSPAPER

Tuesday, February 28, 2006

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The National Courses Database

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## Interest Assessment

The Career questionnaire is divided into sections on jobs, courses and hobbies. Read each question carefully. Think which option you like the most and mark that circle. If you're not sure then just guess what is best for you. You have to choose one and you can't leave any blank.

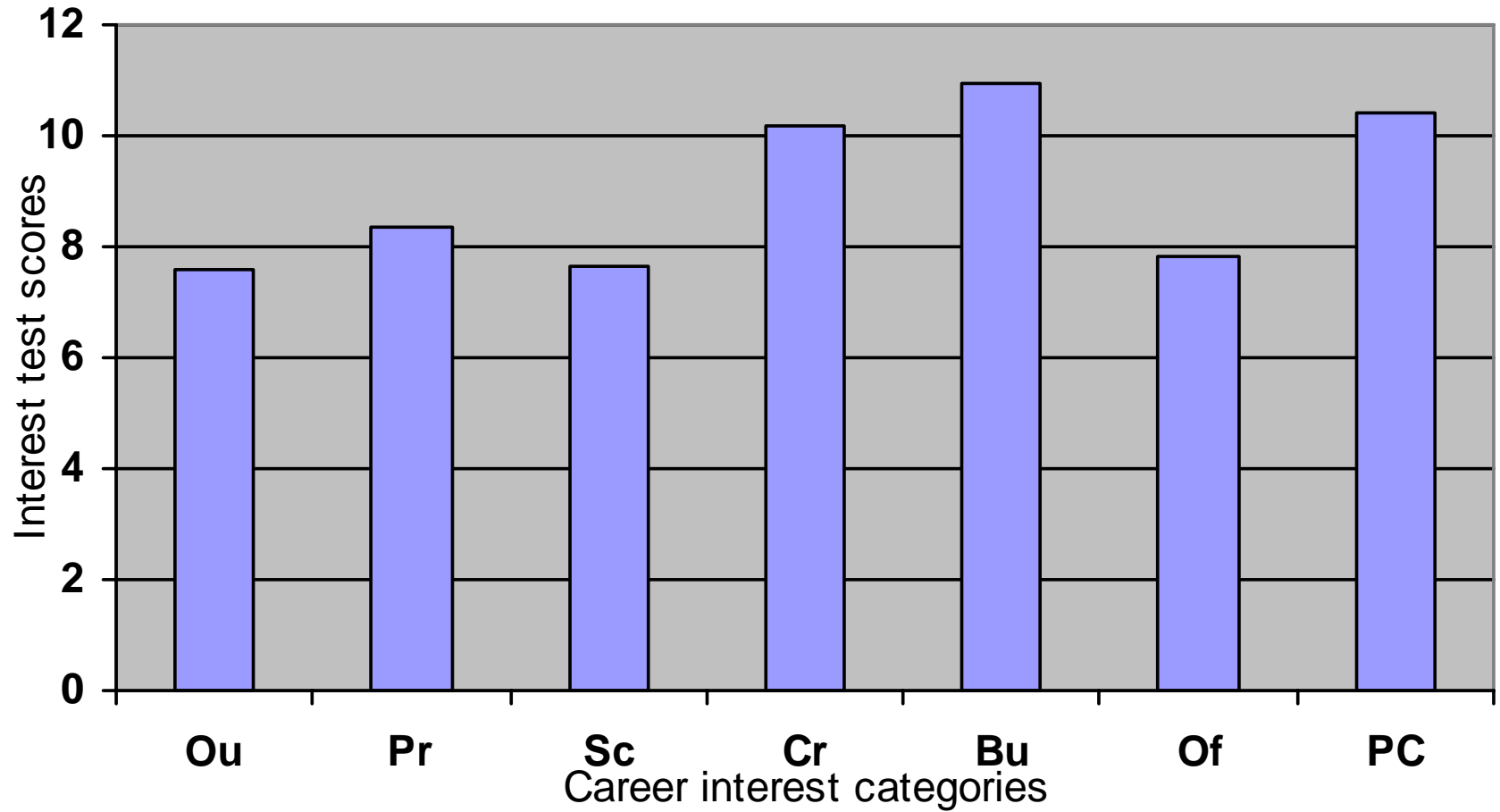
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### Jobs

1	Farmer	<input type="radio"/>	OR	<input type="radio"/>	Mechanic
2	Doctor	<input type="radio"/>	OR	<input type="radio"/>	Pilot
3	Architect	<input type="radio"/>	OR	<input type="radio"/>	Scientist
4	Social Worker	<input type="radio"/>	OR	<input type="radio"/>	Artist
5	Accountant	<input type="radio"/>	OR	<input type="radio"/>	Manager
6	Sales Representative	<input type="radio"/>	OR	<input type="radio"/>	Child Care Worker
7	Surveyor	<input type="radio"/>	OR	<input type="radio"/>	Pharmacist / Chemist
8	Jeweller	<input type="radio"/>	OR	<input type="radio"/>	Electrician
9	Nurse	<input type="radio"/>	OR	<input type="radio"/>	Physiotherapist
10	Travel Agent	<input type="radio"/>	OR	<input type="radio"/>	Musician
11	Teacher	<input type="radio"/>	OR	<input type="radio"/>	Engineer
12	Sportsman / Woman	<input type="radio"/>	OR	<input type="radio"/>	Actor / Actress
13	Business Owner	<input type="radio"/>	OR	<input type="radio"/>	Electronics Technician
14	Lawyer	<input type="radio"/>	OR	<input type="radio"/>	Veterinarian

# Results

**Figure 2.** Career interest preferences (N=7477).



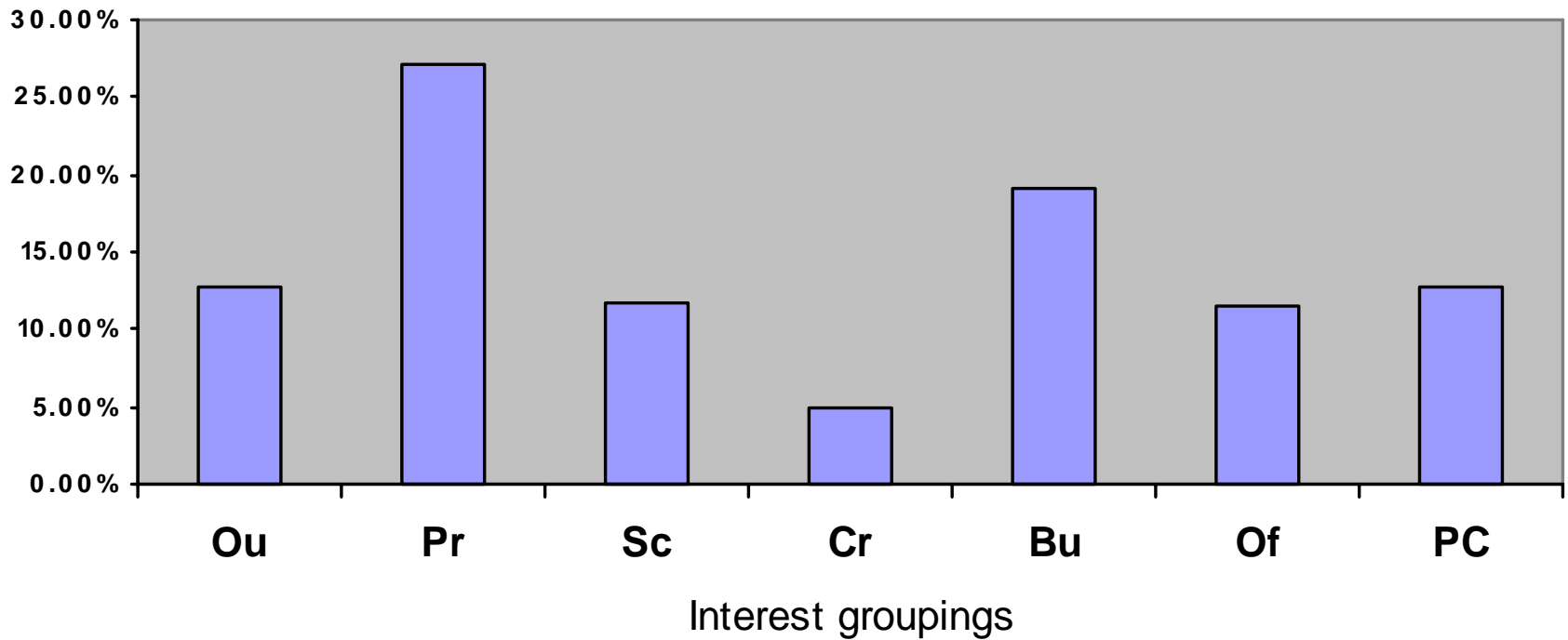
	Ou	Pr	Sc	Cr	Bu	Of	PC
Average=	7.59	8.37	7.66	10.16	10.97	7.85	10.41
SD=	3.15	4.19	2.93	3.41	2.90	2.96	3.38
Proportion of total score	12.0%	13.3%	12.2%	16.1%	17.4%	12.5%	16.5%

Ou= Outdoor; Pr = Practical; Sc = Scientific; Cr = Creative; Bu = Business; Of = Office; PC = People Contact; Note scores range from 0 to 18; The total score overall on the *Career Interest Test* is 63.

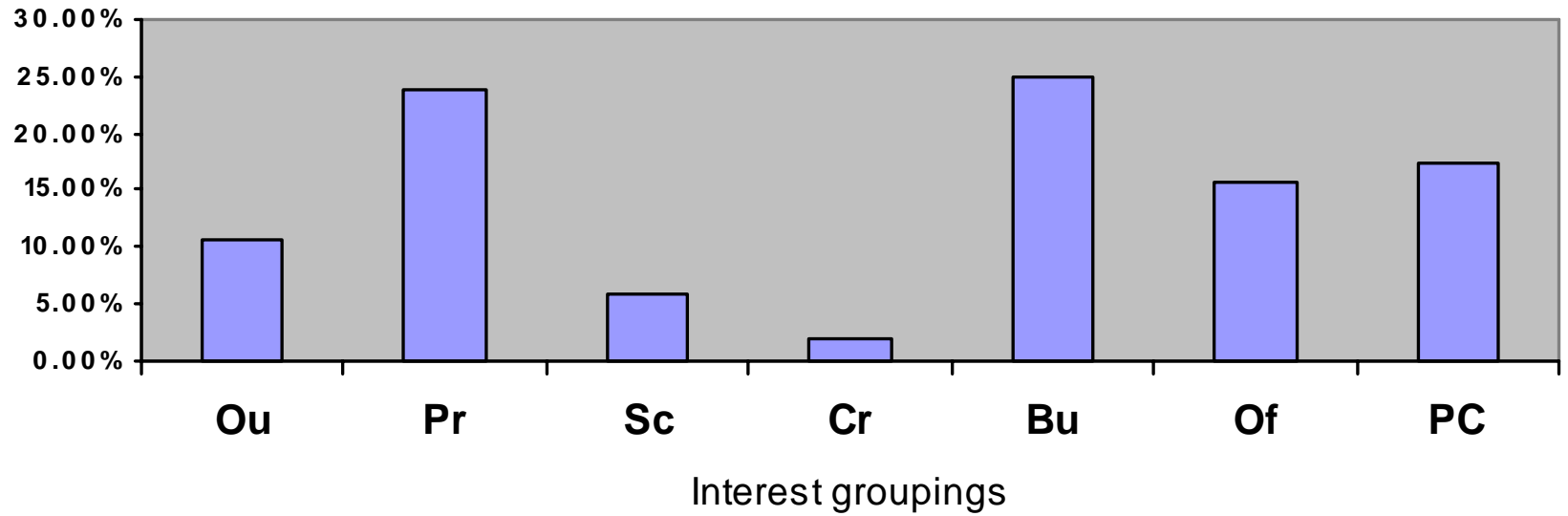


employment

**Figure 3.** Types of occupations available in Australia (N=474).



**Figure 4.** Numbers of jobs in Australia (N=8.9 million).





# Distribution of courses and subject enrolments in the Higher School Certificate

<b>Category</b>	<b>Courses % of total</b>	<b>Enrolments % of total</b>
Ou	10.2%	3.9%
Pr	22.6%	9.9%
Sc	5.6%	17.6%
Cr	14.1%	11.1%
Bu	7.3%	13.0%
Of	4.0%	4.2%
PC	15.3%	9.8%
Classics/Modern languages	16.9%	2.6%
Mathematics	4.5%	20.1%
History	1.1%	7.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>300200</b>

# Distribution of interests, employment and course enrolments

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	<b>Interests</b>	<b>Occupations</b>	<b>Courses<sup>1</sup></b>
Ou	12.0%	10.6%	3.9%
Pr	13.3%	23.7%	9.9%
Sc	12.2%	6.0%	17.6%
Cr	16.1%	1.9%	11.1%
Bu	17.4%	24.9%	13.0%
Of	12.5%	15.6%	4.2%
PC	16.5%	17.4%	9.8%

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**Figure 5.** Comparison of career interests, occupations and courses.

