

# STUDENT PREFERENCES IN DIVISIONAL STUDIES AND THEIR PREFERENTIAL ACTIVITIES

K. S. YUM

*University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois*

What are the relationships between what college students prefer to do and their divisional choices in study? Are there any divisional differences in the activities which they prefer? Are men and women alike in these respects? These are questions which college deans, professors, and student counselors, as well as students themselves, would be interested in knowing. The present investigation attempts to answer some of these questions by means of the Preference Record of Dr. G. Frederic Kuder (6). The Preference Record lists seven major types of activities, namely, scientific, computational, musical, artistic, literary, social service, and persuasive. The lists of occupations for each of the seven major types are quite extensive (5). The characteristics of these preference items have also been evaluated (7).

The test was given to 193 juniors in the University of Chicago, and their preferential choices in the divisional studies have been investigated. The results are presented in Tables I to VII, in terms of sigma units.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. The mean profile of the total group, presented in Table I, is significantly higher in the order of the social service, scientific, artistic, and musical activities, and significantly lower in persuasive activities, as compared to the norms. We might look upon this profile as a sample of university life on the motivational level.

2. Divisional differences seem to exist. The significant differences in the mean profiles of the Biological and Social Sciences are in the scientific and literary activities, as shown in Table II. Comparison of the three divisions of Physical, Biological, and Social Sciences, in respect to men, and comparison of the two divisions of Biological and Social Sciences in respect to women, bring out these differences more clearly and consistently as presented in Tables III and IV.

3. Tables V, VI, and VII in our data, show rather marked differences between men and women in some major types of their preferential activities, and indicate

TABLE I.—MEAN PROFILE OF THE TOTAL GROUP

Group	Number of Cases	Scientific	Computational	Musical	Artistic	Literary	Social Service	Persuasive
Total Group.....	193	.248	— .002	.196	.203	.038	.554	— .215

TABLE II.—COMPARISON OF THE MEAN PROFILES OF THE DIVISIONS OF BIOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (MEN AND WOMEN COMBINED)

Divisions	Number of Cases	Scientific	Computational	Musical	Artistic	Literary	Social Service	Persuasive
Biological.....	59	.813	.308	.144	.366	— .521	.687	— .434
Social.....	87	— .226	.244	.041	— .014	.439	.531	— .060

TABLE III.—COMPARISON OF THE MEAN PROFILES OF THE DIVISIONS OF PHYSICAL, BIOLOGICAL, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (MEN)

Divisions	Number of Cases	Scientific	Computational	Musical	Artistic	Literary	Social Service	Persuasive
Physical.....	18	1.517	.281	.703	.164	— .469	.056	— .603
Biological.....	32	1.203	— .323	.133	— .080	— .628	.434	— .275
Social.....	54	— .206	.324	— .069	— .290	.426	.301	.200

TABLE IV.—COMPARISON OF THE MEAN PROFILES OF THE DIVISIONS OF BIOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (WOMEN)

Divisions	Number of Cases	Scientific	Computational	Musical	Artistic	Literary	Social Service	Persuasive
Biological.....	27	.350	.291	.157	.894	— .394	.987	— .622
Social.....	33	— .259	.114	.223	.438	.461	.908	— .486

TABLE V.—COMPARISON OF THE MEAN PROFILES OF MEN AND WOMEN

Sex	Number of Cases	Scientific	Computational	Musical	Artistic	Literary	Social Service	Persuasive
Men.....	111	.479	.110	.139	— .131	— .035	.256	— .007
Women.....	82	— .064	— .152	.273	.656	.137	.958	— .496

TABLE VI.—COMPARISON OF THE MEAN PROFILES OF MEN AND WOMEN IN THE BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Sex	Number of Cases	Scientific	Computational	Musical	Artistic	Literary	Social Service	Persuasive
Men.....	32	1.203	— .323	.133	— .080	— .628	.434	— .275
Women.....	27	.350	— .291	.157	.894	— .394	.987	— .622

TABLE VII.—COMPARISON OF THE MEAN PROFILES OF MEN AND WOMEN IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Sex	Number of Cases	Scientific	Computational	Musical	Artistic	Literary	Social Service	Persuasive
Men.....	54	— .206	.324	— .069	— .290	.426	.301	.200
Women.....	33	— .259	.114	.223	.438	.461	.908	— .486

that these differences are quite consistent. Women are significantly higher than men in artistic and social service activities; men are significantly higher than women in scientific activities. It is interesting to observe that women are more definitely uninterested in persuasive activities than men.

4. These profiles of motivation obtained here are not measures of ability but are meant to give some index of the extent to which an individual will be motivated in various areas along with the abilities at his disposal. Hence, they should be useful to those educators who are confronted with the problems of handling student counseling more efficiently.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Adkins, Dorothy C. and Kuder, G. Frederic. The Relation of Primary Mental Abilities to Activity Preferences. *Psychometrika*, 1940, 5, 251-262.
2. Carter, H. D. and Strong, E. K. Jr., Sex Differences in Occupational Interests of High School Students. *Person, J.*, 1933, 12, 166-175.
3. Darley, John G. Counseling on the Basis of Interest Measurement. Ed. and Psychol. Measurement, 1941, 1, 35-42.
4. Fryer, D. The Measurement of Interests. New York: Holt, 1931.
5. Kuder, G. Frederic. Manual For the Preference Record. 1700 Prairie Ave., Chicago, Illinois: Science Research Associates, 1939.
6. Kuder, G. Frederic. Preference Record. 1700 Prairie Ave., Chicago, Illinois: Science Research Associates, 1939.
7. Kuder, G. Frederic. The Stability of Preference Items. *J. Soc. Psychol.*, 1939, 10, 41-50.
8. Stead, W. H., Shartle, C. L., and Others. Occupational Counseling Techniques, Their Development and Application. New York: American Book Company, 1940.