



**SUBJECT SELECTION FOR THE SENIOR
YEARS OF SCHOOLING: A CASE STUDY
OF A RURAL COMPREHENSIVE
HIGH SCHOOL IN NSW.**

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CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY

I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not being currently submitted for any other degrees.

I certify that to the best of my knowledge any help received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in this thesis

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ABSTRACT

The process of subject selection for the senior years of schooling involves a range of inter-related factors that are directly and indirectly related to the student.

This study sought to identify the major influences upon students' choice and reasons why they chose the subjects they did for their final two years of secondary school. Influences include government and education policy, the rules and regulations governing the Higher School Certificate in NSW through the Board of Studies, gender, socio-economic status, ethnic background, Aboriginality and family support. The reasons for subject selection explored in this study included; intrinsic, interest and enjoyment of the subject; extrinsic, needed for future work and/or study; instrumental, the student's ability in the subject, gaining a Tertiary Entrance Rank; organisational, curriculum constraints, school factors; significant others, family, friends and teachers.

To better understand how these factors relate to each other a conceptual model of subject selection was developed to show the inter-relationships of the factors to one another and the student.

This study was conducted as a case study in a comprehensive high school in rural NSW using a cohort of students who were making their subject selections for the senior school. As well as using the conceptual model of subject selection the process of subject selection is clearly detailed in the case study to indicate the complexity of the process and the need for clear communication for all people involved in the process.

The findings suggest that students in the case study have similar patterns of subject selection to students elsewhere in Australia. A broader consequence of the research is that schools need to be conscious of the needs of their students and attempt to cater for their needs through the provision of a curriculum that will meet the requirements of the varying post school pathways that students may choose to pursue.