

## Science Education Exploration

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What inspires college-bound people to enter science-related majors? This question is critical to understanding the complex issue of getting more people to go into STEM fields in order for the USA to remain competitive and to advance our economy and society. The objectives of this study was to: explore what variables have influenced undergraduate student's decision to select a science-related major at Montana Tech; gain an understanding of students' attitudes toward K-12 education; examine the influences from K-12 teachers; and explore the level of external support to choose a science major. I hypothesized that studying these influences, along with prior research, would lead to a greater understanding of students who selected a science major as well as reveal ideas of how to support and recruit a diverse group of students for these majors. My research indicates that over half of our responders felt that their K-12 education prepared them for college and that their favorite subject influenced their chosen major. A new understanding could lead to improved techniques in science education in the Montana school systems, including high school and elementary, to engage and interest the students.