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**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## STUDY OF FACTORS AFFECTING THE DECISION OF STUDENTS TO SELECT TUY HOA INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE

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*Abstract:*

Objectives of the study are to find the relationship between the factors affecting the decision to select the schools. The study collected data from 509 students using both qualitative research method and quantitative research method. Results of empirical research showed that: (1) Diversity and attractiveness of the subjects; (2) Reputation of the schools; (3) Influential individuals; (4) Personal characteristics are the factors affecting the school selection decision.

*Key Words:*

## 1. Study purposes

Students at 12th grade face a very big milestone of their life. However, studying is still the top priority, so the students need to choose the appropriate universities or colleges. There are many factors both subjectively and objectively affecting the decision to select schools. This study only focuses on some key factors including: diversity and attractiveness of the subjects, reputation of the schools, personal characteristics and influential individuals. This study will help schools better understand the process of choosing school of students, from which they can build appropriate enrollment plans to effectively attract more students to the schools.

## 2. Theoretical bases and study models
### 2.1. Theoretical bases

**\* Diversity and attractiveness of the subjects**
Students tend to choose schools with diverse subjects which are more attractive and interesting than other schools (Other authors & Burns, 2006). If the subjects are appropriate with social demands and there are many exchange training programs, the schools will be more likely to attract attention of the students.

**\* Reputation of the schools**
The popularity and reputation of the school and faculty reputation as the factors affecting the chosen field (Burns, 2006). Students will feel proud to be a member of the prestigious schools or schools with renowned faculty there. Therefore, students will tend to choose these schools than other schools.

**\* Personal characteristics**
Personal characteristics are all factors relating to the students themselves. In particular, capabilities and preferences have the strongest effect to students' decision (Chapman, 1981). The capabilities of students are expressed through academic results (Galotti & Mark, 1994). Therefore, students also tend to select occupations in accordance with their characteristics, preferences and aspirations of themselves.

**\* Influential individuals**
Students are strongly affected by persuasion and advices from their friends and family according to Chapman (1981). Hossler & other authors (1987) also confirmed that the individual at the school also significantly affected the decision of students to choose the schools. Considering the condition of Vietnamese education, individuals who have great influence on students' decision include students' teacher and school counselor.

**\* Decision to select school**
School selection is a complex and multi-stage process in which an individual develops aspirations to continue formal education after high school. It is followed by a decision to attend a university/college or a specific advanced vocational institutions (Hossler, Braxton & Coopersmith, 1989).
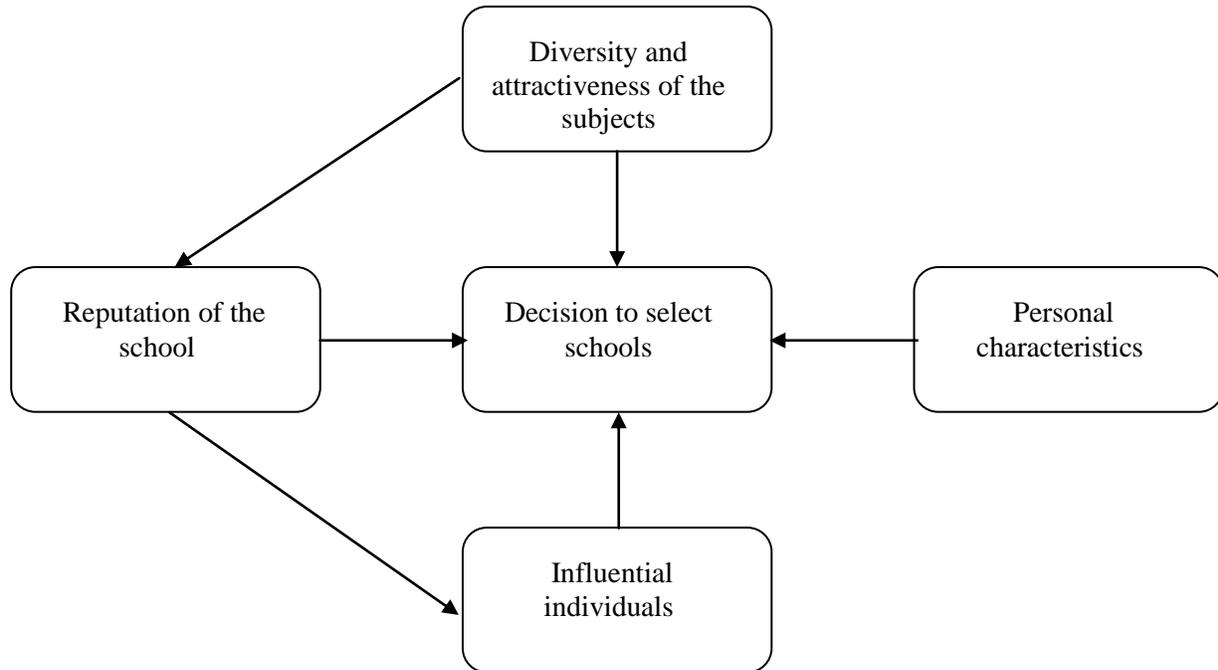
**2.2. Study models**



**Figure 1. Proposed study models**

## 3. Study methodology
**Scope:** Tuy Hoa Industrial College

**Scale evaluation:** Scale was evaluated through reliability estimate Cronbach's alpha, Exploratory factor analysis (EFA), Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

**Study model testing:** Using structural equation modeling SEM with AMOS 18.0.

## 4. Study findings
Study model is compatible with market data: Chi-square = 785.826 (p = .000), Chi-square/df = 3.556 < 5 (Kettinger, 1995), GFI = 0.890, TLI = 0.878 and CFI = 0.894 and RMSEA = .071. Estimation results of the parameters in the structural equation modeling SEM shows that all hypotheses are accepted which means that all factors affecting the decision of students to select schools specified at the start of the study are accepted. Specifically, diversity and attractiveness of the subjects; reputation of the schools; personal characteristics and influential individuals are all the factors affecting the decisions of students to select schools.

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