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## **The Effects of High School Mathematics and Science Classes on Wages**

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## THE EFFECTS OF HIGH SCHOOL MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE CLASSES ON WAGES

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The popular press is full of claims that as the world becomes a more technological place, mathematical and scientific knowledge is becoming a necessity, not an extra selling point. There are projections that by the year 2000, almost all jobs will be technical in nature. However, these claims and projections are seldom backed by empirical research. Therefore, this project attempts to fill that gap. If mathematical and scientific knowledge is really essential to the workplace, then people with that knowledge should earn more. Thus, I test if there is a positive correlation between taking an abundance of mathematics and science classes in high school and wages later in life.

I use the Human Capital Model as my theoretical framework. An individual's human capital consists of their acquired productive skills, talents, ability, and knowledge. Human capitalists believe that schooling enhances productivity, which in turn increases wages. My research analyzes two samples taken from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. The first is a group of individuals that had completed exactly twelve years of education. The second group of respondents had exactly sixteen years of education.

My results show that the human capital factors of previous work experience and age positively affect wages. Further, demographic variables such as having children present in the home or being male also increase wages. My results fail to show that high school mathematics and science classes are more beneficial than other classes. None of my variables that measured the number of classes are significant. The final steps of my research will include looking at the differences between my two samples and examining why my results were not as expected.