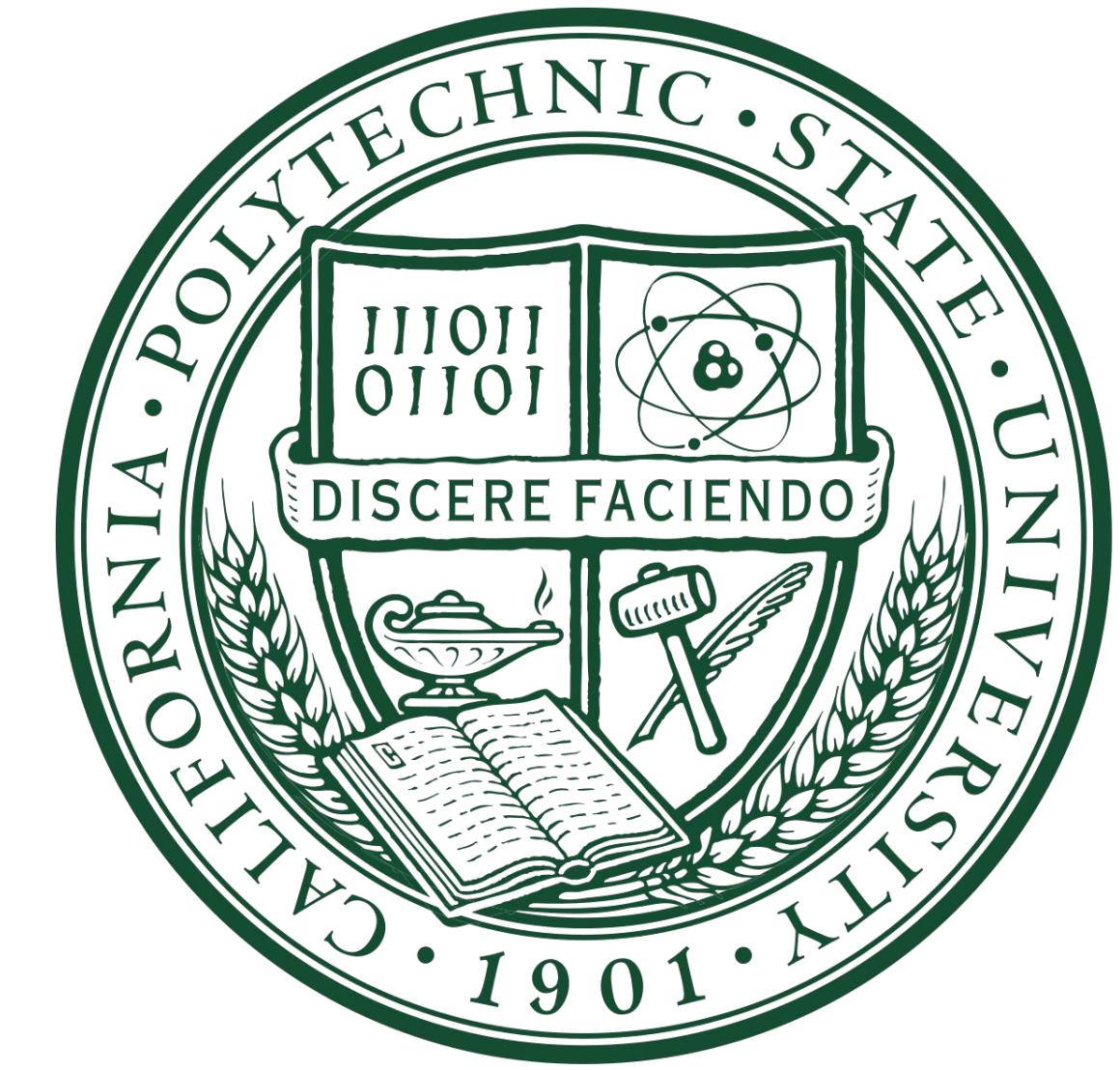




Case Study: Uplifting the Interest of Santa Maria High School Students into the Construction Industry

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Purpose

The purpose for this study is to understand the reasoning behind why Santa Maria High School students are not pursuing a higher education in Construction or a trade school. The main objective is to understand the counselor's response to my questions, and further understand what the main root problem is, if one is presented. My overall goal for this study is to attract these high school students into the Construction Management program, give them resources, and promote the benefits of pursuing a career in the construction industry.

Knowledge Gap

- Counselor states that "10 out of her 400 students spark interest in the construction industry"
- Students are only accustomed with the physical labor jobs in construction
- Students do not associate Construction as a college going culture
- Students are only associated with entry level positions (i.e. apprentice, journeymen)

The central coast of California, historically, has not been a region that produces large construction projects which can then generate employment. It is a region that has slowly attracted builders because of the various development projects happening around the cities. This qualitative case study aims to examine the interest Santa Maria High School students have on the construction industry. A structured interview was used to collect data from the eight guidance counselors at the high school. The data reflects the socio-economic structure of this particular school zone and how it impacts the knowledge gap negatively. With less education/knowledge about the construction industry, the demand to incorporate this industry into school curriculums, clubs, funding, internship opportunities etc. will be minimal. Thus, creating an ongoing cycle that is reflected within the students in Santa Maria high school according to the observations of the qualitative data gathered.

Key Words: High-School, Student, Santa Maria, Interview, Counselors

Methodology

My research strategy for my senior project proposal consisted of a qualitative approach in which I answer why Santa Maria High School students are not interested in the construction industry. This best suits my topic because the overall role of my study was based on the perceptions of the counselors and the views and opinions within their responses. The interview format was a one-on-one setting in which I performed as the interviewer. The interviewees consisted of the eight guidance counselors from the high school. The interviews consisted of seven questions to gain insight/feelings on why students are not interested in the construction industry.

Student Demographic

- 96% Hispanic
- 1.8% White
- 1.2% Asian
- 0.4% American Indian
- 0.4% Two or more races
- 0.2% Black
- 0.1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

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