

STAY INTERVIEWS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF STAY INTERVIEWS AS A
RETENTION TOOL

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Submitted to the faculty of the University Graduate School
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree
Master of Arts
in the Department of Communication Studies,
Indiana University

March 2015

Accepted by the Graduate Faculty, Indiana University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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DEDICATION

To my parents who encouraged me to attend graduate school in the first place and who supported me every step of the way.

To the faculty of the Communication Graduate Program that strive to make every class interesting and applicable. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to your students.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Elizabeth Goering for encouraging me to research this topic and for her support along the way. A special thanks to Dr. Ronald Sandwina, my impromptu thesis advisor, who graciously stepped up as Committee Chair when Beth could no longer chair this thesis. Finally, I would like to thank all the professors who have encouraged me along the way to continue researching and asking questions, specifically Dr. Kim White-Mills and Dr. John Parrish-Sprowl for agreeing to be a part of my thesis committee and their assistance and encouragement along the way.

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INTRODUCTION

In order to help individuals feel more engaged within work organizations and more satisfied with their jobs, employers have started to administer stay interviews within organizations, with the end goal being to retain organizational members. Finnegan (2012) defines stay interviews as “a structured discussion a leader conducts with each individual employee to learn the specific actions he or she must take to strengthen that employee’s engagement and retain them within the organization” (p.4). Stay interviews have become a proactive solution to the retention problem and have been seen as a better alternative to the exit interview, which is seen as reactive and is administered after an employee has already made the decision to leave (Finnegan, 2012). This study proposes that through the use of stay interviews, organizational members will feel more engaged, satisfied, and committed to an organization, which will ultimately result in the retention of organizational members. While the review of the literature focuses mainly on how stay interviews can be applied in work organizations, one of the goals of this research is to demonstrate the usefulness of stay interviews in any organizational context, specifically in higher education. Retention in education is not only important from a financial standpoint, but it also effects the reputation of the institution and the institutions likelihood of attracting future students and maintaining stability.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The High Price of Turnover

Two things that every organization wishes to preserve are time and money.

Finnegan (2012) found that losing employees is very costly and untimely for organizations, reflecting that

Organizations face many costs directly related to turnover, including exit interview time and administrative requirements, payout of unused vacation time, and the cost of temporary workers or overtime for co-workers asked to fill in. Replacement costs include advertising, processing of candidates, interviewing, and selection. Finally, training costs-both formal and informal-add to the overall burden (p.96).

Implementing stay interviews can help to act as an autopsy within an organization, which can help to identify roadblocks that hinder engagement and commitment.

Once the problems are identified, solutions can begin to form and retention rates can increase. However, before implementing stay interviews, organizations must understand that the driving forces behind a successful stay interview are communication, feedback, and fostering the leader-member exchange relationship.

Two-Way Symmetrical Communication and Feedback

Effective communication is a key component in any organization. In terms of stay interviews, effective communication would reflect an organization where communication is both top-down and bottom-up. In work organizations, communication and feedback often comes from the top-down. However, for communication and feedback to be used constructively, it should not be viewed as one directional. Two-way symmetrical communication, an essential component to excellence in any organization, is described as engaging communication between two people where there is some sort of negotiation going on that presents a “win-

win” situation (Grunig et al., 1992). One goal of feedback is to manage conflict and reach a mutual understanding between managers and employees, or administrators and students. Both parties discuss a given situation and try to negotiate solutions between the organization and the key players.

Two-way communication also relates to engagement between group members and leaders. When two individuals are conversing and receiving feedback, both parties feel engaged. In order for this communication strategy to be successful, mutually beneficial relationships must be present. According to Watson and Noble (2005), mutually beneficial relationships relates to a two-way communication process in which the organizations act in the interests of both itself and the parties with which it interacts. With the development of the stay interview, there will need to be questions that will engage both the group member and the leader to create a mutually beneficial relationship. Meaning, in a work setting, management will know how to keep the employee satisfied and the employee will be more engaged with their work. The same notion could be applied at the university level.

To encourage two-way communication is to also encourage feedback. Communicators must get feedback in order to know how a receiver comprehends a message. Feedback is a response about what is happening within that relationship and allows each partner to adjust to changes. Feedback facilitates the understanding of each individual’s perspective (Chia, 2006). In work organizations employees have a difficult time providing feedback to a supervisor for multiple reasons. One reason, as discussed by Bisel and Arterburn (2012), is that employees fear losing their job if they express too much feedback. Not being able to express feedback could

potentially cause dissent in the workplace, so feedback is something that organizations should have as a primary mechanism for improvement. The challenge with this study will be making sure that the group members will be open to discussing their feedback in the stay interviews. To overcome this challenge employers must emphasize the direction in which they wish their employees to express dissent.

With the stay interview, the ideal direction of dissent would be upward. Dissent is the expression of disagreement about the organizations policies and practices (Kassing et al., 2012). Kassing et al. found an employee's expression of lateral and displaced dissent indicated one's intention to leave. Lateral dissent would be expressing dissent to coworkers, while displaced dissent would be expressing dissent to those outside the organization. In other words, dissent directed to non-management audiences indicated when employees were considering leaving their organization. Kassing et al. also identified that organizations that foster upward dissent, had more engaged employees. Companies that are better equipped to foster employee dissent, can expect to have employees that are more engaged at work, and less inclined to leave. These same findings can be applied to other types of organizations. For example, if a student does not feel comfortable expressing their dissent to educators or administrators, they are more likely to express that dissent laterally, or to other students. In turn, this could lead to increased misplaced dissent among students and those students might feel more inclined to seek their education elsewhere. Additionally, students might feel reluctant to express feedback because they fear retaliation from teachers or

administrators. In order for students to willingly offer feedback, leaders of the university must encourage upward dissent and use it constructively.

Current Feedback Mechanisms: Why the Exit Interview Falls Short

As previously mentioned, one way to foster upward dissent expression is to continually encourage feedback within an organization. One of the most widely used mechanisms for feedback is the exit interview. The exit interview is conducted when an employee or member of an organization is exiting the organization. It is often used to assess reasons for why an organizational member is leaving the organization, and also poses questions pertaining to how they feel about the organization, or leadership. While exit interviews can be beneficial, they might not provide the most accurate feedback. For example, if an employee is leaving an organization, they might not want to burn bridges by offering negative feedback. Additionally, because they are leaving, they might not care enough to answer the exit interview questions thoughtfully. Because feedback is such an integral part of two-way communication and the leader-member exchange relationship, it is important that organizations put in place effective feedback mechanisms. There are many studies, specifically Kassing's previously mentioned 2002 study, pertaining to dissent, the importance of feedback, and how to provide/receive feedback. Kassing's research on dissent expression provides strategies on encouraging employees to express feedback, or upward dissent, to managers or other leaders of the organization. However, little research provides examples of actual feedback mechanisms that are used other than the exit interview.

As an alternative to exit interviews, stay interviews have become a cost effective solution to the retention problem because they offer three solutions that exit interviews do not: a) They uncover information that can be used today; b) they give insight for engaging and retaining individual employees including top performers; and c) they put managers in the solution seat for developing individual stay plans (Finnegan, 2012). While exit interviews provide an autopsy of the workings of an organization, they are presented after the fact and act as a reactive measure to remedy problems within an organization, while a stay interview would offer a proactive approach.

Dissent Expression and Leader-Member Exchange

Before administering stay interviews in an organization it is important to understand the purpose of the exercise and the results that stay interviews hope to achieve. One of the key elements of stay interviews is opening the lines of communication between the leaders and members of the organization. Open communication will encourage feedback, which can be both negative and positive. For example, the trust built between a manager and employee has a direct effect on their willingness to be open and express dissent. Finnegan (2012) found that “trust is very closely tied to perceptions of organizational openness, which, in turn, predicted employee involvement.” (p. 306). If administered in a work organization, one key of the stay interview is to encourage employees to express upward dissent, meaning dissent that is expressed towards managers, as opposed to coworkers, or those outside the organization. Kassing (2002) found that “employees who report having higher-quality relationships with their supervisors and those who report

greater engagement with decision-making processes in their organizations more readily express upward dissent” (p.226). That being said, organizations stand to benefit by fostering an environment that encourages upward dissent and nurtures the relationship between managers and employees. Expression of upward dissent can also be beneficial in other organizational settings as it can uncover frustrations and concerns within the organization and allow leaders to address and offer solutions for those issues.

Another component that can hinder or enhance the likelihood of dissent expression is the leader-member exchange (LMX) relationship, which can factor heavily into successful communication and feedback within any organization. The LMX relationship is a focus of stay interviews as opposed to other leadership theories because of its focus on social distance between leaders and members of an organization. Waldron et al. (2011) explains measures of LMX quality demonstrated strong links in communication, especially in communication in relation to bosses. It is also suggested that the stronger the LMX relationship, the less threat will be perceived by the organizational member in terms of dissent expression. Because upward dissent expression is encouraged through the use of stay interviews, using LMX as a leadership theory will help to open the lines of communication and close the social distance between leader and member while facilitating feedback.

The LMX focus on leadership is why in order to conduct successful stay interviews buy-in from leadership is integral. The process of developing trust and communication between managers and employees begins with organizational leaders. As D’Aprix (2011) explains, “Organizational leaders are major influencers

of the cultures they lead” (p.29). An organization’s leaders must first be open to employees expressing dissent and they are responsible for creating a culture that encourages an open flow of communication from top management that cascades down through the organization. If this relationship is developed it can act as another benefit that exit interviews do not provide, as the exit interview is generally conducted by a human resources or other administrative professional; “an individual with whom the departing employee may not have a particularly well-established or close relationship” (Gordon, 2011, p.80). With this open communication, organizational members begin to feel that their leader is looking out for them and truly wants them to succeed and feel satisfied within the organization.

Less research has been conducted on dissent expression in an instructional setting, such as a classroom, however, a study conducted by Horan et al. (2010), examining students’ behavioral reactions to perceptions of classroom injustice, found that students most frequently respond to unfairness by engaging in student dissent. However, Horan et al. (2010) found that the direction of dissent expression mirrored that of most organizations, in that dissent was mostly expressed upward, student to instructor/administrator, or lateral, to other students. This communication pattern mirrors that of communication patterns in other organizations, in that students, like employees, will express dissent when they feel an injustice has occurred. Directing that dissent upward, through the use of stay interviews could encourage students to openly express problems/issues they are having in the classroom with their instructor or administrator, and help to foster a

positive leader-member exchange relationship. In a study on dissent expressions specifically in the classroom, Goodboy (2011) indicated that “instructors should understand that not all instructional dissent is communicated to harm them; rather, some students are merely venting their frustrations or hoping to fix the problem and move on” (p. 309). This type of dissent expression is encouraged through the use of stay interviews and could positively affect the likelihood of retaining students until degree completion. If students feel that they are encouraged to go to faculty or administrators with issues, and they feel that those issues will be heard, they are more likely to express their dissent upwards and build a stronger leader-member exchange relationship between faculty and students. Not only does strengthening the LMX relationship help to facilitate dissent expression, but it can also assist in creating organizational members that are more satisfied and hopefully more engaged within the organization.

Job Satisfaction and Work Engagement

There are many components in an organization that will determine the quality of organizational communication, such as the employee-subordinate relationship, job satisfaction and the ability to express opinion or dissent within the organization (Kassing et al, 2012). Additionally, whether an organizational member is satisfied within their organization can effect whether or not they form a positive or negative attitude regarding the organization. As Abraham (2012) notes, “The more a person’s work environment fulfills his or her needs, values or personal characteristics, the greater the degree of satisfaction” (p. 27). While job satisfaction and engagement are two separate constructs, Maylett and Riboldi (2008) found that

job satisfaction is a component of creating more engaged employees. Abraham (2012) concludes that job satisfaction is related to the cognitive aspect of employee engagement in which those that “are cognitively engaged are well aware of their mission and role in their work environment” (p. 28).

Employee engagement is defined as “the degree to which workers feel job satisfaction and an emotional connection to the success of their business, resulting in improved productivity, innovation and retention.” (Abraham, 2012, p 28.) The more satisfied an organizational member is, the more likely they are to be engaged and dedicated to the organization. When applied in an educational setting, such as at the university level, factors that increase employee satisfaction can help to create more dedicated and enthusiastic students. In work organization, factors that produce more satisfied employees are those that “effect pay, benefits, and company policies. Other factors include, cooperation, fair treatment, team spirit, and performance management” (Abraham, 2012, p. 35). The latter group of characteristics could also be applied to students in a college setting. Students that feel they are treated fairly by university leaders and foster a sense of cooperation within the LMX relationship are bound to feel more satisfied at the university.

Additionally, when discussing work satisfaction and engagement one must also be aware of what motivates organizational members. With any organization there are motivational factors that motivate individuals to stay at an organization. According to Herzberg (1968), most motivational factors represent hygiene factors. Hygiene factors are components such as company policy, supervision, relationships with peers and supervisors, work conditions, salary, personal life, status, security

and relationship with subordinates (Herzberg). These factors become components that employees often assess in reference to job satisfaction. The motivational factors are the factors that actually motivate employees to succeed and are fundamental to the job. These factors are the achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement and growth (Herzberg, 1968). Helping to meet these needs keeps an employee motivated and will help to create an employee that feels more satisfied with their work environment and more engaged within the organization. The same notion holds true for organizations that extend beyond the sphere of employment. In higher education, students have certain motivational factors that drive them to succeed. For example, students might be motivated by the sense of achievement that they feel when studying hard results in a good grade on an exam. Just like in work organizations, providing students with tools to drive motivation will help students to feel more satisfied with their education and more engaged at the university.

On the other hand, because employees feel they routinely face dissatisfying conditions in the workplace (Hirschman, 1970), employers are continually searching for new methods to keep employees satisfied with their jobs. Finnegan (2012) found that “people who are satisfied with their jobs (e.g., evaluate positively their pay, supervision, chances for promotion, work environment, and tasks they do) will stay, while those who aren't will leave” (p. 97). Intention to leave is the single best predictor of employee turnover, (Liou, 2009; Randall, 1990; Shore et al., 1990). In order to avoid turnover and to not waste time and money, employers must focus on initiatives that help employees feel more satisfied with their jobs and

less likely to want to leave. One way employers have found to increase job satisfaction, and to be an effective retention strategy, is to increase employee engagement (Kassing et al., 2012). A similar concept can be applied in an academic setting. As mentioned previously, research on dissent expression indicates that students express dissent similar to employees, which could indicate that they often feel dissatisfied at the university. Uncovering methods that will help to keep students engaged and more satisfied could help produce an effective retention strategy in higher education.

In summary, the degree to which an organizational member feels engaged within an organization can be a determinant on whether or not that person chooses to leave or stay at an organization. Engagement can be affected by several factors within an organization, but there is no denying that one of the purposes of engaging employees, students, or other types of group members is to retain those individuals. Improving satisfaction of organizational members can create organizational members that more inclined to be engaged and vice versa.

Employee Engagement and Burnout

While satisfaction can be directly linked to an increase in engagement, dissatisfaction can result in burnout and unengaged organizational members. Kassing, Piemonte, Goman, and Mitchell (2012) discuss that engagement is made up of three components: energy, involvement, and efficacy within an organization. These components are inversely correlated with those that define burnout, such as “exhaustion or depletion of emotional resources; cynicism and depolarization, which entail adopting a pessimistic and cynical attitude; and lack of professional

efficacy or effectiveness denoted by a deficiency in personal accomplishments” (Kassing et al., 2012, p.240). When an individual experiences burnout as opposed to engagement they are more likely to leave the organization. As previously mentioned, satisfaction can be linked to positive or negative experiences within an organization and those experiences directly affect the attitude of organizational members. An organizational member that routinely has negative experiences is more likely to be unsatisfied within the organization and more likely to experience burnout. For example, when looking at student burnout through the scope of Kassing’s definition, a student that feels dissatisfied might adopt a cynical attitude towards the university. They might also feel like their goals and values no longer align with the university’s. Most importantly, a student experiencing burnout might feel that they have no control over their circumstances, which could result in a decline in the student’s academic efforts and achievements. This type of burnout could lead to a slippery slope effect resulting in student turnover.

On the other hand, Kassing found that one way to reduce burnout was to focus on engaging employees. Kassing (2002) found that the more engaged an employee feels, the more satisfied with their job they become and therefore are more likely to stay. In terms of university members, focusing on student engagement can lead to producing more satisfied students. Similar to work organizations, student engagement encompasses many components and can happen both inside and outside the classroom. McDonald and Robinson (2014) stated, “student engagement, integration, and attendance are intrinsically linked to social and academic success within the institution” (p. 67). McDonald and Robinson also

addressed the effects that uprooting can have on student success for first year undergraduate students. Successful integration of first-year college students from home-life to college-life can be integral in producing satisfied students. One way to do this is through successfully integrating students through processes that engage students both inside and outside the classroom. McDonald and Robinson (2014) found that the way to “successfully integrate students into college life is to create programs that promote student engagement with staff and peers at the start of their undergraduate degree to increase student retention, pass rates, and engagement with their degree program.” (p.54) For example, Purdue University has a freshman orientation program called “Boiler Gold Rush” (BGR). This program is aimed at integrating first-year students into college life. The program allows for freshman students to move into their dorms one week before school starts. The week is filled with activities that aim to provide a foundation for students to be successful both inside and outside of the classroom. BGR provides structured activities that help students to learn their way around campus, make friends, and offers tips on academic success. Purdue University’s website (2014) reflects that the mission statement for BGR reads “Boiler Gold Rush is to instill excitement in being a Purdue student through an engaging and enriching environment that provides opportunities to partake in meaningful activities, traditions, leadership development and conversations with students of various backgrounds and experiences.” The activities of the program center directly around increasing engagement and can provide students with tools to reduce burnout. For example, “Interest Sessions” offer study tips and advice on classroom learning, while the

“Resource Fair” introduces students to the university’s plethora of resources offered for the success of students. Programs such as BGR offer the students a foundation on which they can become engaged within the university. This increased sense of engagement can help students to feel more satisfied and less likely to experience burnout. While programs such as BGR do not relate directly to stay interviews, they can provide a foundation for students to start off on the right foot at the college level. Additionally, stay interviews can be used in conjunction with these types of programs in order to maintain the sense of engagement and satisfaction and address issues of burnout before they lead to turnover.

Group Identity and Commitment

Perhaps the most important component influenced through the use of stay interviews is commitment. Because the overarching goal of stay interviews is to reduce turnover, commitment is a primary focus. Research on commitment and group identity maintains that the two concepts are separate, but directly affect one another. Ashforth et al. (2008) defines identification as “viewing a collective’s or role’s defining as self-defining.” (329). Organizational identification intersects with organization commitment in that it “involves a sense of attachment to or resonance with the organization.” (Ashforth et al., 2008, p.332). Identification could be an indicator for organizational commitment, especially in a university setting. For example, as a display of loyalty, students often identify themselves in terms of the university mascot. Students that attend Purdue University might identify themselves as a “Boilermaker”. Students that attend Indiana University identify themselves as “Hoosiers”. This is an example where loyalty is so intense that

organizational members begin to identify with the goals or values of the organization and adopt it as their own identity, and could possibly produce more committed students. We do not see the same type of loyalty in work organizations. Rarely do we see employees identify themselves in terms of their organization, rather they would more likely identify themselves according to their occupation (Ashforth et al., 2008). This could mean that while organizational identity seems more prevalent in higher education, it could hold more weight when students choose to apply at a university. It could also mean, that when a student no longer feels they identify with the university, they are more apt to leave.

Stay interviews may help to build a strong relationship between group members and leaders, which will help goal alignment and further integrate the member in the organization. In turn, group members will become more committed and more likely to stay at an organization. Adler and Adler (1988) and Kramer (2002) both referenced the relationship between identity and commitment in regards to group memberships, with Kramer (2002) saying, "Identification occurs when individuals appropriate the organizational identity and make decisions for the benefit of the organization. Commitment is a temporary involvement with organizational identity that makes behaviors predictable" (p. 167). The concepts of identifying with a group and committing to a group are interdependent of one another. Through identifying with a group, one can build loyalty towards that group and grow more committed. The more a group member identifies with a group, the more likely they are to be committed and the more loyalty they will show to that

group. In turn that group's identity becomes an umbrella under which individuals identify themselves and group membership becomes a priority commitment.

For many group members, identification is the first step in becoming committed to a group. When an individual identifies with group goals and objectives, they are more apt to become committed to that group and eventually become loyal to that group. Cheney (1983) highlighted the importance that modern organizations are placing on identification in respect to employee dedication. He also indicated that organizations "less obtrusively encourage individual involvement, support, and loyalty (p. 103)" and that fostering identification in a less obtrusive manner is intended with the notion that organizational members will voluntarily align with organizational interests and values. On the other hand, groups that have members that display intense loyalty are made up of group members that not only identify with the group, but also take on the identity of the group as a means of identifying themselves. Bona fide groups spur many group members that fulfill temporary commitments to certain organizations. However, some organizations also have members that maintain a sense of intense loyalty towards a certain group that is brought on by strong or charismatic leadership, identification, commitment, integration, and goal alignment (Adler & Adler, 1988). These five forces are capable of producing group members that first identify with a group, become committed to a group, and then begin to take on the group identity in conjunction with their own identity in which they transform their lives in order to revolve around remaining committed and loyal to a particular group.

Dubin et al. (1975) defined organizational commitment as a variable that produces members that indicate: “ (1) a strong desire to remain a member of the particular organization, (2) a willingness to exert high levels of effort on behalf of the organization, and (3) a definite belief in and acceptance of the values and goals of the organization (p. 414). Stay interviews can uncover reasons that an organizational member might not feel the desire to remain a member of the organization, or why that organizational member. Stay interviews can also help group members to address issues of misalignment related to goals, values, and beliefs among the organization and the organizational member. Once these issues are brought to light, leaders and members of the organization can work together to realign the group member with the organization and produce more committed group members.

The Structure of The Stay Interview

While the contents of a stay interview are important, the structure of the interview is also integral to the instruments success. One of the first steps in implementing stay interviews is to research and understand the process of conducting stay interviews and the structure behind creating the interviews. Finnegan (2012) defines the core features of the stay interview, which includes six components: a) Cascade: the first interviews should be conducted at the top leadership level and then cascade down through the organization; b) In Person: the stay interview should be a one-on-one conversation conducted with an individual and interviewer; c) Setting Expectations: Create a sense of urgency and convey why it is important to conduct stay interviews, what you hope to accomplish, and how it

will benefit the individual and organization as a whole. If conducting stay interviews in a work organization, make sure to let employees know that the interviews will focus on only issues within the manager's control, not broad policy issues; d) Scheduling: A stay interview should take around 20 minutes to conduct. Make sure to set up a time to sit down with the individual and devote that time solely to administering the stay interview; e) Separate from performance: make sure to distinguish the stay interview from a performance review. Stay interviews should be focused on specific improvements that can be made to improve the levels of engagement, commitment, and retention; f) Scripted Openings: leaders must open meetings with scripts that point the employee in the right direction and avoid any appearance of implied contract. However, while a script might be provided to get the ball rolling, it is important to ask probing questions to uncover how the individual really feels about their role within the organization (Finnegan, 2012).

By creating a feedback mechanism, such as the stay interview, organizations can focus their retention programs on programs that encourage feedback and work hand-in-hand with administrators as well as leaders. This in turn will help organizations to create an environment that helps individuals to feel more satisfied, engaged, and committed. This study aims to show whether or not the implementation of stay interviews within a university will increase engagement, raise levels of satisfaction, and establish organizational commitment, with the ultimate goal being the retention of those students.

While the bulk of stay interview research focused mainly on retention in work organizations, the same concepts of engagement, satisfaction, and

organizational commitment can be applied to any organization. This study will focus on the use of stay interviews as a means of measuring engagement, satisfaction, and commitment in an academic setting. Any organization wants to engage, satisfy, and produce committed members in order to retain their top performing group members. The same notion applies in an academic setting. Schools want to produce these types of students in hopes of retaining those students until they graduate. Academic institutions stand to benefit from processes that will help to engage students in hopes of increasing organizational commitment and satisfaction, which results in ultimately retaining those students until degree completion. Therefore, based on the literature review regarding satisfaction, engagement, and commitment, the following research questions are offered:

RQ1: Will students that received Stay Interviews be more satisfied than students that did not receive Stay Interviews?

RQ2: Will students that received Stay Interviews be more engaged than students that did not receive Stay Interviews?

RQ3: Will students that received stay interviews be more committed than students that did not receive stay interviews?

METHOD

Introduction

In order to conduct this exploratory study a combination of surveys and interviews were used to collect data. The participants in the study were based on a convenience sample of students in the School of Liberal Arts at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). Next the survey, stay interview, and follow-up interviews were created and implemented on the students depending on what group the students were randomly assigned to. One group received an online survey only, and another group received the stay interview, the online survey, and a follow-up interview. Finally, an analysis of the results was conducted as well as a comparison of findings between groups in order to uncover whether or not stay interviews increased satisfaction, engagement, or commitment among the students that received the stay interviews.

Participants

Data for this study was collected by soliciting a convenience sample comprised of current students enrolled at IUPUI. To qualify for participation in the study, volunteers needed to be a current student enrolled in classes at IUPUI. Overall, twenty-five (n=25) students participated in the study. Of those students, 20% (n=5) were male and 80% (n=20) were female. Additionally, 4% (n=1) were freshman, 25% (n=7) were sophomores, 64% (n=16) were juniors, and 4% (n=1) were seniors. 40% (n=10) of the students reported working full-time, 32% (n=8) worked part-time, and 28% (n=7) do not work throughout the school year. The

average number of credit hours taken among the students was 12.68 hours for the current semester.

Instrumentation

A survey was designed that included questions specifically created for this study as well as questions from existing instruments. The survey is made up of questions drawn from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which was used to measure engagement, and also included questions created specifically for this study that were intended to measure both engagement and commitment. While the stay interview was administered in person, the online survey was emailed to students and conducted online, or given to students to complete directly following the stay interview. To measure engagement, students were asked questions such as: “During the school year, how often have you asked questions or contributed to course discussion in other ways?” To gauge commitment students were asked questions relating directly to intention to stay (see Appendix A).

Interview

Stay interview questions were designed to facilitate discussion among the participants and the interviewer. The questions encouraged dissent as well as positive feedback and were constructed to be open-ended in order to create communication and trust. For example, the students were asked “what frustrates you about school” and “what keeps you motivated?” (see Appendix B). The stay interview was conducted as a one-on-one discussion between students and the interviewer. Probing questions were asked throughout the stay interview to uncover as much as possible in order to gain as much feedback from the student as

possible. The stay interview was also conducted in a manner that encouraged open communication, as opposed to a paper and pen survey.

Finally, in order to conduct a qualitative analysis, a follow-up interview was created that was used on the stay interview students. The follow-up interview dealt directly with how the students that received stay interviews felt in regards to being interviewed. The students were asked questions pertaining to how they felt stay interviews would effect engagement, or if they even thought stay interviews would be a useful tool at the university. Students were also asked questions pertaining to their ability to communicate with the interviewer, (see Appendix C). These questions helped to uncover whether or not the stay interview worked, but also helped to uncover how stay interviews can create trust and open communication among leaders and other organization members.

Data Collection and Sample

An email questionnaire was sent to those students directly admitted into the School of Liberal Arts (SLA) at IUPUI right out of high school (n=100), asking for participation in the study. Each student also received a cover letter describing the purpose of the research and highlighted any implications or risks associated with participation in the study. The email provided students with a link to a survey and asked them to respond to the email if they would be willing to come in for a one-on-one interview. Direct admit students in the SLA have a retention rate of 60%. This means that 60% of the students attending in a given semester enroll the following semester. Additionally, only 40% of those students directly admitted into SLA graduate after six years. This indicated that this group of students would be a group

that would benefit from the use of stay interviews. While 13 students completed the online survey, zero responded to the email indicating they would be willing to participate in an interview. Because of the lack of students that volunteered to participate in stay interviews, this group of students received the survey only.

In order to collect data for the stay interview portion of the study, students from an introductory Communication Studies course were offered extra credit to complete the online survey and stay interview questionnaire in a one-on-one interview.

Twelve students volunteered to participate in the study. This group received stay interviews, the survey, and a brief follow-up interview.

Analysis

This study consisted of two groups, students who received stay interviews and students that did not receive stay interviews. There were three outcomes: engagement, satisfaction, and commitment. Regarding survey data analysis, descriptive statistics on all items were calculated. Tests of group differences, such as T-Tests and Chi-Square were conducted but not used because the test of group differences did not yield sufficient power to find that differences existed. However, mean scores and percentages between students who received stay interviews and those who did not receive stay interviews were examined to see if they suggested if a difference might exist had there been enough participants to detect a difference.

In order to analyze the results of the follow-up interviews, a qualitative analysis was used that focused on thematic analysis in order to uncover themes and patterns within the research. In order to conduct the analysis the follow-up interview was examined to identify and code common themes among the responses

from the follow-up interviews. This included reading over the interview responses multiple times to uncover commonalities. Once the student responses had been read through several times, identifiers were assigned to the various common themes. This allowed categorization of responses in order to focus in on trends that were reported among the student's responses. Finally, the themes were compiled and examined in order to identify if they could relate to the variables: satisfaction, engagement, or commitment.

RESULTS

As previously mentioned, this study was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Descriptive statistics on each question were calculated. It was determined that there was not sufficient power for inferential statistics. The control group only had 13 participants, while the experimental group had 12 participants. However, the results of the descriptive analysis did point towards possible trends in relationships among the dependent variables between the two groups tested. Because the descriptive statistics only pointed towards possible significance, the bulk of results focus on the qualitative analysis and data collected from the follow-up interview.

Satisfaction

There were no survey questions that related directly to satisfaction, therefore, only a qualitative analysis was conducted regarding satisfaction. As far as the analysis of the follow-up interview, when students were asked if they feel that stay interviews offer solutions to identify and solve problems, all students except for one said yes. Most reported liking the personal aspect as opposed to taking an electronic survey. Some mentioned that talking with the interviewer made them realize the benefit in providing feedback and that they liked the “one-on-one” with the interviewer. Additionally, several students reported that just talking about their issues helped them to see it from a different perspective and how they could resolve issues differently. After analyzing this study from a qualitative perspective, three themes emerged among the student responses: 1) Connecting with the interviewer; 2) Face-to-face communication; and 3) Fostering a collaborative environment.

1. Connecting with the interviewer: While this theme aligns more with engagement, and will be discussed in the engagement section, it did produce some interesting student responses regarding satisfaction. Students that participated in the interviews reported that they felt “better” about their circumstances after having talked to the interviewer. One student felt that just talking about her issues at the university helped her to feel like someone cared, but she was not sure if it would be enough to create solutions to problems brought forth by students. For example, when this student was asked if she felt stay interviews would be successful, she responded, “Yes, but only if they were done on a regular basis, like a check-in, with the students. Just conducting them once, without any follow-through would be pointless.” Interestingly, The study found that many students’ issues at the university were not substantive enough to cause them to leave, but they did make them feel dissatisfied. Some students reported that being able to talk through their issues helped them to see an alternative perspective and alleviated some of their feelings of dissatisfaction. One student mentioned, “I understand that it is just as much my responsibility to address issues as it is my advisor or teachers, and I think stay interviews will help to create dialogue and help students to feel better about any problems they might have”

2. Face-to-face communication: In many ways, this study was designed to test the effects of face-to-face communication versus electronic communication. The online survey was administered online and did not offer any opportunity to probe among the responses from students. The stay interview was designed to be conducted face-to-face and gave the interviewer the opportunity to probe deeper

depending on the responses from students. In regards to satisfaction, many students reported that they felt like sitting down with the interviewer added a personal touch to the feedback process. When one student was asked if he thought stay interviews would be successful at the university, he said “yes, because they will allow students to feel like they are being heard.” As covered in the literature review, a sense of self-efficacy or feeling like you have a voice is directly related to satisfaction.

Implementation of stay interviews can foster feedback that allows students to feel like their concerns are valid and that they are being heard by those in a position to provide solutions.

3. Fostering a collaborative environment: Most importantly, stay interviews can effect satisfaction because they promote feedback. The collaboration between a student and teacher, or student and administrator can result in opening the lines of communication and creating a strong LMX relationship. In terms of satisfaction, one student that received the stay interview mentioned that they would feel happier at the university if they had someone they could go to talk issues through with.

Surprisingly, many students mentioned that they did not feel like this was an option with their advisor because many did not know who their advisor was or they felt like their advisor did not have time. One student said “I am a transfer student and I have had three different advisors that tell me three different things. I often feel like I am just passed around, and no one ever communicates with one another.” These are all issues that clear communication and feedback provided through the use of stay interviews can help remedy.

Stay interview questions that addressed satisfaction were designed with the

notion that resolution of issues would increase satisfaction among students. However, one cannot conclude that the students that received stay interviews were actually more satisfied than students that did not receive stay interviews, as the online survey did not directly measure satisfaction. The analysis once again identified a theme of engagement within the responses of students in regards to the satisfaction items, as many reported feeling “connected”. Many students also reported that they felt a sense of responsibility to collaborate with staff and administrators in order to resolve issues. This indicates that as a result of the stay interview, students felt it took engaging with university members in order to bring about solutions to issues.

Engagement

When students were asked how often they contributed in class, the students in the stay interview group (n=12) had a slightly higher score (M=3.0) than those students that were not in the stay interview group (n=13) (M=2.69). However, this does not necessarily reflect that these students were more engaged as a result of the stay interview. These results could simply indicate that students felt more engaged with the interviewer, but not necessarily at the university. Students in the stay interview group also had a slightly higher mean score for the question “How often have you come to class without completing readings or assignments?” This question was reversed scored and the results pointed to the possibility that students that received stay interviews (M=2.83) felt they were slightly more prepared for class than students that did not receive stay interviews (M=2.75.)

When analyzing the follow-up interview, questions that related directly to

engagement were grouped. There were 12 (n=12) students that received stay interviews and a follow-up interview. One theme that emerged was that all students that participated in the stay interviews felt like they could openly communicate with the interviewer during the stay interview. One student commented that they “felt the interviewer was very personable and easy to speak with”. Another theme that emerged was that the students were able to relate to the interviewer. This could be one of the factors as to why the students in the stay interview group had a slightly higher engagement level than those that did not receive stay interviews. These students might have been more engaged at the time of the interview because they were able to interact, one-on-one, with the interviewer, as opposed to filling out an electronic survey. One of the main components of the stay interview is being able to engage with the interviewee and establish trust and open communication. Students that received stay interviews were able to interact with the interviewer and establish a connection that allowed them to relate and engage with the interviewer, indicating that students that received stay interviews felt more engaged than students that did not receive stay interviews, at the time of the actual interview. However, the results of the study do not indicate if this increased engagement level is sustainable. In order to prove reliability, students would have to be tested again to see if they maintain the same engagement scores over time. While the increased engagement might have been the result of the interaction with the interviewer, it is worth noting that repeated interaction with the interviewer, as the stay interview process recommends, could produce sustainable organizational engagement.

One the other hand, when students were asked in the follow-up interviews if

they felt more engaged after receiving stay interviews 41.67% (n=5) reported no or not really, and 41.67% (n=5) reported somewhat or a little bit. One respondent mentioned that talking about their problems or issues made them realize that they have the ability to address and solve these issues themselves. 16.66% (n=2) reported yes, that the stay interviews made them feel more engaged, and one said it made them feel more connected. This question yielded mostly yes/no answers, with no real themes emerging, however, the number of students that answered yes or somewhat, outweighed the number of students that said they did not feel more engaged. It is worth noting that the question asked was “Do you feel more engaged at this university now that you have participated in a stay interview”. Again, this could mean that while students might have felt engaged with the interviewer, they did not necessarily feel more engaged at the University. Also, it would also be necessary to establish what the students consider to be engaged at the university. For some students, engagement could mean participating in class discussion. For others, it could mean joining a club or organization. In order to test whether or not students felt more engaged after the stay interview, a definition of engagement must first be defined.

When asked, “do you feel stay interviews can be used as a tool to enhance communication and build trust between the interviewer and interviewee,” all but one student said yes. Most indicated that they felt they were able to relate well to the interviewer, so that helped to create open communication. Again, open communication and establishing a relatable connection emerged often within the follow-up interview.

Commitment

Several questions within the survey gauged commitment. When students were asked if they felt IUPUI's goals aligned with their own, students in the stay interview group yielded a slightly higher mean (M=2.92) than students not in the stay interview group (M=2.69). The same can be said for students that were asked if they felt a strong sense of belonging at IUPUI (M=2.75 vs M=2.54), and if they felt proud to tell others that they go to IUPUI (M=2.75 vs M=2.69).

When asked during the follow-up interview, "Did the survey affect your likelihood of staying?" Three students said it did affect their likelihood. They reported that they felt that the university is constantly trying to improve and engage students. Three said "No" because they already plan to stay. These students did provide positive comments about the stay interview, saying they could see the benefit in conducting them if they had issues or reasons for wanting to leave IUPUI, and 6 said no, but 4 of those are leaving for personal reasons and have had their mind made up for a while. Based on the thematic analysis, It is not clear whether or not a conclusion can be made linking stay interviews and commitment. However, two interesting themes did emerge:

1. Loyalty – Of the students that intend to stay at the university, most did not say they would stay out of a sense of loyalty. These students were not committed to the university, but committed to finishing their education. The literature review uncovered the link between organizational commitment and identification with an underlying theme of loyalty. After speaking with the students, it became clear that their reason to remain committed to the university did not stem from organizational

identification or even commitment to the university itself, but more that they were committed to degree completion.

2. External circumstances – Students that were leaving the university reported leaving for personal reasons, and not because of the result of unresolved issues at the university. One student said, “I have already made my decision to leave and I don’t think a stay interview would have changed my decision because it was not related to any issues with the university itself.” Stay interviews are designed to be open-ended and encourage the interviewer to ask probing questions. If the interviewer can stimulate enough conversation to address issues outside the university, it might help the student develop tools to overcome these issues and be more inclined to stay. Interestingly, as will be discussed in later, most of the students in the stay interview group transferred from another university because of personal reasons. If this is a trend in higher education, it is possible that implementing stay interviews when transfer students arrive at the university might help them to learn tools that they can apply to all aspects of their life and possibly help them to resolve external issues that could cause them to leave the university.

Overall, most students responded that they do intend to stay at the university, however, it is unclear whether or not they are staying because they are committed or loyal to IUPUI. Also, because most of the students that reported they did not plan to finish their education at IUPUI reported leaving because of personal reasons, it is possible that those students that are currently committed to finishing their education at IUPUI could also leave the university should the same type of personal circumstances arise.

DISCUSSION

After reviewing all survey instruments and interviews, it became clear that the quantitative analysis did not produce any statistically significant results due to the lack of power, but the descriptive data does add support to the research questions. For several of the questions measuring engagement, students in the stay interview group appeared to be more engaged than students not in the stay interview group. However, since the study does not have a base level of engagement to compare these results, it is hard to determine if the stay interview students felt more engaged as a result of the stay interview, or if they were already more engaged prior to conducting the interview. Descriptive data results showed that overall students in the stay interview group had higher mean scores of commitment than students in the group that did not receive stay interviews. This could be the most supportive evidence for the use of stay interviews that this study uncovered. The overarching goal of stay interviews is to retain organizational members. If the students in the stay interview group scored higher on the survey questions measuring commitment, it could indicate that stay interviews will have a positive effective on retention.

From a qualitative perspective, it is not clear if the follow-up interview indicated that the students that received stay interviews were more satisfied or more committed than students that did not receive stay interviews. The student's responses indicate that that students who received stay interviews felt more connected to the interviewer, but do not conclusively uncover whether or not they felt more engaged in their education or at the university. Additionally, because the

students that did not receive stay interviews did not receive a follow-up interview, we cannot make assumptions between groups based on the follow-up interviews alone. It is also worth noting that the group of students in the control group all volunteered to participate in the study without incentive, while the students in the experimental group were offered extra credit to participate in the study. This could indicate that the students in the experimental group might have been more engaged to begin with.

After reviewing the instruments used to measure engagement, satisfaction, and commitment, it became evident that more was gleaned from the stay interview itself than the actual survey results. While this information did not directly support the research questions, it did show that conducting stay interviews could encourage feedback and dissent expression, strengthen the LMX relationship, and build trust. In order to analyze the stay interview, student's responses were viewed from a qualitative perspective in order to uncover trends or themes within their responses.

The Stay Interview

While the stay interview was not analyzed as a means of indicating engagement, satisfaction, or commitment, it did uncover possible indicators for why students might choose to leave or stay at IUPUI. An analysis of the stay interview group uncovered that within the group, almost half of the students were transfer students. Among these students, reasons for transferring were mostly personal and did not directly relate to the university. Students also mentioned that their reasons for attending IUPUI were based mainly on the location and convenience of the campus, and also the fact that IUPUI is a commuter campus. Because the students

did not originally plan to attend IUPUI, this could indicate a lack of commitment to the university to begin with. Another interesting aspect that the stay interviews uncovered was that IUPUI's commuter campus was both a positive and negative for students. Students indicated that they liked attending a smaller university and that it was convenient and they liked the location. However, almost all of the students complained about the lack of parking and many said that because they didn't live on campus, they felt it was more difficult to be involved in student life.

When the students were asked, "Why did you choose to go to IUPUI" many mentioned personal reasons, such as family or relationships, for coming to IUPUI, and most of the transfers came from a larger university. Many students mentioned that they wanted to be at a smaller school or closer to home. A lot of students said that they felt overwhelmed at their previous schools and found it hard to keep on track. One student who transferred from Indiana University (IU) said, "Attending a larger university gave me too many options and too much freedom." This was especially interesting because it suggested that while engagement and satisfaction might be high, it might not necessarily lead to student's success at the university. When the same student was asked if he felt engaged at his previous university he said "yes". He was then asked him if he felt satisfied and he said "yes". Finally, he was asked him if he felt committed and he said he still feels a "sense of loyalty and identifies himself as a "Hoosier" even though he no longer attends IU." The student mentioned that he was highly engaged at the university, but not necessarily in classroom activities, which is what ultimately lead him to IUPUI. This type of

response suggests that engagement may need to be focused on specific types of activities in order to promote retention, such as engagement in the classroom.

When the stay interview students were asked, “What things do you most look forward to in a normal school day”, many students responded with answers pertaining to learning new things and the social interaction with their peers. For example, one student said “I like feeling like I get something out of class.” This shows that the students do have an interest in learning, however many students also complained about having to complete the Core curriculum for SLA, saying that they felt like they would never use some of the things they were learning in these classes. This could mean that students are only engaged in topics that interest them, or that they will be able to apply to something outside the classroom, perhaps in their future career.

The other component, peer interaction, was also interesting because it showed that the students are interested in engaging with their peers, but these relationships do not necessarily transfer outside the classroom. When probed about these responses, students mentioned that they had their core group of friends, mostly formed with people outside the university, not necessarily people that they met in class, clubs, or organizations. Many students mentioned that the bulk of their friends were individuals they were friends with before they attended the university. It is possible that these pre-established relationships already satisfy student’s social needs and they do not seek additional engagement in campus life outside of the classroom. It would be interesting to conduct this study at a larger university that is not considered a commuter campus. For example, students at Purdue University

might have more of a need to get involved in clubs and organization as a means to establish relationships with their peers. Another variable that would be interesting to test would be how international students become engaged at the university. These students come from countries all around the world and are leaving friends and family behind. When these students come to IUPUI, it is likely they are coming to a city where they do not know anyone and they might need to get involved in campus life as a means to find a peer group. Engaging these types of students might be key to ensuring that the university retains these students.

Finally, students were asked what frustrates them and what motivates them to succeed at IUPUI. For the question pertaining to frustration, an overwhelming amount of students said parking. Because of the campuses downtown location, there is not a lot that can be done about this specific issue. In order to probe deeper, students were asked if they have ever had any issues with professors or administrators. Some of the transfer students mentioned being frustrated with the process of transferring credits, and others said they do not even know who their advisor is. A lot of students mentioned that they have had several advisors since they have been at the university. Since establishing a relationship with a superior in which an individual feels comfortable providing feedback is one of the key components of a stay interview, this response poses a problem in terms of stay interviews. If students do not know where they can express upward dissent or provide feedback, they will be more likely to express that dissent to peers or outside the organization, which as covered in the literature review, could indicate intention

to leave. Tackling these types of administrative issues could be a step in the right direction to creating more satisfied students.

On the other hand, when students were asked “what keeps you motivated to excel at this institution”, many students responded with answers pertaining to completing their degree or wanting to get a good job. Students seemed motivated by what their education means for their future, and not necessarily what they can get out of their education now. It would be interesting to see what students responses would be if they did not look at their education as a means to an end, but rather as something that is benefiting them in the present. As mentioned earlier, many students indicated that they like learning something new or feeling like they are getting something out of class, which shows that students are interested in learning, but more apt to stay motivated if it is something that they can apply outside the classroom, ideally in a future career.

When asked about intention to leave, there were two students in the stay interview group that do not plan to finish school at IUPUI. It is worth noting that both of these students mentioned personal reasons for wanting to leave the university. When both students were asked “Has something caused you to consider leaving? Has it been resolved?”, one mentioned that she had just gotten her dream job, and the other student said that she was not happy at the university, but this was not due to anything that the university had done. Interestingly, this student mentioned that she had sought help, through counseling services, to try to resolve issues at IUPUI, and did feel that the service was helpful but she mentioned it was very hard to get an appointment. A follow-up question was asked to see if she

thought if appointment availability were not an issue then would she consider staying and she still said “no.” Both students stated that the stay interview would not affect their decision because they had already made the decision to leave. This supports current research on stay interviews because it shows that they are to be proactive and not reactive. If you give them to students that already know they are leaving, it is not likely that those students will change their mind and stay. However, if you give them to students regularly, as part of a process, IUPUI might be able to uncover and address issues before students make the decision to leave.

Finally, the most interesting finding from the stay interviews pertained to student engagement. When students were asked if they felt like IUPUI did a good job of promoting clubs and organizations, many students responded, “yes”. A follow-up question along the lines of “are you involved in any clubs or organizations?” was asked. Every single student in the stay interview group said “no”. Even more interestingly, when those students were asked if they would like to be involved in any clubs or organizations, almost all of them said “no”. Students also mentioned that they felt students could be as engaged at the university as much as they wanted to be, indicating that the university was doing their part to engage students, but it was up to the students to want to be engaged. This indicates that in order to link stay interviews to engagement, future research would first have to focus on what produces students that want to be engaged. A university can do everything correct as far as engaging students, but it is up to the students to reciprocate engagement.

Conclusion

This exploratory study produced many roadblocks. Research on stay interviews is limited as it is a relatively new concept. Additionally, finding a group of willing participants, without offering an incentive, is a struggle within any study. Unfortunately, the study was unable to draw a sample large enough to produce significant quantitative results, however, it did produce some interesting findings from both the survey and interview instruments.

While the quasi-experiment did not necessarily prove that stay interviews will increase engagement, commitment, or satisfaction after one use of the stay interview, the follow-up interview with the students that did receive stay interviews showed that the interview helped to build trust between the interviewer and interviewee, and also allowed for communication that fostered feedback, and in some cases dissent. These are all components that are promoted through the use of stay interviews, and can result in increased engagement, satisfaction, and commitment. Stay interviews are supposed to be a process that helps create change overtime and not to be used as a one-time occurrence to prevent turnover. At the onset of the study, it was not expected to see a huge difference among the groups tested because in order to create positive change, the issues that arise in the stay interview must be addressed and steps must be taken to remedy those issues. If students in the stay interview group would have been exposed to multiple stay-interviews, it is possible that there would have been a gradual increase in their engagement, commitment, and satisfaction scores, as opposed to the students who are not exposed to stay-interviews. The results suggest that if a longitudinal study

were to be conducted, it would yield stronger results and support for the use of stay interviews.

It is also worth noting that the students in the stay interview group that said they did not plan to stay at the university were not leaving because something specific to the university, but because of personal reasons. Another interesting comment that almost all of the interviewees in the stay interview group made was that they felt like each student can be as engaged at the university as they want to be and that engagement, as far as student-life, outside of the classroom is concerned, is more of a personal choice than a university responsibility. When students were asked if they participate in any clubs, they all said no, and that they did not necessarily want to. In the stay interview discussions with this group it seemed like most students chose to go to IUPUI solely for their education and not for social reasons. However, It seems possible promoting student-life can help to create more engaged and satisfied students that are more likely to remain committed to the university.

While the analysis did not produce any concrete results to indicate that stay interviews will indefinitely increase engagement, satisfaction, or commitment, the study did produced some significant findings that can contribute to current research on stay interviews. This is due in part to the lack of research on stay interviews. However, the lack of research allowed me to produce an exploratory study that resulted in support of the claims made by proponents of stay interviews. As mentioned in the literature review, two main components of stay-interviews are creating open communication and fostering feedback. It is clear from the follow-up

interview that conducting stay-interviews resulted in both two-way communication between the interviewee and interviewer, and also fostered both positive feedback and dissent.

The results of this study supports current arguments over the use of stay-interviews as a retention tool and adds to the conversation as to whether or not stay interviews are a legitimate tool for organizations to employ. Moving forward, a longitudinal study would produce more concrete results that relate directly, to engagement, satisfaction, and commitment. However, it is safe to conclude that stay-interviews can be used as a communication tool to foster feedback; they can be used as an alternative to exit interviews; and can offer a proactive solution to retention problems.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Appendix A

Student Online Survey

1. What is your class level?
2. What is your gender?
3. How many credit hours are you taking this semester?
4. Are you working either full-time or part-time this semester?
5. During the school year how much have you asked questions or contributed to course discussion on other ways?
6. During the school year how often have you gone to class without completing readings or assignments?
7. During the school year how often have you prepared for exams by discussing or working through course materials with other students?
8. Before you graduate, do you plan to participate in an internship, co-op, field experience, student teaching, or clinical placement?
9. Before you graduate, do you plan to work with a faculty member on a research project?
10. Before you graduate, do you plan on completing a culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, portfolio, etc.)?
11. Are you a student-athlete at this institution?
12. Did you receive a scholarship to attend this institution?
13. Did you begin your education at this institution?
14. Would you recommend attending this institution to friends?

15. If you could start again, would you go to this same institution?
16. IUPUI'S goals and values strongly align with mine.
17. I feel a strong sense of belonging at IUPUI.
18. I am proud to tell others that I go to IUPUI.
19. I feel a strong sense of loyalty to IUPUI.

Appendix B

Stay Interview Survey

1. What things do you most look forward to in your school day?
2. Why do you stay at IUPUI?
3. What frustrates you about school?
4. What keeps you motivated?
5. What keeps you from doing the best you can?
6. What are some reasons that might make you consider leaving the organization?
7. Has something caused you to consider leaving? Has it been resolved?
8. What are some ways we can help you be successful at this organization?

Appendix C

Follow-up Questionnaire

1. Did you feel you were able to openly communicate with the interviewer while conducting the stay interview?
2. Do you feel more engaged at this university now that you have participated in a stay interview?
3. Do you feel that stay interviews can offer a solution to identifying and solving problems? Why or why not?
4. Do you feel stay interviews can be used as a tool to enhance communication and build trust between the interviewee and interviewer?
5. Did this survey/interview process affect your likelihood of staying at this university? How so?

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Human Resources Assistant, July 2014-Present

- Provide administrative support to the Human Resources Department
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- Responsible for onboarding new hires including processing paperwork, state reporting, I-9 verification, and benefit enrollment.
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