

## Introduction

The annual survey of American's best college reveals authoritative rankings of American's colleges according to their overall performance. Among the performance criteria, the performance of graduated students is an important indicator. Similarly, Taiwan's Global View magazine also annually reveals a survey of the most favorite university students of enterprises. Top ranked schools all feel highly honored and use this survey as means to attract prospective students. For example, when announced as the most favorite private university by enterprises, the president of Tamkang University proudly announced that this university has probably the best education environments, providing students with opportunities to achieve multiple goals, such as rigorous academic training and a variety of extra curriculum activities (Chen, 2011). This situation raises another important consideration for universities: how to have first-year students quickly fit in their new environments at the beginning of study.

To cultivate a university's values on new students can be considered as newcomers' socialization process. Researchers of organizational socialization process primarily focus on organizational entry process of newcomers. Earlier turnover caused by unmet fit turns investment, including recruiting, selecting, and training expenditure, into sunk cost (Griffeth & Hom, 2001). Although volumes of studies have been made to understand how newcomers' adjustment arises, the theoretical lenses of the literature mainly stay in two streams. First, researchers emphasize the influences of newcomers' characteristics, such as pre-entry knowledge (Cable & Parsons, 2001), proactive personality (Kim, Hon, & Grant, 2009), and self-efficacy (Ashforth, Sluss, & Saks, 2007; Jones, 1986). Second, others emphasize the influences of the use of organizational socialization tactics (Gruman, Saks, & Zweig, 2006).

However, there are two relatively little known aspects. First, most studies neglect the relational variables on newcomers' adjustment. However, the theoretical relevance of the relational view on newcomer' adjustment has begun to receive attention, such as interpersonal communications between newcomers and experienced members of the organization (Moreland & Levine, 1988). Second, most studies do not focus on when an

event occurs (Morita, Lee, & Mowday, 1993). Saks and Ashforth (1997) credited the abundant literature of newcomer adjustment and challenged researchers to answer “how organizations do to facilitate newcomers’ adjustment,” which means little research is focused on newcomers’ time of adjustment. Since organizational turnover is often high among newcomers (Griffeth & Hom, 2001), facilitating newcomers’ socialization has come to attention.

Thus, the purpose of the study is two folds. First, we address relational variables as antecedents. Second, by taking up Saks and Ashforth’ challenge in 1997, we propose that the ‘time of adjustment’ is also an important consideration. A university’s socialization of first-year students provides us a unique context to address the relationship between relational view and adjustment time: (a) It is an important consideration that how universities do to have their unique vision, values, and ideas implanted into new students and, after graduation, they can continue serve the society and bring more reputations to their schools; (b) Unlike firms, the relationships between school and students are more suitable to utilize relational view; (c) Methodologically, since first-year college students enter school at the same time (say, fall semester), the well-defined starting point (Morita et al., 1993) is an advantage for us to examine their time of adjustment.

To well handle newcomers’ time of adjustment, we utilize event history analysis, EHA (Kalbfleisch & Prentice, 1980). The features of this method is strong in dealing with events occurring with different probabilities. In the past, EHA were widely used in biomedical and social demographic research, e.g. Levinthal (1991). It is now widely used in organizational research, such as employee’s turnover rate (Morita et al., 1993), firms’ entry timing into new subfields (Mitchell, 1989), and firms’ international expansion (Chang, 1995). In line with this stream of thought, our study aims to empirically examine the effects of organizational and personal characteristics on organization newcomer’s adjustment time.

We begin developing theoretical rationale by establishing individual characteristics, task characteristics, and organizational supports as primary antecedents of adjustment time. In the next section, drawing on the theoretical arguments presented, we develop hypotheses. In methods section, we explain the hypothesis-testing procedures. Finally, we end this paper with discussion of results and theoretical and practical implications.