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Profiles of fit and misfit: a repeated weekly measures study of perceived value congruence

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ABSTRACT

Value congruence is generally studied as a stable experience instead of a dynamic phenomenon. This static approach largely ignores the emerging evidence that the fit experiences of individuals vary over time, and that different individuals may develop distinct experience profiles as time unfolds. We hypothesize that these temporal profiles of value congruence provide relevant insights into the relationship between perceived value congruence and employee functioning. We conducted a repeated weekly measures study with 125 white-collar Belgian employees to assess perceptions of value congruence and work role behaviours during 12 consecutive weeks. Through cluster analysis we were able to group employees with similar experience profiles based on average, variance, and frequency of changes into five distinct fit and misfit types. These were differentially related to two types of work role behaviours, i.e., work role proficiency (task performance and organizational citizenship behaviour) and work role proactivity (change-oriented behaviour and innovative work behaviour). Overall, our findings challenge the idea that fit–misfit is a dichotomous category, and underscore the need for more temporal research on perceptions of organizational fit in order to get a better understanding of how different types of fit and misfit behave in work settings.

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KEYWORDS

PE fit; value congruence; person-centred; temporal profiles; clustering

Past studies on person–environment (PE) fit strongly emphasized the importance of achieving congruence between personal and organizational values because values provide key criteria for decision-making in the workplace (Chatman, 1991; Kristof, 1996; Meglino, Ravlin, & Adkins, 1989). Value congruence is commonly conceptualized as the similarity between an individual's values and the value system of the organization (Chatman, 1989). Congruence in values promotes interpersonal attraction, enhances communication, and creates trust within the organization (Edwards & Cable, 2009), and is therefore known for being an important influence of work attitudes, turnover intentions, and in-role and extra-role performance (e.g., Hoffman & Woehr, 2006; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005; Verquer, Beehr, & Wagner, 2003; Vogel, Rodell, & Lynch, 2016).

Despite the fact that substantial empirical progress has been made in understanding how value congruence relates to outcomes in the attitudinal, behavioural, and cognitive domain, research on value congruence is increasingly criticized for being overly static and ignoring the potential for temporal variability (Boon & Biron, 2016; Gabriel, Diefendorff, Chandler, Moran, & Greguras, 2014; Jansen & Shipp, 2013; Shipp & Jansen, 2011). In the past, researchers have predominantly studied the relationship between value congruence and work outcomes by means of cross-sectional designs in which all variables are measured at the same point in time (e.g., Vogel & Feldman, 2009; Wheeler, Gallagher, Brouer, & Sablinski, 2007), or static longitudinal designs based on single value congruence measurements (e.g., Cable & DeRue, 2002;

Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009). The underlying assumption so far has been that value congruence represents a static experience, much like something that is firm or fixed over time and only differs between people (i.e., person A experiences more value congruence compared to person B). Such cross-sectional and static longitudinal investigations thus focus on “what is” rather than “what happens” (Roe, 2008), and largely negate the possibility that employees' fit experiences vary over time (e.g., the value congruence experience of both person A and B may differ across situations; see Gabriel et al., 2014; Swider, Zimmerman, & Barrick, 2015). Moreover, studies so far have been unable to account for how temporal process factors such as variance or frequency of change define individual experience (e.g., person A may be a distinct type of fit compared to person B because she has a different trajectory of experiences; see Shipp & Jansen, 2011). Static research designs are thus problematic because they are bounded by what they can reveal about the true relationship between two variables (George & Jones, 2000; Hausknecht, Sturman, & Roberson, 2011; Roe, 2008), and therefore limit theoretical and empirical advancements in PE fit research (Jansen & Shipp, 2013).

The main objective of this study is to move beyond the current static research on PE fit by studying value congruence through a temporal lens. To this end, we use cluster analyses to group employees into different profiles of fit and misfit based on three temporal parameters, i.e., employees' baseline experience of value congruence, the variance in their experiences, and the frequency by which these experiences change. Scholars (e.g., Ostroff & Fulmer, 2014; Roe, 2008) have argued

that such a systematic examination of the degree and structure of variability beyond the mean holds promise to generate theoretically meaningful research that is also practically impactful. In terms of the latter, we explore which benefits and drawbacks are associated with these different profiles of fit and misfit by examining how these profiles relate to two distinct classes of individual and organizational work role behaviours (see Griffin, Neal, & Parker, 2007), i.e., work proficiency outcomes (here, task performance and organizational citizenship behaviour directed at the organization – hereafter called OCB-O) and work proactivity outcomes (here, innovative work behaviour and change-oriented behaviour).

Theoretical framework

A dynamic perspective on value congruence experiences

Values are fundamental beliefs about normatively desirable behaviours or end states, and form the criteria through which decisions are evaluated (Liedtka, 1989; Rokeach, 1973). Values are general convictions about what is desirable and meaningful (e.g., relationships, prestige or security), and can be hierarchically ordered in terms of importance (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990). Although value change may occasionally happen over longer time periods as an organization or its leadership transitions or individuals are socialized into new environments (e.g., Cable & Parsons, 2001; Cooper-Thomas, Van Vianen, & Anderson, 2004), individual and organizational values are commonly seen as stable and durable (Chatman, 1989; Meglino & Ravlin, 1998).

Theoretically, value congruence perceptions are believed to result from a cognitive comparison of the discrepancy between individual and organizational values (French, Caplan, & Harrison, 1982; Kristof, 1996). The commonly held assumption that value congruence represents a stable construct directly builds on the premise that both personal and environmental values are stable. However, this does not negate the very possibility that *perceptions* of value congruence are instable even when underlying personal and organizational values are stable. Indeed, an accumulating body of evidence demonstrates that individuals' perceptions of value congruence are, in fact, quite dynamic (see Gabriel et al., 2014; Swider et al., 2015). The reason for this may be that value congruence perceptions are less rational or calculative than has been assumed thus far. An insightful study by Edwards and colleagues (Edwards, Cable, Williamson, Lambert, & Shipp, 2006) suggests that individuals do not systematically compare and contrast P and E factors when forming perceptions of fit. Instead, fit perceptions may originate from more interpretative or even heuristic processes as individuals make sense of their ongoing experiences in the work environment (Vleugels, De Cooman, Verbruggen, & Solinger, 2018; Yu, 2013).

Arguably, perceptions of value congruence do not stem from reading wall pamphlets or company brochures, but are instead molded through the day-to-day interaction with managers and colleagues, or via exposure to a company's systems, processes and procedures. Because company values are not always consistently translated into action, the content of these value signals can vary over time. Although it is common to

think of organizations as "cultures" in terms of a unitary set of values, norms and beliefs shared by the organization's members (Chatman & O'Reilly, 2016), scholars (e.g., Liedtka, 1989; Martin, 2002; Ostroff & Schulte, 2014) have questioned this assumption of unity and consensus, and have instead emphasized ambiguity, fragmentation, and multidimensionality as key elements in cultures (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2013). In addition, values often manifest in a dynamic relational context (Blustein, 2011), and the degree to which values are shared by coworkers can vary within organizations. Hence, and building on the premise that "the people make the place" (Schneider, 1987, p. 437), exposure to the different behaviours, interests, and opinions of coworkers has the power to situationally conceal or disclose overlap in values (Cooper-Thomas & Wright, 2013). For example, interpretations of how prototypical employees communicate, react to environmental events, or decide what to prioritize may be sufficient for individuals to experience (lack of) value congruence (Meglino, Ravlin, & Adkins, 1991; Van Vianen, Stoelhorst, & De Goede, 2013). From this perspective, perceptions of value congruence can be dynamic because they are embedded in individuals' ongoing personal (e.g., social relationships) and impersonal (e.g., exposure to a company's processes and procedures) interactions with the work environment. These dynamic interactions produce an ongoing stream of information on what is valued in a particular environment at a given moment in time, and these value signals can sometimes divert from the "true" values or the dominant culture of the company.

Temporal parameters of fluctuations in value congruence experiences: average, variance, and frequency of change

A temporal profile refers to a sequence of data points which together create a meaningful pattern across time. Ostroff and Fulmer (2014) suggest that three meaningful temporal parameters can be derived from such a temporal profile, i.e., the average, the variance, and the frequency of change.

Average level of value congruence

Past studies on perceived value congruence have usually adopted a between-person level approach to study how differences in individuals' general perception of value congruence impact upon outcomes. These studies typically show that higher levels of perceived fit result in more favourable work attitudes, higher job satisfaction, and better performance (Hoffman & Woehr, 2006; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Verquer et al., 2003). The common thread of these studies is that they tap into individuals' average or baseline level of value congruence (i.e., generalized across multiple situations) and seek to explain how average differences in value congruence relate to average differences in outcome measures. Mathematically speaking, the average refers to the arithmetic mean of a list of numbers that can be obtained by dividing the sum of all numbers by the total amount of numbers. In the context of a repeated measures study on fit experiences, the average level of value congruence is a calculation of each participant's baseline level of perceived fit, i.e., their propensity to experience fit as high, medium, or low across situations. Figure 1 represents a graphical comparison of fictitious perceived value congruence data for three persons (A, B, C)

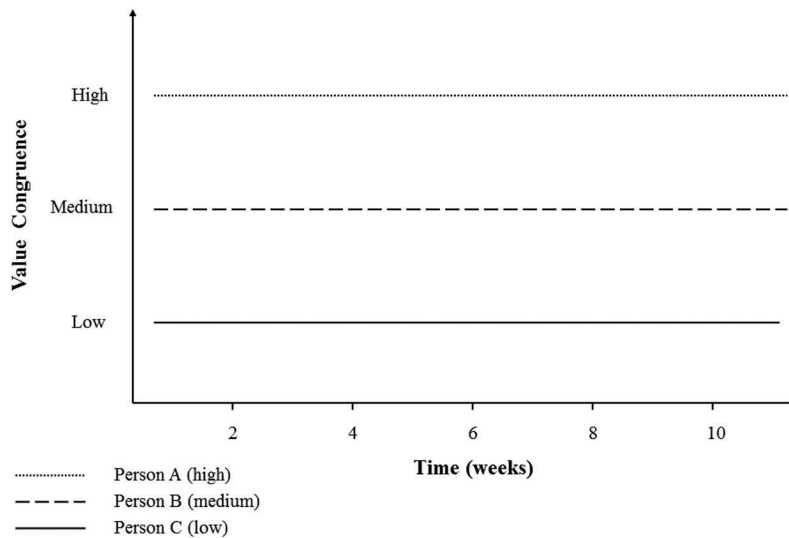


Figure 1. Average level of value congruence experience.

with different average levels of value congruence. From the perspective of the employee, a higher baseline of value congruence should be associated with more favourable outcomes (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

Variance in value congruence experiences

In line with a growing body of evidence showing that many organizational psychology constructs show sizable levels of within-person variability (Dalal & Hulin, 2008), researchers (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2014; Swider et al., 2015; Vleugels, et al., 2018) have started to explore how fluctuations in affect, job satisfaction, work performance and job choice decisions are related to fluctuations in fit perceptions over time. However, organizational fit researchers usually overlook the possibility that some individuals may have large fluctuations in fit perceptions while other people may have relatively stable fit perceptions over time. Although potentially important,

these differences in variance are typically ignored in organizational fit research. The variance essentially refers to the extent to which data points deviate from the arithmetic mean of a given data set. In the context of a repeated measures study on fit experiences, the variance refers to the difference in individuals' fit experiences across these various situations. When the variance increases, the differences between an individual's fit experiences become more extreme (see Figure 2). The variance is seldom treated as an independent construct separate from the average level of the response. However, as has been demonstrated in research outside the PE fit domain, the variance in persons' responses may indicate something important about the underlying phenomenon and process that researchers attempt to explain (e.g., Debusscher, Hofmans, & De Fruyt, 2015; Judge, Simon, Hurst, & Kelley, 2014; Kuppens, Oravecz, & Tuerlinckx, 2010), and should thus be seen as a

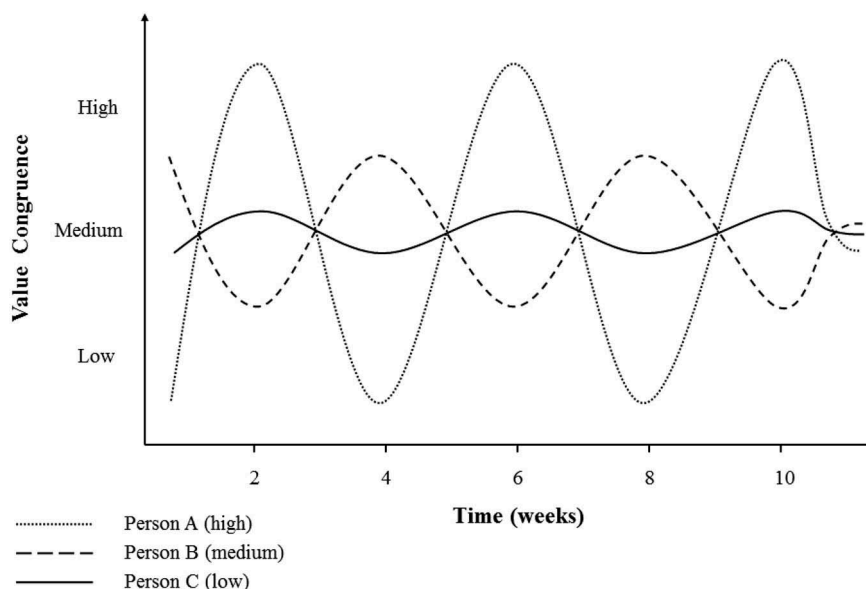


Figure 2. Variance in value congruence experiences.

meaningful construct that is worthy of explicit attention (Ostroff & Fulmer, 2014). Consider for example the temporal value congruence experiences of persons A, B, and C (Figure 2). All three persons show identical (i.e., medium) baseline experiences but different variance patterns. Person A's value congruence experiences are highly scattered, while persons B and C show respectively medium and low levels of variance in value congruence experiences. These differences in variance may result in a completely different feel about how well a person's values match the values of the work environment, and in turn have important consequences for that person's thoughts, feelings, and behaviour in the workplace.

Frequency of change in value congruence experiences

In addition to the overall mean score and the degree of variance in individual perception, the frequency of "highs" and "lows" across all measures (i.e., the structure of the variance) also contributes to a better understanding of an individual's temporal fit profile. That is, people can display divergent patterns of fluctuations in fit perceptions even when they have the same degree of variance (Ostroff & Fulmer, 2014). The frequency of an event refers to the number of times the event has occurred within an a priori specified time frame. In the context of a repeated measures study on fit experiences, the frequency of change refers to the number of alternations between experiences of high and low fit. With increasing frequency, the amount of "ups" and "downs" in individuals' fit experiences also increases, whilst the duration of each experience decreases (see Figure 3). The frequency of change is thus a meaningful indicator of the velocity or speed by which fit experiences change over time, and conveys information about the pervasiveness of people's fit experiences. Research shows that such velocity feedback is an important predictor of affect, attitudes, and behaviour in the workplace (see Chang, Johnson, & Lord, 2010; Johnson, Howe, & Chang, 2012). Moreover, velocity information is believed to have a

stronger impact on outcomes compared to discrepancy information (Carver & Scheier, 1998), so that fast changes can compensate for undesirable experiences of low fit (Chang et al., 2010; Johnson, Taing, Chang, & Kawamoto, 2013). As an example, consider the frequency patterns of persons A, B, and C (Figure 3). Person A frequently alternates between experiences of high and low congruence. Person B experiences a gradual change from high to low and back to high congruence, while person C reports a transient yet enduring experience of low congruence. Although person A has more absolute experiences of low congruence, persons B and C will likely be more affected by their lack of congruence given the pervasiveness of their experiences. The example above indicates that the frequency by which fit experiences change may also have important implications for the prediction of individual outcomes.

Hypotheses

A typology of value congruence experience profiles

Based on the interplay between individuals' baseline (i.e., average) level of fit, the differences between fit experiences (i.e., variance), and their pervasiveness (i.e., frequency of change), we propose that, in any random sample of the working population, various value congruence profiles are likely to show up, which can be grouped into different types of fit and misfit. In what follows, we will describe four generic fit and misfit types, i.e., fits, weak fits, mavericks, and misfits. It is important to note that the typology we describe here is tentative and based on past empirical research and writings on organizational fit, which means these types are to be seen as ideal types or profile families (see Solinger, van Olffen, Roe, & Hofmans, 2013). Hence, not all fit and misfit profiles need to resemble these ideal types exactly. That is, different fit and misfit realities exist in heterogeneous samples, and many different and unique fit and misfit patterns can show up. Our typology thus contains typically occurring

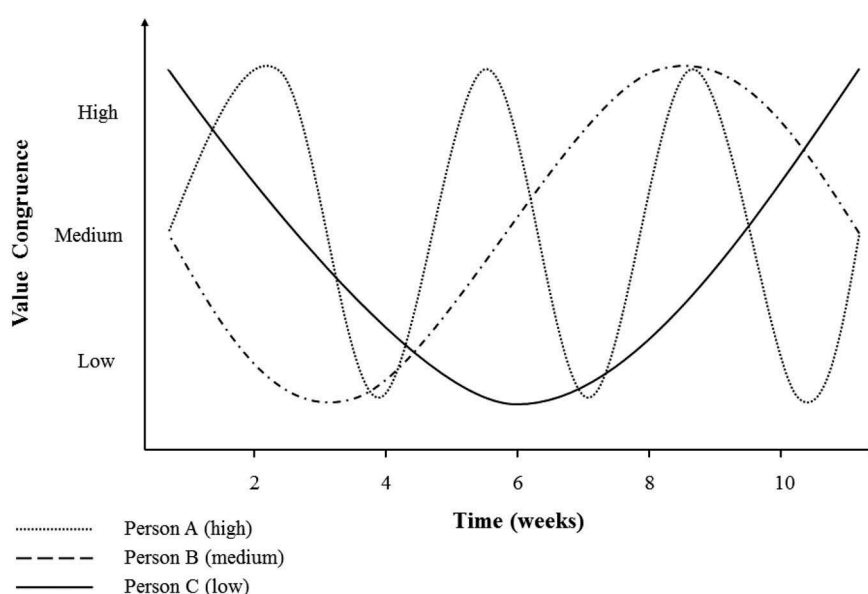


Figure 3. Frequency of change in value congruence experiences.

profiles predicted from the organizational fit literature, but not necessarily their actual instantiations.

High fitting profiles: fits

Fits are people who have successfully emerged from the processes of recruitment, selection and socialization (Chatman, 1991; Kristof, 1996). Because the values of fits overlap with the value system of the organization, they should report a high baseline level of perceived value congruence that well exceeds the midpoint of the value congruence scale. In addition, fits would naturally be expected to experience very little variance and changes in their fit experiences. This is because fits should have developed a clear understanding of what the organization's culture is like, and have learned that their values match those of their work environment (Cable & Parsons, 2001; Chatman, 1991; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2004). For example, employees who prioritize fulfilling social relationships and work in organizations characterized by prosocial values should, once they discovered they fit in, experience a continued sense of value congruence throughout their tenure with their organization. As a consequence, their perceptions of value congruence should be consistent, pervasive, and more resistant to "noisy" value signals. The profile of someone who fits is generally thought to be the desired and usual state that both employees and employers seek (Kristof, 1996; Schneider, 1987). Because research has shown that individuals who perceive congruence in values are less likely to leave (Hoffman & Woehr, 2006; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Verquer et al., 2003), fits should be highly tenured and most prevalent in organizations (Schneider, Goldstein, & Smith, 1995).

Low fitting profiles: weak fits and mavericks

Weak fits. Various scholars have entertained the possibility that there are people in organizations who neither really fit nor misfit. Cooper-Thomas and Wright (2013) speak of this type as "borderline fits", by which they refer to people who find themselves somewhere in the middle on the transition from fit to misfit. Likewise, Solinger et al. (2013) identified a group of "moderate matching profiles" who emerged from the process of socialization with lower levels of commitment and organizational fit. Further, Vogel et al. (2016) observed that a small subset of the respondents in their sample rated their personal work values as overall less important than the values of the organization, which according to the authors indicates that achieving a sense of value fit with the organization is relatively unimportant to these individuals because they attach more emphasis to activity in the non-work domain. All in all, the available evidence suggests that in any given sample of the working population there exists a group of low fitting individuals who generally lack a strong sense of fit with their employing organization. Due to their imperfect alignment, weak fits should experience lower average levels of value congruence, lingering around the midpoint of the value congruence scale. However, the socialization processes seem to have helped these people realize that this lack of fit is not something that concerns them greatly. As an example, Cooper-Thomas and Wright (2013) discuss the case of an employee who lacks a sense of fit with his social environment,

without experiencing this as a deal breaker per se. Given that weak fits seem to be accepting of their condition, their value congruence experiences could naturally be expected to fluctuate closely around their lower baseline level of fit, without extending into the territory of misfit. This should result in a lower-than-average level of variance in combination with a higher-than-average frequency of change, indicating that experiences of both high fit and misfit are not only unusual but also, if they occur, short-lived.

Mavericks. Tentative evidence suggests that another low fitting profile exists within organizations, to which scholars have referred as outsiders (Becker, 1963), nonconformists (McMurry, 1974), risk-taking innovators (Kouzes & Posner, 1987), or organizational deviants (Spreitzer & Sonenshein, 2003). The central feature that distinguishes this profile from any other company profile is that these people tend to engage in maverick behaviour, like violating behavioural norms and going against the established social order (Gardiner & Jackson, 2012, 2015). This is the "positive" type of misfit that scholars (e.g., Cheverton, Vincent, & Wilson, 2001; Schneider, 1987; Vogel et al., 2016) have talked about; the type of misfit that shakes up the organization by doing things a bit differently. Because mavericks are unconventional and independent individuals, they are unlikely to compromise their values to fit in. In situations when an unavoidable choice has to be made between following one's own values versus those of the organization, mavericks represent the small subset of individuals who refuse to yield to the influence of the company culture or the group to which he or she belongs (Liedtka, 1989). Although mavericks do not readably conform, they should not be seen as "rebels without a cause". The evidence suggests that mavericks are essentially company-oriented individuals, yet often feel constrained in their interactions by existing conventions and therefore embark on challenging some of them. At the same time, they comply with others in order to avoid incomprehensibility and lack of collaboration (Becker, 1982; Jones, Svejenova, Strandgaard Pedersen, & Townley, 2016; Ray, Ugbah, Brammer, & DeWine, 1996), resulting in intermittent and relatively enduring episodes of cooperation and conflict. As a result, mavericks should experience both "highs and lows" in their relationship with their employer, resulting in strongly varying experiences that will occasionally dip into misfit. Their average level of perceived value congruence can be expected to linger somewhere around the transition from fit to misfit, with a higher-than-average variance level and a lower-than-average frequency of change. Mavericks are therefore different from weak fits (who also have low average levels of value congruence) because the latter have few, if any, high fit or misfit experiences. Mavericks are also different from misfits (below) because misfits experience an enduring value conflict (Deng, Wu, Leung, & Guan, 2016). Misfits are out of place and do not thrive in organizations, whereas mavericks can.

Misfitting profiles: misfits

Misfits are people for whom the socialization process has made them realize that they do not share the values of the organization. More than this, they actively value different

things from the organization, and these two sets of values are antagonistic in ways that matter to the people who feel like a misfit (Cooper-Thomas & Wright, 2013; Vogel et al., 2016). Therefore, misfits are different from weak fits and mavericks because they experience value incongruence rather than low levels of value congruence. Consider, for example, a situation of mismatch regarding autonomy. Misfit is not so much an issue of whether an employee values autonomy more or less than the organization does. Rather, misfit would imply that the individual and the organization have clearly preferred alternative values that appear to be mutually exclusive, which is for instance the case for employees who highly prioritize autonomy but work in organizations characterized by micromanagement. Similar to fit, the state of misfit is a strong and pervasive one. Hence, not only should misfits experience the lowest average levels of value congruence of any of the groups, reflected by an average score below the midpoint of the value congruence scale, they should also exhibit a lower-than-average level of variance and a lower-than-average frequency of change. Misfits are likely to be scarce in any organizational setting as the literature suggests that the state of misfit is a very disabling and destructive one (e.g., Cooper-Thomas & Wright, 2013; Deng et al., 2016), from which people are keen to free themselves by finding employment elsewhere (Schneider, 1987; Wheeler et al., 2007).

Based on the above we formulate three hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: At least four different types of organizational fit and misfit profiles can be observed, i.e., fits, weak fits, mavericks, and misfits.

Hypothesis 2: The high fitting profiles (i.e., fits) are more prevalent compared to the low (i.e., weak fits and mavericks) and misfitting profiles (i.e., misfits).

Hypothesis 3: The fit cluster contains the highest tenured profiles (3a), while the misfit cluster contains the lowest tenured profiles (3b).

Relationships with work role behaviours

Work proficiency: task performance and OCB-O

Two meta-analyses (Hoffman & Woehr, 2006; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005) have provided compelling evidence that value congruence is positively related to indicators of work proficiency (Griffin et al., 2007), such as task performance and OCB-O. The key explanation for this positive relationship is that value congruence leads to favourable work attitudes like job satisfaction and organizational identification (Edwards & Cable, 2009), and contributes to the satisfaction of basic human needs (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009). According to Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), this should increase employees' willingness to leverage their skills, knowledge, and abilities for organizational benefit and motivate them to make a positive contribution to the work environment (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001).

Given this seemingly linear positive relationship between value congruence and task performance and OCB-O, people with high fitting profiles (i.e., fits) would naturally be expected

to show the highest levels of work proficiency of all the fit and misfit profiles, as these profiles are characterized by the highest average levels of value congruence and the lowest levels of variance and frequency of change. This should result in consistent and pervasive experiences of high value congruence, both of which can be expected to benefit work proficiency outcomes. Conversely, the opposite should be true for the misfitting profiles (i.e., misfits), as these profiles should typically report pervasive experiences of incongruence and at the same time demonstrate very little potential for dissonant (i.e., more positive) experiences. In line with this prediction, evidence indicates that value incongruence leads to impaired task proficiency (Deng et al., 2016) and a decline in task performance and OCB-O (Vogel et al., 2016). Finally, little difference in work proficiency is expected for the two low fitting profiles (i.e., weak fits and mavericks). It is known that task performance and OCB-O require both the resources and the motivation to leverage such behaviours. The ups and downs in value congruence that are experienced by mavericks may consume many of the essential resources (e.g., time, focus) needed to maintain high levels of work proficiency. Weak fits, in contrast, may lack the dedication and commitment to excel in task performance and OCB-O. In addition, and although both profiles are characterized by a differently structured variability pattern, these patterns eventually end up producing a similar baseline level of perceived value congruence.

Hence, we predict:

Hypothesis 4: Fits show higher levels of task performance (4a) and OCB-O (4b) compared to weak fits, mavericks, and misfits.

Hypothesis 5: Misfits show lower levels of task performance (5a) and OCB-O (5b) compared to fits, weak fits, and mavericks.

Hypothesis 6: Mavericks and weak fits do not differ in task performance (6a) and OCB-O (6b).

Work proactivity: IWB and COB

Despite the positive impact value congruence has on the work proficiency of employees, several scholars (e.g., Kristof, 1996; Schneider, 1987; Vogel et al., 2016) have voiced concerns about the negative consequences of "too much" organizational fit, including conformity and lack of innovation at the individual level and homogeneity and inertia at the organizational level. This threat runs counter to the facilitation of proactive behaviours, such as innovative work behaviour (IWB) and change-oriented behaviour (COB), that many organizations are pursuing (Frese & Fay, 2001; Griffin et al., 2007). Particularly high levels of value congruence are usually positioned as being detrimental to such proactivity outcomes (Mullins, 2002; Schneider, 1987). Because organizational fits should experience little cognitive dissonance with the status quo (Festinger, 1957), they can be expected to comply with, rather than challenge, their environment. Indeed, where the values of the individual and the organization merge, conformism, cohesion, and absence of conflict result (Jehn, Northcraft, & Neal, 1999; Liedtka, 1989).

Contending values, in contrast, create an internal conflict which causes a person to use non-scripted cognition to determine the “right” course of action (Liedtka, 1989). Broadly speaking, there are three different strategies that can be employed in such situations (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984): accommodate the situation (e.g., by creating facades of conformity; Hewlin, 2003), modify the situation (e.g., by proactively initiating change; Griffin et al., 2007) or turnover (Schneider, 1987). It is proposed here that of the three clusters that experience suboptimal fit (i.e., weak fits, mavericks, and misfits), maverick profiles will be most likely to engage in modifying behaviour. That is, maverick profiles are characterized by high levels of variance in combination with a low frequency of change, which is indicative of occasional outbursts of value conflict. Such value conflicts present a powerful opportunity for diverse perspectives to emerge, which can lead to innovative outcomes and divergent behaviour (Hoever, van Knippenberg, van Ginkel, & Barkema, 2012). In comparison, weak fits are characterized by lower levels of variance and a higher frequency of change, indicating that feelings of incongruence should be less intense and more short-lived. In addition, it appears that weak fits often deliberately choose “borderline fit” as a way to keep their work and non-work domain separated (Cooper-Thomas & Wright, 2013; Vogel et al., 2016), making them more likely to opt for a less invested (i.e., accommodating) strategy. As for misfits, their disabling and destructive position in the organization may render them without the necessary resources (e.g., impact, social support) to make an actual difference. As a consequence, disengagement, inaction, or turnover seems to be their natural courses of action (Schneider et al., 1995; Wheeler et al., 2007).

Given the above, we predict:

Hypothesis 7: Mavericks will show higher levels of IWB (7a) and COB (7b) compared to fits, weak fits, and misfits.

Method

Procedure

The data was collected on twelve different occasions, one week apart. The extended network of the researchers and the alumni network of the university were used in order to recruit participants. We specifically targeted a heterogeneous group of employees who worked at least part-time (i.e., 50% of full-time employment) and who held one paid job. Consequently, employees with more than one paid job, self-employed employees, project workers, and employees working less than part-time were not eligible to participate. We opted for weekly measures because “the past workweek” represents a clearly defined and meaningful temporal unit that appeared best suited to capture respondents’ situational fluctuations in value congruence perceptions and work role behaviours. That is, daily measures might have been too momentary, while monthly measures likely integrate multiple situational effects and might therefore be too broad. Past studies (e.g., Bakker & Bal, 2010; Parkinson, Briner, Reynolds, & Totterdell, 1995) have established that people can accurately

reflect upon weekly work-related experiences. All questionnaires were distributed by e-mail on Friday afternoons. Weekly reminders were sent out on Saturday and Sunday afternoons to those respondents who had yet not returned their weekly questionnaire at that stage.

A total of 244 participants agreed to take part in the study. They all received a general questionnaire in which they were asked to report their demographic characteristics (e.g., gender, age, educational level), job and organizational tenure, occupational position, and organizational background characteristics (e.g., sector and size). Of this group, 19 respondents did not complete the questionnaire and 10 respondents did not qualify for the study (six respondents held more than one paid job, three respondents indicated to be self-employed, and one person identified as a temporary worker). These participants were removed from the study. Weekly scores for the substantive variables were only recorded if participants did not miss more than two working days during the reference period (i.e., the past work week). As a result, and in order not to compromise the accuracy of the data-analysis, 90 additional cases were removed.¹ The final sample thus comprised all respondents who completely filled out the first questionnaire, met all inclusion criteria, and consistently returned their weekly questionnaires over the course of the study. This resulted in a final sample size of 125 respondents, with a weekly response rate ranging from 80% to 98.4% ($\bar{X} = 91.2\%$).

Participants

Of the final sample, 58.4% of the respondents were women. The mean age of the respondents was 34.7 years ($SD = 10.14$), ranging from 20 to 62 years. The largest category of respondents were professional knowledge workers (45.6%), with administrative personnel (33.6%) and management (20.8%) ranking second and third. The majority of the sample (90.4%) was permanently employed (versus 9.6% working on trial contracts) and was working on a full-time basis (93.6% full-time versus 6.4% part-time). The majority of the respondents were employed in the for-profit sector (55.2%), with the government (24.8%) and the non-profit sectors (17.6%) ranking second and third; 2.4% indicated “other”. Average organizational tenure was 79.5 months ($SD = 106.79$).

Measures

Weekly perceptions of value congruence, task performance, OCB-O, and COB were measured on a 7-point Likert-scale, ranging from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 7 (*totally agree*). Weekly IWB was measured on a 5-point Likert-scale from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*always*). All items were worded in the past tense and participants were explicitly instructed to answer the questions with the past working week in mind. Items were randomized to rule out potential order effects.

Perceived value congruence

Weekly perceptions of value congruence were measured with three items from Cable and DeRue (2002). A sample item example is “my personal values matched my organization’s

values and culture". The scale showed good reliability, with Cronbach's alpha's ranging from .90 to .97 across measurement occasions ($M_{(\alpha)} = .95$, $SD_{(\alpha)} = .02$).

Work performance outcomes

Weekly task performance was measured with seven items from Williams and Anderson (1991). An example of a sample item is "I adequately completed assigned duties". Scale reliabilities were generally good, ranging from .68 to .84 ($M_{(\alpha)} = .80$, $SD_{(\alpha)} = .05$). Weekly OCB-O was measured as a behavioural index with three of the original six items from Dalal, Lam, Weiss, Welch, and Hulin (2009). This was done so in order to decrease the burden for participants and limit dropout, which is a recommended practice in diary research (Ohly, Sonnentag, Niessen, & Zapf, 2010). An example of a sample item is "I defended organizational policies". Cronbach's alpha scores were generally good ($M_{(\alpha)} = .75$, $SD_{(\alpha)} = .06$, $range_{(\alpha)} = .64$ to .81). Weekly COB was measured with four items from Choi (2007). An example of a sample item is "I suggested changes to unproductive rules or policies". The scale showed good reliability ($M_{(\alpha)} = .87$, $SD_{(\alpha)} = .05$, $range_{(\alpha)} = .77$ to .92). Finally, innovative work behaviour was measured with six of the nine items of the IWB scale by Janssen (2000). The scale consists of three subscales, i.e., idea generation, idea promotion, and idea realization, which are all measured with three items each and subsequently combined into a composite score of IWB. Examples of sample items are "I searched out new working methods, techniques, or instruments" (idea generation), "I mobilized support for innovative ideas" (idea promotion), and "I introduced innovative ideas into the work environment in a systematic way" (idea realization). The scale showed good reliability ($M_{(\alpha)} = .95$, $SD_{(\alpha)} = .01$, $range_{(\alpha)} = .92$ to .97). The results of a confirmatory factor analysis (Table 1) revealed that our hypothesized four-factor model (MM1) with task performance, OCB-O, IWB, and COB treated as independent constructs showed a very good fit to the data. Moreover, the model fitted the data significantly better compared to two alternative models; a two-factor model (MM2) with work proficiency (including task performance and OCB-O) and work proactivity (including IWB and COB) as distinct factors, and a one-factor model (MM3) with one overarching performance factor.

Analyses

Cluster analysis was used to group individuals with similar experience profiles into distinct clusters. The clustering variables used are the intrapersonal average level of value congruence perceptions, the intrapersonal variance of value congruence perceptions, and the intrapersonal frequency of changes in value congruence perceptions (i.e., the number of local extremes in individuals' value congruence profile over time). Given the nested structure of our data (i.e., different measurements per person), we first estimated the intra-class correlation coefficient (ICC1) for value congruence perceptions. The ICC1 indicates that 24% of the total amount of variance in respondents' value congruence perceptions could be attributed to within-person fluctuations, which justifies our temporal approach (Hox, 2010).

Next, individuals were classified in a finite number of groups using Gaussian finite mixture clustering analyses. Although

Table 1. Results of confirmatory factor analyses for performance constructs.

Models	χ^2	df	P	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR	Comparison	$\Delta SB-\chi^2$	Δdf	P
<i>MM1</i>	<i>432.76</i>	<i>164</i>	<i>< .001</i>	<i>.95</i>	<i>.94</i>	<i>.04</i>	<i>.05</i>				
MM2	1143.61	169	< .001	.80	.78	.07	.08	MM2-MM1	710.85	5	< .001
MM3	2162.65	170	< .001	.59	.54	.09	.11	MM3-MM1	1729.89	6	< .001

^a Best-fitting model in italics. χ^2 = chi-square test value; CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index; RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root-mean square residual.

various distribution families can be used in mixture clustering, the most popular distribution is the (multivariate) Gaussian distribution (Fraley & Raftery, 2007). Mixture clustering has two main advantages over traditional clustering methods. First, mixture clustering is more flexible compared to traditional clustering algorithms that are based on distances between observations, because mixture clustering allows clusters to vary with respect to the shape (i.e., spherical or ellipsoidal), orientation (i.e., coordinate axes vs. oblique) as well as size of clusters (i.e., volume of the K-dimensional subspace), which makes it an ideal clustering method for grouping different temporal patterns. Second, in mixture clustering, the multivariate density of the clustering variables is intrinsically modelled. As such, the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) can be used to evaluate the quality of the clustering solution and to select the best fitting model. The R-package “mclust” was used to perform the Gaussian finite mixture clustering (Fraley & Raftery, 2002; Fraley, Raftery, Murphy, & Scrucca, 2012).

In the last phase, we explored between-cluster differences with respect to our four work role behaviour outcomes (i.e., task performance, OCB-O, IWB, and COB) by means of a non-parametric pairwise difference test. We chose this approach because the assumption of normality is more likely to be violated in smaller clusters. Non-parametric testing hence maximizes the robustness of our pairwise difference test (Bretz, Hothorn, & Westfall, 2011). For each respondent, a baseline level of task performance, OCB-O, IWB, and COB was computed by taking the arithmetic mean of the weekly work role scores. Differences in work role behaviour outcomes were then tested by comparing average levels across clusters.

Results

Descriptive results

Table 2 provides an overview of the descriptive statistics and correlations between the study variables. The mean score for respondents' intrapersonal average of value congruence is 5.13, which indicates that respondents' baseline perception of value congruence are generally situated above the midpoint (i.e., 4) of the scale. Moreover, respondents reported a mean variance score of .30 and a mean frequency of change score of 3.71, indicating that, over a time span of 12 weeks, respondents generally alternated about four times between high and low perceptions of value congruence. Yet, the descriptive statistics (Min, Max, SD) also reveal that sizeable differences exist in how respondents experience their value congruence over time. For example, while some respondents demonstrate no variance and/or change in their fit perceptions at all, other respondents report above-average levels of variance and/or up to 9 alternations from high to low fit.

In terms of work role behaviours, task performance is generally speaking the highest rated behavioral outcome, whilst respondents scored themselves lowest on IWB. Respondents' intrapersonal average of value congruence is positively related to task performance, OCB-O, and COB. In contrast, respondents' intrapersonal variance and frequency of change are negatively related to OCB-O, while frequency of change is also negatively related to task performance. In

Table 2. Descriptive statistics.

Variables	Mean	Min	Max	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Value congruence clustering variables</i>											
(1) Intrapersonal average	5.13	2.39	7.00	1.00							
(2) Intrapersonal variance	0.30	0.00	2.76	0.40	-.43*						
(3) Intrapersonal frequency of change	3.71	0.00	9.00	2.24	-.34*	.23*					
<i>Work role behaviours</i>											
(4) Task performance	5.80	4.18	6.98	0.62	.50*	-.10	-.35*				
(5) Organizational citizenship behaviour	4.50	1.611	7.00	1.08	.71*	-.28*	-.22*	.42*			
(6) Innovative work behaviour	2.65	1.10	4.74	0.79	.15	.05	.03	.04	.44*		
(7) Change-oriented behaviour	4.57	1.38	6.75	1.15	.27*	.04	-.03	.16	.57*	.86*	
<i>Tenure</i>											
(8) Organizational tenure	6.62	0.08	37.92	8.90	.20*	-.03	-.13	.15	.10	.08	.13

*p < 0.05; organizational tenure is reported in years.

overview, these results indicate that high baseline levels of value congruence support employees' work proficiency, while high levels of variability suppress such work role behaviours.

Types of value congruence experience profiles

Hypothesis one stated that at least four distinct types of value congruence experience profiles (i.e., fits, weak fits, mavericks, and misfits) would be revealed in our data. Table 3 reports the BIC scores for the various cluster solutions based on our three temporal indicators. The BIC scores denote the quality of the cluster solution, and lower BIC values are representative of closer fit with the data.

Confirming hypothesis one, a five cluster solution with equally shaped and equally sized ellipsoidal clusters with varying orientation (EEV) resulted in the best cluster solution. Table 4 (descriptive variables) and Table 5 (differences in cluster indicators) describe these five clusters. The first cluster (labelled "stable fits") comprises the profiles with the highest average levels of value congruence perceptions ($\bar{X}_{\text{average}} = 5.75$) and the lowest levels of variability ($\bar{X}_{\text{variance}} = 0.09$; $\bar{X}_{\text{change}} = 0.92$). This cluster thus quite accurately resembles our "fit" type as it contains individuals with stable and high fitting profiles in combination with high organizational tenure. The second cluster (labelled "dynamic fits") relates to the first cluster in that this cluster also comprises profiles with high average levels of value congruence

Table 3. Determination of the number and shape of clusters: BIC values.

Number of Clusters	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
EEI ^a	1660.4	1394.5	1314.6	1290.1	1242.8	1213.5	1201.8
EEE ^b	961.4	964.8	975.9	815.0	834	850.5	861.6
EEV ^c	961.4	139.0	–	116.8	113.8	–	244.0

^aEEI: equally shaped and equally sized spherical clusters.

^bEEE: equally shaped and equally sized ellipsoidal clusters, with equal orientation.

^cEEV: equally shaped and equally sized ellipsoidal clusters, with varying orientation.

Table 4. Cluster variables and descriptives.

Cluster Label	Stable Fits	Dynamic Fits	Mavericks	Weak Fits	Misfits
Cluster Size: n (Prop.)	38 (30%)	58 (46%)	6 (5%)	17 (14%)	6 (5%)
<i>Clustering Variables</i>					
Average	5.75 (0.86)	5.16 (0.75)	4.87 (0.60)	4.55 (0.68)	2.75 (0.27)
Variance	0.09 (0.12)	0.21 (0.12)	1.12 (0.65)	0.68 (0.34)	0.71 (1.01)
Frequency of Change	0.92 (0.88)	4.91 (1.39)	3.33 (0.52)	5.76 (1.20)	4.33 (1.03)
Misfit (0/1)	0%	0%	0%	0%	83%
<i>Descriptives</i>					
Gender (Male)	42%	40%	17%	52%	50%
Tenure	8.13 (9.85)	5.97 (8.71)	4.21 (9.68)	7.57 (5.07)	3.07 (2.85)
<i>Occupational Status</i>					
Administrative	29%	29%	33%	53%	50%
Professional	45%	53%	33%	29%	33%
Management	26%	17%	33%	18%	17%

Table 5. Differences in cluster indicators.

	M (SD)	Pairwise Difference Tests			
		Stable Fits	Dynamic Fits	Mavericks	Weak Fits
Average of Value Congruence					
Stable Fits	5.75 (0.86)				
Dynamic Fits	5.16 (0.75)	3.38***			
Mavericks	4.87 (0.60)	2.61**	1.03		
Weak Fits	4.55 (0.68)	4.81***	2.53**	0.54	
Misfits	2.75 (0.27)	5.30***	3.78***	2.04*	1.95*
Variance of Value Congruence					
Stable Fits	0.09 (0.12)				
Dynamic Fits	0.21 (0.12)	4.20***			
Mavericks	1.12 (0.65)	5.37***	3.46***		
Weak Fits	0.68 (0.34)	6.82***	4.03***	0.78	
Misfits	0.71 (1.01)	3.66***	1.71**	1.30	0.80
Frequency of Change in Value Congruence					
Stable Fits	0.92 (0.88)				
Dynamic Fits	4.91 (1.39)	8.30***			
Mavericks	3.33 (0.52)	2.00***	1.99*		
Weak Fits	5.76 (1.20)	7.50***	1.65	2.76**	
Misfits	4.33 (1.03)	3.30***	0.66	0.99	2.37*

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$; Absolute Dunn Z-statistics are reported. P-values were corrected for Multiple Comparison using the Benjamin-Hochberg correction; Global Difference Tests:

Average: Kruskal-Wallis $\chi^2 = 44.07$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.01$

Variance: Kruskal-Wallis $\chi^2 = 66.61$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.01$.

Frequency: Kruskal-Wallis $\chi^2 = 88.80$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.01$

($\bar{X}_{\text{average}} = 5.16$), albeit with considerably more short-term fluctuations ($\bar{X}_{\text{change}} = 4.91$). However, these fluctuations do not seem to include strong declines in fit perceptions ($\bar{X}_{\text{variance}} = 0.21$); instead, these individuals frequently alternate between high and moderately high experiences of value congruence and therefore resemble a dynamic subgroup of the fit cluster described above, rather than a truly distinct type. The third cluster represents the group we labelled "weak fits". This group includes relatively tenured but moderately matching profiles ($\bar{X}_{\text{average}} = 4.55$) who experience significantly weaker levels of value congruence compared to fits, although not as low as misfits (fifth cluster). As expected, the fit perceptions of weak fits show a higher-than-average degree of change ($\bar{X}_{\text{change}} = 5.76$), yet also an unanticipated higher-than-average degree of variance ($\bar{X}_{\text{variance}} = 0.68$) – although not as high as "mavericks" (fourth cluster). Like weak fits, the maverick-type includes profiles with lower-than-average baseline levels of fit ($\bar{X}_{\text{average}} = 4.87$). However, "mavericks" have a more outspoken variability pattern, in that they combine high levels of variance ($\bar{X}_{\text{variance}} = 1.12$) with a lower frequency of change ($\bar{X}_{\text{change}} = 3.33$), indicating rather pervasive episodes of high and low congruence that may occasionally dip into misfit. Finally, the "misfits" cluster represent those profiles with the lowest baseline level of perceived value congruence ($\bar{X}_{\text{average}} = 2.75$). Contrary to expectations, the misfits in our sample also demonstrate a pattern of variability comparable to that of a maverick ($\bar{X}_{\text{variance}} = 0.71$; $\bar{X}_{\text{change}} = 4.33$).

In support of hypothesis two, the stable and dynamic fits clusters altogether represent 76% of the total sample, indicating that these high fitting profiles are most prevalent within this sample. Finally, stable fits are among the most tenured profiles in our sample ($\bar{X}_{\text{tenure}} = 8.13$ years) whilst misfits represent the least tenured profiles ($\bar{X}_{\text{tenure}} = 3.07$ years), providing support for hypotheses 3a and 3b.

Relationships with work role behaviour

Table 6 indicates that stable fits have the highest level of task performance and OCB-O. The results of the pairwise difference tests indicate that the differences in task performance are significant across all clusters except mavericks. For OCB-O, the differences are significant across all clusters. These results provide partial support for hypothesis 4a and full support for hypothesis 4b. Conversely, misfits report the lowest levels of task performance and OCB-O. Yet, for task performance, the difference with weak fits and mavericks is not significant, providing only partial support for hypothesis 5a. The differences in OCB-O are significant across all clusters, providing full support for hypothesis 5b. Moreover, and in line with hypotheses 6a and 6b, mavericks and weak fits show no difference in task performance and OCB-O. Finally, hypotheses 7a and 7b predicted that mavericks would outperform fits, weak fits, and misfits in terms of IWB (H7a) and COB (H7b). Although mavericks indeed reported the highest average levels of IWB and COB of all groups, the differences across clusters failed to reach significance. Therefore, hypotheses 7a and 7b are not supported.

Discussion

Contributions to the fit literature

This study presents some important implications for the PE fit literature. First and foremost, our study indicates that perceptions of organizational fit are dynamic, albeit not to the same extent for everyone. In the past, fit researchers have usually treated intrapersonal variation in value congruence as measurement error based on the belief that personal and organizational values should remain fairly stable over time. However, as theorized above and empirically shown by others (e.g., Gabriel et al.,

Table 6. Differences in work performance outcomes ^a.

	M (SD)	Pairwise Difference Tests			
		Stable Fits	Dynamic Fits	Mavericks	Weak Fits
Task Performance					
Stable Fits	6.10 (0.50)				
Dynamic Fits	5.73 (0.56)	1.12**			
Mavericks	5.50 (0.91)	1.39	0.27		
Weak Fits	5.60 (0.69)	1.53**	0.41	0.14	
Misfits	5.29 (0.72)	2.49**	1.37	1.10	0.96
Organizational Citizenship Behaviour					
Stable Fits	5.19 (1.02)				
Dynamic Fits	4.45 (1.11)	1.42***			
Mavericks	4.29 (0.55)	1.79*	0.37		
Weak Fits	4.37 (0.90)	1.58**	0.16	0.21	
Misfits	2.62 (0.57)	4.59***	3.17***	2.79***	3.01***
Change-Oriented Behaviour					
Stable Fits	4.65 (1.21)				
Dynamic Fits	4.47 (1.02)	0.42			
Mavericks	5.00 (0.35)	0.47	0.89		
Weak Fits	4.37 (1.15)	0.60	0.18	1.08	
Misfits	3.74 (0.85)	1.54	1.12	2.01	0.94
Innovative Work Behaviour					
Stable Fits	2.66 (0.85)				
Dynamic Fits	2.62 (0.79)	0.08			
Mavericks	3.09 (0.31)	0.93	1.01		
Weak Fits	2.64 (0.78)	0.04	0.12	0.89	
Misfits	2.40 (0.79)	0.59	0.51	1.52	0.63

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$; General Linear Hypothesis tests are reported with Tukey-corrected p -values.

2014; Swider et al., 2015; Vleugels et al., 2018), the argument that personal and environmental values are stable over time does not necessarily contradict the argument that, at the same time, *perceptions* of congruence can be dynamic. Our repeated measures study confirms that perceptions of value congruence can fluctuate over a period as short as one week, which further challenges the assumption that perceived value congruence represents a stable construct at the within-person level. However, our results also indicate that not every person necessarily experiences the same type and degree of fluctuations.

Second, our study demonstrates that fit and misfit are not dichotomous constructs. Instead, different types of fit prevail, and the presence of two low fitting clusters indicates that misfit is not just the absence of fit. Usually, value incongruence is operationalized as the opposite to value congruence on a fit-misfit continuum (e.g., Deng et al., 2016; Wheeler et al., 2007). While the results of our study indeed show that value congruence itself is a continuous variable in that employees can vary in the extent to which they fit the environment (see also Johnson et al., 2013), value *incongruence* seems to represent a different reality. While weak fits and mavericks both report a moderate baseline experience of value congruence, the overall experience of misfits is substantially worse. More so, misfits score below the neutral mid-point on the value congruence scale, and as such actively reject the proposition that their values match those of the organization. It was surprising, however, that our sample did not contain “stable misfits”, i.e., people who are enduringly trapped in the detrimental state that scholars (e.g., Cooper-Thomas & Wright, 2013) have described. Instead, we identified a more “dynamic” form of misfit, i.e., individuals who alternate between extreme and less extreme experiences of incongruence. The reason for this may be that misfit is so unpleasant that people make strenuous efforts to alleviate themselves of it, including efforts to work on their misfit (see Follmer, Talbot, Kristof-Brown, Astrove, & Billsberry, 2018) or change organizations (see Schneider, 1987; Wheeler et al., 2007). We would thus expect that stable misfit is a relatively short-lived phenomenon and a transitory condition by nature, which makes it very difficult to capture empirically.

Third, our findings suggest that differentiating between types of fit or misfit could significantly enhance our understanding of how PE fit relates to various work outcomes. That is, a one-sided focus on individuals’ baseline level of fit in relation to work outcomes may be insufficiently informative for understanding the exact relationship between both, and potentially leaves other important insights unnoticed. For example, the correlation matrix (Table 2) indicates that those with higher baseline levels of value congruence are more proficient in terms of task performance and OCB-O. Yet, after the variability dimensions (i.e., variance and frequency of change) are additionally taken into account, cluster differences in OCB-O remain highly salient while cluster differences in task performance become practically negligible. The example above highlights that it is the constellation of different parameters (i.e., average level, variance, and frequency of change) that determines how people will behave in the workplace. The resulting types we have set forth above should thus be seen as holistic entities that transcend the sum of their constituent parts.

New avenues for temporal research on perceived fit

The results of our study indicate that individuals demonstrate a remarkable variability in the patterns with which their fit perceptions change over time. For instance, stable fits demonstrate a high baseline experience of value congruence in combination with little variability in fit perceptions over time, while dynamic fits, weak fits, mavericks, and misfits all demonstrate different patterns of relatively high variability. Hence, an important question for future research is how these pattern differences can be explained. The quality of selection and the degree of organizational socialization might be two factors contributing to such differences in temporal variability, given the dominant role both processes play in establishing value congruence (Chatman, 1991; De Cooman et al., 2009). Table 2 indeed shows that both higher baseline levels of fit (as a proxy for quality of selection) and longer tenure (as a proxy for socialization) tend to restrict the amount of variance and change in individuals’ perceptions of fit, suggesting that fit perceptions become less dynamic as the degree of actual correspondence between person and environment increases. Other than that, factors related to the person or the environment itself may matter as well. Environment-related factors may include the strength and content of organizational cultures (e.g., Chatman et al., 2014) or the leadership style of supervisors (e.g., Hoffman, Bynum, Piccolo, & Sutton, 2011), whilst personality (e.g., Buss, 1987) may be an important person-related factor. More research is needed to determine the exact role that these and other factors play in shaping individuals’ temporal pattern of variability.

Related to the previous point, our study also raises the issue of to what extent these various temporal fit profiles have a dispositional origin. Traditionally, fit researchers have talked about how selection and socialization processes (e.g., Chatman, 1991; Schneider, 1987) guide people from states of suboptimal fit to states of high fit. Our tenure data however suggests that weak fits and mavericks might not be phases through which people travel, but their natural place or their end destination. Future research might thus focus on the process versus dispositional origin of these fit-misfit types and explore the static versus dynamic nature of the clusters. If this typology is the result of a process, it would mean that people are likely to go through different types within the same organization (e.g., people enter as a weak or dynamic fit and move to being a stable fit, or conversely, a misfit). If the typology is mainly driven by dispositional factors, then this would suggest that a combination of certain personal and environmental features predisposes people to be a fit, weak fit, maverick, or misfit.

Practical implications

An important takeaway for organizations is that hiring a perfect organizational fit may not always be necessary, and at times perhaps even be undesirable, as suboptimal fit does not always impairs individual task performance. Rather than trying to achieve a perfect match for each individual employee, managers should consider the position they are hiring for as well as the composition of fit and misfit profiles in their organization or

team. For example, stable fits are most likely to be consistent performers, but might increase the level of cultural homogeneity within the organization and therefore reinforce the status quo. Conversely, weak fits and mavericks could offset the negative effects of cultural homogeneity, but at the potential cost of suboptimal or disruptive behaviour. However, depending on their position in the organization, this should not necessarily be a problem. For instance, weak fits may be undesirable on strategically important positions, but should arguably pose no threat to the organization when employed on positions with limited responsibility and impact on the organization. Likewise, mavericks can shake up the organization and could hence be positioned on strategically important positions when need for change is high, but not when cohesion and stability are required. Finally, true misfits are out of place and therefore unable to contribute to their organizational environment. It would thus seem beneficial to both the organization and the individual to avoid a misfitting relationship.

Limitations

Our study has some limitations related to its focus and repeated measurement format. First, our study sample is not a probability sample and selection bias may have been an issue. Hence, care is required when extrapolating from the profile sample percentages to general populations. Moreover, the low cluster sample sizes have likely affected the outcomes of our pairwise difference test, especially for work proactivity outcomes. More pronounced differences between the clusters can be expected for bigger samples. Second, value congruence was measured with three items from Cable and DeRue (2002); the most commonly used scale to measure fit and misfit (e.g., Deng et al., 2016; Wheeler et al., 2007). The scale requires participants to agree or disagree with statements regarding their value fit. However, it does not necessarily capture those people who misfit, i.e., hold values that are antagonistic to those of the organization. We hence encourage the development of a misfit measure that is capable of separating low value congruence from incongruence. Third, we chose to focus on perceived value congruence because it is the most widely used approach in the field of PE fit and misfit (e.g., Vogel et al., 2016). However, value congruence is just one of the many forms of fit. Other forms of PE fit include person-job fit, person-supervisor fit, person-group fit, and person-vocation fit (Kristof, 1996). We do not know if the profiles of fit and misfit found in this study are mirrored in other forms of fit. Those that have values as a component, such as those involving fit between people, might tentatively be thought to do so. However, those that are less personal and more task-focused, such as person-job fit, might offer a slightly different picture. We therefore encourage replications that also include other forms of fit beyond measures of value congruence.

Conclusion

The goal of the present study was to examine differences in value congruence through a temporal lens. Through cluster analysis we were able to group individuals with similar

temporal value congruence profiles into five distinct fit and misfit types based on three temporal parameters; individuals' average level of fit, the degree of variance in their experiences, and the frequency by which these experiences change. The results of our study indicate that perceptions of organizational fit are dynamic, but not to the same extent for everyone. That is, different types of fit and misfit exist within organizations, and these types tend to show a different relationship to various work role behaviours.

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Note

1. After performing sample attrition analyses, no significant differences were found between the final sample and the 90 omitted cases in terms of demographics (gender and age), value congruence experiences, and performance outcomes (task performance, OCB-O, CWB, and IWB).

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