

## REVIEW ARTICLE

# A systematic review of temporal person-environment fit research: Trends, developments, obstacles, and opportunities for future research

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## Abstract

In this systematic review, we present a comprehensive overview of the temporal person environment (PE) fit literature. To this end, we organize and integrate extant temporal fit research and discuss research trends and developments in the temporal domain. Our analysis reveals that temporal conceptualizations of fit vary in terms of change process (transitional, developmental, transformational), level of aggregation (situational vs. baseline level), and temporal frame (clock time vs. psychological time), all of which divide the temporal fit literature in significant ways. Furthermore, our analysis shows that progress in the temporal fit domain has been confined by five major obstacles: An emphasis on selection and socialization processes, a narrow focus on the between-person level of analysis, preoccupation with linear change, a strong interest in normal causation questions, and a lack of attention to misfit. We conclude with a discussion of the research challenges that lie ahead and provide suggestions to tackle these challenges and expand temporal PE fit research in new directions.

## KEYWORDS

ESM, longitudinal, person-environment fit, systematic review, temporal, time

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

Person-environment (PE) fit is one of the most pervasive guiding frameworks for management scholars and practitioners alike and key to our understanding of employees' emotions, attitudes, and behavior in the workplace (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). The study of work-related PE fit ("fit," in short) focuses on the antecedents and consequences of the (perceived) compatibility between people and their work environment (Kristof, 1996) and covers a wide array of research on topics such as job satisfaction, job stress, vocational choices, recruitment and selection, and organizational culture (Edwards, 2008). A continuing trend in this literature is the emergence of studies

looking at fit from a temporal perspective (e.g., Boon & Biron, 2016; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2004; De Cooman et al., 2009; DeRue & Morgeson, 2007; Jansen & Shipp, 2019). The purpose of this review paper is to document, review, and integrate the temporal fit literature and highlight avenues for future research.

From its inception, notions of change have always occupied a central position in theories of PE fit. For example, directly following from selection-based theories of fit such as Schneider's (1987) Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) theory, Holland's (1973) Theory of Vocational Choice (TVC), and Dawis and Lofquist's (1984) Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA),<sup>1</sup> is the idea that the self-correcting nature of selection processes (i.e., hiring and turnover) causes fit to

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change over time when individuals who fit poorly sort into vocations, jobs, and organizations that are more commensurate with their interests, ability levels, and personal values, which is known as the gravitational hypothesis of fit (McCormick et al., 1972; Wilk & Sackett, 1996).

By contrast, socialization and adjustment-based models of fit reinforce the idea that fit changes through adaptation. For instance, Chatman's (1989) Interactional Model of PO Fit (IMPOF) proposes that, following organizational entry, the person and the organization grow to become more congruent as employees are socialized towards company values and norms. Beyond the socialization phase, fit is believed to change as part of a larger, ongoing work adjustment process by which individuals seek to achieve and maintain long-term correspondence with their work environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). This adjustment process has been loosely called employee maturation, growth, or development (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987) and involves either proactive (i.e., change in E) or reactive (i.e., change in P) adjustment strategies (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). These strategies can be used to improve fit in an objective way by targeting the root causes of incongruence ("coping"); alternatively, individuals may seek to transform their subjective perceptions of P or E attributes ("defense") in an attempt to alleviate symptoms of incongruence (French et al., 1982).

More recently, new theoretical developments in the PE fit domain have focused on the psychological motives behind changes in fit and the adaptive and cognitive processes employees tap into to self-regulate their fit. In this respect, Yu's (2009) Expanded Model of PE Fit (EMPEF) calls attention to the role affective experiences play in influencing fit and proposes that affective consistency and hedonistic motives can account for change in fit. Yu's (2013) Fit Motivation Theory (FMT) later expanded on this idea by suggesting that people see fit as a tool to be managed in pursuit of consistency, hedonism, clarity, control, and belonging. In turn, each of these motivations is considered a potential driver of various fit management tactics, ranging from unconscious heuristic processes over self-regulation to intentional proactive behaviors that target PE fit change.

While Yu's work aligns with early theorizing on PE fit in that the person and environment are evaluated in the present, Shipp and Jansen's (2011) Fit Narratives Theory (FNT) incorporates Caplan's (1983) notion of "psychological time" in proposing that individuals continuously craft and recraft "fit narratives"—a mosaic of past, present, and anticipated fit experiences—by selectively attending to, or even fabricating, fit snippets that revolve around a particular theme. The personalized fit stories that result from this process influence outcomes as current fit is being compared and contrasted with retrospections of past fit and anticipations of future fit.

Despite explicit consideration of temporality in theorizing on PE fit, historically, most empirical studies have taken a static, snapshot-like perspective of fit (Shipp & Jansen, 2011); that is, fit has long been captured as an independent, mediating, or dependent variable at a single point in time. However, and recognizing that jobs, organizations, and individuals change over time, the fit literature has witnessed a gradual trend towards more longitudinal research at the turn of the century (e.g., Cable & Parsons, 2001; Feij et al., 1999; Saks &

Ashforth, 2002). This trend is now supplemented by a more contemporary one in which dynamic features of the construct are becoming the focus of interest (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2014; Tepper et al., 2018; Vleugels et al., 2018, 2019; Vogel et al., 2020). Consequently, this is an opportune time to take stock of progress and appraise directions for future research.

## 2 | REVIEW AIMS AND STRATEGY

The purpose of this review is to present a comprehensive and systematic overview of temporal PE fit research. To this end, we organize and integrate extant fit research that has approached fit in a temporal (i.e., nonstatic) way. We first describe recent trends and developments and show where temporal research has made most progress. Next, we identify the main obstacles to future progress and develop a research agenda aimed at expanding temporal fit research in new directions.

A detailed description of our review strategy can be found in Appendix A. For this review, we targeted empirical quantitative and qualitative articles on temporal fit and misfit published in peer-reviewed journals and written in English. To this end, we conducted a search of titles, abstracts, and keywords of journal articles in EBSCO, PsycInfo, and Web of Science. Papers had to focus on workplace fit or misfit, convey temporal language, and include a temporal perspective in their study approach. This step surfaced 243 papers. Next, we reviewed articles for scope and relevance. We removed articles published in a journal without an impact factor ( $k = 28$ ), articles that were not on workplace fit ( $k = 116$ ), and articles that were either non-temporal or nonempirical ( $k = 56$ ). In addition, three papers could not be sourced. This step eventually reduced our initial sample to 40 papers. We then conducted a completeness search by checking the citations listed in the 40 papers and by conducting a manual search in management, organizational behavior, and organizational psychology journals ranked A\* or A by the 2019 Australian Business School Deans Council (ABDC). Step four surfaced a further six studies, resulting in a final sample of  $k = 46$  studies to be included in the review. All papers were reviewed by at least two authors and coded for (1) the type of PE fit, (2) study characteristics (i.e., design, sample, analysis, theory, and employment phase), and (3) main findings and temporal implications for fit.

## 3 | RESULTS

### 3.1 | Research trends and developments

Descriptive details, study characteristics, and brief summaries of findings of the 46 empirical temporal fit studies are presented in Table 1. They are listed according to change paradigm: 34 between-person studies, 5 within-person studies, 2 studies with both between-person and within-person designs, and 5 qualitative studies. Two studies, Swider et al. (2015) and Vleugels et al. (2019), were designed to capture within-person variation but compare the results between people.

**TABLE 1** Summary of between-person, within-person, and qualitative temporal fit studies

Study characteristics						
Study	Fit	Design	Sample size	Analysis	Main theory	Employment phase
<i>Between-person designs</i>						
Bayl-Smith and Griffin (2017)	DA fit NS fit	Two-wave longitudinal panel	$N_1 = 1345$ $N_2 = 665$	Cross-lagged SEM	TWA	Posthire
Bayl-Smith and Griffin (2018)	DA fit Work style fit	Two-wave longitudinal	94	Hierarchical moderated regression	TWA	Posthire
Boon and Biron (2016)	PO fit DA fit NS fit	Multilevel, two-wave longitudinal Archival turnover data	160	Multilevel logistic regression Path analysis	ASA LMX TWA	Turnover
Breeden (1993)	PV fit DA fit NS fit	Two-wave longitudinal	436	ANOVA	TWA	Posthire Turnover
Cable and Judge (1996)	PO fit PJ fit	Three-wave longitudinal	65	Hierarchical regression	ASA	Recruitment Socialization
Cable and Parsons (2001)	PO fit	Three-wave longitudinal panel	101	Hierarchical regression	ASA ST	Socialization
Caldwell et al. (2004)	DA fit PO fit	Multilevel, cross-sectional	581	Hierarchical linear modeling	Change processes literature	Posthire
Carless (2005)	PJ fit PO fit	Four-wave longitudinal	65	Hierarchical regression Baron and Kenny mediation	ASA TRA	Selection
Chatman (1991)	PO fit	Two-wave longitudinal	122	Hierarchical regression Logistical regression Survival analysis	Selection literature ST ASA	Selection Socialization Turnover
Chuang and Sackett (2005)	PJ fit PO fit	3 separate cross-sectional surveys	446	Hierarchical regression Paired samples t-tests	PE fit and recruitment literatures	Selection
Cooper-Thomas et al. (2004)	PO fit	Two-wave longitudinal	105	Hierarchical regression	ASA ST	Socialization
de Beer et al. (2016)	PJ fit	Three-wave longitudinal panel	382	Cross-lagged SEM with Bayesian estimation	BBT JD-R model SDT	Posthire
De Cooman et al. (2009)	PO fit	Two-wave longitudinal	142	Paired samples t-tests Logistic regression	ASA ST	Socialization Turnover
DeRue and Morgeson (2007)	PG fit PR fit	5-wave longitudinal	205 43 teams 43 team leaders	Hierarchical regression	Team development literature	Socialization
Feij et al. (1999)	PV fit	Two-wave longitudinal panel	492	Hierarchical regression Paired samples t-tests	TWA Congruence theory	Posthire Turnover
Gerdenitsch et al. (2018)	NS fit	Three-wave longitudinal intervention	63	Mixed model analyses with maximum likelihood estimation	Office redesign literature	Socialization
Ghetta et al. (2020)	PV fit	Three-wave longitudinal panel	7,049	Latent change score modeling Polynomial regression	ASA DATA model TAT TWA TVC	Posthire Turnover

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Study characteristics						
Study	Fit	Design	Sample size	Analysis	Main theory	Employment phase
Giumetti and Raymark (2017)	PO fit PJ fit	Three-wave longitudinal	536	Hierarchical linear modeling	Image theory	Selection
Hu et al. (2016)	PO fit	Three-wave multisource longitudinal	67	Hierarchical regression	LMX PCT	Socialization
Kim et al. (2020)	DA fit NS fit PJ fit	Three-wave longitudinal panel	168	Hierarchical regression based on Bayes slope estimate drawn from mixed-effects growth models	TWA FNT	Posthire
Kooij and Boon (2018)	PO fit	Three-wave longitudinal	487	SEM	PE fit literature HPWP	Posthire
Kooij et al. (2017)	DA fit NS fit	Two-wave longitudinal intervention	86	Regression analyses Mediation model via process macro	JCT	Posthire
Lu et al. (2014)	DA fit NS fit	Two-wave longitudinal panel	246	SEM based on standardized residual scores	BBT EMPEF JCT	Posthire
Marstand et al. (2018)	PS fit	Two-wave longitudinal panel	282	Cross-lagged SEM	Similarity-attraction paradigm Identification through emulation	Posthire
Meyer et al. (2010)	PO fit	Two-wave longitudinal	334	Polynomial regression	CVM PE fit literature	Socialization
Saks and Ashforth (2002)	PO fit PJ fit	Two-wave longitudinal	113	Path analysis Hierarchical regression	Job search and PE fit literatures	Recruitment Socialization
Simmering et al. (2003)	NS fit	Two-wave longitudinal intervention	83	Hierarchical regression Multivariate regression	ST SST	Posthire
Tims et al. (2016)	DA fit NS fit	Three-wave longitudinal panel	114	Cross-lagged SEM	JCT SDT	Posthire
Valero and Hirschi (2016)	PJ fit	Two-wave longitudinal panel	215	Latent profile analyses Latent difference score analysis	Proactive motivation SDT	Socialization
Vanderstukken et al. (2019)	PO fit PI fit	Experimental Cross-sectional	$N_1 = 108$ $N_2 = 61$ $N_3 = 304$	Pairwise t-tests Hierarchical regression Fisher's exact test	CLT	Recruitment
Wang et al. (2011)	PO fit DA fit NS fit PG fit	Two-wave longitudinal	671	SEM	ASA IAT	Socialization
Wei (2013)	PO fit	Cross-sectional	262	Hierarchical regression	PE fit literature TPT	Posthire
Wilk and Sackett (1996)	DA fit	Four-wave longitudinal panel	$N_1 = 15,859$ $N_2 = 10,756$	Hierarchical regression Ordered probit analysis	GH	Posthire Turnover
Wille et al. (2014)	PV fit	Two-wave longitudinal, multimethod study	167	ANOVA Test-retest correlations congruence profiles	ASA GH TVC	Posthire Turnover
Within-person designs						
Swider et al. (2015)	PO fit	8-wave longitudinal	169	Hierarchical linear growth modeling	DCT	Recruitment

(Continues)

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Study characteristics						
Study	Fit	Design	Sample size	Analysis	Main theory	Employment phase
Tepper et al. (2018)	NS fit	Daily diary study ESM	$N_1 = 65$ $N_2 = 93$	Hierarchical linear modeling Polynomial regression	AET SRT Transformational leadership literature	Posthire
Vleugels et al. (2018)	PO fit DA fit NS fit	Weekly diary study Daily diary study	$N_1 = 153$ $N_2 = 77$	Hierarchical linear modeling	Cognitive judgment literature EMPEF FMT	Posthire
Vleugels et al. (2019)	PO fit	Weekly diary study	125	Cluster analysis Nonparametric pairwise difference tests	Value congruence literature Variance and variability	Posthire
Vogel et al. (2020)	NS fit	ESM	82	Multilevel path analyses Polynomial regression	CLT Meaningfulness literature	Posthire
Combined (between and within) designs						
Gabriel et al. (2014)	PO fit PJ fit	ESM	142	Hierarchical linear modeling Hierarchical regression	ATE EMPEF FST SRT TWA	Posthire
Sylva et al. (2019)	DA fit	Two-wave longitudinal panel	637	Parallel growth model using SEM	ASA Career initiative literature	Posthire Turnover
Qualitative designs						
Baldegger and Gast (2016)	PF fit PO fit	In-depth, retrospective interviews	55	Inductive analysis	ASA Leadership literature	Recruitment Selection
Chuang et al. (2015)	PE fit	Semistructured interviews	30	Content analysis based on grounded theory approach	Confucian conceptions FNT	Posthire
Follmer et al. (2018)	PE fit	Semistructured interviews	$N_1 = 36$ $N_2 = 45$	Grounded theory approach	ASA FMT FNT	Posthire Turnover
Jansen and Shipp (2019)	PE fit	Interviews exploring life histories	32	Coding based on constructivist grounded theory	Cognitive sensemaking literature FNT	Posthire
Klag et al. (2015)	PE fit	Interviews exploring life histories	26	Coding based on constructivist grounded theory	UMT Work and life transitions literatures	Posthire Turnover
Study	Temporal implications for fit					
Between-person designs						
Bayl-Smith and Griffin (2017)	As individuals perceive increased age discrimination, both perceived DA and NS fit decrease over time. Engaging in a highly active work style ameliorates the effect of age discrimination on perceived DA fit.					
Bayl-Smith and Griffin (2018)	Adjustment behaviors contribute to an increase in perceived DA fit across time but only in the context of high work styles fit. When work styles fit was low, engaging in adjustment behaviors resulted in lower perceived DA fit.					
Boon and Biron (2016)	PO fit perceptions affect changes in PJ fit perceptions over time and influence subsequent turnover but only for employees in high-quality LMX relationships. LMX is only effective at enhancing PJ fit perceptions when employees perceive high PO fit.					
Breeden (1993)	Job and occupational change were not significantly related with PV fit at intake. At follow-up, changers reported higher levels of fit for ability and interests compared to people who did not change occupations.					

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Study	Temporal implications for fit
Cable and Judge (1996)	Job seekers who place greater emphasis on PO fit in their job choice decisions experience greater PO fit after organizational entry. The correlation between subjective and perceived PO fit increases from pre-entry to postentry stages.
Cable and Parsons (2001)	Changes in newcomers' values and subjective fit are associated with two types of socialization tactics: content and social aspects.
Caldwell et al. (2004)	The relationship between organizational change and perceived changes in fit is best understood as interactions between the characteristics of the change process, the extent of change, and individual differences.
Carless (2005)	PO and PJ fit perceptions influence attraction differently at different stages of selection. PO and PJ fit perceptions (before and during the selection process) are unrelated to actual job acceptance decisions.
Chatman (1991)	Recruits whose values match those of the firm more closely upon entering also adjust to the organization more quickly. Those who experience the most vigorous socialization achieve a better fit with the firm's values over time.
Chuang and Sackett (2005)	In selection interviews, interviewers place less emphasis on PJ fit in the final interview than in earlier interviews whereas PO fit increases in importance throughout the selection process.
Cooper-Thomas et al. (2004)	Socialization tactics contribute to change in perceived, but not actual, PO fit after the first socialization stage. Socialization does not change newcomers' own values but rather their perceptions of organizational values. Perceived and actual PO fit become more congruent after the first socialization stage.
de Beer et al. (2016)	Over time, work engagement is a predictor, rather than an outcome, of perceived PJ fit.
De Cooman et al. (2009)	Perceived PO fit increased with tenure across 24 months. Work values underwent small changes as perceptions of fit with the organization grew.
DeRue and Morgeson (2007)	Perceived PT fit, when conceptualized as value congruence, is generally stable over time, but perceptions of PR fit in teams are dynamic. Individuals' growth satisfaction and performance were positively related to increases in perceived PR fit over time.
Feij et al. (1999)	The congruence between vocational interests and perceived skill requirements increases over time. Employees are more apt to change or reassess skill requirements as opposed to vocational interests.
Gerdenitsch et al. (2018)	Redesigning offices to be activity-based flexible offices increases perceived NS fit.
Ghetta et al. (2020)	Change in PV fit was not related to simultaneous or subsequent change in job satisfaction, or vice versa.
Giumetti and Raymark (2017)	The importance of PO and PJ fit perceptions in predicting selection withdrawal intentions increases throughout the selection process. In turn, withdrawal intentions were lower when candidates perceived a greater degree of fit. For PJ fit, this relationship was moderated by perceived alternatives.
Hu et al. (2016)	Senior executives' pre-entry expectations of new executives' PO fit were positively related to senior executives' postentry perceptions of new executives' PO fit. This relationship was partially explained through the mediating role of LMX.
Kim et al. (2020)	Over a time span of 12 months, change in perceived DA and NS fit was indirectly associated with change in job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment through change in perceived PJ fit. Younger employees reacted more strongly to changes in perceived PJ fit than older employees.
Kooij and Boon (2018)	The relevance of perceived PO fit depends on employees' career stage. The relationship between perceptions of HPWP and perceived PO fit is only significant among employees in the advancement stage of their careers, while the relationship between perceived PO fit and affective commitment is only significant among employees in the maintenance stage of their career.
Kooij et al. (2017)	A job crafting intervention resulted in strengths crafting but only among older workers. Strengths crafting, in turn, promoted perceived DA and NS fit.
Lu et al. (2014)	Work engagement has a significant indirect effect on changes in perceived NS fit through changes in relational job crafting and on changes in perceived DA fit through changes in physical job crafting.
Marstand et al. (2018)	Over time, perceived leader–employee value congruence results in higher leader identification. However, bidirectional effects could not be ruled out.
Meyer et al. (2010)	PO culture fit relates positively to commitment, but not turnover intent, both before and after a change intervention. Perceptions of organizational culture are more stable across time compared to employees' culture preferences.
Saks and Ashforth (2002)	Pre-entry fit perceptions are positively related to postentry fit perceptions. The relationships between pre-entry fit perceptions and employment quality outcomes are mediated by postentry fit perceptions.
Simmering et al. (2003)	Misfit amplifies the conscientiousness–development relationship, such that conscientiousness is positively related to development but only when employees are misfits with respect to autonomy. In turn, being involved in developmental activities results in improved fit.

(Continues)

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Study	Temporal implications for fit
Tims et al. (2016)	Individuals who craft their job by increasing their job resources (e.g., support, autonomy) and challenging job demands (e.g., participate in new projects) and by decreasing their hindering job demands (e.g., emotional demands) report higher perceptions of PJ fit in the following week.
Valero and Hirschi (2016)	Unmotivated profiles report a decrease, and motivated profiles an increase, in perceived PJ fit across 1 year.
Vanderstukken et al. (2019)	Psychological distance influences job seekers' perceptions of PO fit: At a large psychological distance, assessments of organizational values are more heavily colored by industry-based assumptions and industry stereotypes compared to a small psychological distance.
Wang et al. (2011)	Newcomers' adaptability competencies explain improvements in PE fit perceptions over and above socialization and personality effects. Perceived PO, DA, NS, and PG fit show different levels of stability.
Wei (2013)	The psychological experience of time moderates fit-outcome relationships: Perceived PO fit is a weaker predictor of OCB for employees who have a higher present-orientation time perspective.
Wilk and Sackett (1996)	DA fit strengthens over time. DA fit shows a "diminishing return" such that big improvements in fit occur early on and taper off later.
Wille et al. (2014)	People occupy professions at the beginning of their career and 15 years later that fit with their initial as well as their evolved vocational interests. Interests and occupations are relatively stable across a 15-year time interval, yet there also is room for change. Occupational perceptions increasingly resemble objective assessments over time.
<b>Within-person study designs</b>	
Swider et al. (2015)	Initial levels of, and changes in, differentiation of applicant PO fit perceptions across organizations significantly predict future job choice. Changes in within-organizational PO fit perceptions predict applicant job choices among multiple employers.
Tepper et al. (2018)	Positive affect is higher on days when the supply of transformational leadership fits (rather than being deficient or in excess of) follower needs. Within-person positive affect mediates the dynamic relationship between NS fit and job satisfaction, supervisor satisfaction, and OCB.
Vleugels et al. (2018)	Employees' situational work experiences were found to temporally overlap with their situational perceptions of PO, DA, and NS fit. This pattern of results suggests that heuristic thinking processes govern the formation of situational perceptions of fit.
Vleugels et al. (2019)	Cluster analysis based on three temporal parameters (average fit experience, change frequency, variance in experiences) reveals five distinct fit and misfit types: stable fits, dynamic fits, low fits, mavericks, and misfits. These types show different relationships to work role proficiency (task performance and OCB) and work role proactivity (change-oriented behavior and innovative work behavior) variables.
Vogel et al. (2020)	People can experience "meaningfulness misfit": The need for meaningfulness serves the role of a daily tipping point, above (and below) which the positive effects of meaningful work are accompanied by negative effects (e.g., fatigue) that detract from daily engagement.
<b>Combined (between and within) designs</b>	
Gabriel et al. (2014)	Fit perceptions primarily precede affect and job satisfaction at the within-person level and the between-person level of analysis, though some specific relationships exhibit reciprocal or reverse causality. Causal relationships are stronger on the between compared to the within level.
Sylva et al. (2019)	For both job stayers and job changers it was found that a within-person increase in career initiative over time, rather than stable between-person difference in career initiative at time 1, was associated with a within-person increase in perceived DA fit over time.
<b>Qualitative designs</b>	
Baldegger and Gast (2016)	The decisive employee selection criteria in new ventures change over time: Initially important person-founder fit turns into PO fit.
Chuang et al. (2015)	Chinese individuals assess PE fit over clock time in relation to five dominant themes: competence at work, harmonious connections at work, balance among life domains, cultivation, and realization. The two themes of cultivation and realization are experienced within a retrospective and a prospective temporal frame and also suggest a third temporal perspective: diachronic time.
Follmer et al. (2018)	To manage their misfit experience over time, individuals engage in three broad misfit management strategies: resolution, relief, and resignation. Some of these focus on resolving the underlying sources of misfit, while others are simply meant to relieve the negative consequences of misfit.
Jansen and Shipp (2019)	From individuals' fit-related histories across psychological time, four prototypical fit trajectories (temporary setback, riding the wave, anticipated decline, and downward slide) and two fit processes (a slow accumulation journey and a sudden identity-threat journey) were discovered. Across clock time, four enduring fit themes (transactional, instrumental, affiliative, and custodial) explained fit experience patterns and responses to misfit.

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Study	Temporal implications for fit
Klag et al. (2015)	Thoughts about changing workplaces begin with one of three forms of triggering stimuli (external events, taking stock of several prior events or experiences, or a welling up of negative affective posthire states), which in turn activate PE comparisons. Four storylines were revealed that capture variation in the evolution in this process over time: exploring opportunities, solving problems, reconciling incongruence, and escaping situations.

Abbreviations: AET, affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996); ASA, attraction-selection-attrition theory (Schneider, 1987); ATE, appraisal theory of emotions (Roseman et al., 1990); BBT, broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2001); CLT, construal-level theory (Trope & Liberman, 2010); CVM, competing values model (Quinn, 1988); DA fit, demands-abilities fit; DATA model, demands-affordances transactional model (Woods et al., 2019); DCT, differentiation-consolidation theory (Svenson, 1992); EMPEF, expanded model of PE fit (Yu, 2009); ESM, experience sampling methodology; FMT, Fit motivation theory (Yu, 2013); FNT, fit narratives theory (Shipp & Jansen, 2011); FST, fit spiral theory (Jansen & Shipp, 2013); GH, gravitational hypothesis (McCormick et al., 1972); HPWP, high performance work practices (Lepak et al., 2006); IAT, individual adaptability theory (Ployhart & Bliese, 2006); JCT, job crafting theory (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001); JD-R model, job demands-resources model (Bakker et al., 2014); LMX, leader-member exchange (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995); NS fit, needs-supplies fit; OCB, organizational citizenship behavior; PCT, person-categorization theory (Feldman, 1981); PE fit, person-environment fit; PF fit, person-founder fit; PG, Person-group fit; PI fit, person-industry fit; PJ fit, person-job fit; PO fit, person-organization fit; PR fit, person-role fit; PS fit, person-supervisor fit; PV fit, person-vocation fit; SDT, self-determination theory (e.g., Gagné & Deci, 2005); SRT, self-regulation theory (Carver & Scheier, 1981); SST, situational strength theory (Mischel, 1977); ST, socialization theory (Jones, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979); TAT, trait activation theory (Tett et al., 2013); TRA, theory of reasoned action (Ajzen, 1991); TWA, theory of work adjustment (Davis & Lofquist, 1984); UMT, unfolding model of turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994); TPT, time perspective theory (Zimbardo et al., 1997); TVC, theory of vocational choice (Holland, 1973).

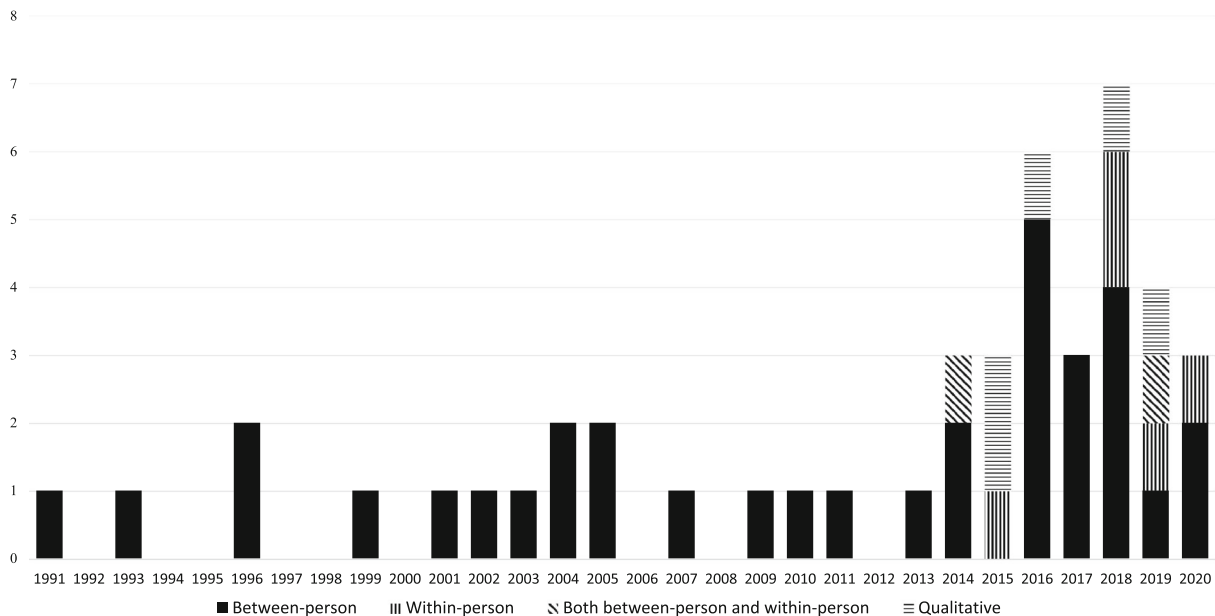


FIGURE 1 Chronological frequency of temporal fit studies by study design

Given their design considerations, they have been classified as within-person studies in Table 1.

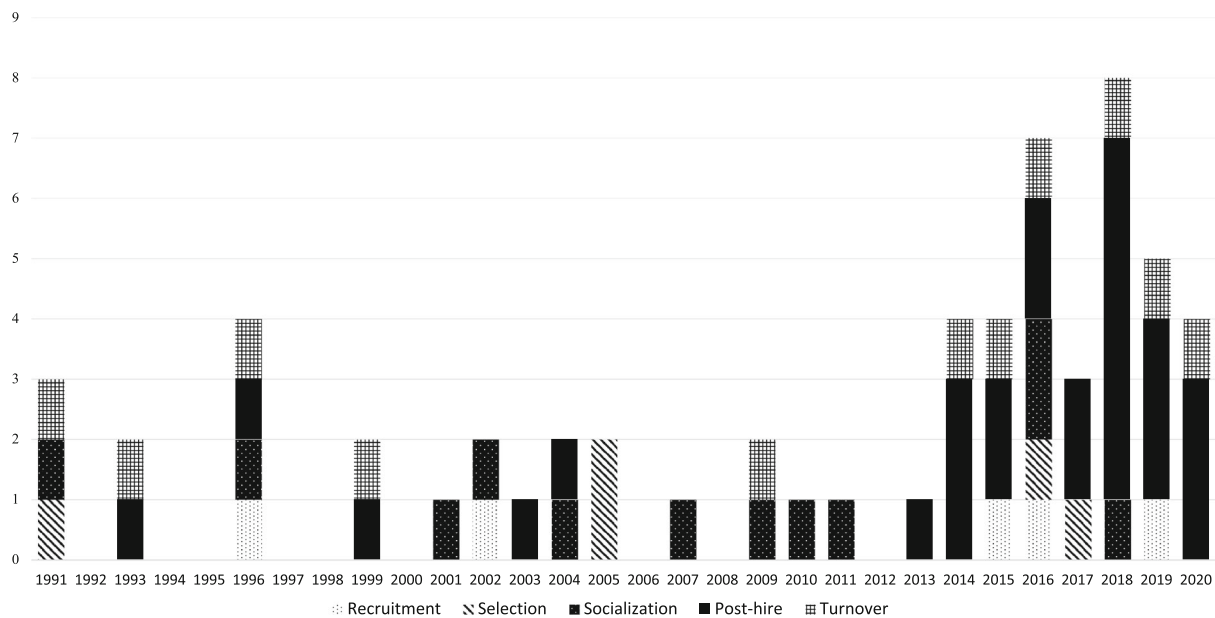
Figure 1 shows the chronology of empirical temporal fit studies by study design. Before 2014, all temporal fit studies had a between-person design and it is only from 2014 that temporal fit studies appeared with within-person and qualitative designs. From that point onwards, a surge in temporal fit studies is evident, with an average of four temporal fit studies published each year. The publication of new temporal theory papers appears to have been an important catalyst of this increase. Based on a reference analysis of all papers published in 2014 or later, Shipp and Jansen's (2011) FNT was cited in 13 out of 29 (45%) studies. Eight of these papers (28%) cite Yu's (2009) EMPEF, and six (21%) cite Yu's (2013) FMT. Furthermore, this increase is

marked by a shift in focus from how fit changes during the more procedural pre-employment and early employment phases (i.e., fit in relation to recruitment, selection, and socialization<sup>2</sup>) to what happens with employees' fit beyond this initial socialization phase (i.e., posthire fit and fit in relation to turnover) (Figure 2). Below, we present an overview of our review findings in relation to the theoretical frameworks we discussed above.

### 3.1.1 | Recruitment, hiring, and job change

An implicit premise underlying selection-based models of fit (e.g., Holland, 1973; Schneider, 1987) is that fit changes when, over





**FIGURE 2** Chronological frequency of temporal fit studies by employment phase

time, individuals sort into better fitting work environments through a combination of attraction, selection, and attrition processes. Recruitment, hiring, and job change research largely support this gravitational hypothesis of fit. For instance, Swider et al. (2015) show that job applicants increasingly differentiate between employers based on their changing perceptions of person-organization (PO) fit. More broadly, fit, and especially PO fit, has been found to become more predictive of attraction and withdrawal effects further down into the recruitment and hiring process, both from a recruiter (Chuang & Sackett, 2005) and applicant (Carless, 2005; Giumetti & Raymark, 2017) point of view. In addition, Breeden (1993) reports that those who changed jobs or occupations displayed higher levels of abilities and interest fit compared to nonchangers at follow-up 2 years later. Similarly, Wilk and Sackett (1996) observed that job misfit is self-correcting when viewed over a time span of 12 years, such that the odds of improving fit by moving up versus down in job complexity through job change were markedly higher for individuals who exceeded or struggled to match initial job demands for complexity.

While recruitment and hiring efforts influence job choice decisions, job change ultimately is the driving force behind gravitational effects on fit. Interestingly, research suggests that job change can affect fit in different ways. For example, Feij et al. (1999) revealed that job change is associated with changing perceptions of E skill requirements, but not P vocational interests, suggesting that job changers gravitate to environments with attributes that better match their own. By contrast, Sylva et al. (2019) observed that turnover simultaneously affects growth in perceptions of demands-abilities (DA) fit and career initiative within the same reporting period, with those who switched jobs exhibiting greater growth in both career initiative and DA fit than those who did not. Thus, job change may also bring about better fit by facilitating work adjustment in job changers' new work environment.

While recruitment, hiring, and job change combine to explain how fit changes following a job, organizational, or vocational transition, research indicates that fit can also change for those who remain in the same work environment. For instance, Sylva et al. (2019) demonstrate that improvements in DA fit could also be established without necessarily having to change to a new job. Likewise, fit has been found to change substantially within the same cycle of attraction, selection, and attrition (e.g., Chatman, 1991; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2004; Saks & Ashforth, 2002). This indicates that gravitational effects triggered by recruitment, selection, and job change are not absolute and unable to account for all change in fit.

### 3.1.2 | Socialization

Because selection processes are unlikely to ensure a perfect fit between newcomers and all aspects of their work environment, socialization has been proposed as an additional determinant of PE fit (Chatman, 1989). While some studies indicate that, on average, fit increases during the socialization period (De Cooman et al., 2009; Valero & Hirschi, 2016; Wang et al., 2011), other studies have reported a decrease (Chatman, 1991; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2004; Saks & Ashforth, 2002) or no change (Cable & Parsons, 2001) in mean level fit for the full sample of respondents. This suggests that fit does not change in the same way for every individual during the socialization period. Indeed, research (Cable & Parsons, 2001; Chatman, 1991; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2004; Wang et al., 2011) indicates that individuals exposed to more vigorous socialization tactics, especially those targeting social aspects (e.g., social activities and mentor support), are more likely to report improvements in fit, particularly perceptions of fit. Thus, how the socialization process is designed seems to account for significant variance in fit change. In addition, recruits whose values

on entry more closely match those of the firm also tend to achieve better fit following socialization (e.g., Cable & Parsons, 2001; Chatman, 1991), suggesting that socialization processes interact with selection effects to create and change fit during the early stages of organizational membership. Stated differently, if the recruitment and selection process produces a poor match, socialization efforts are less likely to be effective at improving fit.

Exactly how organizational fit changes in response to socialization is still not entirely clear. Socialization may cause personal work values to shift towards perceptions of organizational values (Cable & Parsons, 2001; Chatman, 1991) or the values held by its members (De Cooman et al., 2009). In this scenario, fit improves to the extent that socialization events lead employees to internalize the dominant organizational or workforce values. The alternative view is that socialization does not change newcomers' own values but rather their perceptions of firm values (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2004). In this scenario, perceptions of firm values may be initially inaccurate due to the absence of firsthand organizational experience but may grow to be more realistic upon entry, which triggers adjustments to newcomers' perceptions of fit (Cable & Judge, 1996; Saks & Ashforth, 2002).

Only a small number of studies have focused on how fit develops following socialization to a change. Meyer et al. (2010) observed that person-culture fit was impacted most for those components specifically targeted for change. Gerdenitsch et al. (2018) note that, following an office redesign, a decrease in work distraction coincided with a linear increase in perceptions of needs-supply (NS) fit. Finally, DeRue and Morgeson (2007) studied how fit develops in newly formed teams and showed that an increase in growth satisfaction and performance experiences favorably color perceptions of person-role fit over time. Combined, these studies reveal that improvements in fit that follow from socialization are indicative of an improved work experience or successful adaptation to a change.

### 3.1.3 | Work adjustment

After socialization, work adjustment serves to repair, maintain, and cement fit with the work environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; French et al., 1982). Studies on work adjustment and fit span a variety of timelines, ranging from several weeks (e.g., Bayl-Smith & Griffin, 2017) to months (e.g., Lu et al., 2014) or even years (e.g., Feij et al., 1999). Combined, these studies confirm that different adjustment pathways exist through which change in fit can be accomplished and that selection, socialization, and turnover are not necessarily the only, or even the primary, mechanisms to improve fit.

First, employees may employ strategies that target either P (reactive) or E (proactive) components of fit (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). Examples of reactive adjustment strategies include engaging in an active work style (Bayl-Smith & Griffin, 2017) or taking part in developmental activities (Bayl-Smith & Griffin, 2018; Simmering et al., 2003; Sylva et al., 2019), whereas examples of proactive adjustment strategies include job change negotiation (Bayl-Smith & Griffin, 2018) and various job crafting tactics (Kooij et al., 2017; Lu et al., 2014). Proactive and

reactive adjustment strategies both help individuals to restore their fit with the current work environment by targeting the root cause of incongruence, termed "coping" (French et al., 1982). Alternatively, individuals may improve their subjective fit experience by engaging in "defense" behaviors (French et al., 1982). Examples of defense responses include adjusting vocational interests in response to the work one does (Feij et al., 1999); bringing fit perceptions in line with prevailing levels of work engagement (de Beer et al., 2016) or motivation (Valero & Hirschi, 2016); re-evaluating job demands, abilities, needs, or supplies (Kim et al., 2020); or taking pride in misfit (Follmer et al., 2018).

Studies on work adjustment also show that the effectiveness of work adjustment strategies is often conditional on moderating factors. Many of the identified factors are P-related, including age (Caldwell et al., 2004; Kim et al., 2020; Kooij et al., 2017), work style (Bayl-Smith & Griffin, 2017, 2018), career stage (Kooij & Boon, 2018), or personality factors such as conscientiousness or mastery orientation (Caldwell et al., 2004; Simmering et al., 2003). In addition, Lu et al. (2014) identified job insecurity as a relevant environmental factor in the adjustment process. Some of these studies (e.g., Bayl-Smith & Griffin, 2018; Kooij et al., 2017) also show that adjustment strategies may backfire if certain boundary conditions go unmet. These findings highlight that P and E factors play an important role in understanding how work adjustment tactics influence fit.

### 3.1.4 | Affective self-regulation

Recent within-person studies reinforce the idea that fit can also change dynamically across very short time intervals, such as week-to-week (Vleugels et al., 2018, 2019), day-to-day (Tepper et al., 2018; Vleugels et al., 2018), or even within the very same day (Gabriel et al., 2014; Tepper et al., 2018; Vogel et al., 2020). Combined, these studies suggest that perceptions of the person and the environment fluctuate more intensely than direct perceptions of fit (Table 2).

Yu (2009, 2013) proposed that affective self-regulation may be one of the driving forces behind dynamic change in fit, either because people seek to maintain consistency between experienced affect and fit (affective consistency perspective) or because they see fit as a tool to be managed in search of well-being (hedonistic perspective). Gabriel et al. (2014) demonstrate that momentary job satisfaction and affect indeed influence perceptions of fit. However, the practical significance of their findings is cause for debate, with within-person fluctuations in job satisfaction and affect only accounting for as little as 2.79% of the total variance in PO fit and 1.82% of the total variance in person-job (PJ) fit. Likewise, momentary fit perceptions appear to be an equally weak predictor of momentary job satisfaction and positive affect (2.28% and 0.87% of total variance explained). This suggests that fit and affect largely overlap. For example, Vleugels et al. (2018) were unable to provide support for the idea that situational experiences of affect and performance can be causally disentangled from situational perceptions of fit, a pattern of results that is in line with the notion that heuristic thinking processes govern the formation of situational perceptions of fit (Yu, 2013). Overall, these findings fail

Time lag	Corresponding references	Fit construct	ICC <sub>1</sub>
<b>Fit perceptions</b>			
<1 day	Gabriel et al. (2014)	PJ fit	32%
		PO fit	22%
Day-to-day	Vleugels et al. (2018)	DA fit	40%
		NS fit	21%
		PO fit	21%
Week-to-week	Vleugels et al. (2018, 2019)	DA fit	28%
		NS fit	23%
		PO fit	23%–24%
<b>Perceptions of P and E</b>			
<1 day	Tepper et al. (2018) and Vogel et al. (2020)	Needs	38%–43%
		Supplies	30%–55%
Day-to-day	Tepper et al. (2018)	Needs	32%
		Supplies	51%

Notes: Intraclass correlation coefficients (ICC<sub>1</sub>) denotes amount of variance that exists within-person. Abbreviations: DA, demands-abilities fit; NS, needs-supply fit; PJ, person-job fit; PO fit, person-organization fit.

to provide convincing support for the idea that dynamic change in perceptions of fit can be causally attributed to prior change in affect.

The evidence that dynamic change in fit temporally precedes dynamics in well-being is more convincing. For example, Vogel et al. (2020) found that momentary mismatches between meaningful work received and meaningful work needed lower momentary engagement through increased fatigue. Likewise, Tepper et al. (2018) report that positive affect mediates the relationship between momentary NS fit and job satisfaction, supervisor satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Tims et al. (2016) also surveyed individuals across three points in time, 1 week apart, and demonstrated that individuals who job craft in week 1 benefit in terms of improved PJ fit perceptions in week 2 and higher work meaningfulness in week 3. Through the use of a cross-lagged panel design, they were able to rule out the alternative explanation that PJ fit causally precedes job crafting behavior, suggesting that engaging in job crafting is a purposeful strategy to situationally enhance work meaningfulness through improved PJ fit. Indirectly, these findings lend credence to the idea that individuals are apt to satisfy hedonism and well-being needs by situationally manipulating their fit experience.

### 3.1.5 | Fit narratives

FNT (Shipp & Jansen, 2011) builds on the distinction between clock time and psychological time in proposing that individuals combine perceptions of retrospected, present, and anticipated fit into an overarching fit narrative, which itself is subject to (re)crafting as individuals try to make sense of the personal and environmental changes that take place over clock time.

The main ideas underlying FNT have been validated empirically in a qualitative study by Jansen and Shipp (2019), who distinguished

between four prototypical narrative types (i.e., temporary setback, riding the wave, anticipated decline, and downward slide), each of which was characterized by a distinct set of experiences of retrospected and anticipated fit. For some individuals, their fit narrative remained stable across time, while others experienced fit-impacting changes across clock time which triggered concomitant changes to their fit narrative. They also noted that fit narratives were crafted around a particular theme, which explained people's pattern of fit experiences and their response to misfit over time.

More broadly, the idea that individuals revisit fit across psychological time has gained some traction in the fit literature in recent years. For example, Klag et al. (2015) show that, over time, individuals reinforce or recalibrate past assessments of fit. Follmer et al. (2018) observed that misfits may shield themselves from feelings of incongruence in the present by anticipating better fit in the future; a defense strategy referred to as temporal framing. Chuang et al. (2015) provide empirical evidence for the idea that fit changes over both clock time and psychological time and additionally propose a third temporal perspective, diachronic time, which focuses on evolutionary connotations of fit. Finally, Wei (2013) shows that the attention individuals devote to thinking about the present or future influences the relationship between fit and work outcomes. Combined, these findings underscore that with its focus on change in PE fit over psychological time, FNT fills an important theoretical void in the temporal fit literature.

### 3.2 | Different temporal conceptualizations of fit

From the preceding discussion, it is evident that fit scholars have conceptualized change in fit in a variety of ways. Here, we discuss three distinct conceptual classifications that emerged from our analysis of the temporal fit literature. While these various temporal

**TABLE 3** Different temporal conceptualizations of fit

	Change characteristics	Change triggers	Fit models	Implications for fit	Example studies
<b>Change process</b>					
<i>Transitional</i>	Change in response to an objective or subjective transition	Selection Turnover Job, supervisor, work group, or vocational change Mental time traveling	ASA TVC TWA FNT PPFFM	Change in fit is episodic; infrequent and discontinuous change tied to a specific transition	Cable and Judge (1996), Jansen and Shipp (2019), Saks and Ashforth (2002), Wilk and Sackett (1996)
<i>Developmental</i>	Change as part of a larger, ongoing adjustment process	Recruitment and selection practices Socialization Proactive and reactive adjustment strategies Coping and defense behaviors	TWA PEFT IMPOF EMPEF FMT	Change in fit is continuous; gradual, incremental change that accumulates slowly and eventually erupts in bigger change over a longer time	Bayl-Smith and Griffin (2018), Swider et al. (2015), Cooper-Thomas et al. (2004), Kim et al. (2020)
<i>Transformational</i>	Change events that fundamentally alter (perceptions of) P or E attributes	Personal life events Career events Training interventions Organizational shock events	TWA PEFT	Change in fit is discontinuous; abrupt change that unfolds over a restricted period in time	Gerdenitsch et al. (2018), Kooij et al. (2017), Meyer et al. (2010), Simmering et al. (2003)
<b>Level of aggregation</b>					
<i>Situational level</i>	Change over short recording intervals (e.g., multiple times a day, daily, weekly) with clear time anchors (e.g., “at this moment,” “this day,” “this week”) to guide assessments	Self-regulation Heuristic processes	EMPEF FMT	Fit snapshots within short time intervals; change implies reevaluation of fit experience from one situation to the next	Gabriel et al. (2014), Tepper et al. (2018), Vleugels et al. (2018), Vogel et al. (2020)
<i>Baseline level</i>	Change over long recording intervals (e.g., weeks, months, years), often without clear time anchors to guide assessments	Transitional, developmental, or transformational events	ASA TVC TWA PEFT IMPOF EMPEF FMT PPFFM FNT	Durable assessments of fit across various situations in time; change implies reevaluation of “average” level of fit	Cable and Parsons (2001), Caldwell et al. (2004), de Beer et al. (2016), Follmer et al. (2018)
<b>Temporal frame</b>					
<i>Clock time</i>	Change over factual time (i.e., time flowing linearly in one direction)	Transitional, developmental, or transformational events over clock time	ASA TVC TWA PEFT IMPOF EMPEF FMT FNT	Fit exists in the present and changes with the objective passage of time	Chatman (1991), Boon and Biron (2016), Ghetta et al. (2020), Vleugels et al. (2019)
<i>Psychological time</i>	Recollections of the past and/or anticipations of the future in the present	Transitional, developmental or transformational events over clock time (as triggers of subjective time traveling)	PPFFM FNT	Fit exists in the past (retrospected fit), present, and future (anticipated fit) and changes with the subjective passage of time	Chuang et al. (2015), Jansen and Shipp (2019), Klag et al. (2015), Wei (2013)

Abbreviations: ASA, attraction-selection-attrition theory (Schneider, 1987); EMPEF, expanded model of PE fit (Yu, 2009); FMT, fit motivation theory (Yu, 2013); FNT, fit narratives theory (Shipp & Jansen, 2011); IMPOF, interaction model of PO fit (Chatman, 1989); PEFT, person-environment fit theory (French et al., 1982); PPFFM, past-present-future fit model (Caplan, 1983); TVC, theory of vocational choice (Holland, 1973); TWA, theory of work adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984).

conceptualizations have important implications for the meaning of fit, they also divide the temporal fit literature in significant ways (Table 3).

First, and based on the nature of the underlying change process, fit can be categorized as a transitional, developmental, or transformational construct. *Transitional change* is episodic in that fit may change every time individuals are selected in and out of vocations, work settings, or jobs (objective transitions; e.g., Wilk & Sackett, 1996) or whenever individuals mentally travel back or forth in time and recollect fit in the past or anticipate fit in the future (subjective transitions; e.g., Jansen & Shipp, 2019). *Developmental change* represents continuous, incremental change that accumulates slowly and eventually erupts in bigger change in fit over a longer period in time. For example, fit matures as a result of recruitment, selection, or socialization efforts (e.g., Cooper-Thomas et al., 2004; Swider et al., 2015) or can be (re)developed through coping, defense, and proactive or reactive adjustment strategies (e.g., Bayl-Smith & Griffin, 2018). Finally, *transformational change* embodies abrupt and discontinuous change in fit that manifests following a P or E redefining event in, for instance, the private (e.g., sudden illness or becoming a parent), career (e.g., missed promotion, training intervention), or organizational (e.g., culture change or restructuring) domain (e.g., Kooij et al., 2017; Meyer et al., 2010).

Second, fit can also be conceptualized as a situational or baseline level construct. The distinctive feature here is how individuals aggregate time into an episode for exploration and reflection (George & Jones, 2000). Studies focusing on *baseline fit* (e.g., Cable & Parsons, 2001) investigate how respondents revise generalized assessment of fit formed over longer time intervals. All qualitative and most of the between-person quantitative studies in our sample (implicitly) focus on changes in baseline fit. These studies can be contrasted with those that examine *situational fit*, mostly within-person studies (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2014) that focus on how fit changes over much shorter, time-defined intervals (e.g., “at this moment,” “this day,” “this week”). While situational fit has largely been studied independent of baseline fit, dynamic fluctuations in fit may also be conceived of as part of larger trajectories in baseline fit (e.g., Vleugels et al., 2019).

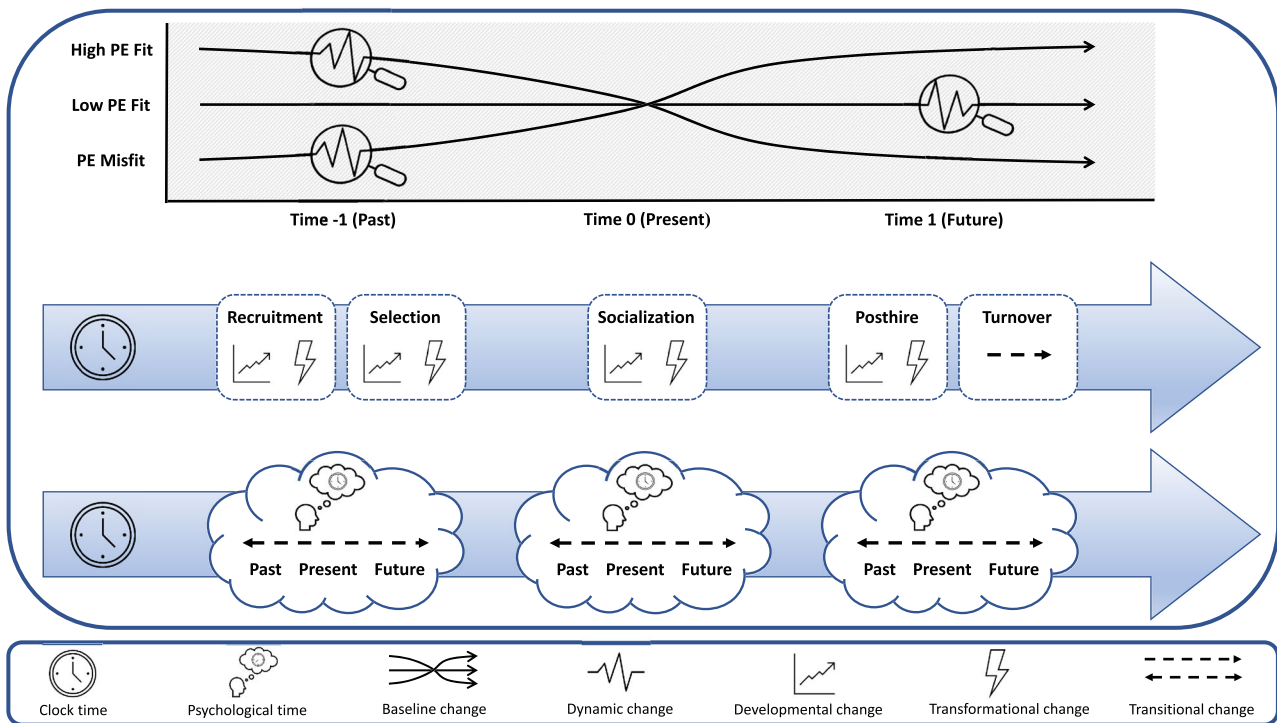
Finally, changes in fit can also be considered in two different temporal frames—clock time and psychological time. Studies investigating change in fit over *clock time* consider how fit changes across objective time intervals, that is, with the linear passage of time (e.g., Boon & Biron, 2016). By contrast, studies focusing on *psychological time* (e.g., Jansen & Shipp, 2019) examine how fit changes in the present but across subjective time intervals, through recollections of past fit, or anticipations of future fit.

Collectively, these various temporal conceptualizations of fit provide the building blocks for the different theories, models, and frameworks that explain change in PE fit. Models focusing on selection and turnover processes, such as TVC (Holland, 1973) and ASA (Schneider, 1987), build on the notion of clock time in suggesting that baseline fit changes as individuals (objectively) transition from one job, vocation, or organizational environment to the next. Changes in baseline fit over clock time are also evident in adaptation models such as TWA

(Dawis & Lofquist, 1984), EMPEF (Yu, 2009), FMT (Yu, 2013), IMPOF (Chatman, 1989), and French et al.'s (1982) PE Fit Theory (PEFT). However, and in these models, the focus predominantly lies on developmental change as opposed to transitional change. Some of these models, including PEFT (French et al., 1982) and TWA (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984), also implicitly cover transformational change in fit in proposing that sudden change in (perceptions of) P and E attributes may precede more deliberate adjustment initiatives (i.e., coping and defense and proactive and reactive responses) aimed at restoring fit over clock time. In addition, adaptation theories rooted in affective self-regulation and heuristic thinking processes, such as EMPEF (Yu, 2009) and FMT (Yu, 2013), are also suited to explain dynamic clock time change in situational fit. Finally, Caplan's (1983) model of past, present, and future fit (PPFFM) and Shipp and Jansen's (2011) FNT (also) explain how baseline fit changes over psychological time. In Caplan's PPFFM, change in baseline fit occurs through (subjective) transitions back and forth in time. By contrast, FNT proposes that fit narratives take shape over psychological time, as individuals differentiate between, and make holistic sense of, their baseline fit in the past, present, and future. In addition, FNT also builds on the notion of clock time in suggesting that these personalized fit narratives are subject to incremental (developmental) or radical (transformational) crafting in response to triggering events over clock time.

Figure 3 provides an integrative summary of the different temporal conceptualizations of fit discussed above. The top center of Figure 3 depicts three hypothetical fit trajectories unfolding over clock (T-1, T0, and T1) and psychological (past, present, and future) time. Although more complex change patterns exist (e.g., U-shaped and S-shaped; Jansen & Shipp, 2019), these examples illustrate that, broadly speaking, fit can improve (e.g., from misfit to low fit to high fit), deteriorate (e.g., from high fit to low fit to misfit), or persist (at, e.g., low levels of fit) when studied as a baseline trajectory over either clock or psychological time.

The two block arrows below illustrate how fit trajectories may form, develop, and change for someone who completes the entire employment cycle of recruitment, selection, socialization, posthire adjustment, and turnover. Over clock time, baseline fit is impacted by developmental, transformational, or transitional change resulting from, for example, macro-level human resource processes (e.g., recruitment, selection, or socialization efforts), personal and professional life events (e.g., financial setback or corporate scandal), agentic behaviors (e.g., coping, defense, and reactive and proactive adjustment postentry), or deselection (e.g., Chatman, 1989; French et al., 1982; Schneider, 1987). This real-time information informs us about our fit in the present and is supplemented with recollections of past fit and anticipations of future fit (Caplan, 1983; Shipp & Jansen, 2011). As people move through the different phases of the employment cycle (e.g., from selection to socialization and from socialization to posthire adjustment), the future (e.g., socialization at T-1) gradually evolves into the present (e.g., socialization at T0) and past (e.g., socialization at T1), a process that is likely to produce (dis)confirming evidence about the future in addition to a “new” past. As this process unfolds, people may reinterpret, recalibrate, or reinforce recollections of past fit and



**FIGURE 3** Integrated change model person-environment fit

anticipations of future fit by traveling back and forth over psychological time, eventually causing their fit trajectory to shift over clock time.

Situationally, fit can be seen a dynamic phenomenon influenced by self-regulatory and heuristic processes (Yu, 2009, 2013), with fit assessments fluctuating around a baseline trajectory. Within the recruitment, selection, socialization, posthire, and turnover stages of employment, fit dynamics may be present to a greater or lesser extent and increase, decrease, or remain unaffected by transitional, developmental, and transformational events.

### 3.3 | Obstacles to future progress

#### 3.3.1 | Emphasis on ASA and socialization processes

Figure 2 reveals that more than 70% of the temporal studies on fit contextualize change by looking at the HR staffing process; 10 out of 46 studies (22%) investigate temporal fit from the perspective of job applicants during the recruitment and selection process, 12 studies (26%) focus on changes in fit during the socialization phase, and 11 studies (24%) focus on temporal fit in relation to turnover. Hence, and while a majority of studies talk about how fit takes shape through selection (entry and exit) and socialization processes, historically, few studies have focused on how fit is impacted between the socialization and attrition phases.

Being cited in 23 of the 46 articles (50%), Schneider's (1987) ASA theory is by far the most referenced theory in our database (Table 1).

Of the 34 between-person temporal fit studies, 10 (29%) explicitly rely on ASA for hypothesis development, with TWA (7 studies, 21%) and socialization theories (ST; 5 studies, 15%) coming in second and third. However, in 6 of these 12 instances, TWA and ST are used in an ASA-combined approach. The overall dominance of the ASA model is remarkable given that, essentially, ASA is not a theory about fit. ASA's central insight is that organizations become increasingly homogeneous in terms of the workers they employ as they attract, select, and retain similar types of people over time. Selection processes are considered to be the driving force behind organizational homogeneity; throughout the organization's life cycle, the composition of individuals within the organization changes rather than the attributes of individuals themselves. From this perspective, fit is not commonly seen as something changeable or adjustable, unless people decide to leave. By contrast, socialization theories (e.g., Chatman, 1989) address how fit changes between the selection and attrition phases but only among newcomers, not among more tenured insiders. More broadly, ASA and socialization theories do not support transformational change and cannot account for change in fit over psychological time.<sup>3</sup> Thus, all in all, ASA and socialization theories can only explain a fraction of the many different ways in which fit can change over time.

#### 3.3.2 | Focus on between-person level of analysis

With the large majority (74%) of temporal fit studies being uniquely between-person (Table 1), the overall potential of the fit literature to break new temporal ground has been restricted to date. Indeed,

while past studies have typically compared change in fit *between* people (i.e., changes in person A's fit relative to person B's fit), many of the theoretical ideas related to temporal fit describe change processes that occur *within* people (i.e., when, how, and why person A and B's fit changes over time; Tepper et al., 2018; Vleugels et al., 2019).

One limitation that most between-person longitudinal designs share is that they gloss over more complex, within-person change patterns that operate behind average sample-level effects. As a case in point, consider Cable and Parsons' (2001) study on socialization and PO fit. The authors concluded that "the average level of pre-entry values congruence was the same as the average level of postentry values congruence" (Cable & Parsons, 2001, p. 17), even though significant change in P values was observed over time (E values were only measured once). Indeed, personal work values shifted towards perceptions of organizational values when newcomers experienced socialization tactics that were sequential and fixed, meaning that for some individuals, value congruence *did* significantly change over time. Yet for newcomers with a different socialization experience, personal work values may have changed in the opposite direction, or not at all, which explains the noted zero-sum effect on PO fit for the full sample. This example illustrates that the results from between-level studies cannot simply be extrapolated to the within-person level, as this may result in an ecological fallacy (Gabriel et al., 2014). Indeed, the presence and nature of within-person change can easily be misinterpreted by a strict focus on the between-person level, resulting in erroneous conclusions about how fit changes over time.

### 3.3.3 | Preoccupation with linear change

A few notable exceptions aside (e.g., Gerdenitsch et al., 2018; Vleugels et al., 2019), researchers have generally portrayed fit as a phenomenon that changes in a linear (developmental) fashion over time. This is especially true for between-person studies of fit (Table 1), most of which employ analytical techniques that are regression-based (e.g., hierarchical regression and structural equation modeling) and concentrate on how fit at one point in time relates to fit at some later point in time (e.g., Cable & Judge, 1996; Marstand et al., 2018). This is despite the realization that many fit models, including ASA (Schneider, 1987), TWA (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984), PEFT (French et al., 1982), and FNT (Shipp & Jansen, 2011), underscore that fit can (also) change in transitional and transformational ways, implying complex, abrupt, and nonlinear change, even for baseline levels of fit.

While between-person studies are not typically designed with complex change in mind, within-person diary studies, through the use of repeated measurements, are well suited to study dynamic fluctuations and discontinuous change in P and E attributes or perceptions of fit. Yet from an analytical point of view, most of these studies continue to resort to a linear change logic by zooming in on situational deviations from average fit (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2014; Vleugels et al., 2018) or optimal match (e.g., Tepper et al., 2018; Vogel et al., 2020) using hierarchical linear modeling techniques. Even though the data

from these studies indicate that change in fit is dynamic and discontinuous rather than linear and continuous, the causes and consequences of nonlinear change in fit have rarely been explored.

### 3.3.4 | Normal causation thinking

The temporal fit literature remains heavily dominated by a normal causation logic: the notion that change in fit causes something else. Indeed, the vast majority of between-person (e.g., Boon & Biron, 2016; Cable & Judge, 1996; De Cooman et al., 2009; Kim et al., 2020; Saks & Ashforth, 2002) and within-person (e.g., Swider et al., 2015; Vleugels et al., 2019; Vogel et al., 2020) studies on fit have been concerned with quantifying the benefits of relative improvements in fit for (de-)selection, well-being, and performance purposes, without explicitly considering the antecedents of such change. As such, fit researchers have been more concerned with the utility of fit as opposed to understanding how fit can be created, developed, or repaired.

Even so, models of PE fit are quite explicit about how change in fit comes about. For instance, adaptation models of PE fit (Chatman, 1987; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; French et al., 1982) propose that fit changes through socialization or work adjustment efforts. FNT (Shipp & Jansen, 2011) considers introspection and extrospection as the driving force behind fit narrative change. By contrast, Yu (2009, 2013) positions work-based affect, bias and heuristics, self-regulation, and proactive behaviors as determinants of PE fit change. Nonetheless, most empirical fit studies appear to be undertheorized when it comes to explaining change. That is, the cause of change in fit is often implied, not hypothesized nor tested. This general lack of theorizing about, and testing of, antecedents of change is an important omission in the temporal fit literature and signals that for many of the fit studies that qualify as temporal, addressing temporal issues only is a secondary consideration, at best.

### 3.3.5 | Inattention to misfit

Only a handful of studies (20%) in our sample have (also) explicitly considered misfit. The question is whether one can fully understand fit, its temporal nature and features, without also factoring in misfit. Indeed, and to the extent that change results in fit being bend out of shape, the issue of misfit inevitably comes into the picture. Misfit represents a state of incompatibility, actual and/or perceived, that manifests when the attributes of the person are different, opposite, or mutually exclusive to those of the environment. Attributes can refer to values, traits, skills, needs, demographics, norms, or any other relevant characteristic based on which the person is rejected by the environment, or vice versa. This definition accounts for conceptualizations of misfit as an objective (actual and perceived as such) versus self-constructed (perceived but not actual) phenomenon, in addition to the idea that misfit is different from low compatibility or poor fit.

A key difference between fit and misfit is that fit is the usual or expected state, while misfit is an anomaly. Indeed, most fit models (e.g., Chatman, 1989; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; French et al., 1982; Schneider, 1987; Yu, 2013) assume that individuals are naturally driven towards fit—through (de-)selection, socialization, work adjustment or self-regulation—while misfit is intentionally avoided and brings individuals into a state of alert. As a result, actual fit, if present, may not always be salient to individuals. Actual misfit, by contrast, is less likely to go unnoticed. This duality also throws up questions about how misfit temporally relates to fit. For instance, some scholars have portrayed misfit as a transitory condition, a sense of incompatibility that naturally extends to fit over time (e.g., Simmering et al., 2003; Tepper et al., 2018; Vogel et al., 2020). This suggests that misfit may simply represent a temporary incongruity experienced by otherwise good fits. Yet others (e.g., Jansen & Shipp, 2019; Vleugels et al., 2019) proposed that true misfit is characteristic of a more manifest and persistent mismatch and something that would overtake feelings of fit. Still, others (e.g., Follmer et al., 2018) proposed that misfit in one area

can be buffered with fit in another, suggesting that fit and misfit can temporally coexist. This lack of insight into the temporal manifestation of misfit also obscures our understanding of temporal fit.

## 4 | DISCUSSION AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The purpose of this review was to take stock of progress in the temporal fit domain. To this end, we organized the temporal fit literature to provide insights into the wide diversity of mechanisms, processes, and conceptualizations underlying temporal fit research.

This review corroborates Yu's (2013) conclusion that popular and widespread conceptualizations of PE fit as a static, exogeneous variable that exists solely because of individual job choice and human resource practices (e.g., recruitment, selection, and socialization; e.g., Cable & Parsons, 2001; Chatman, 1991) are no longer tenable. Instead, change in fit appears to be multilayered and complex. That is,

**TABLE 4** Recommendations for future research

Obstacles to further progress	Opportunities for future research	Example questions
Emphasis on ASA and socialization processes	Future studies could place a greater emphasis on what happens beyond the socialization phase, compare and contrast changes in fit across employment phases, and study the boundary conditions of various work adjustment strategies.	How is developing fit different from maintaining fit? Does it matter who (P or E) accomplishes the adjustment? Does the mode of work adjustment (e.g., coping, defense) influence the long-term quality of fit?
Focus on between-person level of analysis	Future research could further examine the nature, causes, and consequences of within-person change, between-person differences in within-person change, and the presence of cross-level interactions between between-person and within-person change.	What are the causes and consequences of within-person change in fit? Why is fit stable for some individuals but dynamic for others? How does change in situational fit impact on baseline fit, and vice versa?
Preoccupation with linear change	Fit scholars could examine other facets of temporality beyond linear change, such as the frequency and intensity of change events, the shape of the change that results from it, the speed of the change process, or the patterns (e.g., fit trajectories, cycles, spirals) that emerge from combining various temporal parameters.	What is the unique contribution of velocity (i.e., rate of change) in explaining fit outcomes? How do transformational change events reshape individual fit trajectories? Is transitional change a precursor of accelerated change or, conversely, stability in fit?
Normal causation thinking	More research is needed on the etiology of fit and the origins of stability and change of different types of fit.	Which role do supervisors play in the development of fit? Can change in one type of fit spill over to other types of fit? Are the factors that explain stability and change the same for all types of fit?
Inattention to misfit	Future research should cast more light on how misfit co-evolves with fit; the impact of the timing (when misfit happens) and duration (how long misfit lasts) of misfit on the development of fit; and the episodic versus absolute nature of misfit.	Can misfit coexist with fit? Can misfit be developmental and enhance future fit? Is misfit absolute and does it follow people from place to place, or can fit slip into misfit and back into fit?

Abbreviation: ASA, attraction-selection-attrition theory.



fit may change in transitional, developmental, or transformational ways; change in fit may manifest at a baseline or situational (dynamic) level, and change in fit may unfold over clock or psychological time. Indeed, insights from recent qualitative (e.g., Follmer et al., 2018; Jansen & Shipp, 2019) and quantitative between-person (e.g., Kooij et al., 2017; Tims et al., 2016) and within-person (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2014) studies indicate that employees spend considerable effort on developing, maintaining, and self-regulating their fit over both clock and psychological time. This observation makes sense, given that baseline (e.g., Kim et al., 2020) and situational (e.g., Tepper et al., 2018) assessments of P and E components, the core building blocks that underlie PE fit, appear to be fundamentally unstable; a conclusion that also holds for prehire and posthire perceptions of fit (e.g., Swider et al., 2015; Vleugels et al., 2018).

Notwithstanding these insights, our systematic review also indicates that temporal fit research is still in its infancy. Indeed, we still only have a very fragmented and incomplete understanding of when, why, and how fit changes, and extant temporal fit research has barely scratched the surface of these matters. In its current form, the temporal fit literature still raises more questions than answers, and there is considerable work left to be done in the temporal domain. In Table 4 and in the remainder of the discussion, we offer recommendations for future research followed by a roadmap towards a more advanced temporal perspective on fit.

## 4.1 | Opportunities for future research

### 4.1.1 | Posthire work adjustment

Most temporal fit research has focused on what happens during the organizational entry and early socialization phases. Comparably less is known about what happens with fit between the selection and attrition phases of the ASA cycle (Schneider, 1987), especially following the initial socialization period. Here, one interesting avenue for future research may lie in comparing how fit develops across distinct employment phases. For instance, working out your fit upon entry may entail a different, more developmental process compared to maintaining fit long term, which may also involve responding to transformational change. Similarly, newcomer fit may be more situationally dynamic compared to insider fit, which has already matured and may thus be more stable.

Relatedly, the fit literature would also benefit from developing a better understanding of the boundary conditions and limitations of various posthire work adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; French et al., 1982) and (mis)fit management (Yu, 2009, 2013) strategies. For example, Follmer et al. (2018) note that employees who make surface-level behavior changes to address misfit can create higher levels of stress due to their inauthentic behavior. Bayl-Smith and Griffin (2018) demonstrate that adjustment behaviors contribute to an increase in DA fit but only in the context of high work styles fit. By contrast, Kim et al. (2020) found that change in E supplies resulted in higher PJ fit, while change in E demands, P abilities, and P needs

reduced PJ fit. Thus, how fit is being managed or adjusted, and the context surrounding the adjustment, may also have important implications for the quality of fit.

### 4.1.2 | Within-person change

For most fit models, assumptions and predictions have largely been tested on the between as opposed to the within-person level. While this may make sense for fit models emphasizing turnover and selection processes (Holland, 1973; Schneider, 1987), which naturally operate between as opposed to within individuals, adaptation processes such as socialization (Chatman, 1989) and work adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; French et al., 1982) cause fit to change within individuals first. In a general sense, between-person change cannot exist in the absence of within-person change. Thus, one pertinent recommendation for future fit research involves incorporating a stronger within-person research focus when designing new temporal studies on fit.

An advantage of the within-person paradigm is that it can paint a much sharper picture of how fit evolves *within* people, while still allowing comparisons of temporal patterns *between* people as well. For example, Jansen and Shipp's (2019) qualitative study not only indicates that fit narratives can change within individuals over time but also reveals remarkable between-person differences in the fit trajectories that result from them. Likewise, Vleugels et al. (2019) demonstrate that not everyone exhibits the same pattern of within-person fit change over time. Interestingly, the two studies that have contrasted a within-person with a between-person perspective of fit (Gabriel et al., 2014; Sylva et al., 2019) show that homology of effects across levels cannot be assumed. Thus, changes in fit may play out differently within people compared to between people, and more research is needed on how both levels of analysis interact with one another.

### 4.1.3 | Alternative forms of change

The fit literature has yet to progress beyond the mere insight that fit can improve, deteriorate, or persist over time. Research (e.g., Jansen & Shipp, 2019; Vleugels et al., 2019) suggests that these seemingly straightforward change trajectories may obscure more complex forms of change. Hence, explorations of novel ways of capturing and comparing change, such as qualitative changes in the meaning of fit (Baldegger & Gast, 2016; Vanderstukken et al., 2019), quadratic change and diminishing returns (Gerdenitsch et al., 2018; Wilk & Sackett, 1996), or comparisons of variance patterns over time (Swider et al., 2015; Vleugels et al., 2019) should be encouraged. Furthermore, a closer examination of fit trajectories (Jansen & Shipp, 2019) and temporal fit and misfit profiles (Vleugels et al., 2019) may offer new and rich information on the evolution of fit over clock and psychological time and can help to tease out the onset and timing of temporal effects.

Complex change may simply represent transformational change but may also emerge from the interplay between, for instance, developmental and transitional forms of change. For example, Sylva et al. (2019) show that job changers also demonstrated a stronger increase in career initiative and DA fit at follow-up compared to nonchangers. Moreover, Boon and Biron (2016) report that both improvement and decline in fit can activate turnover pathways. These examples suggest the existence of a complex interplay between developmental and transitional change. More broadly, the relationships between developmental, transformational, and transitional change remain poorly understood to date.

#### 4.1.4 | Origins of change

Normal causation relationships are so engrained in the temporal fit literature that they seem to have mitigated opposite thinking. Nonetheless, emerging between-person (Bayl-Smith & Griffin, 2017; de Beer et al., 2016; Marstand et al., 2018) and within-person (Gabriel et al., 2014; Vleugels et al., 2018) research indicates that a normal causation logic is not always as common as typically implied. These opposite relationships carry substantial theoretical weight because they provide more insight into the origins of fit and help to establish a body of knowledge regarding when, how, and why fit changes.

Future research should also identify mechanisms that can help to contextualize more established selection, socialization, and adjustment effects on fit. For instance, the strong association between LMX and fit (Boon & Biron, 2016; Hu et al., 2016) signals that the social context plays an important role in the development of fit. Likewise, the insight that perceived fit and actual fit grow closer over time (e.g., Cooper-Thomas et al., 2004; Wille et al., 2014) suggests that the accumulation of work experience may play a prominent role in stabilizing fit posthire. Furthermore, it remains unclear why some types of fit appear to be more dynamic than others (e.g., DeRue & Morgeson, 2007; Wang et al., 2011) and whether all types of fit are equally likely to undergo, for instance, transitional, developmental, or transformational change. To answer questions such as these, we need more temporal research that considers fit as an outcome, rather than an antecedent of something else.

#### 4.1.5 | Temporal misfit

We still know very little about how misfit temporally relates to fit. For instance, Simmering et al. (2003) equate misfit to poor fit and, in doing so, suggest that misfit can be episodic and instrumental to the development of fit. By contrast, Vleugels et al. (2019) propose that misfit involves an enduring sense of antagonism in that individuals repeatedly reject the proposition that their values match those of the organization, whereas poor fit simply indicates that this match is suboptimal. Furthermore, episodic misfit is associated with being a maverick, individuals who thrive on short outburst of value incongruence and

produce positive change in response. It is clear that both examples represent two very different portrayals of misfit with very different temporal implications for fit also, and future studies will need to examine fit and misfit in one and the same model to tease out their difference and temporal dependency.

Fit researchers also need to provide more clarity on how the timing, frequency, and duration of misfit influence the quality and stability of long-term fit. For example, Wilk and Sackett (1996) indicate that misfit should be addressed early on in one's career; if not, misfit may result in long-lasting detrimental consequences. In addition, more studies are needed on the role P and E factors play in creating, growing, and intensifying misfit. For example, misfit is likely to exist in gradations, and depending on personality or past experiences, individuals may develop different thresholds for it. Likewise, organizational discriminatory practices have been found to impair employees' ability to fit in (Bayl-Smith & Griffin, 2017); over time, such experiences may further spiral into misfit.

## 4.2 | Roadmap towards a more advanced temporal perspective of fit

The recommendations for future research outlined above highlight some untapped opportunities to further expand the boundaries of current temporal fit research. To spur such much needed research innovation in the temporal fit domain, we call for more theoretical, conceptual, and methodological rigor in future temporal studies of fit.

### 4.2.1 | Integrative use of theory

While all temporal perspectives may not be equally salient at any given time, each can be expected to make unique contributions to temporal fit, its antecedents, and its outcomes. Therefore, fit scholars are encouraged to paint a more holistic picture of PE fit by accounting for the nested nature of its various temporal conceptualizations. This could be achieved by integrating the various theoretical lenses that fit scholars have used to study PE fit. For instance, self-regulation theories such as EMPEF (Yu, 2009) or FMT (Yu, 2013) could be integrated into adaptation models like IMPOF (Chatman, 1989) or TWA (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) or (de-)selection theories like ASA (Schneider, 1987) and TVC (Holland, 1973) to study how clock time change in situational fit relates to developmental, transformational, or transitional change in baseline fit. Likewise, EMPEF (Yu, 2009) could be integrated into FNT (Shipp & Jansen, 2011) to study how affect-driven changes in P or E attributes contribute to fit narrative change. To achieve better theoretical integration, fit scholars can draw from theories outside of the fit domain to knit these core PE fit theories together. For example, theories about emergence (e.g., Fulmer & Ostroff, 2015) may provide new leads into how higher-level phenomena such as baseline fit emerge from lower-level elements such as situational fit, while theories about complex change (e.g., Plowman et al., 2007) may help explain how destabilizing P and E events help drive

small changes in fit to emerge and become radical. In doing so, fit researchers need to clearly articulate which temporal predictions underpin their research and be explicit about how their research confirms, challenges, or refines the assumptions of existing PE fit theories.

#### 4.2.2 | Temporally defined measures of fit

Consistent with the principle of methodological fit (Edmondson & McManus, 2007), any new temporal study about fit should be both theoretically and methodologically temporal, with measures that are sufficiently sensitive to capturing change in P, E, or perceptions of fit in a way that is consistent with the study's underlying theoretical framework. George and Jones (2000) maintain that the length of time a person chooses to bracket into an episode for exploration and reflection, in addition to the temporal frame (clock time versus psychological time) used to examine change, can substantially affect the meaning attributed to a phenomenon under investigation and its relationship to other constructs. Consequently, fit scholars need to clearly articulate under which temporal frame (clock versus psychological time) fit is expected to change, define the relevant level of aggregation (situational fit versus baseline fit), and specify the temporal boundaries of the objective (e.g., “this day” or “over the past month”) or psychological (e.g., “past job” or “future fit with current employer”) time interval across which change in fit is expected to occur.

#### 4.2.3 | Advanced methodological designs

To break new temporal ground, it is imperative that fit researchers build on stronger methodological designs with data collected at more than two points in time. Traditional two-wave longitudinal designs that capture how fit linearly changes between-persons are limited in their ability to produce new insights in temporal fit. By contrast, more advanced repeated measurement designs such as longitudinal panel designs (e.g., Ghetta et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2020) and multilevel diary studies (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2014; Vogel et al., 2020) allow for a more complex analysis of change compared to conventional longitudinal designs. Longitudinal panel data support at least five different modeling frameworks, including within, between, emergent, cross-level, and growth (Bliese et al., 2020). By contrast, multilevel diary studies are well suited to examine temporal facets other than simply the degree of change, such as feedback loops, spillover effects, growth rate, or shape of change (Vantilborgh et al., 2018). Such designs can also shed more light on the impact of nonlinear change and the timing and duration of change (e.g., McFarland et al., 2020). Finally, repeated measurement techniques can also be applied to qualitative studies of fit, such as when studying evolutions in fit narratives (Jansen & Shipp, 2019) or the effectiveness of misfit management strategies over time (Follmer et al., 2018).

## 5 | CONCLUSION

While PE fit has long been portrayed as a state of “being,” that is, a static condition people have arrived at after selection and socialization, fit might be better thought of as a process of “becoming”: a changing condition that requires ongoing development, maintenance, and self-regulation over both clock and psychological time, in line with original theorizing on fit. With this review, we organized and integrated the extant temporal fit literature around its different temporal conceptualizations (transitional, developmental, and transformational change; situational vs. baseline level change; change over clock time vs. psychological time) and identified five major obstacles to further temporal progress (emphasis on selection and socialization processes; between-person level focus; preoccupation with linear change; focus on normal causation questions; and a lack of attention to misfit). In response, we touched upon some of the opportunities for incubating new insights into temporal fit, which we believe can mark the start of an exciting new era for PE fit research.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Open access publishing facilitated by Deakin University, as part of the Wiley - Deakin University agreement via the Council of Australian University Librarians. Open access publishing facilitated by Deakin University, as part of the Wiley - Deakin University agreement via the Council of Australian University Librarians.

### ENDNOTES

- 1 Despite being a theory about work adjustment, TWA also incorporates the idea that person-job incongruence can be resolved through job change (i.e., promotion, transfer, or voluntary and involuntary turnover).
- 2 Studies coded as “socialization” focus on either the onboarding or socialization (or both) phases of employment, including socialization to a change. Studies coded as “staff turnover” look at fit in relation to organizational exit. Where researchers did not single out these phases and studied employees regardless of their length of tenure or their onboarding processes or exiting decisions, studies were coded as “posthire.”
- 3 It is important to differentiate here between “socialization” as a distinct phase of the employment cycle versus “socialization” as a targeted change process. While the socialization process is likely to induce developmental change in fit, transformational change in fit may still occur during the socialization phase itself (see Figure 3).

### DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data derived from public domain resources - The data that support the findings of this study were derived from resources available in the public domain (see reference list).

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**How to cite this article:** Vleugels, W., Verbruggen, M., De Cooman, R., & Billsberry, J. (2023). A systematic review of temporal person-environment fit research: Trends, developments, obstacles, and opportunities for future research. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 44*(2), 376–398. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2607>

## APPENDIX A: REVIEW STRATEGY

To achieve a systematic coverage of relevant temporal studies on PE fit, we followed a five-step approach in line with best practice recommendations in the field (e.g., Siddaway et al., 2019).

### A.1 | Step one: Defining scope and focus

We looked for both quantitative and qualitative peer-reviewed empirical articles on temporal fit and misfit, which we consider to be part of the same literature, written in English and published in the management, OB, I/O psychology, and HR literatures. As this is the first review of its kind, no date limits were set. We restricted our sample to those studies that convey information about changes in objective, subjective, and perceived fit/misfit over time, captured via (1) cross-sectional designs that pair fit/misfit measures with temporal moderator variables (e.g., age, tenure, career stage), (2) longitudinal designs that include measures of fit/misfit on at least two points in time, or (3) qualitative process studies that capture people's transient experiences of fit/misfit. Studies in which temporal processes are framed from a PE fit perspective (e.g., polychronicity fit; see Hecht & Allen, 2005) or studies that employ isolated measures of PE fit in a change context (e.g., Harris & Mossholder, 1996) fell outside the scope of this review.

### A.2 | Step two: Inclusion criteria

We then conducted a search of titles, abstracts, and keywords of journal articles in the following databases: EBSCO (Inc. Business Search Complete), PsycInfo (Inc. PsycArticles), and Web of Science. Consistent with the motivation of our review, papers had to satisfy three inclusion criteria to become part of the review. First, papers had to be part of the literature that focuses on “workplace fit” as a person-work environment (psychological) adjustment construct, as opposed to, for example, studies that look at the strategic fit of organizations with industries. To this end, we included several variants of PE fit (e.g., “person-environment fit,” “person-job fit,” “person-team fit,” “organizational fit”) and their various abbreviations (e.g., “PE fit,” “(PO) fit,” “(PJ) fit,” “PG fit,” “value congru\*\*”) as search terms. Second, PE fit studies had to convey temporal language (e.g., “dynamic,” “development,” “chang\*,” “temporal\*,” “stage\*\*”). Third, studies had to include a temporal perspective in their study approach (e.g., “longitudinal,” “multiwave,” “time-lagged,” “diary stud\*,” “over time”). In the cases of all three inclusion criteria, logical operators were used to find at least one of these terms in the title, keywords, or abstracts of papers. During this first step, EBSCO returned 74 papers, PsycInfo 195 papers, and Web of Science 180 papers. Once the

three samples were combined and duplicates removed,  $k = 243$  papers remained.

### A.3 | Step three: Filtering

Next, we reviewed articles for relevance and fit, reading the abstract and verifying their empirical nature. Articles published in a journal without an impact factor ( $k = 28$ ) were removed. In addition, 64 studies were eliminated for not being fit studies. Another 52 studies were filtered out because they were not studies of *workplace* fit (e.g., studies on personality development during childhood, substance abuse, or gerontology) or because they covered related but conceptually different constructs (e.g., strategic, horizontal and vertical fit, job embeddedness, group diversity). A further 56 studies were removed because they were either nontemporal (e.g., cross-sectional studies without temporal moderator, longitudinal studies with one-time measures of fit) or nonempirical (e.g., essays, theoretical or conceptual papers, editorials, scale validation studies). Finally, three papers could not be sourced. Step three eventually reduced our initial sample to 40 papers.

### A.4 | Step four: Completeness check

To ensure we did not miss any relevant papers, we conducted two further searches for completeness. First, we conducted a manual search of management, organizational behavior, and organizational psychology journals ranked A\* or A (i.e., the top 5%–7% and the next 15%–25% of the journals assigned to an individual field of research) by the 2019 ABDC. Secondly, we conducted a search of the citations listed in the 40 papers. Step four surfaced a further six studies, resulting in a final sample of  $k = 46$  studies to be included in the review.

### A.5 | Step five: Coding

The first, second, and third authors were responsible for the coding of the papers. All papers were reviewed by at least two authors and coded for relevant information related to (1) the measurement of PE fit (e.g., type of fit, fit, or misfit), (2) method (e.g., between or within-person study, sample size, design, and data-analysis), (3) theory (e.g., dominant theory and employment phase [recruitment, selection, socialization, posthire, and turnover]), (4) change characteristics (temporal focus [past, present, and future], time frame [clock vs. subjective], time bracketing [baseline vs. temporal fluctuations], duration [days, weeks, months, and years], change process [transitional, developmental, and transformational], nature of change [e.g., linear, fit trajectories, and variability]), and (5) main findings and implications.