The Dual Fit Perspective: Examining the Simultaneous Effects of Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Regulatory Fit on Motivation

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Drawing from regulatory focus and regulatory fit theories, this paper introduces a framework for understanding the simultaneous occurrence of intrapersonal and interpersonal regulatory fit. The Dual Fit Perspective (DFP) proposes that different combinations of intrapersonal and interpersonal regulatory fit (i.e., Dual Fit) have varying influences on employee motivation. According to the DFP, some combinations of regulatory fit (misfit) are more desirable than others. The theory presented in this paper provides a more nuanced view of regulatory fit and suggests that misfit is not as detrimental to motivation as previously portrayed.

Keywords: Dual Fit Perspective, Regulatory Focus, Regulatory Fit, Motivation

INTRODUCTION

Regulatory focus theory (RFT) describes how people regulate behavior during goal pursuit through two systems: promotion focus and prevention focus (Higgins, 1997). Promotion and prevention orientations are associated with unique preferences for goals (approach/avoid) and the means of goal striving (eagerness/vigilance) (Higgins, 1997, 1998). Regulatory fit occurs when individuals pursue goals in a manner that sustains their preferred regulatory orientation (Higgins, 2000). When an individual experiences regulatory fit, they "feel right" which increases the value of what they're doing (Cesario, Grant, & Higgins, 2004; Higgins, Idson, Freitas, Spiegel, & Molden, 2003). Initially, researchers focused on the regulatory fit/non-fit at the intrapersonal level. However, it's possible "to have individuals with different goal-pursuit concerns interact with someone else, or receive a message from someone else, who displays a manner of goal pursuit that does or does not fit their concerns" (Higgins, 2012, p. 239). Indeed, researchers acknowledged that self-regulation often occurs in social contexts (Fitzsimons & Finkel, 2011) and began to view regulatory fit as consisting of interpersonal and intrapersonal aspects.

Regulatory fit occurs at the interpersonal level when an individual perceives that an interaction partner's regulatory orientation matches their own regulatory orientation (Righetti, Finkenauer, & Rusbult, 2011). The degree of perceived interpersonal regulatory fit affects one's response to advice, guidance and assistance received from an interaction partner. Unlike intrapersonal regulatory fit, interpersonal regulatory fit effects manifest in social interactions such as holding more favorable interpersonal evaluations (Righetti et al., 2011), increased persuasiveness (Cesario & Higgins, 2008) and increased forgiveness (Santelli, Struthers, & Eaton, 2009). Establishing interpersonal regulatory fit can be useful for managers/supervisors wishing to increase employee motivation (Johnson, Lin, Kark, Van Dijk, King, & Esformes, 2017).

Unfortunately, the regulatory fit literature is segmented into two streams: one focused on intrapersonal regulatory fit and the other focused on interpersonal regulatory fit. Research focusing solely on intrapersonal regulatory fit ignores or downplays the social interactions that take place in the work environment. Whereas, research focusing on interpersonal regulatory fit overlooks the influence intrapersonal cognitive processes have on behavior. This bifurcation is problematic as failing to acknowledge the full spectrum of regulatory fit may mean that prior findings over or underestimate the impact of regulatory fit on motivation and behavior. To date, research has not examined the simultaneous effect of different types of regulatory fit (intrapersonal and interpersonal) on motivation which exacerbates our limited understanding of regulatory fit. The lack of research examining the interplay between different forms of regulatory fit is especially problematic to the field of management as much of the research is focused on the work environment where social interactions frequently occur. A unifying framework is needed to merge the two streams of regulatory fit research. Doing so is necessary if we hope to further our understanding of the complex process of self-regulation.

In this paper, I posit an alternative view of regulatory fit, one that assumes that intrapersonal and interpersonal regulatory fit co-exist. The Dual Fit Perspective (DFP), considers the simultaneous effects of intrapersonal and interpersonal regulatory fit (misfit) on motivation. The DFP assumes that intrapersonal fit (misfit) is present in all situations and interpersonal regulatory fit (misfit) acts a moderator on the relationship between intrapersonal regulatory fit (misfit) and motivation. This view of regulatory fit illustrates how various combinations of fit and misfit impact motivation and suggests that a) not all forms of fit are created equally, and b) misfit may not be as detrimental to motivation as previously portrayed (Kark & Van Dijk, 2008).

By integrating intrapersonal and interpersonal fit, the DFP overcomes some of the limitations of current regulatory fit research. Namely, the limitations arising when researchers examine either the within person or between persons processes and effects of regulatory fit but not both. For example, results from a study by Hamstra and Colleagues (2014) suggest that regulatory fit between leaders and followers (interpersonal regulatory fit) is positively related to follower perceptions of feeling valued by their leader. Unfortunately, only the effects of interpersonal regulatory fit were examined in their study. However, given the nature of regulatory focus (see Higgins, 1997), it's possible for an individual to experience both intrapersonal and interpersonal regulatory fit (misfit) simultaneously. Therefore, Hamstra et al.'s (2014) results may overestimate the variance accounted for by interpersonal regulatory fit for individuals experiencing interpersonal but not intrapersonal regulatory fit. On the other hand, their results may underestimate the variance accounted for by interpersonal regulatory misfit for individuals experiencing intrapersonal but not interpersonal regulatory fit.

Considering only one type of regulatory fit obfuscates the true impact of regulatory fit on outcomes such as employee motivation. By acknowledging the simultaneous effects of intrapersonal and interpersonal regulatory fit (misfit), the DFP may help alleviate the issues described above. The DFP provides a much-needed foundation which unites the currently segmented regulatory fit literature and sets the stage for future research endeavors aimed at broadening our understanding of the unique consequences of different forms of regulatory fit.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Regulatory Focus Theory

RFT attempts to explain why people adopt one strategic means over another when pursuing goals (Brockner, Higgins, & Low, 2004). According to RFT, people regulate their behavior differently when serving different needs (Higgins, 1997, 1998). A person's predominant regulatory orientation affects how they view goals and indicates a preference for adopting one strategic means over another (Scholer & Higgins, 2008). As such, regulatory focus functions as a motivational mechanism that triggers changes in goal attainment strategies in response to feedback about one's current state (Higgins, 2000).

RFT describes two systems by which individuals regulate behavior during goal pursuit: promotion focus and prevention focus. A promotion focus is characterized by a concern with growth and

accomplishment and the desire to obtain hits and avoid nonhits (Higgins, 1998). Under a promotion focus, behavioral regulation occurs in response to the presence or absence of positive outcomes. Individuals adopting a promotion focus use eagerness-related strategies (approach strategies that support gains) during goal pursuit to ensure hits and avoid errors of omission (Higgins, 1998). A promotion focus is associated with desirable behaviors such as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and innovation (Lanaj, Chang, & Johnson, 2012).

A prevention focus is characterized by a concern with safety, security, and fulfilling duties and obligations (Higgins, 1998). Individuals adopting a prevention focus are motivated to avoid losses or errors of commission and will regulate their behavior in response to the presence or absence of negative outcomes (Higgins, 1998). Prevention-oriented individuals pursue goals using vigilance-related strategies (avoidance strategies that support nonlosses) and engage in behaviors which decrease the likelihood of failure such as task performance and safety performance (Lanaj et al., 2012).

Promotion and prevention foci are independent of one another (Wallace, Johnson, & Frazier, 2009). Higgins and Colleagues (1994) suggest that, "all people possess both systems, but different socialization experiences could make one system predominant in self-regulation" (p. 277). An assumption of RFT is that individuals regulate behavior in order to become more compatible with their environment (Camacho, Higgins, & Luger, 2003; Higgins, 2000). That is, a person's regulatory focus can be operationalized as a trait like chronic disposition (i.e., general regulatory focus) akin to personality, or as a state like situational disposition (i.e., situational regulatory focus) that is influenced by contextual factors such as leader influence and task structure. Therefore, knowing one's preferred regulatory orientation is not enough to determine subsequent behaviors because "the opportunity to pursue such behaviors depends on the context" (Wallace, Butts, Johnson, Stevens, & Smith, 2016, p. 988).

Regulatory Fit

Although a person's regulatory disposition is relatively stable, it is malleable and can vary from one situation to the next (Johnson, Smith, Wallace, Hill, & Baron, 2015; Liberman, Idson, Camacho, & Higgins, 1999). Regulating one's behavior to becoming more compatible with the environment may mean pursuing goals in a manner that either sustains or obstructs one's preferred regulatory orientation. For example, it's possible that an individual with a preference for a promotion approach to goals adopts a prevention focus in response to feedback from their supervisor. Recognizing this possibility, Higgins (2000) expanded RFT to include regulatory fit which is concerned with the degree of alignment or "fit" between one's current and preferred goal pursuit means. Regulatory fit occurs when an individual pursues a goal using a strategy that fits his/her preferred regulatory orientation (Higgins, 2000). For example, if a promotion-oriented individual pursues a goal in an eager way, then he/she experiences regulatory fit. Whereas a prevention-oriented individual experiences regulatory fit when he/she pursues a goal using vigilance. Regulatory fit leads to "feeling right and increases the value of what the person is doing" (Cesario et al., 2004, p. 389). Thus, regulatory fit has an "energizing" effect that intensifies motivation during goal pursuit (Cesario et al., 2004; Johnson et al., 2017).

Regulatory fit was originally examined as a within person phenomenon, but research has expanded to include fit that occurs in response to social interactions. Interpersonal regulatory fit occurs when an individual perceives that an interaction partner's regulatory orientation matches their own preferred regulatory orientation (Righetti et al., 2011). The regulatory orientations of two individuals interact such that "the combination of the two persons' orientations shapes the [target] individual's approach to goals" (Righetti et al., 2011, p. 721). Perceived interpersonal regulatory fit affects one's response to feedback from interaction partners such as managers and co-workers. Interpersonal regulatory fit is associated with several outcomes including followers feeling valued by their leader (Hamstra et al., 2014), higher quality leader-member exchange (Johnson et al., 2017), OCBs (Shin, Kim, Choi, Kim, & Oh, 2017), and increased motivation and task enjoyment (Righetti et al., 2011).

Unraveling the effects of interpersonal regulatory fit can be quite complex when considering the volume of social interaction that occurs in the workplace. Further, assuming that intrapersonal and interpersonal regulatory fit co-exist, viewing both forms simultaneously increases the complexity of

regulatory fit. Before arguments can be presented which delineate the nature of the different forms of Dual Fit, it is necessary to differentiate regulatory fit from the more well-known person-environment fit.

Regulatory Fit vs. P-E Fit

Person-environment (P-E) fit is defined as "the compatibility between an individual and a work environment that occurs when their characteristics are well matched" (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005, p. 281). P-E fit can occur at several levels within a given environment. For example, person-organization (P-O) fit refers to "the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when: (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both" (Kristoff, 1996, p. 4). Person-supervisor (P-S) fit exists in the realm of dyadic relationships between individuals in a work environment (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Within the province of P-S fit research, fit refers to perceived similarity in terms of personality or behavioral style, and/or perceived congruence in terms of values and goals (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

Regulatory fit differs from P-E fit in that the core areas of congruence of P-E fit (e.g., personality, values, goals, demographics, needs-supplies) are relatively enduring/stable. As such, there aren't many options available to help create fit when fit doesn't exist. For example, neither an individual nor an organization is likely to change their values in order to achieve congruence with one another. On the other hand, promotion and prevention orientations are malleable and can change from moment to moment (Johnson et al., 2015; Liberman et al., 1999). Therefore, when regulatory misfit occurs, there are several methods that can be used to create or reestablish fit.

People pursue goals in the presence of interaction partners and regulatory focus is a crucial construct in social interactions as indicated by regulatory fit research (Righetti et al., 2011). Regulatory fit "emphasizes the degree to which a particular stimulus can sustain or detract from the intensity of future goal pursuits" (Simmons, Carr, Hsu, & Shu, 2016, p. 608). After interacting with others, an individual might feel more or less motivated about their goals (Righetti et al., 2011). If one's strategic preferences align with those of an interaction partner, then fit exerts its effects on social perceptions where "feeling right" enhances both one's motivation and one's perception of the interaction partner (Higgins, 2000, Liu, Ban, Gao, Ding, & Zhang, 2016). In terms of P-E fit, if a supervisor and subordinate do not experience value congruence there is not much that can be done. On the other hand, if a supervisor and subordinate do not experience interpersonal regulatory fit, then the supervisor can attempt to elicit a regulatory orientation from their subordinate that results in fit (Wu, McMullen, Neubert, & Yi, 2008).

Regulatory fit and P-E fit are similar in that both constructs reflect the congruence between an individual and elements of the environment. However, the source of fit and permanence of fit varies between the two conceptualizations. Because regulatory focus is malleable and can vary from situation to situation, the regulatory fit perspective contributes additional understanding of how the interactions between an individual and their environment impact outcomes.

DUAL FIT

Prior research has examined within-persons (WP) and between-persons (BP)[1] regulatory fit as separately occurring phenomena rather than as co-existing ones. Yet, the introduction of an interaction partner does not mean that WP regulatory fit is no longer relevant. Further, BP-Fit between a target and an interaction partner does not mean that WP-Fit exists or vice versa. Both WP and BP regulatory fit must be considered in tandem[2] in order to more accurately illustrate the dynamics of regulatory focus and understand how it operates under different conditions of regulatory fit and misfit.

Research demonstrates that within supervisor/subordinate dyads, supervisors are able to alter subordinate situational regulatory focus to be more or less aligned with relevant goals (Benjamin & Flynn, 2006; Brockner et al., 2004; Freitas, Liberman, & Higgins, 2002; Gamache, McNamara, Mannor, & Johnson, 2015). Consider the following scenarios (adapted from Johnson et al., 2015). In the first scenario, a supervisor frames a task as promotion oriented by emphasizing an increase in profits. The subordinate responds by reducing their use of due diligence when selecting new projects. This results in

the subordinate taking on more projects which increases the chance of obtaining hits (profits). Alternatively, the supervisor may frame the same task as prevention oriented by emphasizing reduced financial losses over larger profits. The subordinate responds by increasing due diligence when approving new projects with the hopes of reducing the potential to incur financial losses. In both scenarios, the subordinate adopts a regulatory orientation that aligns with the orientation solicited by their supervisor. If one's situational regulatory orientation is induced as a result of workplace interventions, then it stands to reason that they may not experience WP-Fit. If the intervention is successful, the supervisor's attempt to create BP-Fit may inadvertently create WP-Misfit. Therefore, it's possible that employees may experience BP-Fit, WP-Fit, both, or neither.

Scholars suggest that the effects of regulatory fit on outcomes varies based on the nature of the fit (Motyka et al., 2014). Even though an employee might experience BP-Fit, the benefits of fit will not be maximized unless the employee also experiences WP-Fit. That is, BP-Fit (Misfit) can augment (mitigate) the effects of WP-Fit (Misfit) depending on the combination (Johnson et al., 2017). Therefore, BP regulatory fit acts as a moderator on the relation between WP regulatory fit and motivation. Under the DFP, WP and BP regulatory fit are conceptualized as occurring in tandem. As such, a richer understanding of the relations between regulatory fit and outcomes is provided under the DFP as compared to the more common practice of examining WP and BP regulatory fit in isolation.

Referring to the simultaneous effect of promotion and prevention focus, Johnson et al. (2017) state that "when they operate in tandem, these approach and avoidance motivations exert synergistic pull-and-push forces, respectively, that produce stronger affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses than either system operating alone" (p. 383). The same pull-and-push forces are present when WP and BP regulatory fit operate in tandem. The effects of which vary depending on the form and combination of WP and BP regulatory fit (misfit). BP-Fit bolsters WP-Fit's effect on motivation under some conditions and weakens the effect under others. Before further delineating the DFP, it is necessary to review different types of WP and BP regulatory fit (misfit) as an understanding of how each type of fit (misfit) impacts motivation is crucial to understanding how they operate in tandem. Tables 1 and 2 present the different combinations of WP and BP regulatory fit (misfit) that underlie the DFP.

TABLE 1
TYPES OF INTRAPERSONAL REGULATORY FIT AND MISFIT

	Interaction Partner Promotion Focus	Interaction Partner Prevention Focus
Target Promotion Focus	BP-Fit (I) Promotion/Promotion	BP-Misfit (I) Promotion/Prevention
Target Prevention Focus	BP-Misfit (II) Prevention/Promotion	BP-Fit (II) Prevention/Prevention

Notes: Within Person (WP)

TABLE 2
TYPES OF INTERPERSONAL REGULATORY FIT AND MISFIT

	Eager Means	Vigilant Means
Target General Promotion Focus	WP-Fit (I) Promotion/Eager	WP-Misfit (I) Promotion/Vigilant
Target General Prevention Focus	WP-Misfit (II) Prevention/Eager	WP-Fit (II) Prevention/Vigilant

Notes: Between Person (BP)

Intrapersonal Regulatory Fit

WP-Fit I and WP-Fit II represent WP promotion fit (promotion/eager) and WP prevention fit (prevention/vigilant), respectively (see Table 1). Individuals experiencing either WP-Fit I or WP-Fit II should experience the positive effects associated with fit (Higgins et al., 2003), but the intensity of the effects will vary between WP-Fit I and WP-Fit II. An individual experiencing WP-Fit I is using eagerness means to obtain hits/gains whereas an individual experiencing WP-Fit II is using vigilance to avoid error/loss (Higgins, 1997). WP-Fit results in both individuals "feeling right" about what they're doing. However, the emotions associated with approaching gains (e.g., joy and excitement) are more energizing than the emotions associated with avoiding a loss (e.g., calm and serene). Therefore, the positive effects of fit on motivation are stronger for WP-Fit I compared to WP-Fit II.

Proposition 1: *The positive effects of intrapersonal regulatory fit on motivation are greater under WP-Fit I than WP-Fit II.*

WP-Misfit I and WP-Misfit II represent WP promotion misfit (promotion/vigilant) and WP prevention misfit (prevention/eager), respectively. Misfit, in a general sense, is associated with feelings of discomfort (Follmer, Talbot, Kristof-Brown, Astrove, & Billsberry, 2018). Likewise, regulatory misfit has a de-energizing effect on individuals (Johnson & Wallace, 2011). It should be noted that when an individual experiences WP-Misfit, their desired goals do not change, rather, the means with which they use to strive towards their goals are not aligned with the goal. In order to maximize the chance of obtaining hits, a promotion oriented individual needs to increase the number of opportunities to obtain hits. This is accomplished through eagerness means. However, under WP-Misfit I, a promotion-oriented individual is striving for hits by being vigilant. Being vigilant reduces the number of opportunities available to achieve hits, the likelihood of obtaining a hit, and the likelihood of experiencing the positive emotions associated with obtaining hits.

Under WP-Misfit II, a prevention-oriented individual is trying to minimize loss by being less vigilant. Rather than reducing the possibility of losses, being less vigilant increases the likelihood of losses. Since failure under a prevention focus is experienced more harshly than a failure under a promotion focus (Idson, Liberman & Higgins, 2000), WP-Misfit II should have a greater impact on motivation than WP-Misfit I. Therefore, individuals experiencing WP-Misfit II will experience a greater decrease in motivation than individuals experiencing WP-Misfit I.

Proposition 2: *The detrimental effects of intrapersonal misfit on motivation are greater under WP-Misfit II than WP-Misfit I.*

Interpersonal Regulatory Fit

BP regulatory fit goes beyond WP regulatory fit by considering regulatory focus in the context of social interactions (Righetti, Rusbult, & Finkenauer, 2010). According to the asymmetrical fit hypothesis, the benefits of BP-Fit are more salient under a promotion focus compared to prevention focus (Righetti et al., 2011). The underlying assumption of the asymmetrical fit hypothesis is that a person's predominant regulatory orientation shapes how they evaluate and perceive others. Whereas individuals with a preference for promotion view situations as opportunities to gain, individuals adopting a prevention focus view situations as possible threats (Righetti et al., 2011).

These asymmetries arise, in part, because promotion and prevention foci are associated with different information processing styles. Promotion-oriented individuals use a global processing style and are better at detecting similarities between their own and an interaction partner's approach to goals. Prevention-oriented individuals use a local processing style which enhances perceived dissimilarities between their own and another's approach to goals (Förster & Higgins, 2005). Promotion focused individuals are more receptive to the input of others and are more likely to seek advice and assistance from others compared to their prevention focused counterparts who don't perceive help received from others as beneficial (Förster & Higgins, 2005; Righetti et al., 2011). Therefore, based on the asymmetrical fit hypothesis, BP-Fit I and BP-Fit II (see Table 2) are positively related to employee motivation. However, because prevention-oriented individuals are less likely to experience the benefits of BP-Fit, motivation should be higher under BP-Fit I compared to BP-Fit II.

Proposition 3: *The positive effects of interpersonal regulatory fit on motivation are greater under BP-Fit I than BP-Fit II.*

BP-Misfit can occur as a result of a mismatch between regulatory orientations (promotion/prevention), a mismatch between the level of the means (overeager/hypervigilant), or both (Higgins, 2000). In cases of BP-Misfit I, promotion-oriented individuals perceive prevention-oriented interaction partners as being unable to contribute to or as hindering their goal pursuit efforts. In response to misfit, promotion-oriented individuals may become overeager in order to ensure hits are obtained. In cases of BP-Misfit II, prevention-oriented individuals view promotion-oriented individuals as threats to the status quo. In response to misfit, prevention-oriented individuals may need to become hypervigilant to ensure against losses that may occur at the hands of a promotion-oriented interaction partner. Being hypervigilant requires an increase in due diligence and more concentration on tasks; both of which reduce regulatory resources (Muraven & Baumeister, 2000). As regulatory resources are depleted, the likelihood of failing to successfully regulate one's behavior increases (Baumeister, 2002; Muraven, Tice, & Baumesiter, 1998). Therefore, the effects of BP-Misfit are more detrimental under conditions of BP-Misfit II than BP-Misfit I.

Proposition 4: *The detrimental effects of intrapersonal misfit on motivation are greater under BP-Misfit II than BP-Misfit I.*

Propositions 1-4 illustrate the effects of various types of regulatory fit and misfit when WP and BP regulatory fit are viewed independently. However, the DFP suggests that WP and BP regulatory fit should be examined together. Table 3 provides eight examples illustrating how the interaction of WP and BP regulatory fit (misfit) influences motivation. As seen in Table 3, the effects of Dual Fit (DF) vary depending on the form and combination of WP and BP regulatory fit (misfit). Each example of Dual Fit (i.e., DF-1 to DF-8) starts with either WP-Fit or WP-Misfit. BP-Fit and BP-Misfit act as moderators on the relationship between WP-Fit (Misfit) and motivation. Below, I describe how the different forms of regulatory fit and misfit interact to influence motivation. Note that the same reasoning underlying propositions 1-4 also applies to Dual Fit (i.e., the effects of WP-Fit I and BP-Fit I are stronger than those of WP-Fit II and BP-Fit II, and the effects of WP-Misfit II and BP-Misfit II are stronger than those of WP-Misfit I and BP-Misfit I).

The Moderating Effect of Interpersonal Regulatory Fit

The first four examples presented in Table 3 (DF-1 to DF-4) help illustrate the impact of BP-Fit on the relation between WP-Fit and motivation. In the first example (DF-1), a promotion-oriented individual using eager means (WP-Fit I) engages with a promotion-oriented partner. BP-Fit I occurs since both individuals prefer a promotion approach. The target individual's overall motivation increases as BP-Fit I bolsters the positive effects associated with WP-Fit I. In the next example (DF-2), a prevention-oriented individual using vigilance (WP-Fit II) engages with a prevention-oriented partner. BP-Fit II occurs since both individuals prefer a prevention approach. In both examples (i.e., DF-1 and DF-2), BP-Fit enhances the positive motivational effects of WP-Fit (Higgins, Cesario, Hagiwara, Spiegel, & Pittman, 2010). Since the motivational benefits associated with WP-Fit I are stronger than those associated with WP-Fit II, the moderating effect of BP-Fit will be stronger under BP-Fit I than under BP-Fit II. Thus, overall motivation will be higher under DF-1 than for DF-2 (see Table 3, Column 4).

DF-1 and DF-2 illustrate how BP-Fit bolsters the existing positive effects of WP-Fit. Conversely, BP-Fit can weaken the negative effects of WP-Misfit. In the third example (DF-3), a promotion-oriented individual using vigilance (WP-Misfit I) engages with a promotion-oriented partner. BP-Fit I occurs since both individuals prefer a promotion approach. The motivational boost resulting from BP-Fit I (Higgins et al., 2010) should help buffer the negative effect of WP-Misfit I. Likewise, under DF-4, a prevention-oriented individual using eager means (WP-Misfit II) engages with a prevention-oriented partner. BP-Fit II occurs since both individuals prefer a prevention approach. The motivational boost of BP-Fit II (Liu et al., 2016; Righetti et al., 2011) helps to buffer the negative effects of WP-Misfit II. Under DF-3 and DF-4, BP-Fit weakens the negative effects of WP-Misfit. However, because a) the negative effects associated with WP-Misfit II are stronger than those associated with WP-Misfit I, and b) the positive effects associated with BP-Fit I are stronger than those associated with BP-Fit II, overall motivation will greater under DF-3 compared to DF-4.

The four examples described above (i.e., DF-1 to DF-4) suggest that BP-Fit a) bolsters the positive effects of WP-Fit and b) buffers the negative effects of WP-Misfit.

Proposition 6: *Interpersonal regulatory fit strengthens the positive relation between intrapersonal regulatory fit and motivation.*

Proposition 7: *Interpersonal regulatory fit weakens the negative relation between intrapersonal regulatory misfit and motivation.*

Proposition 8: *The moderating effect of interpersonal regulatory fit is stronger under conditions of BP-Fit I compared to BP-Fit II.*

TABLE 3
EXAMPLES OF DUAL FIT

Dual Fit Example	Type of Intrapersonal Regulatory Fit	Type of Interpersonal Regulatory fit	Differential Effects of Fit and Misfit
DF-1	WP-Fit I (+2)	BP-Fit I (+2)	+4
DF-2	WP-Fit II (+1)	BP-Fit II (+1)	+2
DF-3	WP-Misfit I (-1)	BP-Fit I (+2)	+1
DF-4	WP-Misfit II (-2)	BP-Fit II (+1)	-1
DF-5	WP-Fit I (+2)	BP-Misfit I (-1)	+1
DF-6	WP-Fit II (+1)	BP-Misfit II (-2)	-1
DF-7	WP-Misfit I (-1)	BP-Misfit I (-1)	-2
DF-8	WP-Misfit II (-2)	BP-Misfit II (-2)	-4

Notes: The number in the right most column represents the motivational strength derived after accounting for both intrapersonal and interpersonal regulatory fit (misfit). Assuming a base level of motivation (0). Promotion focused individuals experience greater motivation as a result of intrapersonal regulatory fit as compared to prevention focused individuals so WP-Fit I was assigned a value of +2 and WP-Fit II assigned a value of +1. The effects of intrapersonal misfit are stronger for prevention than for promotion focus. Therefore, WP-Misfit II was assigned a value of -2 and WP-Misfit I a value of -1. BP-Fit I and II were assigned values of +2 and +1 respectively. BP-Misfit I and II were assigned values of -1 and -2 respectively. Scores were added across rows to derive the value representing the differential effects of fit and misfit.

The Moderating Effect of Interpersonal Regulatory Misfit

DF-5 to DF-8 detail situations in which BP-Misfit occurs. First (DF-5), a promotion-oriented individual using eager means (WP-Fit I) engages with a prevention-oriented partner. BP-Misfit I occurs which diminishes the positive effects of WP-Fit I (Higgins, 2000). Next (DF-6), a prevention-oriented individual using vigilance (WP-Fit II) engages with a promotion-oriented partner. The resulting BP-Misfit II diminishes the positive effects associated with WP-Fit II. Under DF-5 and DF-6, BP-Misfit weakens the positive motivational effects of WP-Fit. However, because a) the positive effects associated with WP-Fit I are stronger than those associated with WP-Fit II, and b) the detrimental effects of BP-Misfit II are stronger than those of WP-Misfit I, overall motivation will be higher under DF-5 compared to DF-6.

The final two examples of Dual Fit (DF-7 and DF-8) detail situations in which BP-Misfit enhances the effects of WP-Misfit. Under DF-7, a promotion-oriented individual using vigilance (WP-Misfit I) engages with a prevention-oriented partner. BP-Misfit I occurs which bolsters the negative effects of WP-Misfit I and reduces overall motivation. Under (DF-8), a prevention-oriented individual using eager

means (WP-Misfit II) engages with a promotion-oriented partner. BP-Misfit II occurs which bolsters the negative effects of WP-Misfit II and reduces overall motivation. Under DF-7 and DF-8, BP-Misfit strengthens the negative relationship between WP-Misfit and motivation. However, because a) the negative effects associated with WP-Misfit II are stronger than those associated with WP-Misfit I, and b) the detrimental effects associated with BP-Misfit II are stronger than those associated with BP-Misfit I, overall motivation will be lower under DF-8 compared to DF-7.

The four examples described above (DF-5 to DF-8) suggest that BP-Misfit a) weakens the positive effects of WP-Fit and b) strengthens the negative effects of WP-Misfit.

Proposition 9: *Interpersonal regulatory misfit weakens the positive relation between intrapersonal regulatory fit and motivation.*

Proposition 10: *Interpersonal regulatory misfit strengthens the negative relation between intrapersonal regulatory misfit and motivation.*

Proposition 11: *The moderating effect of interpersonal regulatory misfit is stronger under conditions of BP-Misfit II compared to BP-Misfit I.*

DISCUSSION

Prior research examining regulatory fit fails to consider the interactive effects of WP and BP regulatory fit. I argue that WP and BP regulatory fit are best viewed as occurring simultaneously, in tandem, rather than independently. The Dual Fit Perspective (DFP) introduced in this paper outlines the conditions under which regulatory fit (misfit) may be helpful or harmful to employee motivation. Previous research exploring regulatory fit treats different forms of regulatory fit (i.e., intrapersonal and interpersonal) as asynchronous phenomena. The insights provided by the DFP contribute to both the regulatory focus (Higgins, 1997) and regulatory fit (Higgins, 2000) literatures by providing a more thorough understanding of the motivational effects stemming from different combinations of WP and BP regulatory fit (misfit).

Although the insights of this paper provide a more complete and compelling explanation of the complex dynamics that underlie different forms of regulatory fit, there are several important issues related to operationalizing and measuring regulatory fit that have not been addressed. First, the DFP assumes that the tandem effects of regulatory fit occur in a fixed sequence (i.e., WP-Fit occurs before and independent of BP regulatory fit). However, it may be that the order in which the different types of regulatory fit occur depends on the target individual's perception of an interaction partner. Absent any environmental obstacles, individuals will pursue goals using their preferred regulatory orientation (Liberman et al., 1999). Thus, it can be assumed that general and situational regulatory focus will be the same (i.e., intrapersonal regulatory fit) until such a time that the environment necessitates a change.

Supervisors, through various interventions, can shape subordinate situational regulatory focus (Crowe & Higgins, 1997; Neubert, Wu, & Roberts, 2013) but when doing so, the supervisor may inadvertently create WP regulatory fit or misfit. This suggests that the simultaneous effects of regulatory fit as outlined by the DFP may operate in reverse order. For example, the supervisor of a promotion-oriented employee emphasizes rules and accountability in an attempted to persuade the employee to adopt a prevention orientation. The supervisor's intervention, if successful, results in BP-Fit, but the employee experiences WP-Misfit. In this scenario, BP-Fit results in decreased motivation because it leads to WP-Misfit. Dual Fit becomes even more complex when moving beyond the supervisor level to consider regulatory fit that occurs at different levels within an organization (e.g., fit with the organization or job). Likewise, elucidating the simultaneous effects of regulatory fit at different levels within an organization (e.g., job, work group, department) is needed to further develop the DFP. Addressing these issues requires empirical examination which is beyond the scope of this paper.

A second area of future inquiry concerns how employees experience fit and/or misfit with multiple sources (e.g., person-job, person supervisor, and within person). Viewing regulatory fit from the perspective of the theory of multiple fits (Van Vianen, Shen, & Chuang, 2011) suggests that research could benefit from studies integrating different types of fit (e.g., person-organization, person-environment, person-job) with RFT to better understand the effects of multiple fits. According to P-O fit theory (Kristof, 1996), when individuals perceive their characteristics and preferences fit with the characteristics of the work environment there is a positive effect on work performance, prosocial behaviors, and attitudes. Results of a recent study suggest that P-J fit is useful in explaining relations between prevention focus and several outcomes including job satisfaction, job involvement, and task enjoyment (Park, Hinsz, & Nickell, 2015). Future research could expand upon the theory posited in this paper by examining how different forms of fit (e.g., P-O fit) complement or hinder different combinations of regulatory fit.

Last, the literature is not clear on whether BP regulatory fit represents the alignment between trait regulatory foci, situational regulatory foci or if it can be either. In their seminal work, Righetti and Colleagues (2011) refer to one's "own regulatory orientation" when defining interpersonal regulatory fit. However, they don't specify if this refers to one's general or situational regulatory orientation. They do operationalize BP regulatory fit using a general regulatory focus measure; others have followed suit (e.g., Liu et al., 2016). Yet, other studies use situational/state regulatory focus measures to establish BP regulatory fit (e.g., Johnson et al., 2017; Shin et al., 2017). Unfortunately, there is no consensus on which method is correct. Researchers interested in studying BP regulatory fit are urged to establish fit using a measure of regulatory focus that is consistent with the context of the study. Situational/work regulatory focus measures (e.g., Neubert, Kacmar, Carlson, Chonko, & Roberts, 2008; Wallace & Chen, 2006) should be used when outcomes are context specific (e.g., work specific outcomes such as job performance, job satisfaction, or organizational commitment) whereas general regulatory focus measures (Higgins, Friedman, Harlow, Idson, Ayduk, & Taylor, 2001; Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda, 2002) should be used when variables of interest are not context specific (e.g., personality, well-being, or self-esteem).

Practical Implications

On a practical note, the DFP is particularly useful to managers. One's regulatory focus is malleable, unlike other characteristics (e.g., age, gender, personality), and leaders can elicit desirable outcomes by aligning subordinate regulatory focus with a regulatory orientation best suited for the present situation. This is beneficial when creating teams or when adding new members to existing teams. For example, if promotion focused employee is placed on a team that has a collective prevention focus, the employee may still contribute successfully to the team's efforts as long as he or she is allowed to pursue goals using eager means (DF-5). On the other hand, placing a prevention-oriented employee on a team with a collective promotion focus is not recommended as this will likely result in a fit combination that is harmful to the employee's overall motivation (DF-6 or DF-8). A thorough understanding of the regulatory fit between dyad partners offers "greater value than similarity in demographics, personality traits, and affectivity" (Johnson et al., 2017, p. 380).

CONCLUSION

In sum, regulatory fit may be beneficial to employees and organizations but only under certain conditions. The Dual Fit Perspective attempts to illustrate the simultaneous effects that result from different combinations of intrapersonal and interpersonal regulatory fit (misfit). I hope that the information presented in this paper is an impetus to unite the two streams of regulatory fit research and enriches our understanding of the complexities surrounding self-regulation.

ENDNOTES

1. Given the visual and audible similarity between the words intrapersonal and interpersonal, each word will be substituted with abbreviations in order to help distinguish between the two types of regulatory fit (misfit). Within person (WP) is used to represent intrapersonal regulatory fit (misfit) whereas between persons (BP) indicates interpersonal regulatory fit (misfit).
2. The order in which regulatory fit operates (intrapersonal and interpersonal) is important. Intrapersonal regulatory fit (misfit) is always present no matter the circumstances. Whereas interpersonal regulatory fit (misfit) only occurs in the context of social interaction. Therefore, the effects of interpersonal regulatory fit (misfit) should be considered as occurring after any effects of intrapersonal regulatory fit (misfit).

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