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### Teachers' remaining career opportunities

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Teachers' Remaining Career Opportunities: The Role of Value Fit and School Climate

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### Abstract

In light of an aging teacher population, this study investigates the influence of school climate and person-school (P-S) value fit on teachers' perspectives regarding their career futures. The results, based on a sample of 147 teachers, indicate that P-S value fit is positively associated with remaining career opportunities, over and above the negative effect of age. In addition, both climate for performance/academic press and climate for socialization affect teachers' future career perspectives through a P-S value fit mechanism. These findings imply that schools can enhance teachers' perceived remaining career opportunities by creating strong school climates and improving perceived value fit.

*Keywords:* occupational future time perspective; career opportunities; person-school value fit; school climate; teachers

## Teachers' Remaining Career Opportunities: The Role of Value Fit and School Climate

Attracting motivated and talented people into the teaching profession is a recurring issue in educational practice and academic literature alike. At the same time, concerns are raised in many parts of the world with regard to teaching quality and teacher quality, as current teachers are increasingly approaching retirement (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Schleicher, 2012). Hence, maintaining employee motivation to work toward school objectives at high levels over their entire career is an important but challenging task in the educational sector. In this study, therefore, we concentrate on the perceptions teachers have of their career futures, as these perceptions are likely to affect the remaining years they practice their profession (Thomson, Turner, & Nietfeld, 2012; Wöhrmann, Fasbender, & Deller, 2016). More specifically, the recently developed concept of the occupational future time perspective by Zacher and Frese (2009), and in particular, the perception of the remaining opportunities in one's career, will be applied to teachers.

Literature on teaching emphasizes the future time perspective as an important factor related to teachers' motivations and beliefs, aspirations for teaching and professional plans about teaching (Eren, 2012; Eren & Tezel, 2010). Here, future time perspective is mostly studied as an independent variable or factor mediating a relationship. However, so far little is known about the predictors of perceived remaining opportunities in the teaching profession (e.g., future time perspective as a dependent variable). In particular, the role of contextual factors that might affect perceived remaining opportunities is unknown. One established finding is that for age, a robust negative effect is found (Kochoian, Raemdonck, Frenay, & Zacher, 2016; Zacher & Frese, 2011; Zacher, Heusner, Schmitz, Zwierzanska, & Frese, 2010). This study therefore aims to contribute to the knowledge about factors affecting teachers' perceived remaining opportunities that are more easily influenced by school policies

and practices than teachers' age. To this end, this study explores the role of two contextual factors predicting perceived remaining opportunities at work: person-school (hereafter P-S) value fit and school climate.

In particular, this study investigates the extent to which P-S value fit is associated with perceived remaining opportunities at work. This type of fit is known to positively affect work attitudes (Chatman, 1989; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005; Wöhrmann et al., 2016), and people also actively strive to enhance fit with their organization (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Hirschi, 2010). The Theory of Work Adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) explains that a minimum of correspondence is needed to stay in the same (work) environment, while subsequently allowing the individual to look for opportunities to stabilize this fit. This theory leads us to predict a positive relationship between P-S value fit and perceived remaining opportunities in one's career.

In addition, this study pays attention to how the feeling of P-S value fit is influenced by school climate. In a school's climate, the values of the school become explicit (Schein, 2000), allowing teachers to identify the school's ambitions and purposes. In this study, the effects of a school climate for performance/academic press and a school climate for socialization (Shouse, 1996) are explored, as we expect that different climates can be formed within one school depending on the strategic foci (Schneider, 1990). We draw upon the organizational climate literature to examine the role of P-S value fit as key processes through which these two climate types affect perceived remaining opportunities (Schneider, White, & Paul, 1998). Following signaling theory and its extensions (Spence, 1973), we argue that a school climate for performance/academic press and a school climate for socialization strengthen feelings of P-S fit by enhancing employees' awareness of its core values and goals and what the work context stands for (Connelly, Certo, Ireland, & Reutzel, 2011), which in turn are linked to enhanced perceived remaining opportunities.

To contribute to the relevant literature, we capture teachers' future time perspective and the role of P-S value fit and school climate in the context of Dutch schools. According to an Organization for Economic and Co-operation Development (OECD) report (2005), teacher shortages and teacher quality issues are important problems concerning the teaching profession. The teacher shortage issue differs from one country to another but is a challenge for the Netherlands (Ministry of Education, 2011). In addition, delaying retirement for the current teacher cohort is not an easy option for employers. In the Netherlands, collective bargaining agreements ensure that retirement age is mostly fixed, with options for earlier, but not for later, retirement.

In sum, this study aims to add to our knowledge on how P-S value fit and climate may offset the decrease in perceived remaining opportunities typically found among aging teachers. From the perspective of schools, knowledge on how age influences perceived remaining opportunities in careers among teachers is relevant, but there is not necessarily much that the schools can do to prevent this negative effect of age. Therefore, it is important to investigate the factors that can influence teachers' perceptions of remaining opportunities over and above the negative effect of age that are more malleable by school policies and practices. Our paper will therefore focus on more contextual factors, specifically the feeling teachers have about value fit with their specific school context (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), as well as school climate (Shouse, 1996).

### **Occupational Future Time Perspective and Perceived Remaining Opportunities**

People can have different expectations and attitudes towards the future. This idea is defined in the concept of future time perspective. Future time perspective (FTP) is the sense people have about the future, which is constructed differently at different points in their lives and is influenced by personal and social contextual influences (Leonardi, 2007). It describes how much time people believe they have left in their future and how they perceive this time,

therefore providing a basis for organizing and planning future possibilities and setting personal goals (Eren, 2012; Zacher & Frese, 2009). FTP can serve as a strong motivator to engage in activities that are instrumental for future outcomes (McInerney, 2004).

The theory on FTP states that the amount of time people perceive to have left is linked to their social motivational system (Cate & John, 2007). As the ultimate end, death automatically connects aging to individuals' social motivational systems (Carstensen, Pasupathi, Mayr, & Nesselrode, 2000). Nonetheless, other social end points can also be of importance (Cate & John, 2007), for example, the ending of the employment contract. In the organizational context, FTP is seen as important for organizational behavior and career decision making (Marko & Savickas, 1998). Occupational future time perspective (OFTP) is defined in terms of remaining opportunities and remaining time at work (Zacher & Frese, 2009). These two concepts are particularly relevant for the educational sector. First, the sector is known for its limited career possibilities, which gives an extra disadvantage regarding the number of opportunities left at work. In addition, the educational sector is known to be aging, and more and more people are facing retirement (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Schleicher, 2012). These factors are associated with OFTP and especially with remaining time at work (Zacher & Frese, 2009). Studies show that age appears to be the main predictor of the latter (Zacher & Frese, 2011), especially when retirement age is fixed (which is the case in the Netherlands). Therefore, in line with other scholars (Zacher & Frese, 2011; Zacher et al., 2010), this study will focus solely on the perceived remaining opportunities. This study describes "how many goals, options, and possibilities employees generally believe to have left in their personal work-related futures" (Zacher et al., 2010, p. 375).

### **Person-School Value Fit**

Values are the beliefs one has about desirable end states, which guide the selection and evaluation of behaviors, people and events. Furthermore, they are ordered by relative

importance (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987; de Clercq, Fontaine, & Anseel, 2008; Johnson & Jackson, 2009). Several studies have investigated values related to the work context via the concept of work values (e.g., Sverko & Super, 1995; de Vos, Buyens, & Schalk, 2005). Work values are expressions of more general human values in the context of the work setting (de Vos et al., 2005). Having a positive feeling about the work setting one is in is likely to influence one's work attitudes (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). This idea is the cornerstone of the person-organization fit (hereafter P-O fit) approach, which states that a match between a person and the organization (i.e., a good fit) will result in better work-related attitudes and behaviors than when a person does not fit the organization he or she is working in (Gibson & Borges, 2009; Ostroff, 1993; Hoffman & Woehr, 2006). One of the most important forms of P-O fit is value fit. Value fit or value congruence is the fit between one's personal values and the organization's values (Chatman, 1989; Kristof, 1996). Translating this to the school context, the concept of person-school (P-S) value fit is more appropriate.

Compatibility between personal values and organizational values is associated with positive attitudes (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Rehfuss, Gambrell, & Meyer, 2012; Verquer, Beehr, & Wahner, 2003), and people also actively strive to create a fit with their environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Festinger, 1962). Both the Theory of Work Adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) and the Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1962) state that achieving and maintaining correspondence, consonance or fit with the environment is a basic human motive. In addition, a minimal level of correspondence is needed to remain in the same (work) environment, while subsequently it allows the individual to look for opportunities to optimize or stabilize this fit (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). In line with this idea, it is likely that a feeling of P-S value fit will stimulate the search for and use of opportunities within the school, including career opportunities. A feeling of fit can lead to identification with the organization (Erdogan, Kraimer, & Liden, 2004). This identification can cause a strong attachment to the school and



the profession, thus leading to more expected time in this profession. In contrast, low feelings of P-S value fit will hinder teachers from searching for and using opportunities within the school. Since previous research within the school context has found positive relationships between value congruence and attitudes, such as career satisfaction (Erdogan et al., 2004; Siegal & McDonald, 2004), we expect a positive relationship between P-S value fit and perceived remaining opportunities. This leads to our first hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 1: Person-school (P-S) value fit is positively related to perceived remaining opportunities in one's career.*

### **Organizational Climate in Schools**

The organizational climate, in the context of schools, refers to the values, interpretations, and definitions of purpose (Kelley, Thornton, & Daugherty, 2005) that distinguish one school from another (Hoy & Miskal, in Milner and Khoza, 2008). Within the school climate literature, two visions of schooling predominate: a climate emphasizing academic press (i.e., a performance-oriented school climate) and a climate emphasizing the school as a community (Shouse, 1996). A climate for academic press refers to a school that is driven by achievement-oriented values and norms and that sets high academic standards and goals (Hoy, Smith, & Sweetland, 2002; Shouse, 1996). Students are respected by other students and by their teachers for their academic success and try to perform as well as they can (Hoy et al., 2002; Shouse, 1996). In the more traditional concept of the school as a community, however, the school aims to shape students and to create shared understandings about values, beliefs, purposes and (future) behaviors of the students as learners and as citizens (Shouse, 1996). In this concept, schools want to create (a feeling of) school membership and emphasize caring social relationships, both among colleagues and between teachers and students (Shouse, 1996; Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, & Liu, 2001). Compared to the climate for academic press, this type of climate is more aimed at a process of

socialization and education (Veugelers & de Kat, 1998). As this school climate is congruent with socialization/education, defined as the conscious activity directed toward the development of individuals' personalities, it will be called the "climate for socialization" here, whereas the first will be called the "climate for performance/academic press". According to Schneider (1990), multiple climates often coexist in an organization, as different climates can be formed in an organization at the same time, depending on the multiple strategic foci of the school.

School climate can serve a signaling function by communicating messages to employees about the strategic foci of the school (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). The extent to which the values and goals are clearly and consistently communicated by the organization and perceived as such by employees has important effects, according to signaling theory (Spence, 1973). We argue that a school climate for performance/academic press and a school climate for socialization strengthen P-S fit by enhancing employees' awareness of what the work context stands for and of its core values and goals (Connelly et al., 2011). As such, a school climate for performance/academic press or a climate for socialization provides an opportunity to experience a sense of choice in initiating and regulating teachers' own actions based on the extent to which teachers' personal values and school values match. In addition, the attraction-selection-attrition model (ASA model) (Schneider, Goldstein, & Smith, 1995) outlines the process through which teachers find schools differentially attractive as a function of their judgments of the congruence between the goals of the school and their own personalities (Schneider et al., 1995). This process starts from the phase in which teachers' preferences for particular schools are formed. Next, the formal and informal selection procedures used by the school in the recruitment and hiring of teachers also filter out those teachers with the attributes the school desires. Finally, the attrition process addresses the idea that teachers will leave the schools they do not fit (Schneider et al, 1995).

Consistent with the signaling and P-O fit theory arguments outlined above, we posit that school climate influences a specific, new type of employee attitude (perceived remaining career opportunities) indirectly, through its effect on P-S value fit. When teachers perceive the school to have more clear and distinctive values and goals (higher scores on climate for socialization or academic press), we expect a better match between a person and the school, and in turn higher perceived remaining opportunities. This idea is captured in hypothesis 2:

*Hypothesis 2a: P-S value fit fully mediates the positive relationship between a climate for socialization and perceived remaining opportunities.*

*Hypothesis 2b: P-S value fit fully mediates the positive relationship between a climate for academic press and perceived remaining opportunities.*

## **Method**

### **Research Set-Up and Procedure**

The study was performed in cooperation with an educational consultancy office in the Netherlands. A quantitative, cross-sectional design was used (Bryman, 2004). The teachers were selected via multi-stage probability sampling (Baker, 1999). Initially, a probability sample of schools was drawn from a sampling frame consisting of all primary and secondary schools in the Netherlands. However, it appeared that not all schools were willing to participate. Therefore, in order to collect more data, the headmaster of a school, the head of a teacher team or an HR manager was contacted to approach teachers. The teachers then received an e-mail with a link to the digital questionnaire, a set of instructions, and a guiding letter, in which confidentiality and anonymity were stressed. To increase the response rate, a reminder was sent by e-mail after a week.

### **Participants**

The data were collected among primary and secondary education teachers in the Netherlands. No teachers in special education participated. In total, 11 schools employing a

total of 477 teachers were invited. A total of 147 teachers from seven schools returned a fully completed questionnaire (a response rate of 31% at the teacher level and 64% at the school level). The sample consisted of 69 men (47%) and 78 women (53%). The age of the respondents ranged from 20 to 65 years, with a mean of 48.0 years ( $SD = 11.8$ ). The teachers had an average tenure of 16.8 years ( $SD = 12.6$ ). Compared to the general Dutch teacher population, the sample had a somewhat larger percentage of men, and the average age was slightly higher (Central Bureau for Statistics, 2014). In the sample, 11.3% of the teachers were employed at primary schools, whereas the majority of the teachers (88.7%) were employed at secondary schools. Although this distribution also reflects that of the general Dutch teacher population, the distribution in the general population is somewhat less extreme (32.4% primary education, 67.6% secondary education; Central Bureau for Statistics, 2014).

### **Measures**

The *perception of remaining opportunities* was measured using the scale by Zacher and Frese (2009). It contained three items (e.g., “Many opportunities await me in my career as teacher”). Answers were given on a seven-point scale, ranging from 1 = does not apply at all to 7 = applies completely. The scale, which has already been shown to have good validity and reliability in previous research (Zacher & Frese, 2009), was found to have a Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  of .93 in the current sample.

*P-S value fit* was measured by a three-item scale developed by Cable and DeRue (2002). A sample question of this scale (adapted to the school context) is the following: “The things that I value in life are very similar to the things that my school values”. The three items were measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. In previous research (Cable & DeRue, 2002), the scale was shown to have good validity and reliability. The Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  was .87 for the current sample.

For *school climate*, we could not find existing Dutch scales in the literature that captured exactly what we intended to measure in this study. Therefore, we translated the original Organizational Climate Measure (Patterson et al., 2005) and the Organizational Climate Index (Hoy et al., 2002) from English to Dutch; these measures were used as a starting point for item content. The items were adapted to the school context. A sample question for the climate for academic press scale is the following: “This school sets high standards for the academic performance of students”. Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  for the three-item scale was .72.

The climate for socialization scale consists of three items, again based on Hoy et al. (2002) and Patterson et al. (2005), and runs mostly parallel to the climate for academic press scale questions, replacing “performance” by “education” or “socialization”. An example is the following: “This school wants to contribute to the socialization of students”. Respondents rated the questions on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  of the scale was .72. The items and their unstandardized estimates for the two climate scales are included in Appendix A.

*Age* remains an important antecedent of OFTP, since as aging teachers grow closer to retirement, the natural termination of the employment contract comes closer, and the time to engage in opportunities at work decreases. Research also confirms the negative effect of age on FTP (e.g., Cate & John, 2007; Seijts, 1998; Hesketh, 2000) and perceived remaining opportunities in one's career (Zacher & Frese, 2009, 2011; Zacher et al., 2010). In addition, studies have found that older employees are less motivated and get fewer opportunities to develop (Author et al, 2010; van Dam, van der Vorst, & van der Heijden, 2009; Warr & Birdi, 1998; Warr & Fay, 2001). Therefore, we controlled for age in our exploration of the role of more contextual factors in relation to remaining opportunities. Age was directly asked for in the survey and was measured in years.

## Statistical Analyses

All variables were individual teacher attributes. However, as our data were collected in seven schools, the individual respondents could not be considered completely independent observations. Therefore, given the nested structure of our sample (teachers nested within schools), and the possible resulting dependence between subjects within schools, we computed intraclass correlations (ICCs) (Hox, 2010). The ICC is the total proportion of the total variance that is explained by group membership. Our results showed low ICCs<sup>1</sup>, and therefore most variance could be attributed to the individual teacher level. Accordingly, we analyzed the data on an individual level.

In order to examine whether the school climates, P-S value fit and perceived remaining opportunities captured different construct, we first conducted a series of confirmatory factor analyses. We use Mplus (Muthén & Muhtén, 2012) for these analyses. Mplus uses the available data to estimate the model using full information maximum likelihood. To evaluate model fit, we followed Hu and Bentler's (1998) recommendation by using multiple indices of fit, including the chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2$ ), the comparative fit index (CFI; acceptable above .90 and good above .95), the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI; acceptable above .90 and good above .95), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA; acceptable below .08, but preferably close to .06) and the standardized root mean square residual index (SRMR; acceptable fit below .10 and good below .05).

We expected that the four-factor model, in which we included all main variables (i.e., climate for academic press, climate for socialization, P-S value fit and perceived remaining opportunities) would fit the model better than a three-factor model, in which both school scales were investigated as one factor, or a one-factor model, in which all variables loaded onto one factor. The CFA of our expected four-factor model, in which we made a distinction

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<sup>1</sup> ICC1 for remaining opportunities: .018; P-S value fit: .031; climate for socialization: -.001; climate for academic press: .059

between the preconceived scales climate for academic press and climate for socialization, as well as included P-S value fit and perceived remaining opportunities, resulted in a good model fit ( $\chi^2 (48) = 62.143, p = .083, CFI = .984, TLI = .978, RMSEA = .045, SRMR = .039$ ). Moreover, the hypothesized four-factor model obtained a better fit than the three-factor model ( $\chi^2 (51) = 133.623, p = .000, CFI = .905, TLI = .877, RMSEA = .105, SRMR = .070$ ) and the one-factor ( $\chi^2 (54) = 545.211, p = .000, CFI = .435, TLI = .309, RMSEA = .249, SRMR = .166$ ). These results support the discriminant validity of our measures.

To test the hypotheses, a path analysis was performed to test the fit between the research model and the data obtained. In this study, Mplus (Muthén & Muthén, 2012) was used with bootstrapping (bootstrap sample size = 5000). In addition to the ratio of the  $\chi^2$  statistic to its degrees of freedom, with a value less than five indicating an acceptable fit, researchers recommended a number of fit indices to assess model fit (see, for example, Kline, 2005). These fit indices are the comparative fit index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), which must be above .90; the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), which must be below .06; and the standardized root mean residual (SRMR), which must be below .05.

## Results

Table 1 contains means, standard deviations and correlations for the study variables, all reported at the individual level. The two climate scales correlated significantly and positively with each other ( $r = .34, p < .01$ ). This correlation indicated that the school climates were not mutually exclusive. These climate scales both correlated positively with P-S value fit (for academic press:  $r = .42, p < .01$ ; for socialization:  $r = .43, p < .01$ ). Age was unrelated to the other independent variables, e.g., P-S value fit and school climate.

**Insert Table 1 about here**

Looking at the dependent variable ‘perceived remaining opportunities’, significant correlations were found with age ( $r = -.45, p < .01$ ) and P-S value fit ( $r = .19, p < .05$ ).

Table 2 and Figure 1 show the resulting path coefficients of the proposed research model<sup>2</sup>. Unstandardized path estimates and their standard errors were reported for each of the direct and indirect effects on remaining opportunities at work. The model showed a good fit ( $\chi^2 (5) = 3.018, p = .697, CFI = 1.000, TLI = 1.034, RMSEA = .000, 90\%CI = .00 - .09, SRMR = .036$ ). Furthermore, all hypotheses were supported by the data. Hypothesis 1 proposed that P-S value fit was positively related to perceived remaining opportunities in one’s career. The results in Table 2 show that P-S value fit was indeed positively related to remaining opportunities in one’s career ( $B = .51, p < .01$ ). Furthermore, age appeared to significantly influence remaining opportunities as well ( $B = -.06, p < .01$ , see Table 2).

The indirect effect of P-S value fit (hypothesis 2a and 2b) in the relationship between school climate and perceived remaining opportunities showed significant results as well. The results from bootstrapping showed that school climate did appear to influence perceived remaining opportunities through P-S value fit (climate for academic press:  $B = .19, p < .05$ ; climate for socialization:  $B = .23, p < .05$ ). In addition, results showed no significant direct effect between climate for socialization and climate for academic press on remaining opportunities at work. Hypotheses 2a and 2b, stating that P-S value fit fully mediated the positive relationship between climate for socialization (2a) and climate for academic press (2b) and perceived remaining opportunities, were therefore confirmed. The path model is shown in Figure 1.

**Insert Table 2 about here**

**Insert Figure 1 about here**

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<sup>2</sup> The analysis showed that the direct effects of climate for socialization and climate for academic press on perceived remaining opportunities were not significant; hence we decided to report results of the revised model without these direct effects included.



## Discussion

The aim of this research was to gain more knowledge on the effects of person-school value fit and school climate on the recently developed concept of perception of remaining career opportunities. The results demonstrated a positive effect of P-S value fit on perceived remaining opportunities at work, which confirmed hypothesis 1. This finding is in line with person-organization fit theories (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), relating value fit to positive work attitudes, as well as the Theory of Work Adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) and the Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1962), which emphasize that fit with the environment is a basic human motivator. A minimal level of correspondence is needed for employees to look for opportunities in the organization to maintain and optimize this fit (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). The results show that a feeling of P-S value fit stimulates the search for and use of (career) opportunities within the school. The feeling of identification with the school leads to stronger attachment to the teaching profession and ultimately more time in the profession. The findings of the mediation analyses confirmed the hypothesized effect of perceived school climate for socialization and climate for academic press, via P-S value fit, on perceived remaining opportunities in one's career (H2a and H2b). The climate of the school can serve as a signaling function by communicating messages to employees about the strategic foci of the school (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). These present findings are consistent with signaling theory (Spence, 1973), suggesting that when teachers perceive the school to have more clear and distinctive values and goals (higher scores on climate for socialization or academic press), we can expect a better match between a person and the school, and in turn higher perceived remaining opportunities in their career. A climate for academic press or a climate for socialization provides an opportunity to experience a sense of choice in initiating and regulating teachers' own actions, which are based on the extent to which teachers' personal values and school values match. In addition, the full mediation of P-S value fit is in

line with the attraction-selection-attrition model (ASA model) (Schneider et al., 1995), stating that the process through which teachers find schools differentially attractive is based on their judgments or the congruence between the goals of teachers' own personalities and the goals of the school (Schneider et al., 1995). Our results further show that if a school scores high on climate for socialization, it also tends to score high on climate for academic press. This multifaceted nature of school climates has been underlined earlier by Schneider (1990).

Congruent with the results of Kochoian et al. (2016), Zacher and Frese (2009, 2011) and Zacher et al. (2010), a negative effect of age on the perception of remaining opportunities was found. This finding is in line with studies stating that older people are less motivated and receive fewer opportunities to develop (Author et al., 2010; van Dam, van der Vorst, & van der Heijden, 2009; Warr & Birdi, 1998; Warr & Fay, 2001).

In conclusion, person-school value fit directly influences the perception of remaining opportunities of teachers in their career. In addition, the climate for socialization and climate for academic press both enhance the perception of remaining opportunities via their influence on person-school fit. Our results contribute to research on the concept of OFTP (Zacher & Frese, 2009) and show that besides age and personality, other contextual variables are important. Furthermore, the study illustrates that P-S value fit can be an important antecedent of other employee outcome variables that are typically studied in relation to value fit. Additionally, the role of P-S value fit as a mediator has been extended, with school climate being a predictor of remaining opportunities in one's career through P-S value fit. For future research, our study opens the arena for finding further contextual factors that might compensate for the negative relationship between age and future career perspective among teachers. Here, we have limited ourselves to variables that relate to P-S value fit and school climate, but one may wonder whether other attributes of the school context (e.g., performance levels, quality ratings, management styles) matter.

## **Limitations**

The results are subject to several limitations. One limitation of the present study is its cross-sectional nature, which implies that it is impossible to make causal statements. Given that the perceived remaining opportunities in one's career, P-S value fit and perceived school climates are malleable by nature, it can be said that longitudinal studies are needed in order to explore how these significant relationships might change over a period of time. Ideally, investigating future time perspective as a predictor as well as an outcome variable would broaden the knowledge of this concept even further.

Second, the sample was relatively small, due to a relatively low response rate. However, we did find significant results between climate for academic press and climate for socialization on perceived remaining opportunities, including the mediating mechanism of P-S value fit.

Third, the present data were based on self-report measures, suggesting that the teachers' responses on the items of the scales may not reflect their actual fit with the values of the school or perceptions about the school climate. The current results are therefore open to the possible effect of social desirability. Future studies should control for this possible effect.

In addition, our measure of P-S value fit was quite short (three items) and directly assessed value fit through the perceptions of the employees involved. In the literature, the limitations of such an approach to measuring fit have been elaborated (Kristof, 1996). However, in modern research, such an approach of directly measuring value fit remains widely accepted (see, for example, Seong, Kristof-Brown, Park, Hong, & Shin, 2012).

Finally, one limitation concerns the choice of contextual variables that influenced perceived remaining opportunities. In this study, we focused on climate and value fit, but there might be more contextual factors that influence teachers' career futures, such as

performance levels, quality ratings, or management styles. Future research could therefore also investigate other predictors of teachers' remaining opportunities.

### **Practical implications**

School climate and P-S value fit were shown to be important contextual factors that enhanced teachers' perceived remaining opportunities in their careers. As many countries are facing a teacher shortage and a need for higher teaching quality, it is important to know which factors might influence the perceptions teachers have about opportunities in their career. This study showed that schools can influence the way teachers perceive their remaining career opportunities through climate and value fit and that their perceptions are not completely dependent on age. For teachers' future career perspective, it is important that schools communicate their goals and values so that teachers become aware of the alignment between their goals and values and those of the school. In this way, attracting motivated and talented people into the teaching profession can become more feasible. For schools and teachers, it would therefore be beneficial for schools to have (multiple) strong climates and explicit objectives. The challenge to maintaining employee motivation to work toward organizational objectives over their entire career is partly maintaining clear communication with teachers.

Both climates have a similar effect on P-S value fit, suggesting that having a pronounced or strong school climate is important, rather than the type of climate. This implication opens possibilities for organizational interventions that may offset, to a certain extent, the well-known negative effect of age. For example, greater teacher participation in the development of school goals may result in an increased sense of ownership. In particular, expanding induction programs and mentoring programs for teachers to communicate the values and objectives of the school would help teachers to experience future options in their careers. Furthermore, schools may also want to invest in modifying selection systems so that individuals get to know the values of the school during the selection process and become

aware of whether their personal values are in line with the goals and values of the school (in line with the ASA theory).

Furthermore, schools can learn from this study that in order to keep teachers positive about their career futures, it is important to be aware that teachers need to have the feeling that they fit with the organization they work for in terms of values. School climate may serve as a tool to achieve this objective. Based on our results, schools should not focus on only one specific form of climate. Both the climate for academic press and the climate for socialization can likewise stimulate future career perspective through a P-S value fit mechanism. It would appear that as long as schools effectively communicate their ambitions and goals to their employees, functional and/or societal, teachers may experience more future career options.

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## Appendix A

*School Climate Items*

Item	Unstandardized Estimate
<b>Climate for academic press</b>	
1. This school sets high standards for the academic performance of students.	1.000
2. Achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school.	1.336
3. Students are expected to achieve the goals that have been set for them.	0.744
<b>Climate for socialization</b>	
1. This school wants to contribute to the socialization of students.	1.000
2. Socialization of students is recognized and acknowledged by the school.	1.577
3. Students usually receive feedback on their social performance	0.760

*Note.* Unstandardized estimates are reported.

Table 1

*Means, Standard deviations, and Correlations for All Variables*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5
1. Remaining opportunities	4.05	1.61	1.00				
2. Age	47.99	11.83	-.45**	1.00			
3. Climate for socialization	3.74	0.51	.01	.12	1.00		
4. Climate for academic press	3.47	.58	.11	.04	.34**	1.00	
5. P-S value fit	3.40	.71	.19*	.04	.43**	.42**	1.00

*Note.*  $N = 147$ ; \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

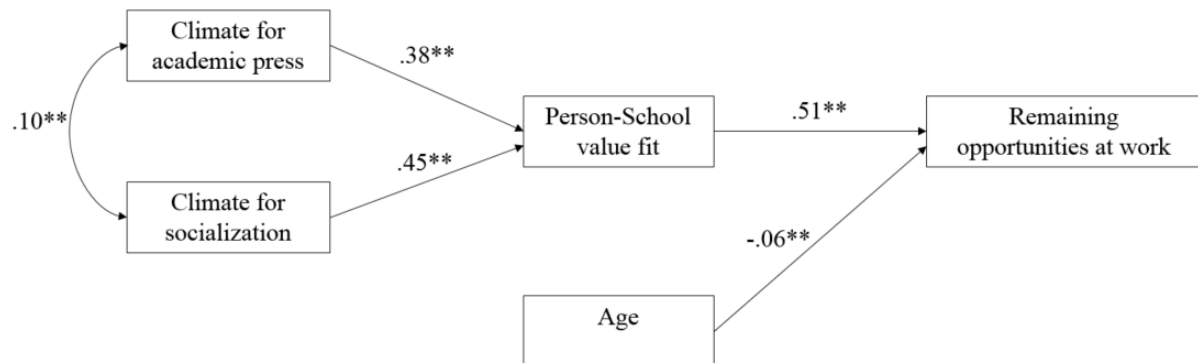
Table 2

*Direct and indirect associations of school climate, P-S value fit and age*

	Remaining opportunities at work			
	Direct estimate (B)	S.E.	Indirect estimate (B)	S.E.
<i>Direct paths</i>				
PS value fit	.51**	.19		
<i>Indirect paths</i>				
Academic press → PS value fit			.19*	.09
Socialization → PS value fit			.23*	.11
<i>Control variable</i>				
Age	-.06**	.01		

*Note.* Unstandardized estimates are reported; \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$





*Figure 1.* Results measurement model.

*Note.* Unstandardized estimates are reported; \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ;  $N = 147$