

# Values in Business Schools: The Role of Self-Selection and Socialization

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*Contemporary business schools are expected to educate their students to embrace ethical and prosocial values. But can business schools rise to this challenge? Comparing a business school to another professional school, social work, that encourages prosocial values, we investigated value profiles as reflected in school websites and among their students. The findings show that the business school expresses self-enhancement values (power and achievement) more, and prosocial values (benevolence and universalism) less than the social work school. We further investigated self-selection and socialization as complementary organizational processes that may lead to and sustain the value profile of each school. Our findings show that as early as the first week of studies, freshmen's values are congruent with the value profile of their departments, indicating a value-based self-selection process. To investigate socialization, we compared freshmen and seniors and conducted a yearlong study among freshmen. The findings revealed a small change in students' values throughout their training, providing only some support for value socialization. Altogether, our findings suggest that business schools that are interested in prosocial students should attract and select students that emphasize these values, rather than rely on socialization attempts.*

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In the last decade more and more scholars and practitioners in the field of management have recognized the importance of ethics-based management and have begun advocating for integrating social goals along with the aspiration to maximize profit (Moosmayer, 2012; Nelson, Poms, & Wolf, 2012; Rasche, Gilbert, & Schedel, 2013; Trank & Rynes, 2003). Consequently, business schools are expected to educate their students to embrace ethical and prosocial values. It is not clear, however, whether business

schools can in fact change the values of their students. In an interview with the *New York Times*, Gabriel Hawawini, at the time dean of INSEAD, a leading international business school, prototyped his students as motivated to be successful and as prone to measure that success by the amount of money made for one's company and for oneself ([http://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/20/business/yourmoney/20advi.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/20/business/yourmoney/20advi.html?_r=0)). These motivations reflect the focus on self-interests rather than on prosocial interests. He reasoned that the aspiration to change students' values cannot be obtained during a 1-year MBA program, and further, argued that business schools interested in ethical students should attract and recruit students that already emphasize these values.

Thus, to ensure the prevalence and continuity of their central values, business schools could rely on

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This research was supported by a grant from the Recanati Fund of the School of Business Administration at the Hebrew University to the second author. We thank Ehud Arieli and Ina Goyhman for their help in content analysis, and Lior Nisman for her help in data collection. We also thank Adi Amit, Adi Katzav, Andrei Elster, Talia Ochayon, Margalit Kluger, and Nir Halevy for their useful comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

either selection or socialization—two complementary organizational processes that may lead to, and sustain, the value profile of organizations (Chatard & Selimbegovic, 2007; Chatman, 1991; Schneider, Smith, Taylor, & Fleenor, 1998). Individuals are attracted to professions and organizations that allow them to express their values and attain their goals. At the same time, organizations select candidates that fit their values and goals. Alternatively, organizations may train and socialize their members to identify and comply with organizational or professional values. Consequently, members' values may change to match the values that are highlighted by the professional group.

Our research here has two main goals. First, we study the value profile of business schools, uncovering how it is reflected in their websites and among their students. We then investigate self-selection and socialization as two processes that may lead to and sustain this value profile. Because business schools around the world share similar agendas and curricula (e.g., Moosmayer, 2012; Wu, Huang, Kuo, & Wu, 2010), we chose to focus on one university. This allows for the required in-depth investigation across the various organizational layers of the school. Moreover, to investigate if our findings are unique to business schools or whether they reflect basic general organizational processes, we compared the case of the business school to that of another academic-professional organization, the school of social work. Whereas the business profession emphasizes pursuing achievement, success, and self-interest, social work emphasizes concern and care for others, even at the expense of one's self-interests (e.g., Knafo & Sagiv, 2004). Comparing the two therefore allows the investigation of whether each one's distinct value profile is embedded in the academic department and whether the effects of self-selection and socialization replicate similarly across these two academic departments that so drastically differ in their value profiles.

The first part of this research (Studies 1–2) investigates the value profiles of the two schools as they are reflected in two central layers of academic departments (e.g., Milem, 1998; Smart, Feldman, & Ethington, 2000): Organizational artifacts (Study 1), and students (Study 2). The second part (Studies 3–4), explores self-selection and socialization as accounting for these value profiles. Self-selection is studied by comparing the value profiles of students from the two departments at the beginning of their professional training (Study 3). Socialization is studied

by comparing students at different stages of their training (Studies 3–4).

## THE VALUE PROFILES OF BUSINESS AND SOCIAL WORK SCHOOLS

### Conceptualizing Values

Values are *trans-situational* attributes, that is, considered to be relatively stable over time and across situations (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992; see review in Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004). Values define what is fundamentally right or wrong for individuals, organizations and societies (e.g., Kluckhohn, 1951; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992). Thus, they exist at multiple levels (Sagiv, Schwartz, & Arieli, 2011). At the collective level (e.g., organizational level), they represent widely shared goals that members of the collective (e.g., employees) are encouraged to pursue and attain (Schwartz, 1999). At the individual level, values serve as motivational forces that affect the choices and behavior of individuals and serve as guiding principles in their lives (Kluckhohn, 1951; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992).

To conceptualize and measure values, we rely on Schwartz's theory of the content and structure of human values (Schwartz, 1992). The theory presents a set of 10 value types that are comprehensive in describing human motivational goals. The dynamic relationships among these 10 value types form a circular structure that represents their conflicts and compatibilities. This circular structure can be summarized in two basic conflicts: One contrasts openness to change (self-direction and stimulation values) with conservation of the status quo (tradition, conformity, and security values). The second contrasts self-enhancement (power and achievement values) with self-transcendence (benevolence and universalism values).

Schwartz's theory has been tested in cross-cultural research in more than 75 countries and 300 samples, providing strong support for the theorized content and structure of values (Davidov, Schmidt, & Schwartz, 2008; Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz & Rubel, 2005). The findings indicate that the meanings of the 10 value types are similar across cultures. Individuals vary, however, in the importance they attribute to them. Also of interest, there is some consensus regarding the hierarchical order of the values: Benevolence values (that express care for the welfare of close others) are consistently among the most important, whereas power values (that express controlling other people and resources) are

consistently among the least important (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001).

### Values in Professional Environments

As guiding principles in people's lives, values facilitate people's adaptation to the environment and impact their decisions, choices, and behavior in social, educational, and organizational settings (see review in Sagiv et al., 2011). Indeed, research has shown that professions and the individuals in them vary in the values they endorse (Gandal, Roccas, Sagiv, & Wrzesniewski, 2005; Knafo & Sagiv, 2004). In our work here we focus on the value profiles of two professional environments, *business* and *social work*, as reflected in the university departments that train students to be professionals in these fields. We next discuss the value differences between business and social work in terms of Schwartz's value theory.

Business is defined as an *enterprising* environment (Holland, 1985, 1997): It involves leading and directing subordinates' action to attain organizational or self-interest goals. Managers set visions and goals and establish policies to implement them (O\*NET database, <http://www.onetonline.org>). They thus seek to lead people and obtain resources, and they have to compete for success. Consequently, business entails the pursuit of power and prestige, ambition and success (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2000). These characteristics are compatible with self-enhancement values that express the motivation to promote self-interest by focusing on gaining control over other people and resources (power) and by demonstrating competence and success (achievement). In contrast, they conflict with self-transcendence values that express the motivation to promote the interests of others by concern and care for others close to us (benevolence), and by acceptance, tolerance, and concern for the welfare of all people and for nature (universalism). By studying the value-patterns of 32 occupations among 652 Israeli workers, Knafo and Sagiv (2004) confirmed this value pattern: Compared to individuals in other professions, managers attributed higher importance to power and achievement, and lower importance to benevolence and universalism values. Likewise, business schools are inclined to focus on teaching their students analytical skills that allow maximizing the company's profit and attaining personal and organizational success. They pay less attention to behaving ethically and acting in a socially responsible manner (e.g., Giacalone & Thompson, 2006; Navarro, 2008; Rasche et al., 2013).

*Social work* is defined as a *social* environment (Holland, 1985, 1997). It promotes actions of caring for and helping others (O\*NET database, <http://www.onetonline.org>). Social workers are encouraged to act in ways that focus on the needs of other people, to help, consult, and guide them. Indeed, in analyzing the Code of Ethics of the social work profession, D'aprix, Dunlap, Abel, and Edwards (2004) observed that its primary goals reflect care and concern for the well-being of all people. In terms of values, these goals are compatible with benevolence and universalism and conflict with power and achievement. Accordingly, this value pattern was documented among professional social workers (Knafo & Sagiv, 2004).

Studies 1 and 2 investigate the value profiles of the two university departments. We aimed to show that the prevailing value profile of the professions studied in each department (i.e., business and social work) is embedded consistently across different aspects of its structure and procedures (e.g., Schneider, 1987; Schneider, Goldstein, & Smith, 1995). Studying business and social work schools at the same university allowed us to compare the prominent values in two central organizational layers: organizational artifacts (Study 1), and students (Study 2). We expected to find the value profile that characterizes the professional environment of each school in both organizational layers. We thus hypothesized that:

*Hypothesis 1: The business school expresses self-enhancement values (power and achievement) more, and self-transcendence values (benevolence and universalism) less than the social work school.*

### Study 1: Content Analysis of Departmental Websites

Study 1 investigated the value profile of each department by observing and analyzing their organizational artifacts. Organizational artifacts are tangible elements that are made by the organization, including organizational procedures, language, and myths (e.g., Pratt & Rafaeli, 2006; Schein, 1990, 2004), and reflect the underlying assumptions and values of the organization (Schein, 1990, 2004; Schneider, 1987; Schneider et al., 1995). We focused on the departments' websites. In the contemporary world the websites of organizations serve as a major organizational artifact through which the organization defines and projects its identity, goals, and agenda (Coupland

& Brown, 2004; Preston, Wright, & Young, 1996). Indeed, researchers have previously conducted content analysis of the web-based curricula of accredited business schools, to reveal their goals and aspirations (Navarro, 2008; Wu et al., 2010). In the university studied, business administration and social work are both independent schools that have similar organizational structures. Thus, the website platforms are similar and comparable. We hypothesized that the schools' websites would reflect the value patterns emphasized by each profession.

### Method

**The university.** This research project was conducted in a large public university in Israel, which is ranked among the best in Israel and in Europe. The university has over 22,000 students and approximately 1,000 faculty members. The business and social work schools offer programs for undergraduates, MA/MBA, and PhDs, as well as for executives (EMBA program in business school and nonprofit management in social work school). Our research focused on the undergraduate programs.

**Procedure.** The websites underwent content analysis by two independent judges who were blind to the research goals and hypotheses. The schools' websites include both Hebrew and English versions. The analysis was conducted on the Hebrew version of the website, hence the judges were native Hebrew speakers, and were instructed in Hebrew. The judges were provided with the definitions of the self-enhancement and self-transcendence value types

(i.e., power and achievement, and benevolence and universalism respectively), and were asked to mark and count words and sentences that matched each value type (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Zilber, 2006). The judges arrived at similar conclusions, and the interrater reliability was high (.98). Therefore their evaluations (amount of words and sentences reflecting each value dimension) were averaged.

### Results and Discussion

Table 1 summarizes the classifications made by the two independent judges. As hypothesized, the judges identified more words and sentences that matched self-enhancement values on the business school's website (words: 137/1434; sentences: 48.5/86) than on that of the social work school's website (words: 23/1081; sentences: 5.5/62). The differences between the proportions were tested using a z test for two population proportions, and were significant (words:  $z = 7.55, p = .00$ ; and sentences:  $z = 5.88, p = .00$ ). Also as hypothesized, the judges identified more words and sentences that matched self-transcendence values on the social work school's website (words: 150.5/1081; sentences: 43.5/62) than on that of the business school's website (words: 21.5/1434; sentences: 5/86). Again, the differences between the proportions were significant (words:  $z = 12.20, p = .00$ ; and sentences:  $z = 8.31, p = .00$ ). Thus, the content analysis of the websites provides support for the expected value differences between the two schools. The differences documented reflect norms and standards that prevail in the business

**TABLE 1**  
Sentences and Words That Reflect Self-Transcendence and Self-Enhancement Values on the Business (B) and Social Work (SW) Websites (Study 1)

Value type	Examples	Judge 1		Judge 2		M		z test		
		B	SW	B	SW	B	SW	Z	p value	
Self-enhancement	Words	Leadership, success, competitive, achievement	131	21	143	25	137	23	7.55	.00
	Sentences	"...future generation of business leaders"; "...admissions criteria that are among the highest ..."	53	7	44	4	48.5	5.5	5.88	.00
Self-transcendence	Words	Concern, welfare, sensitivity, community	14	148	29	153	21.5	150.5	12.20	.00
	Sentences	"...to fill professional roles in all fields of social welfare..."; "... obligation and contribution to the social environment...."	6	51	4	36	5	43.5	8.31	.00
Entire website	Words		1434	1081						
	Sentences		86	62						

versus social work fields, as well as in the specific schools studied. In Study 2 we further investigate the value profiles of business and social work by comparing the students' value patterns in each school.

## Study 2: Value Priorities of Students

We expected students to emphasize the values compatible with their departments. We compared the value emphases of students in the business school and social work school, hypothesizing that they would differ in prioritizing self-enhancement and self-transcendence values in the same manner found in Study 1.

### Method

**Participants and procedure.** Participants were undergraduate students in the business school ( $n = 100$ , 33% female, 80.8% Hebrew native speakers<sup>1</sup>, mean age = 25.19), and the social work school ( $n = 52$ , 85% female, 76.9% Hebrew native speakers, mean age = 24.27), in the same university investigated in Study 1. The business students have a dual-major program, usually with another social science department as their second major. Throughout the undergraduate program, the business students master fundamental and advanced knowledge in each of six specializing areas (finance, marketing, organizational behavior, strategy, operation management, and information technology). The social work students have a single major program, which exposes them to the prominent areas in the field of social work.

The research was presented as a study of values in different university departments. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. The survey began with the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ; Schwartz, Melech, Lehmann, Burgess, Harris, & Owens, 2001), followed by several background items. One participant was not included in the analysis due to extreme value ranking ( $\pm$  three standard deviations from the mean).

**Values instrument.** The participants completed the Portrait Values Questionnaire (Schwartz et al., 2001). This measure focuses on capturing each of the 10 value types as well as the structure of relations among them (Schwartz et al., 2001). The PVQ includes

40 short verbal descriptions ("portraits") of individuals in terms of the values important to them. For example, "It is very important for him to help the people around him. He wants to care for their well-being" describes a person for whom benevolence values are important. "It is important for him to be rich. He wants to have a lot of money and expensive things" describes a person who cherishes power values. The questionnaire has a male and female version, which assumes that it is easier to identify with a same-sex individual (Schwartz et al., 2001). Past research has validated the PVQ as a measure of Schwartz's value theory (Schwartz et al., 2001), and it has been used in research of varied fields and contexts (e.g., Adams, Licht, & Sagiv, 2011; Arieli, Grant, & Sagiv, 2014; Grant, 2008; Knafo & Schwartz, 2003; Krystallis, Vassallo, Chryssohoidis, & Perrea, 2008; Schwartz & Rubel, 2005; Schwartz & Rubel-Lifschitz, 2009).

For each item, respondents were asked, "How much like you is this person?" The scale ranged from 1 (*not like me at all*) to 6 (*very much like me*). The score for the importance of each value type is the mean response to the items that measure it. To eliminate individual differences in use of the response scale, we centered each person's responses on his or her own mean (Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz & Rubel, 2005). To allow for comparison with previously published data, we followed the procedure proposed by Schwartz (1992), centering the values' rankings around the approximate international mean-importance of values (4.00; Schwartz & Bardi, 2001). The internal reliabilities (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) for the four value types ranged from .57 to .83 (see Table A1, Appendix). Values are especially broad constructs. Consequently, the internal reliability coefficients are often relatively low. The reliabilities found here fall within the usual range for values (see Discussions, e.g., Adams et al., 2011; Davidov et al., 2008; Schmitt, Schwartz, Steyer, & Schmitt, 1993; Schwartz & Rubel, 2005; Schwartz & Rubel-Lifschitz, 2009). For further information regarding the reliability and validity of this measure, see Schwartz and Sagiv (1995) and Schwartz, Verkasalo, Antonovsky, and Sagiv (1997).

## Results and Discussion

Table A1 (Appendix) presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations of the study variables, revealing some gender differences in value priorities: Men attribute more importance to power values and less importance to universalism and benevolence

<sup>1</sup> Hebrew native speakers are Jewish-Israelis who were born in Israel. The rest of the sample includes Jewish Israelis who immigrated from various other countries as well as Muslim and Christian Arabs.

**TABLE 2**  
**Means and Standard Deviations of the Four Value Types for the Students (Study 2)**

Value type	Business, <i>n</i> = 99	Social work, <i>n</i> = 52	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i> value	Cohen's <i>d</i>
Achievement	4.68 (0.69)	4.39 (0.70)	5.86	.02	0.42
Power	3.62 (0.78)	2.94 (0.87)	24.75	.00	0.82
Universalism	3.88 (0.60)	4.43 (0.63)	26.64	.00	0.89
Benevolence	4.45 (0.50)	4.88 (0.60)	22.61	.00	0.78

values than do women. These results are consistent with past research showing that gender is likely to impact value priorities especially regarding power and benevolence values (Schwartz & Rubel, 2005). Age correlated positively with power values; no other correlation was significant.

Table 2 presents the means and standard deviations of the four value types for each of the two samples. We tested our hypotheses with a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). The school (business vs. social work) served as the between-groups independent variable, and the value ratings of each of the four value types served as the dependent variables. As hypothesized, business students emphasized achievement and power values more than social work students (achievement:  $M = 4.68$  vs.  $4.39$ , for business and social work respectively,  $F(1, 149) = 5.86$ ,  $p = .02$ , Cohen's  $d = 0.42$ ; power:  $M = 3.62$  vs.  $2.94$ ,  $F(1, 149) = 24.75$ ,  $p = .00$ , Cohen's  $d = 0.82$ ). In contrast, social work students emphasized universalism and benevolence values more than do business students (universalism:  $M = 4.43$  vs.  $3.88$ , for social work and business respectively,  $F(1, 149) = 26.64$ ,  $p = .00$ , Cohen's  $d = 0.89$ ; benevolence:  $M = 4.88$  vs.  $4.45$ ,  $F(1, 149) = 22.61$ ,  $p = .00$ , Cohen's  $d = 0.78$ ). When controlling for gender, the effect of the school (business vs. social work) on achievement, universalism, and benevolence did not change. The effect on power was somewhat weaker but still clearly significant  $F(1, 149) = 9.11$ ,  $p = .00$ ). Thus, the results of Study 2 are consistent with the findings of Study 1, confirming our hypothesis.

Our study considered business students as homogeneous in terms of values. However, the business field is heterogeneous, allowing practitioners and students to specialize in various fields, such as finance, marketing, management, and more. These professional fields may differ in their value profiles. We therefore conducted a supplementary analysis

to investigate to what extent business students hold homogenous value-patterns.

### Supplementary Analysis: Do Business Students Hold Homogenous Value-Patterns?

The participants in this research were undergraduates in a program that does not afford specializations. However, all business students in the university studied are enrolled in a dual-major program. The second major may provide indirect insight into the students' preferences, in terms of the business areas in which they are interested. Thus, for example, the combination of business and economics may imply an interest in finance, whereas the combination of business and communication may imply an interest in marketing.

The participants in Study 2 did not report their second major; therefore, we could not investigate differences among them. Supplementary data of 554 business students who filled in the PVQ as part of several unrelated studies, served to further investigate this question. Table A2 (Appendix) presents means, standard deviations, and correlations of the variables measured. The distribution of second majors indicated that the majority of the students (56%) chose economics as their second major. Other frequent second majors were political science (9%), law (8%), communication (6%), and computer science (4%). About 10% of the students chose a second major with a prosocial orientation (psychology, sociology, and education). We were especially interested in this group because these students may endorse a value-pattern similar to that of social work students.

Table 3 presents the value means and standard deviations of these groups of students (Columns 2–7). To study the value differences between the groups, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted. The second major (economics,

**TABLE 3**  
**Means and Standard Deviations of the Four Value Types for Business Students According to Their Second Major (Supplementary Data, Study 2)**

Value type	Business (Study 2) n = 98	Second department						Social work (Study 2) n = 52
		Economics <sup>a</sup> n = 312	Political science n = 47	Law n = 39	Computer science n = 22	Communication n = 34	Prosocial oriented <sup>b</sup> n = 57	
Achievement	4.67 .68	4.52 .79	4.68 .68	4.73 .69	4.67 .74	4.75 .66	4.57 .68	4.39 .70
Power	3.63 .78	3.56 .95	3.62 .88	3.90 .86	3.57 .82	3.74 .81	3.32 .69	2.94 .87
Universalism	3.87 .58	3.91 .65	4.05 .64	3.87 .64	3.78 .50	4.00 .61	4.03 .63	4.43 .63
Benevolence	4.45 0.5	4.47 0.58	4.43 0.53	4.53 0.57	4.5 0.65	4.58 0.54	4.74 0.53	4.88 0.6

<sup>a</sup> The economics group includes 13 students who major in statistics.

<sup>b</sup> The prosocial-oriented group consists of students who major in psychology, education, or sociology.

political science, law, computer science, communication, and prosocial oriented) was the between-groups independent variable, and the value importance of each of the four value types were the dependent variables. The results indicated no significant differences in the importance attributed to achievement, power, and universalism values between the groups (all  $F$ 's < 2.21, *ns*). The groups differed on benevolence value,  $F(5,505) = 2.53, p = .03$ . Contrasting all combinations of the two groups revealed that the difference stems from the prosocial-oriented group, which significantly differed from two of the five other groups (economics and political science) in attributing greater importance to benevolence values ( $t = 3.53, p = .00$ , and  $t = 3.03, p = .00$ , for economics and political science, respectively).

Thus, the supplementary data shows that students in most combinations (Table 3, Columns 2–6) share the same value-pattern, which is similar to the pattern observed for business students in general (Column 1). The only exception is the group of students whose second major has a prosocial orientation (Column 7). The value pattern of these students falls in-between the patterns observed for business (Column 1) and social work schools (Column 8).

Taken together, although Studies 1 and 2 employed markedly different research methods (value survey among students vs. content analysis of the departmental websites), they yielded consistent findings, confirming our hypothesis.

### SELF-SELECTION AND SOCIALIZATION

Research has shown that organizations differ in their value priorities and develop value profiles that

distinguish them from other organizations (Schneider, 1987; Schneider et al., 1995). The findings of the first part of this research project confirmed the hypothesized value profiles of the business school and the social work school. Next, we investigate two organizational processes that may account for these differences in values, namely self-selection (Study 3) and socialization (Studies 3–4).

### Study 3: Self-Selection and Socialization Processes

The expanding literature on job and organizational choice has argued that individuals *self-select* themselves to work in environments that are compatible with their personal characteristics (Holland, 1985; Kristof, 1996; Schneider et al., 1995), and that allow them to express their personal attributes (traits, skills, values, etc.), and attain their personal goals (e.g., Pervin, 1989; Schneider et al., 1995). Past studies has shown that individuals indeed self-select themselves into organizations and jobs that match their preferences and goals (e.g., Cable & Judge, 1996; Chatman, 1991; Judge & Bretz, 1992; Judge & Cable, 1997; Tom, 1971; Turban & Keon, 1993). To investigate self-selection, we compare the value emphases of first-year students in business and social work during the first week of their studies. Finding value patterns that match the patterns documented in Studies 1–3 would indicate an a priori value difference between the two groups, and would, hence, support self-selection.

*Socialization* is the process through which individuals not only learn how to work in a particular

organization, but also comply with and adopt organizational values and norms (Fisher, 1986; Louis, 1990; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Value socialization is viewed as a desired organizational process because it is expected to increase organizational commitment and decrease turnover (see Review, Cable & Parsons, 2001). Thus, organizations often invest time and effort in attempting to elicit a desired value change (Chatman 1991; Cable & Parsons, 2001; Feldman, 1981, 1989; McMillan-Capehart, 2005; Taormina, 1997). When studying accounting firms, Chatman (1991) found that extensive social interactions with firm members and mentors during the first year of employment (i.e., organizational socialization) predicted person-organization fit 1 year after entering the firm. That is, newcomers' personal values became aligned with the organizational values. Similarly, the perceived value fit between employees and the organization in which they worked was found to be related to socialization tactics that focused on social interactions and on the content of the information given through the socialization process (presenting a sequential and fixed vs. random and variable process; Cable & Parsons, 2001).

Expanding past research, our work here investigates the impact of socialization on pre-professionals who are going through academic training. University students are exposed to socialization tactics similar to the ones described above, such as social interactions (with fellow and advanced students, academic advisors, and faculty members), and content of the information given regarding the activities, courses, and more. We examine whether the values of students change in light of the socialization they experience during their studies. To study the impact of socialization (i.e., academic training, extracurricular activities) on students' values, we compared the value patterns of first- and third-year students in each department. Finding change in value emphases in the direction of the patterns documented in Studies 1-2, would indicate a socialization effect.

### **Method**

**Participants and procedure.** The academic system in which the research was conducted allowed studying the existence of self-selection and socialization. First, in this system students choose their major and enroll into academic departments before they enter the university. Second, admission criteria include only cognitive abilities (a psychometric test) and previous achievements (grades in national high-school tests). Thus, the admission process does

not consider students' personal values. Third, the admission process occurs at the university level (and not in each school separately), and hence, is identical in both schools. Last, although the admission criteria for the business school is somewhat higher than for the social work school, both have relatively high admission thresholds (1/3 standard deviation above average).

We conducted the study at the same business and social work schools investigated in the previous studies. The undergraduate program in the business school is constructed in such a way that during their first year of studies, students already gain knowledge in the field of business. Thus, for example, fundamental courses in economics, marketing, and organizational behavior are being taught in the first year of the studies, whereas advanced courses are taught in the second and the third years.

The sample included 127 business students (45 first-year and 82 third-year students; 36% females, 77.4% Hebrew native speakers, mean age = 24.41) and 89 social work students (39 first-year and 50 third-year students, 89% females, 77.3% Hebrew native speakers, mean age = 23.91). First-year students completed the Schwartz Values Survey (SVS; Schwartz, 1992) in the first week of their first academic year, whereas third-year students completed it at the end of their final year. The survey began with the SVS, followed by several background items. Three participants were not included in the analysis due to extreme values ranking (+/- three standard deviations from the mean).

**Values instrument.** Participants completed a shortened version of the Schwartz Values Survey (SVS; Schwartz, 1992). Of the 56 items in the original instrument, all 44 items that were found to have consistent meaning across cultures were included. Respondents rated the importance of each value item "as a guiding principle in my life" on a 9-point scale, ranging from "opposed to my principles" (-1) and "not important" (0) to "of supreme importance" (7). The asymmetry of the scale reflects the natural distribution of distinctions that individuals make when thinking about the importance of values, as observed in pretests when constructing the original scale. Because values are typically seen as desirable, they generally range from somewhat to very important. The standard indices recommended by Schwartz (1992) were used to measure the priority given to each of the value types.

The internal reliabilities (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) for the studied value types (power, achievement, universalism, and benevolence) ranged from .60 to .72 (see



Table A3, Appendix), falling within the normal range for value (Schmitt et al., 1993).

## Results and Discussion

Table A3 (Appendix) presents means, standard deviations, and correlations of the study variables for the entire sample. Similarly to Study 2, we again found gender differences in power, universalism, and benevolence. Table 4 presents the means and standard deviations of the four value types for each of the four samples. To study self-selection we focused only on the samples of first-year students and conducted a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA): The school (business vs. social work) was the between-groups independent variable, and value importance of each of the four value types were the dependent variables. As hypothesized, first-year business students emphasized achievement and power values more than the social work students (achievement:  $M = 4.53$  vs.  $3.94$ , for business and social work respectively,  $F(1,81) = 14.31$ ,  $p = .00$ , Cohen's  $d = 0.83$ ; power:  $M = 3.10$  vs.  $2.06$ ,  $F(1,81) = 21.25$ ,  $p = .00$ , Cohen's  $d = 1.01$ ). In contrast, the first-year social work students emphasized universalism and benevolence values more than the business students (universalism:  $M = 4.41$  vs.  $3.95$ , for social work and business respectively,  $F(1,81) = 12.60$ ,  $p = .00$ , Cohen's  $d = 0.79$ ; benevolence:  $M = 5.00$  vs.  $4.51$ ,  $F(1,81) = 16.93$ ,  $p = .00$ , Cohen's  $d = 0.92$ ). When controlling for gender, the effects of the department were similar but slightly stronger for achievement ( $F(1,80) = 18.90$ ,  $p = .00$ ) and slightly weaker for power ( $F(1,80) = 9.24$ ,  $p = .00$ ), universalism ( $F(1,80) = 3.94$ ,  $p = .05$ ), and benevolence ( $F(1,80) = 10.83$ ,  $p = .00$ ). Consistent with research on gender differences in value priorities (Schwartz & Rubel, 2005), these findings indicate that although men and women

differ in the importance they attribute to the values studied, these differences are relatively small and do not substantially change the pattern of relationships between values and other variables (i.e., department).

The findings of Study 3 are therefore consistent with a self-selection process: The value patterns of the business and the social work schools are already apparent when the academic training has just begun. This indicates that students self-select themselves into academic professions based, at least in part, on their personal values.

To study the socialization process, we used the whole sample and conducted two multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVAs) for each school. In each analysis the year of study (first or third) was the independent variable, and the importance attributed to the four value types were the dependent variables. The results revealed that within each school there were no differences between the first-year and the third-year students with regard to their priorities for the values of achievement, power, universalism, and benevolence (all  $F < 2.09$ ; *ns*). These results did not change when controlling for gender. Thus, our findings do not indicate any training or socialization effect on students' values. However, the current investigation is limited to a cross-sectional comparison. To further explore for socialization effects, in Study 4 we followed first-year business students throughout their first year of studies and compared their value profile at the beginning of the year, to that at the end of the year.

### Study 4: Socialization Among First-Year Business Students

Study 4 used a longitudinal design to track possible changes in students' values during their first year of undergraduate studies.

**TABLE 4**  
**Means and Standard Deviations of the Four Value Types for First- and Third-Year Students (Study 3)**

Value type	Business		Social work		<i>F</i>	<i>p</i> value	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	1st year <i>n</i> = 44	3rd year <i>n</i> = 81	1st year <i>n</i> = 39	3rd year <i>n</i> = 49			
Achievement	4.53 <sup>a</sup> (0.78)	4.34 (0.69)	3.94 <sup>b</sup> (0.64)	4.11 (0.65)	14.31	.00	0.83
Power	3.10 <sup>a</sup> (1.02)	3.17 (1.16)	2.06 <sup>b</sup> (1.03)	2.09 (0.98)	21.25	.00	1.01
Universalism	3.95 <sup>a</sup> (0.52)	3.84 (0.69)	4.41 <sup>b</sup> (0.64)	4.29 (0.59)	12.60	.00	0.79
Benevolence	4.51 <sup>a</sup> (0.52)	4.48 (0.60)	5.00 <sup>b</sup> (0.54)	4.91 (0.52)	16.93	.00	0.92

Note. Numbers with different subscripts differ significantly ( $p < .05$ ).

## Method

**Participants and procedure.** The participants were 39 business school undergraduates at the same Israeli university investigated in the previous studies. They were in their first academic year (43.6% female; 87.2% Hebrew native speakers, mean age = 22.5). The participants completed a value questionnaire twice: At the beginning (second week, T1) and end (last month, T2) of their first academic year. The procedure in T1–T2 was as in Study 2.

**Values instrument.** Participants completed the 40-item PVQ presented in Study 2. The internal reliabilities (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) for the four value types at T1 and T2 were within the usual range for values, ranging from .56 to .85 (Table A4, Appendix).

## Results and Discussion

Table A4 (Appendix) presents means, standard deviations, and correlations of the study variables. Similarly to Studies 2 and 3, in T1 gender was positively correlated with universalism values. In T2 age was negatively correlated with universalism. The findings regarding age are inconsistent across Studies 2–4; therefore, interpreting them requires caution. Table 5 presents the means and standard deviations of the four value types for T1 and T2. A paired-sample  $t$  test revealed a significant difference only for benevolence values: The business students attributed higher importance to benevolence values at the beginning of their first year (4.46) than they did at the end of that same year (4.26,  $t(38) = 2.08, p = 0.04, \text{Cohen's } d = 0.32$ ). This change is consistent with the value pattern of the business department. None of the other values changed over time (all  $t < 1.15; p > 0.05$ ). The findings were consistent when controlling for gender differences. The internal reliability of power values was weak in both T1 and T2 (.56). Stronger internal reliability might have revealed an effect of value socialization. Note, however, that the difference found for power values was weaker than 10% of the standard deviation. In addition, the internal reliabilities of the other value types were satisfactory (.67–.85). Taken together, the findings indicate a possible socialization effect. Caution is needed, however, given that only one of the four expected effects revealed a significant change.

## GENERAL DISCUSSION

We compared the value profile of the business school and the social work school as reflected in the schools'

**TABLE 5**  
Means and Standard Deviations of the Four Value Types for the Two Measurements (Study 4)

Value type	T1, $n = 39$	T2, $n = 39$	$t$	$p$ value	Cohen's $d$
Achievement	4.69 (0.77)	4.61 (0.62)	.80	.43	—
Power	3.57 (0.87)	3.68 (0.87)	-1.15	.26	—
Universalism	3.93 (0.70)	3.97 (0.54)	-.52	.60	—
Benevolence	4.46 (0.58)	4.26 (0.64)	2.09	.04	0.32

websites (Study 1), and in the values of their students (Study 2). Findings show that the business school emphasizes self-enhancement values more and self-transcendence values less than does social work school. This pattern was robust for business students with different second majors. Some deviation from this value pattern was found among students whose second major entails a prosocial orientation (e.g., psychology, sociology, and education). The value pattern of these students falls in-between the patterns observed for the business and social work schools.

In the second part of this research (Studies 3–4) we investigated self-selection and socialization as two mechanisms that may lead to and maintain the prominent value profiles documented. Study 3 compared the value patterns of first-year students in the two departments, revealing that as early as their first week students hold values that match the value profile distinctive to their departments. Thus, the findings of Study 3 indicate a value-based self-selection process. Studies 3–4 investigated value socialization by comparing the value emphases of first-year and third-year students (Study 3), and by following first-year students and tracking change in their values at the beginning and the end of the academic year (Study 4). Whereas the findings of Study 3 did not trace a socialization effect, those of Study 4 revealed a change in benevolence values, thus providing some support for value socialization.

## Selection and Socialization Processes

Our research joins previous empirical studies in providing support for the self-selection process (Bretz, Ash, & Dreher, 1989; Cable & Judge, 1996; Chatman, 1991; Judge & Cable, 1997; Tom, 1971; Turban & Keon,

1993). Specifically, it provides evidence for the role of value-based attraction to professions. The findings are consistent with the idea that students are attracted to those university departments that express values compatible with their own: departments that allow them to express their values and attain their goals. Our content analysis of the schools' websites shows that both websites repeatedly expressed their professional values. Thus, both schools deliver a message to their constituents (e.g., students, candidates) regarding the values they endorse. University departments and organizations in general could actively attract students that endorse values they consider desirable. For example, to attract ethical students, business schools could emphasize ethical narratives in their websites and curricula.

In contrast, the findings reveal only some effect for socialization or training on the student's value-pattern. These findings are consistent with the notion that values are stable (e.g., Rokeach, 1973) and that organizational socialization is unlikely to alter the basic value structure that individuals bring to the organization (Dose, 1997; Lusk & Oliver, 1974). Our results were consistent with several past studies that focused on students and showed a relative stability in the personal values throughout their studies (e.g., Gandol et al., 2005). Similarly, research has shown that newly recruited employees in organizations reported little or no change in their values since they had started working (Davey & Arnold, 2000).

One possible explanation for these findings is that in the context of vocational choice, self-selection is so substantial that people already enter the vocational training or organization with the appropriate value priorities. This strong self-selection leaves but a small scope for further value-change due to socialization process. We do not suggest, however, that socialization cannot elicit value-change: Professional training often lasts years, and its effects may become apparent only after a long period of time. Future research could investigate value-change postgraduation and throughout the professional career to gain a better understanding of the impact of socialization and training.

While our findings show that it is difficult to affect students' values during their studies, they do not shatter the hope for desirable behavioral change among business students. First, schools could attempt to elicit desirable behavioral change by affecting personal attributes that are less stable than values, such as attitudes or specific goals (e.g., Heslin, Latham, & VandeWalle, 2005). In addition, schools could promote desirable behavior by presenting them as

a means to attaining the values that students cherish. For example, to elicit ethical behavior, schools can attempt to convince their students that ethical behavior leads to business success. In other words, rather than attempting to reduce the importance of power and achievement values, business schools could convince their students that these values could be attained by endorsing ethical decisions.

## Limitations and Future Research

### *The Time Scope of Value-Based Socialization*

To study value-based socialization process, we conducted a longitudinal study (Study 4) in which we followed students in the business school throughout their first year of studies. Professional training is a long-term process. Therefore, it would be worthy to follow business students after graduation, at different stages of their career, and to investigate whether work organizations are perhaps more effective than universities in value socialization.

### *Generalizability*

Another limitation of the current research is the focus on a single university, which raises the issue of generalizability. Future research could investigate the value patterns of business and social work schools in other universities. Moreover our findings are limited to the dominant group in the society studied. We conducted the research in Israel, a culturally diverse nation, and studied a public university in which the vast majority of the students are Jewish and the communication mostly employs the Hebrew language. Future research could deepen the understanding of the role of organizational and professional values for minority groups.

Universities are nested within national cultures, and cultures vary in their value emphases (Hofstede, 1980, 2001; Schwartz, 1999). Consequently, people from different cultures vary in their value priorities. We therefore expect the values of business schools to vary across cultures. We reason, however, that in most cultures business schools emphasize achievement and power values more than do other professional fields and academic departments (e.g., social work schools). Future research could investigate a possible role of the national culture in moderating the effects of self-selection and socialization. For example, in individualistic cultures people are encouraged to find their profession according to their personal characteristics. We therefore would expect a stronger self-selection effect in individualistic

cultures than in collectivistic cultures. At the same time, socialization mechanisms may be more effective in collectivistic cultures, where the importance of following social norms and expectations is highly emphasized (Wheeler, Reis, & Bond, 1989).

### *Investigating Additional Organizational Layers*

The value emphases of academic departments are reflected in multiple layers of the organization. In this research we focused on two prominent layers: the schools' websites and their students. The faculty members of the departments also serve as an important organizational layer: They not only teach and mentor the students, but also serve as the academic management of the department and impact the curricula. We attempted to investigate the value-patterns of the faculty members in the departments studied. However, the numbers of faculty members in the two departments studied were too small to allow sufficient statistical power. Future research could investigate faculty members in larger departments.

## CONCLUSIONS

Our findings reveal the central and prominent role of power and achievement values in business schools. This value-pattern is embedded in various organizational layers of the business school, including organizational artifacts (schools' website) and the value emphases of their students. Studying the effects of value-based self-selection and socialization processes, our findings suggest that individuals actively self-select themselves into vocational environments and organizations that match their values, and that employing socialization processes that aim to change students' and employees' values may prove less effective. Taken together, these findings hint at how great the challenge of instilling ethical and prosocial values among business students is. Thus, business schools that are interested in ethical students are more likely to succeed by investing in attracting those individuals who already hold ethical and prosocial values, rather than by investing in socialization processes intended to change values.

## APPENDIX

**TABLE A1**  
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Study 2 Variables

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Age	24.87	2.52						
2. Gender (female = 1)	.51	.50	-.41**					
3. Achievement	4.58	.70	-.083	.02	(.83)			
4. Power	3.38	.87	.25**	-.35**	.29**	(.65)		
5. Universalism	4.07	.66	-.14	.26**	-.33**	-.46**	(.72)	
6. Benevolence	4.59	.57	-.04	.25**	-.26**	-.36**	.22**	(.57)

*N* = 151.

\**p* < .05, \*\**p* < .01

**TABLE A2**  
Supplementary Data (Study 2): Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of the Variables

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Age	49.97	13.54						
2. Sex (female = 1)	.53	.51	-.44*					
3. Achievement	4.47	.93	-.52**	.30	(.84)			
4. Power	2.61	1.11	-.54**	.20	.35*	(.67)		
5. Universalism	4.19	.58	.34	.04	-.46**	-.49**	(.70)	
6. Benevolence	4.70	.57	.03	.11	-.21	-.51**	.13	(.65)

*N* = 431–511.

\**p* < .05, \*\**p* < .01

**TABLE A3**  
Descriptives and Correlations of Study 3 Variables

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Age	24.19	2.28						
2. Gender (female = 1)	.58	.49	-.28**					
3. Achievement	4.25	.72	.05	-.06	(.72)			
4. Power	2.70	1.18	.04	-.33**	.28**	(.60)		
5. Universalism	4.07	.66	-.12	.32**	-.26**	-.48**	(.68)	
6. Benevolence	4.68	.60	-.00	.24**	-.18*	-.47**	.01	(.66)

*N* = 206–213.

\**p* < .05, \*\**p* < .01

**TABLE A4**  
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Study 4 Variables

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Age	22.49	1.68										
2. Gender (female = 1)	.44	.50	-.69**									
3. Achievement T1	4.69	.78	-.09	.08	(.84)							
4. Power T1	3.57	.87	.10	-.23	.46**	(.56)						
5. Universalism T1	3.93	.71	-.37*	.34*	-.35*	-.32*	(.85)					
6. Benevolence T1	4.46	.58	.15	-.12	-.20	-.64**	.12	(.67)				
7. Achievement T2	4.61	.62	.00	-.12	.69**	.40*	-.39*	-.10	(.80)			
8. Power T2	3.68	.87	.10	-.23	.37*	.79**	-.23	-.49**	.40*	(.56)		
9. Universalism T2	3.97	.54	-.24	.21	-.45**	-.38*	.77**	.12	-.43**	-.30	(.67)	
10. Benevolence T2	4.26	.65	-.04	.06	-.14	-.36*	.05	.56**	-.24	-.44**	.13	(.70)

*N* = 39.

\**p* < .05, \*\**p* < .01

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