

Commitment to the Profession of Novice Social Work Students: Demographic Characteristics, Motives, Perceptions of the Profession

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The article attempts to define the characteristics of students at the beginning of their social work studies at institutes of higher education in Israel, including demographic characteristics, motives for choosing the profession, perceptions of the profession and commitment to the profession. The study was conducted among a sample of 450 students beginning their first academic study year at four social work schools. Study findings show a demographic range, such as: nationality, level of religiosity, and political attitudes, and indicate that three of these socio-demographic variables predict commitment to the profession at the start of academic studies: psychometric score, level of religiosity, and previous academic learning experience.

In addition, the findings indicate two profiles of novice students. First are the students who choose to study social work out of a desire to bring about social change and who recognize the importance of the professional, private and community activities of the profession. In contrast, there are students who want to engage only in private treatment in the future, and who recognize only the importance of professional private activities. The article discusses the findings and their implications on the social work profession in general, and social work training in particular.

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