

ARTICLE

The role of perceived self-transcendence values in forming functional relationships with professionals

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Abstract

Existing research into values and relationship formation highlights the role of individuals' own values or value similarity between the parties. We consider the formation of functional relationships with professionals, which cannot be fully explained by documented value-based mechanisms. Instead, we examine the role of professionals' values as perceived by others. We study two occupations that require forming relationships yet are characterized by opposing value profiles: therapists and managers, who are prototypically high in self-transcendence and self-enhancement values, respectively. We show that: (a) client–therapist and employee–manager relationships are stronger the more the professional is perceived as prioritizing self-transcendence (Study 1, $N=191$, USA); (b) perceived self-transcendence of managers contributes to relationship quality beyond employee personal values and employee–manager value similarity (Study 2, $N=177$, IL); and (c) perceptions of warmth mediate the link between perceived self-transcendence and relationship formation (Study 3, $N=297$, USA). Our discussion further highlights the importance of perceived values.

KEYWORDS

management, perceived values, relationships, therapy, working alliance

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Thinking of relationships, our minds may naturally gravitate towards intimate bonds like romantic partnerships, family ties and friendships. However, people's lives are full of examples of other types

Adi Amit and Shani Oppenheim-Weller contributed equally to the manuscript.

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of relationships, including functional relationships formed with professionals. The quality of those relationships may be crucial to professional success. Relationships between managers and employees, for example, can affect the performance of both parties, and by extension the organization itself (Eby & Robertson, 2020). Similarly, the therapeutic alliance between a therapist and client is vital to the success of treatment, client satisfaction, adherence to treatment plans and client outcomes (Leach, 2005).

Research on close relationships has tended to emphasize the contribution of two factors: personal traits of the individuals involved and similarities in attributes of the parties to the relationship. However, when considering functional relationships such as those formed with professionals, the explanatory power of shared personal traits and personal characteristics is limited. This is because particular occupations tend to be associated with certain attributes, which may not necessarily be the qualities most conducive to building effective relationships (for example, managers are typically characterized as focused on tasks and outcomes). Moreover, professionals are required to collaborate with a diverse range of individuals, not exclusively those who resemble them (therapists help all sorts of people, and not just people similar to them).

Within the general picture just described, a similar picture holds true for the study of personal values and relationships. That is, the study of values and relationships has largely focused on intimate relationships, and on mechanisms based either on individuals' own values or on similarity between the values of the involved parties (Caprara et al., 2012; Daniel et al., 2015). The present study departs from these traditional lines of inquiry in two ways: we focus on how *perceptions of others' personal values* are involved in the formation of *functional relationships with professionals*. To the best of our knowledge, we are the first to study (perceived) values and functional relationships (as opposed to intimate relationships such as those based on love or friendship).

The contributions of our study are threefold. First, while a substantial body of work has examined values and relationships, there remain significant gaps in our understanding. In particular, although recent work has recognized the potential relevance of value perceptions (Foad et al., 2021), research on the importance and implications of perceived values is scarce (for some exceptions, see Illies & Reiter-Palmon, 2020; Mentser & Amit, 2024; Wolf et al., 2019), and the role of perceived values in interpersonal relationships has not yet been investigated. Indeed, perceived values have rarely been studied at the individual level at all, with most existing research focusing on how people perceive the values of others based on group membership (e.g., immigrants; López-Rodríguez et al., 2023; Wolf et al., 2019, 2021).

Second, as noted above, to the best of our knowledge, we are the first to study (perceived) values, showing their contribution to functional relationships above and beyond previously identified value-based mechanisms. Third, and relatedly, we explore the explanatory mechanism of the influence of perceived values on the perceived trait of warmth – an important dimension of person perception. Understanding the influence of perceived values, which reside solely within the mind of the perceiver, holds significant practical potential for client feedback processes and for designing straightforward interventions to help professionals cultivate productive relationships.

We begin by outlining two lines of reasoning that theoretically lead in opposing directions – one on personal values and interpersonal relationships, and the other on values and the occupational context.

Personal values and interpersonal relationships

In studying perceived values, we rely on a long tradition of research on personal (life) values, and specifically Schwartz's well-studied theory of the content and structure of human values, defined as desirable abstract goals which serve as guiding principles in people's lives (Schwartz, 1992). Ample research has examined the generalizability, importance, correlates and implications of values, including links between values and behaviours (Bardi & Schwartz, 2003; Roccas & Amit, 2011), social perceptions (Amit et al., 2010), attitudes (Boer & Fischer, 2013; Roccas et al., 2010) and well-being (Oppenheim-Weller et al., 2018; Sagiv et al., 2015). We chose to focus on personal values rather than work values because the latter are more contextualized, making them most appropriate for exploring career

development or individuals' fit with their work environments (Rounds & Jin, 2013). Personal values, by contrast, are central aspects of identity, transcending specific situations, and thus relevant to the formation of interpersonal relationships in any environment, including at work.

According to Schwartz's value theory, values fall into ten main types which are organized in a circular structure, with complementary values positioned close to each other in the circle and competing values positioned across from each other (Schwartz, 2012). The value types within this circular structure can be summarized as reflecting two bipolar dimensions. One dimension opposes values which express openness to change (self-direction, stimulation and hedonism) with values reflecting conservation (tradition, conformity and security). The other dimension opposes values which emphasize self-enhancement (power and achievement) with values which express self-transcendence (benevolence and universalism).

Rohan (2000) proposed that people hold at least two intrapsychic value systems, with the first being their own value system and the second their perceptions of others' values. Rohan terms this second value system the *social value system*. While the few studies on perceptions of values show powerful stable outcomes (see Wolf et al., 2019, on perceived values and prejudice), existing research linking values and relationships has focused on own, rather than perceived, values.

Research linking own values and relationship formation points to two main mechanisms. The first mechanism is *similarity in values* between the individuals involved. Many studies have found that value similarity strengthens people's satisfaction with family relationships, including between spouses (Gaunt, 2006; Leikas et al., 2018) and between parents and children (Hoellger et al., 2021). Likewise, value similarity is associated with positive relationships among same-sex friends (Hill & Stull, 1981) and between leaders and members of their teams (Dose, 1999). Notably, much of the evidence on effects of actual similarity is weak or mixed (e.g., holding for only one gender; Hill & Stull, 1981). As such, Murray et al. (2002) emphasized that perceptions of similarity in values have a greater, more stable role than actual similarity. They showed that presumed value similarity was related to marital satisfaction even when such similarity was not evident in reality. Similarly, perceived value similarity between mentors and their protégés was related to mentoring success, to higher career and psychosocial support, and to protégés' satisfaction with their mentors (Illies & Reiter-Palmon, 2018).

The second mechanism revolves around specific values, namely those which fall under the *self-transcendence* umbrella in Schwartz's system. As people navigate through interpersonal interactions, they decide how much to invest in the welfare of others and in the relationship itself (Sagiv et al., 2017). Relationships and related phenomena, such as social acceptance, are stronger to the extent that the parties engage in prosocial behaviours, such as sharing, comforting or helping others (Layous et al., 2012). Individuals who prioritize self-transcendence values – those that emphasize concern for the welfare and interests of others – tend to be characterized by more prosocial traits, such as agreeableness, and to behave in more prosocial ways (Bardi & Schwartz, 2003; Caprara et al., 2012; Caprara & Steca, 2007; Daniel et al., 2015; Penner et al., 2005; Schwartz, 2010). According to Van Der Wal et al. (2024), prioritizing self-transcendence values enhances relationship satisfaction by promoting pro-relational attitudes, which are essential for sustaining positive and productive relationships. Therefore, the self-transcendence values of one party, if sufficiently strong, may be enough to establish fruitful relationships.

We suggest that regardless of one's own values and their similarity with those of the other person, perceived self-transcendence values also contribute to forming good relationships. The traits and behaviours associated with self-transcendence values include caring about the welfare of others; being responsible, loyal, honest, and forgiving; being equally accepting of all people; and being intellectually and emotionally open to the environment and nature. Someone who comes across as high in self-transcendence values is likely to seem not only warm and welcoming, but trustworthy and unthreatening. As such, a perception that another person adheres to self-transcendence values should facilitate the formation of a fruitful relationship with that person, even though these perceptions exist within the mind of only one party – the perceiver.

Personal values and the occupational context

The occupational context is especially suited for studying perceived values and relationships as it involves individuals forming functional, rather than intimate, connections with one another, often without a deliberate choice. However, research on values in the work environment, especially in the realm of person–environment fit, suggests that here we must seek alternative value-based mechanisms for relationship formation that go beyond own values or similarity in values. Specifically, people prefer to act in ways that are congruent with their values and avoid circumstances that contradict their values, and these preferences shape their occupational choices, such that people are attracted to occupations they perceive as congruent with their own values (Arieli et al., 2020). Occupations can thus be differentiated based on the value profiles of those employed in the field (Knafo & Sagiv, 2004), as well as by the value priorities associated with the occupation (Arieli et al., 2016). Hence, it cannot be only professionals with high self-transcendence who can form fruitful relationships. At the same time, individuals seeking to build functional relationships with professionals (e.g., employees or clients) may vary in their value profiles. Hence, in the occupational context, value similarity cannot be the sole value-based mechanism of forming relationships.

Should the fit between the professional's values and the values of the occupation facilitate performance, this should manifest in more successful relationship formation in occupational environments in which performance relies substantially on working with people. This premise is also supported by findings from the leadership literature. For instance, Quaquebeke et al. (2014) found that the more leaders were perceived as holding prototypical traits of leadership (e.g., being inspirational, foresighted, trustworthy and decisive), the greater their subordinates' respect, satisfaction and commitment to them.

We take as exemplars two very different professions which involve interpersonal relations: therapy and management. Both therapy and management are occupational environments that require working with people – clients in the first case and employees in the second. Yet, these occupations differ substantially in their focus and in the value profile of the professionals. In Holland's (1997) theory of career choice as reflecting a fit between personality and the environment, managers fall into the *enterprising* type: they most enjoy achieving material and concrete goals. Therapists, including social workers, psychologists and counsellors, fall into the *social* occupational type: they enjoy working with others in order to help, guide and cure. In line with Holland's notions of the enterprising and social occupational types, individuals working or training to work in managerial and therapeutic occupations differ in their typical value profiles, with managers scoring higher in self-enhancement values and therapists in self-transcendence values (Arieli et al., 2016; Knafo & Sagiv, 2004; Myrsky & Helkama, 2001).

Following the notion of person–occupation fit, therapists should be more successful in their jobs to the degree that they prioritize self-transcendence values, and managers should be more successful to the degree that they prioritize self-enhancement values. If job success translates into successful relationships at work, then clients should report better relationships with their therapists to the degree that they perceive the latter as prioritizing self-transcendence values, and employees will report better relationships with their managers to the degree that they perceive the latter as prioritizing self-enhancement values.

THE CURRENT STUDY

We propose and test two sets of hypotheses, one for therapists and one for managers. In each case, we discuss predictions based on the literature on establishing relationships and the literature on person–occupation fit.

Looking first at therapists, both theoretical arguments lead in the same direction: self-transcendence values should contribute to good relationships with professionals of all occupations; and self-transcendence values in therapists should create a good person–occupation fit. Therefore, by both

arguments, perceived self-transcendence values in the therapist should contribute to a good client–therapist relationship.

H1. In client–therapist relationships, clients will report better relationships with their therapists the more they perceive the therapists as holding self-transcendence values.

Looking at relationships with managers, the two theoretical arguments give rise to competing hypotheses. On the one hand, self-transcendence values should contribute to good relationships with professionals of all occupations, including managers. On the other hand, self-enhancement values in managers should create a good person–occupation fit. Therefore, perceived self-enhancement values in the manager should contribute to a good employee–manager relationship.

H2. In employee–manager relationships, (a) based on the literature on values and interpersonal relationships, employees will report better relationships with managers the more they perceive the managers as holding self-transcendence values. In contrast, (b) based on the literature on values in occupational environments, employees will report better relationships with managers the more they perceive the managers as holding self-enhancement values.

We present three studies. In Study 1, we first confirm that management and therapy, as professions, are indeed associated with higher self-enhancement and self-transcendence values, respectively. We then take a correlational approach to examine the link between perceived values of one's own manager/therapist and the quality of working relationships formed with them. In Study 2, we focus on managers only and test whether perceived values predict establishment of a good relationship above and beyond the two known value-based mechanisms underlying relationships. Finally, in Study 3, we employ an experimental design and test the mediating effect of the perceived trait of warmth – an important dimension of person perception. See [Figure 1](#).

As shall be seen, findings of all three studies point to the crucial role of perceived self-transcendence values in the formation of relationships with professionals, supporting our prediction drawn from the literature on values and interpersonal relationships over that from the literature on values in occupational environments.

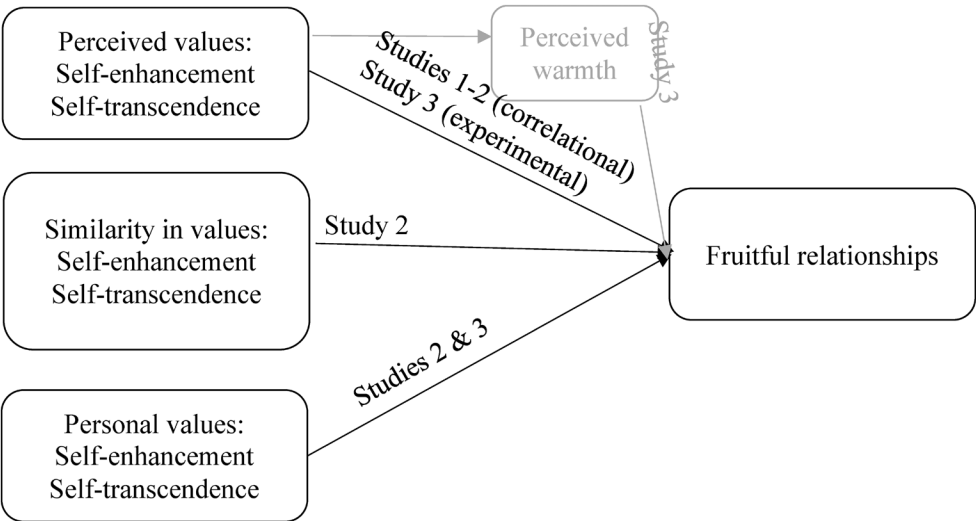


FIGURE 1 Overview of the studies.

STUDY 1

We first confirm that the values associated with management and therapy are as expected: i.e., that managers are perceived as higher in self-enhancement values, and therapists as higher in self-transcendence values. We then take a correlational approach to examine the association between the perceived values of participants' own real-world managers or therapists and the quality of their working relationships with those professionals.

Method

Participants and procedure

Study 1 is preregistered (<https://aspredicted.org/mwb3-3rdj.pdf>), including the study design, planned sample size, inclusion/exclusion criteria and planned primary analyses. A priori power analyses using G-Power (Faul et al., 2009) indicated that in a repeated-measures, between-factors multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), 178 participants would be needed to identify an anticipated small effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$) with confidence of 0.05 and power of 0.80. In terms of our planned analyses, our preregistered hypotheses and analytical plan were based only on the literature on values in occupational environments (the current H1 and H2b). Upon further reflection, we recognized that our initial hypotheses did not fully incorporate predictions derived from the literature on values and interpersonal relationships. To address this oversight, we revised our analysis plan. For the sake of open science, we provide the results of the preregistered analysis in the Supporting Information (Appendix S1: SM 1.1).

Following the preregistered plan, and to account for exclusions, we aimed to collect 200 participants, using the Prolific Academic platform (<https://prolific.ac>). Participants completed the 8-minute experiment for payment of £1.2. Based on the preregistered criteria, we excluded participants who responded 'I don't know' five or more times in the Short and Broad Schwartz Value Survey (SBVBS, see below). The final sample included 191 participants: 99 in the Managers condition ($M_{\text{age}} = 37.60$, $SD = 14.49$; 50 female, 43 male, 6 non-binary or preferred not to say) and 92 in the Therapists condition ($M_{\text{age}} = 35.61$, $SD = 13.24$; 54 female, 36 male, 2 non-binary or preferred not to say).

Participants were randomly assigned to the Therapists or Managers condition. The first stage of our study focused on confirming differences in the values associated with managers and therapists. Participants read a description of the appropriate profession and completed a questionnaire regarding their perceptions of the values associated with that profession. Our findings reveal that participants attributed to managers' higher levels of self-enhancement values and lower levels of self-transcendence values compared to therapists (see Appendix S1: SM 1.2), and that these values follow the circumplex structure of Schwartz's (1992) values theory, with the two main self-enhancement values (achievement and power) emerging in a region opposite the two self-transcendence values (benevolence and universalism); and all conservation values (tradition, conformity and security) emerging in a region opposite both of the main openness-to-change values (self-direction and stimulation) (see Appendix S1: SM 1.3).

Participants were then asked to think about a current or past therapist or manager with whom they had interacted as a client or employee, respectively. Those who did not have one in mind were thanked and directed to the end of the survey. Participants who had a current or former therapist/manager in mind rated the values they believed were important to that therapist or manager. They then reported on their relationship with the therapist or manager. Finally, all participants completed a demographic questionnaire and an attention test.

Measures

Real managers'/therapists' perceived values

To assess the values participants perceived as important to their current or former manager/therapist, we used the SBSVS (Sekerdej & Roccas, 2016), replacing the words 'I/me' with 'my manager'/'my therapist.' This scale includes ten items, each reflecting a distinct value (e.g., the statement 'It is important to me to care for the welfare of people I am connected to. I wish to be responsible, loyal, honest, and forgiving' represents benevolence as a self-transcendence value, and 'Having social status and prestige, and winning influence over other people. Being rich and controlling resources' represents power as a self-enhancement value). We replaced only 'I/me' as described above, leaving the items mainly unchanged (e.g., 'It is important to my manager/therapist to care about the welfare of people with whom my manager/therapist is in contact. My manager/therapist wishes to be responsible, loyal, honest, and forgiving'). Participants were asked to read the statements and indicate to what extent they regarded each value as important to their manager/therapist, from -1 ('Opposed to my manager's/therapist's values') to 7 ('Of supreme importance to my manager/therapist'), including an 'I don't know' option.¹ Internal consistencies were as follows: for self-enhancement, $\alpha = .38$ and $.79$ in the Managers and Therapists conditions, respectively; for self-transcendence, $\alpha = .91$ and $.90$ in the Managers and Therapists conditions, respectively; for conservation, $\alpha = .56$ and $.65$, respectively; and for openness to change, $\alpha = .80$ and $.66$, respectively. Since each dimension is composed of only two or three items, we followed the same procedure as in our examination of the structure of the values attributed to the profession (see Appendix S1: SM 1.2). The results confirm that the structure of perceived values of managers and therapists follows the known bi-dimensional structure of personal values (see Appendix S1: SM 1.4). The similar picture for managers' and therapists' perceived values indicates that our measure was accurate.

Employee–manager/client–therapist relationship quality

We operationalized the quality of relationships with both sets of professionals through items validated as reflecting a working alliance. To examine the relationships between participants and their managers, we used the seven working alliance items from the Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) questionnaire (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), replacing the word 'leader' with 'manager' (a sample item: 'How would you characterize your working relationship with your manager?'). Participants were asked to respond on a 5-point scale, with 1 reflecting a low-quality exchange and 5 a high-quality exchange. Internal consistency across all items was high, with $\alpha = .93$. To examine the relationships between participants and their therapists, we used the Working Alliance Inventory, Client Version (WAI-P; Andrusyna et al., 2001). This questionnaire contains 12 items covering the three working alliance scales: goals, tasks and bonds (Bordin, 1979). A sample item: 'I feel confident in the therapist's ability to help me.' Participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they thought the item was true for them on a 7-point scale from 'Strongly disagree' (1) to 'Strongly agree' (7). Internal consistency across all items was high ($\alpha = .94$).

Results and discussion

To reduce the effect of scale use, we followed a common practice to partial out the mean importance across all values (Roccas et al., 2017), as recommended for group mean comparisons and for testing correlations (Schwartz, 2009). Our findings on perceived values of managers and therapists were as expected (see Table 1). Therapists were rated as significantly higher in perceived self-transcendence values than managers and significantly lower in perceived self-enhancement values than managers. Perceived openness-to-change and perceived conservation values did not differ significantly between therapists and managers.

Turning to relationship quality, participants in the therapists condition reported a stronger working alliance (i.e., more positive relationships) with their therapists the more they perceived them as high in self-transcendence values, $r(71) = .61$, $p < .001$, confirming H1. In accordance with the structure of

¹The scale was presented as -1 to 7 , as described, but coded as $1-9$ in the data file.

TABLE 1 Means and standard deviations of perceived values of managers and therapists.

	Therapists	Managers	
Self-transcendence	$M=1.50, SD=1.39$	$M=-0.01, SD=1.70$	$F(1, 161)=36.60, p<.001, \eta_p^2=.19$
Self-enhancement	$M=-1.44, SD=1.61$	$M=0.17, SD=1.57$	$F(1, 161)=41.00, p<.001, \eta_p^2=.20$
Achievement	$M=-0.65, SD=1.58$	$M=0.71, SD=1.51$	$F(1, 157)=30.72, p<.001, \eta_p^2=.16$
Power	$M=-2.02, SD=1.92$	$M=-0.52, SD=2.40$	$F(1, 157)=18.24, p<.001, \eta_p^2=.10$
Openness-to-change	$M=-0.27, SD=1.11$	$M=-0.51, SD=0.98$	$F(1, 161)=2.04, p=.155, \eta_p^2=.01$
Conservation	$M=0.20, SD=0.94$	$M=0.37, SD=1.02$	$F(1, 161)=1.21, p=.274, \eta_p^2=.01$

values, reported working alliance was stronger the less the participants perceived their therapists as adhering to the opposing values of self-enhancement, $r(70)=-.62, p<.001$. Due to the low internal consistency of the perceived self-enhancement index, we re-ran the analysis separately for power and achievement values. Both yielded significant negative correlations, $r(69)=-.64$ and $r(69)=-.41$, respectively, both $p<.001$.

With respect to managers, participants reported a stronger working alliance with their managers the more they perceived them as high in self-transcendence values, $r(91)=.71, p<.001$, supporting H2a. This is further supported by the negative association with power values, $r(88)=-.64, p<.001$. The association with achievement values was also negative, yet failed to reach significance, $r(90)=-.15, p=.165$.

STUDY 2

Study 1 shows the importance of perceived self-transcendence values for building high-quality relationships with managers as well as therapists. In Study 2, we explore the extent to which perceived self-transcendence values contribute to the establishment of positive relationships over and above own values (particularly self-transcendence) and value similarity. For this purpose, we focus solely on the manager–employee pairing. We hypothesize that:

H3. Perceived values – and specifically perceived self-transcendence values – will have a positive impact on relationship-building between managers and employees even after accounting for employees' own personal values (particularly self-transcendence) and personal–perceived values similarity.

Method

Participants and procedure

We used the same procedure and assumptions to detect the required sample size as in Study 1. We recruited 209 registered users of an online Israeli panel, Panel-4-all, who were currently employed (mean age = 42.69, $SD=13.69$; 50.2% female). The participants first reported their own values, then the perceived values of their managers, and finally the quality of their relationship with their manager. To avoid a sequence effect, where the measurement of values attributed to the profession influences the perception of values of the specific manager, we did not measure the former in this study. Nine participants noted they were self-employed and were removed from further analysis. We

also removed 23 participants who failed to answer more than half of the items on their managers' perceived values. Our final sample thus consisted of 177 participants (mean age = 41.44, $SD = 13.09$; 49.2% female).

Measures

Employees' personal values

Participants reported their personal values on the shorter Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ21; Schwartz, 2003). This questionnaire contains 21 items that measure the ten value types. Individuals responded to the question 'How much is this person like you?' on a 6-point scale, from 'Not at all like me' (1) to 'Very much like me' (6) (e.g., for power: 'It is important to him/her to show his/her abilities'; 'He/she wants people to admire what he/she does'). Internal consistencies of the value indices for each of the four higher-order value categories were calculated following Simón et al. (2017): self-transcendence, $\alpha = .76$; conservation, $\alpha = .69$; openness to change, $\alpha = .73$; and self-enhancement, $\alpha = .73$.

Managers' perceived values

We used the same measure used in Study 1 with $\alpha = .86$, $\alpha = .71$, $\alpha = .76$ and $\alpha = .45$ for perceived self-transcendence, perceived conservation, perceived openness to change and perceived self-enhancement, respectively.

Employee–manager relationship quality

We used the same measure used in Study 1 ($\alpha = .88$).

Results and discussion

To study the concurrent contribution of own and perceived values on relationship quality, we followed the procedure recommended by Wolf et al. (2019). We conducted polynomial regression with response surface analyses. The results of the four regression analyses using ipsatized and centred values are presented in Table 2.

As shown, significant variance was explained by self-transcendence values ($R^2 = 28\%$) and by self-enhancement values ($R^2 = 17\%$). The significant linear contribution of perceived values (b2) replicates the findings of Study 1: Managers' perceived self-transcendence values positively contributed to relationship quality, $b = 0.36$, $SE = 0.05$, $p < .001$, whereas managers' perceived self-enhancement values negatively contributed to relationship quality, $b = -0.29$, $SE = 0.06$, $p < .001$.

Importantly, the contribution of perceived values to relationship quality goes beyond the positive effect of similarity in values reflected in the significant positive slope (but not curvature) of the lines of congruence (a1) for self-transcendence, $b = 0.45$, $SE = 0.07$, $p < .001$, and self-enhancement values, $b = -0.25$, $SE = 0.08$, $p = .003$. These slopes reflect the interactive effect of the perceivers' own values and the perceived values of the manager and suggest that employee–manager relationships are strongest when both perceived (manager's) self-transcendence and own (employee's) self-transcendence are high, and weakest when both are low. Similarly, relationships are strongest when both perceived (manager's) self-enhancement and own (employee's) self-enhancement are low, and weakest when both are high. See Figures 2 and 3 for the response surface plots. Separate analyses of the two components of self-enhancement revealed that the findings hold for power but not for achievement values. The corresponding response surface plots are available in Appendix S1: SM 2.1 along with a discussion of results beyond these anticipated effects.

In sum, we confirm the importance of perceived self-transcendence values in fostering high-quality relationships with managers. Moreover, we show that these perceived values contribute to

TABLE 2 Polynomial regression models and response surface analysis predicting employees' relationships with their managers from personal values of the employee, perceived values of managers and the interactive effect in Study 2.

	Conservation, <i>N</i> = 163, <i>R</i> ² = 3%	Self-enhancement (ACH, POW), <i>N</i> = 159, <i>R</i> ² = 17%**	Self-transcendence, <i>N</i> = 172, <i>R</i> ² = 28%**	Openness to change, <i>N</i> = 160, <i>R</i> ² = 3%
Polynomial regression coefficients				
b1	<i>b</i> = 0.01	<i>b</i> = 0.04 (0.10, 0.00)	<i>b</i> = 0.09	<i>b</i> = −0.11
Personal values of the employee (linear)	<i>SE</i> = 0.07 <i>p</i> = .865	<i>SE</i> = 0.06 (0.06, 0.06) <i>p</i> = .483 (.110, .985)	<i>SE</i> = 0.07 <i>p</i> = .178	<i>SE</i> = 0.07 <i>p</i> = .108
b2	<i>b</i> = −0.01	<i>b</i> = −0.29 (−0.06, −0.35)	<i>b</i> = 0.36	<i>b</i> = 0.04
Perceived values of the manager (linear)	<i>SE</i> = 0.08 <i>p</i> = .865	<i>SE</i> = 0.06 (0.06, 0.06) <i>p</i> < .001 (.311, <.001)	<i>SE</i> = 0.05 <i>p</i> < .001	<i>SE</i> = 0.06 <i>p</i> = .538
b3	<i>b</i> = 0.02	<i>b</i> = 0.072 (0.10, 0.00)	<i>b</i> = −0.05	<i>b</i> = −0.03
Personal values of the employee (curvilinear)	<i>SE</i> = 0.06 <i>p</i> = .693	<i>SE</i> = 0.06 (0.05, 0.06) <i>p</i> = .186 (.030, .958)	<i>SE</i> = 0.05 <i>p</i> = .332	<i>SE</i> = 0.04 <i>p</i> = .385
b4	<i>b</i> = −0.09	<i>b</i> = 0.01 (0.06, 0.00)	<i>b</i> = 0.11	<i>b</i> = −0.02
Interactive effect of personal values of the employee and perceived values of the manager	<i>SE</i> = 0.07 <i>p</i> = .196	<i>SE</i> = 0.05 (0.07, 0.05) <i>p</i> = .876 (.370, .982)	<i>SE</i> = 0.07 <i>p</i> = .091	<i>SE</i> = 0.06 <i>p</i> = .683
b5	<i>b</i> = −0.05	<i>b</i> = −0.07 (−0.08, −0.06)	<i>b</i> = −0.08	<i>b</i> = 0.03
Perceived values of the manager (curvilinear)	<i>SE</i> = 0.03 <i>p</i> = .112	<i>SE</i> = 0.04 (0.04, 0.03) <i>p</i> = .081 (.024, .076)	<i>SE</i> = 0.03 <i>p</i> = .010	<i>SE</i> = 0.03 <i>p</i> = .214
Response surface coefficients				
a1	<i>b</i> = −0.00	<i>b</i> = −0.25 (0.04, −0.35)	<i>b</i> = 0.45	<i>b</i> = −0.07
Line of congruence (slope)	<i>SE</i> = 0.11 <i>p</i> = .987	<i>SE</i> = 0.08 (0.10, 0.07) <i>p</i> = .003 (.709, <.001)	<i>SE</i> = 0.07 <i>p</i> < .001	<i>SE</i> = 0.09 <i>p</i> = .425
a2	<i>b</i> = −0.12	<i>b</i> = 0.01 (−0.04, 0.05)	<i>b</i> = −0.02	<i>b</i> = −0.02
Line of congruence (curvature)	<i>SE</i> = 0.10 <i>p</i> = .240	<i>SE</i> = 0.09 (0.10, 0.06) <i>p</i> = .898 (.650, .374)	<i>SE</i> = 0.05 <i>p</i> = .898	<i>SE</i> = 0.09 <i>p</i> = .797
a3	<i>b</i> = 0.03	<i>b</i> = 0.33 (0.16, 0.35)	<i>b</i> = −0.27	<i>b</i> = −0.14
Line of incongruence (slope)	<i>SE</i> = 0.10 <i>p</i> = .769	<i>SE</i> = 0.08 (0.08, 0.09) <i>p</i> < .001 (.051, <.001)	<i>SE</i> = 0.10 <i>p</i> = .006	<i>SE</i> = 0.09 <i>p</i> = .106
a4	<i>b</i> = 0.06	<i>b</i> = −0.01 (0.08, −0.05)	<i>b</i> = −0.24	<i>b</i> = 0.03
Line of incongruence (curvature)	<i>SE</i> = 0.08 <i>p</i> = .468	<i>SE</i> = 0.07 (0.09, 0.10) <i>p</i> = .940 (.354, .580)	<i>SE</i> = 0.12 <i>p</i> = .039	<i>SE</i> = 0.06 <i>p</i> = .647

Note: Testing for linear and curvilinear effects for each of the four higher-order values separately. Significant effects are highlighted in bold. Abbreviations: ACH, The perceived achievement component of self-enhancement; POW, The perceived power component of self-enhancement. ***p* < .001.

the development of such relationships above and beyond individuals' own values and value similarity (Figure 3).

STUDY 3

In Studies 1 and 2, we used correlative designs and found that perceived self-transcendence contributes to forming fruitful relationships, whereas perceived self-enhancement (and especially power values) hinders such relationships. Our main aim in Study 3 is to establish the causal influence of perceived values using a validated experimental paradigm, where participants referred to a fictional therapist or

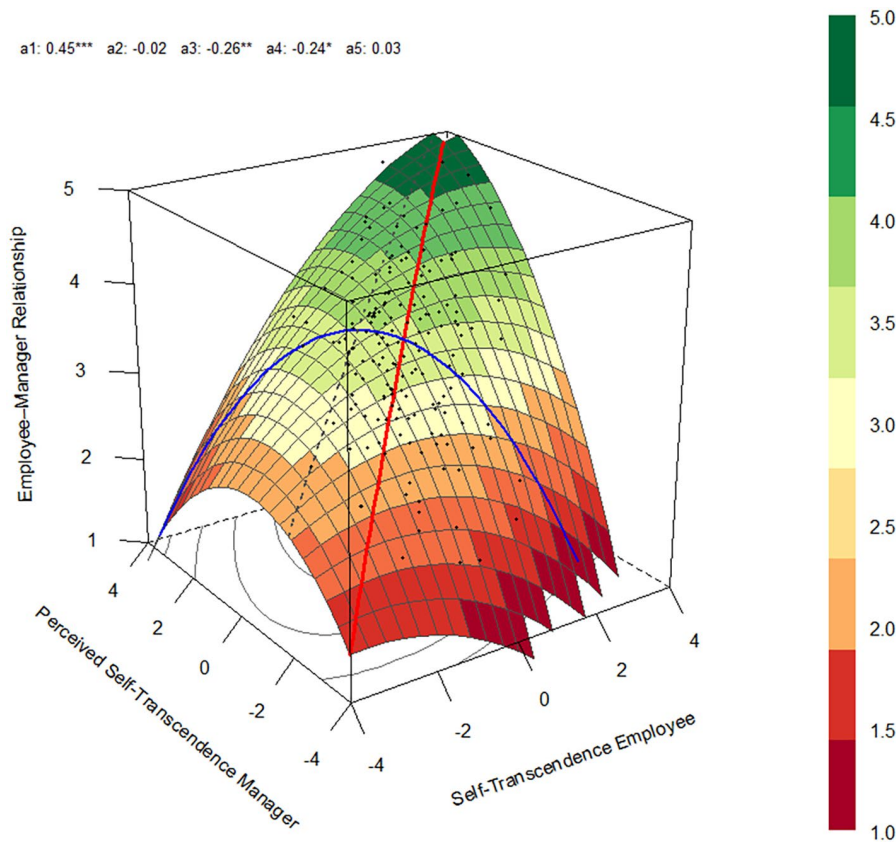


FIGURE 2 RSA of the association between employee's self-transcendence, manager's perceived self-transcendence and the employee–manager relationship.

manager described as prioritizing values related to either self-transcendence or self-enhancement. A secondary goal is to introduce the mediating effects of perceptions of warmth.

Researchers distinguish between two fundamental dimensions of social perception: perceptions of competence, denoting an individual's perceived capabilities and skills, and perceptions of warmth, encompassing attributes such as friendliness and sincerity (for an extensive review, see Kervyn et al., 2010). We propose that professionals perceived as high in self-transcendence are also likely to be perceived as high in warmth (i.e., tolerance, good nature, sincerity), and that this perception of warmth ultimately underlies the link between self-transcendence and the formation of a good relationship. We hence hypothesize that:

H4. Warmth perceptions mediate the influence of perceived self-transcendence on establishment of good relationships with both managers and therapists.

Self-enhancement values, as we have seen, are associated with managers, in keeping with the perception of managers (but not therapists) as aspiring to social status, prestige, influence and personal success. As such, we propose that professionals perceived as high in self-enhancement are also likely to be perceived as high in competence (i.e., as being capable, self-confident, independent, competitive and intelligent). It further seems likely that high perceived competence in managers should be conducive to the formation of a good manager–employee relationship, especially as the employee is likely to look at this relationship from an instrumental perspective (e.g., on the expectation that the manager will help

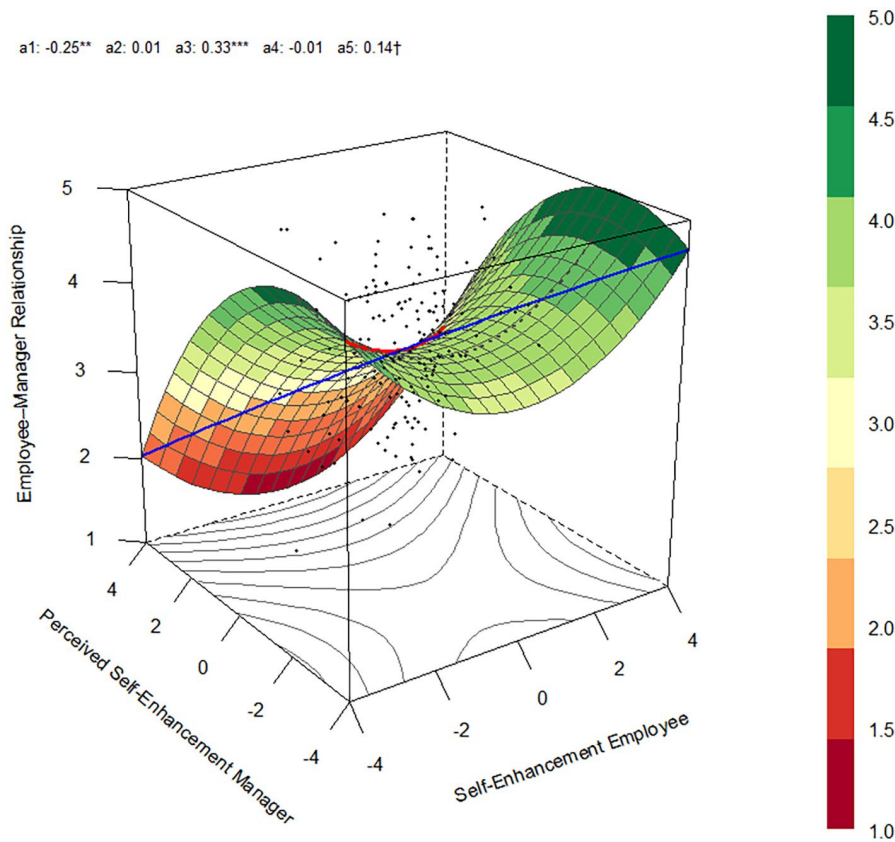


FIGURE 3 RSA of the association between employee's self-enhancement, manager's perceived self-enhancement and the employee–manager relationship.

the employee get ahead and thrive within the company, and more broadly in the occupation). However, due to incompatibility between our preregistration for this study and the findings of Studies 1 and 2, we do not present an explicit hypothesis here.²

Method

Participants and procedure

We preregistered the study design, planned sample size, inclusion/exclusion criteria, planned analyses and hypothesis (see <https://aspredicted.org/htdw-2rny.pdf>). See Appendix S1: SM 3.1 for a pilot study with similar results, using the same experimental design, but without measuring perceptions of warmth and competence.

Monte Carlo simulations indicate that 150 participants per condition (therapists and managers) are required to identify the hypothesized mediation with a power of .80 (https://schoemanna.shinyapps.io/mc_power_med/; Schoemann et al., 2017). We therefore recruited 297 participants through Prolific Academic (<https://prolific.ac>): 146 in the Managers condition ($M_{\text{age}} = 42.04$, $SD = 12.83$; 53 female, 91 male, 2 non-binary or preferred not to say) and 151 in the Therapists condition ($M_{\text{age}} = 41.32$, $SD = 12.73$;

²We registered an exploratory hypothesis that competence perceptions would mediate the influence of perceived self-enhancement on the establishment of fruitful relationship for managers but not for therapists. In hindsight, this was premature.

61 female, 87 male, 3 non-binary or preferred not to say). Participants completed the 10-minute experiment for payment of £1.2. None of the participants failed the preregistered criteria and so none were excluded.

Participants were first asked to report their personal values.³ Next, following the procedure used by Mentser and Amit (2024), participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions based on a 2 × 2 between-subjects design. Participants read a short description of a professional (therapist or manager) who was depicted as prioritizing values related to either self-transcendence or self-enhancement. As recommended by Mentser and Amit (2024), the descriptions also outlined several traits unrelated to values. Following that, participants reported their perceptions of the warmth and competence of the professional they had read about, and then reported their feelings about a hypothetical relationship with that professional.

Measures

Participants' own personal values

We used the SVBVS (Sekerdej & Roccas, 2016) (e.g., 'It is important to me to care for the welfare of people I am connected to. I wish to be responsible, loyal, honest, and forgiving'). Participants were asked to rate the importance of each value on a scale from -1 (not at all important) to 7 (of supreme importance). Internal consistencies of the value indices for each of the four higher-order value categories were calculated as follows (Simón et al., 2017): self-transcendence, $\alpha = .72$; conservation, $\alpha = .70$; openness to change, $\alpha = .59$; and self-enhancement, $\alpha = .68$.

Employee–manager/client–therapist relationship

We used four items based on the working alliance scales used in Study 1: 'I will be happy to work with this therapist/manager,' 'I believe that this therapist/manager will help me solve problems,' 'I think the approach of this therapist/manager is a good fit for me,' and 'This therapist/manager seems right for me.' Participants responded to these statements on a 5-point scale from 'strongly disagree' (1) to 'strongly agree' (5). The internal consistency of these items was high, $\alpha = .97$ ($\alpha = .97$ in the Managers condition and $\alpha = .98$ in the Therapists condition).

Perceived warmth and competence

We used the scale developed by Smith et al. (2016) with four items measuring warmth (tolerant, warm, good natured, sincere; $\alpha = .94$, $\alpha = .92$ in the managers and therapists conditions, respectively) and five items measuring competence (capable, self-confident, independent, competitive, intelligent; $\alpha = .77$, $\alpha = .75$ in the managers and therapists conditions, respectively). Participants rated to what extent the professional is characterized by those traits using a scale from 'not at all' (1) to 'very much' (5).

Results and discussion

We compared the hypothetical relationship with the professional in the different conditions while controlling for the personal values of participants using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). As expected, a significant main effect for the perceived values condition emerged, $F(1, 289) = 138.01$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .32$. Simple effects confirm that (a) participants rated their hypothetical relationship with therapists as more positive if the therapist was described as possessing self-transcendence ($M = 4.93$, $SE = 0.15$,

³In addition, as preregistered, the participants reported their personal traits. The International Personality Item Pool (IPIP; <https://ipip.ori.org/>) was used to select items that represent each of the "big five" traits, with 1–3 items per trait. For example, the item "I am easy to satisfy" was used to assess agreeableness. Participants rated the accuracy of each statement on a scale of 1 (not at all accurate) to 5 (extremely accurate). This short questionnaire was included purely to increase the credibility of the manipulation; we neither intended to nor used this data.

$n=83$) compared with self-enhancement values ($M=3.15$, $SE=0.16$, $n=68$, $F(1, 289)=64.35$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2=.18$, CI of difference [1.34, 2.22]), and (b) participants also rated their hypothetical relationship with managers as more positive if the manager was described as possessing self-transcendence ($M=5.31$, $SE=0.16$, $n=69$) rather than self-enhancement values ($M=3.40$, $SE=0.15$, $n=77$, $F(1, 289)=72.97$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2=.20$, 95%, CI of difference [1.47, 2.35]).

As expected, the contribution of perceived values went beyond the effect of the respondent's own personal values. However, interestingly, own self-transcendence did not contribute to the prediction, $F(1, 289)=1.47$, $p=.226$, $\eta_p^2=.01$, while the unique contributions of own self-enhancement, $F(1, 289)=7.85$, $p=.005$, $\eta_p^2=.03$ and own openness, $F(1, 289)=5.88$; $p=.016$, $\eta_p^2=.02$ were significant. Own conservation values did not contribute to the prediction, $F(1, 289)=0.64$, $p=.423$, $\eta_p^2=.00$.

To test Hypothesis 4, we performed two mediation analyses (one for managers and one for therapists) entering warmth and competence as mediators predicting relationships from perceived values. We used Model 4 of the PROCESS add-on to SPSS (Hayes, 2017). Figures 4 and 5 show the standardized path estimates for managers and therapists, respectively (see Appendix S1: SM 3.2 for full mediation output). Bootstrapping 95% confidence intervals excluding zero confirm the expected significant indirect effect of warmth for both therapists (1.08, 1.93) and managers (1.22, 2.04). The mediating effect of competence was not consistent, with a significant negative indirect effect for therapists ($-0.38, -0.02$) but a non-significant indirect effect for managers ($-0.29, 0.07$). For both managers and therapists, competence contributed to the relationship but was not affected by manipulated perceived values. This suggests that competence in itself is valued, but may become threatening (and detrimental to relations) when accompanied by lack of warmth. Mediation-moderation analysis (Model 14, reported in Appendix S1: SM 3.3) supported this exploratory examination for managers (0.10, 0.61), but not for therapists ($-0.02, 0.48$).

In sum, the results of Study 3 provide additional support for the findings of Studies 1 and 2. In particular, with respect to the two opposing predictions for managers, the findings from this study based on a hypothetical scenario conform with the findings based on participants' real-life perceptions. Overall, employees prefer working with caring and sympathetic managers compared with prototypical managers who value self-enhancement, even if the latter display a better person–occupation fit. In addition, the perceived values of professionals were found to be more important in establishing relationships

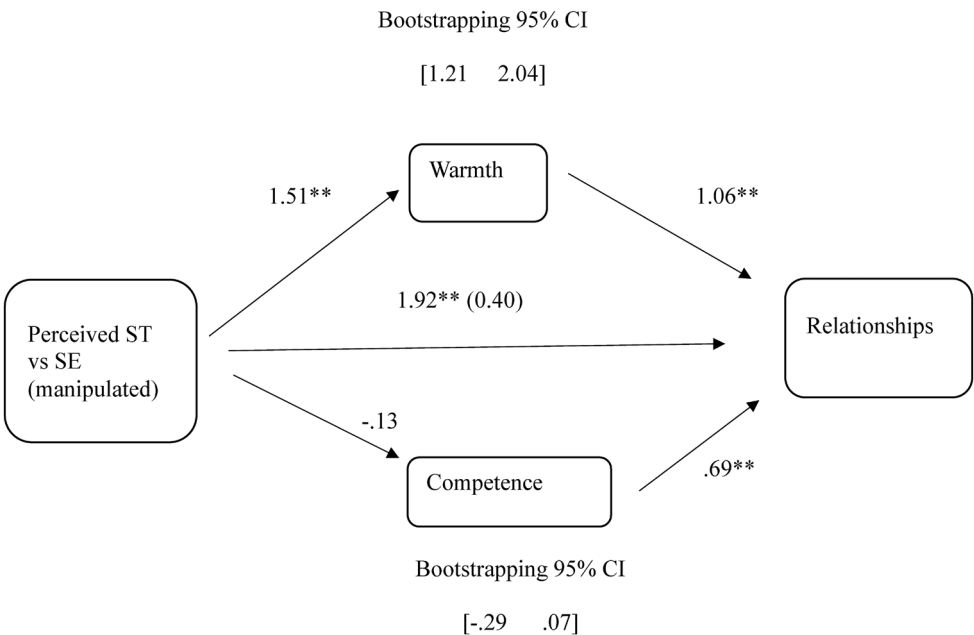


FIGURE 4 Research model standardized path estimates for managers. $**p<.001$.

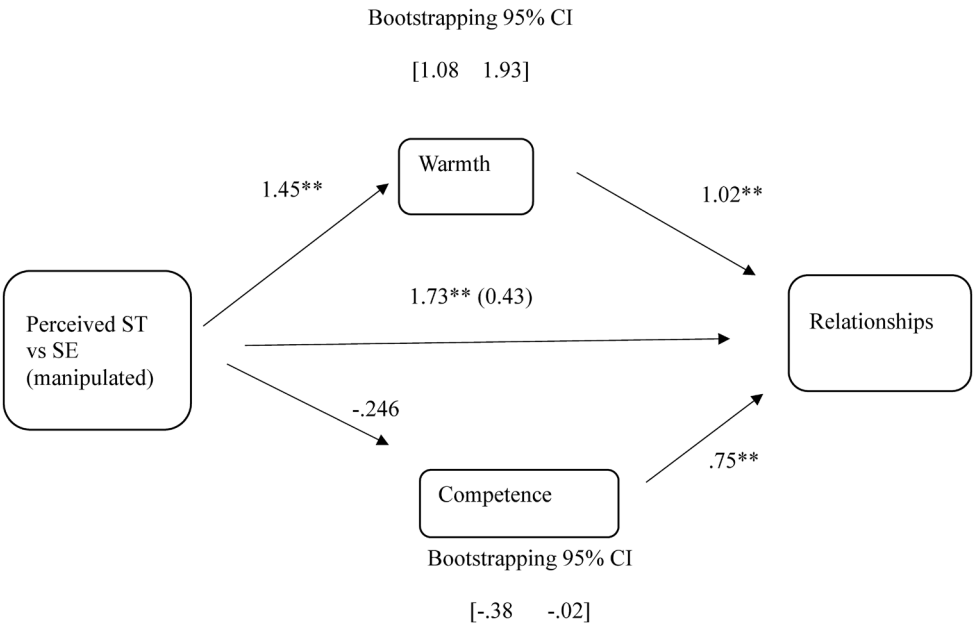


FIGURE 5 Research model standardized path estimates for therapists. ** $p < .001$.

than participants' own values. Finally, the effect of perceived values seems to be derived, in part, from perceptions of warmth.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The present study introduces the important role of perceived values in establishing functional relationships with professionals. We focused on relationships with therapy and management professionals, as both occupations require forming relationships. Relationship formation in such contexts cannot be fully explained by known value-based mechanisms, as the two occupations attract individuals with different personal values and require forming relationships with people with diverse value profiles.

Employing both correlational (Studies 1 and 2) and experimental (Study 3) designs, we found that the quality of relationships formed with both actual and hypothetical therapists and managers rises when the professional is perceived as high in self-transcendence values. Thus, our findings support the hypothesis derived from the literature on values and interpersonal relationships (H2a) and not the competing hypothesis derived from the literature on values and organizational fit (H2b). The contribution of perceived self-transcendence values to the formation of relationships is evident even when it is less likely that the person perceived is characterized by self-transcendence values (as in the case of managers) and supersedes the contribution of own values and that of similarity in values.

Role theory highlights how societal norms and expectations shape behaviours associated with specific roles (Biddle, 1986, 2013). In professional relationships, such as those between clients and therapists or employees and managers, each role carries distinct expectations. For therapists, these expectations are straightforward, emphasizing empathy, understanding, and prioritizing clients' well-being. Meeting these expectations fosters trust and strengthens relationships by ensuring role congruity. In contrast, expectations for managers are more complex and often conflicting. Managers must balance guiding and supporting their teams with demonstrating authority, competence and achievement-oriented behaviours. Our findings suggest that not all role expectations should be

treated equally; rather, congruence with expectations regarding support and empowerment may play a more pivotal role in shaping relationships. Indeed, our findings support the hypothesis regarding employee–manager relationships derived from the literature on values and interpersonal relationships, rather than that from the literature on values in occupational environments. We demonstrate the contribution of perceived values over and above known value-based mechanisms underlying relationships. In Study 2, focusing only on employees, we showed that perceived values of managers contributed to relationship quality over and above the personal values of employees and the similarity between employees' own values and their perceptions of their managers' values. These findings underscore the importance of perceived values in forming meaningful relationships with professionals in occupations that require interpersonal relations. The importance of perceived self-transcendence beyond individuals' own values was further confirmed experimentally in Study 3, where a similar effect was also found for therapists and clients. Note that we focused on the effect of perceived values; however, we did not assess the factors contributing to these perceptions or their accuracy. Future research could compare the perceived values of managers and therapists with their actual values.

The effect of perceived self-transcendence in managers is especially interesting, since Study 1 confirms that managers are correctly perceived as high in the opposing self-enhancement values. Additional analysis of the data of Study 3 further reveals that managers in the self-enhancement condition were perceived as more competent than those in the self-transcendence condition (see Appendix S1: SM 3.4). Thus, managers perceived as high on self-enhancement are perceived by employees as more effective; however, it is managers perceived as high on the opposing values of self-transcendence with whom employees wish to form functional relationships.

We derived our hypotheses regarding self-enhancement values based on the literature on personal values and the occupational context, hence referring to the higher-order value of self-enhancement. The perceived values of power and achievement emerged in the same region in the MDS analysis and opposite to the perceived values of universalism and benevolence, confirming their shared self-enhancing nature (Appendix S1: SM 1.4). However, the internal reliability of the perceived self-enhancement index was low concerning perceptions of managers in Study 1 and Study 2. Therefore, we presented separate analyses for perceived power and achievement in addition to analyses of self-enhancement.

In Study 1, we found that perceived power and achievement similarly undermined the quality of relationships between clients and their therapists. Turning to managers, in Studies 1 and 2, we found that the more the manager was perceived as valuing power, the worse the employees rated the relationships with him/her. We did not find an equivalent effect for perceived achievement. This consistent difference between power and achievement might indicate the importance of the subtle differences between the two, suggesting that high-achieving managers are accepted, whereas high-power managers are not. Studying this difference calls for developing more subtle manipulations of perceived values. In Study 3, we used a validated manipulation designed to capture the differences between self-transcendence and self-enhancement. Future research may benefit from developing a manipulation that can capture differences between perceived power and perceived achievement, as well as manipulations that allow for comparisons between high and low self-enhancement (or self-transcendence).

The effect of perceived self-transcendence for managers and therapists was mediated by perceptions of warmth. Our research thus introduces perceived values as antecedents of trait perceptions. Traits and values are two core aspects of the self (Roccas et al., 2014) that influence behaviour in different ways (Roccas et al., 2002). Values are more strongly associated with cognitively based traits than emotionally based traits (Parks-Leduc et al., 2015). Note that past research linking traits and values focuses on traits captured by the five factor model. To the best of our knowledge, our study is the first to link value perceptions with trait perceptions of warmth and competence. Past research has typically focused on the role of people's *own values* in guiding their attitudes and behaviour (see Sagiv & Roccas, 2017, for a review). Recent research has contributed to the study of values by emphasizing the important influence of *perceived values*. Yet, those studies have largely focused on how perceived values of a whole group influence attitudes towards that group (López-Rodríguez et al., 2023; Wolf et al., 2019, 2021). We advance

research on values by demonstrating the importance of *perceived values of specific individuals in interpersonal contexts*. The findings in Study 3 reflect a strong association between perceived self-transcendence and perceived warmth. Future research could explore whether people distinguish between values and traits in their perceptions of others or overlook the nuances.

We also tested the circular structure of values in Schwartz's (1992) theory as applied to perceived values. This structure has been found to hold within individuals (Borg et al., 2017), and in evaluations of value-related behaviours (De Lins Holanda Coelho et al., 2022). Our findings, based on the MDS analyses in Study 1, show that the circular structure is also evident in *perceived values* of another individual (a manager or therapist): perceived self-enhancement values are located in opposition to perceived self-transcendence values, meaning that when we perceive individuals as prioritizing achievement, we also perceive them as ascribing less value to concern for the welfare of others. For managers, this raises a challenge, because they are typically high in self-enhancement (and perceived as such), yet are more likely to form strong relationships when perceived as high in self-transcendence.

The effect of perceived self-transcendence values on relationship formation is remarkable, as these perceptions exist within the mind of only one party – the perceiver – and may or may not reflect the authentic principles and beliefs of the individual concerned. Following our findings, one may wonder whether simple interventions could be devised to help professionals foster fruitful relationships with organization members, clients or other stakeholders. For example, managers could be encouraged to highlight self-transcendence values (honesty, tolerance, concern for others, love of nature, etc.) in their organizational biographies or other material encountered by new and potential employees. Organizations may also consider implementing employee feedback mechanisms, encouraging employees to reflect on their managers' values and management training programmes that emphasize the importance of demonstrating values like empathy, collaboration and support, rather than power and authority.

On the other hand, our findings raise questions about the long-term strength, stability or even meaning of any relationship formed on the basis of another's perceived values. If a work relationship is grounded in a misreading of the values of another (or worse, deceit), does this matter? Here, our findings might be considered in light of research on leadership. While management is characterized as an occupation that emphasizes material and concrete goals over helping and caring for others, research on leadership has shifted towards ethics and interpersonal relationships. In particular, recent studies have highlighted the distinction between transactional and transformational leadership styles (Khanin, 2007; Sarid, 2016). Managers who value self-transcendence are more likely to adopt a transformational leadership style, which involves inspiring, motivating and empowering team members (Zhang et al., 2021). One might ask whether it is possible for those who value self-enhancement to achieve similar effects by deliberately adopting a transformational leadership style. Future studies should delve into the potential interactions between transformational leadership, perceived versus real self-transcendence values and the establishment of productive relationships with employees.

In our study we examined one mechanism that can help explain the link between perceived self-transcendence and relationship formation. We showed that when professionals – both managers and therapists – are perceived as being high in self-transcendence, they are, in consequence, also perceived as being warmer, friendlier, more sincere and perhaps more likeable, all of which play a role in the formation of good relationships. Our study also underscores the dual importance of competence and warmth in relationships. Particularly for managers, competence, coupled with interpersonal warmth, fosters positive relationships regardless of manipulated perceived values. These findings suggest that training programmes for managers should focus on interpersonal warmth along with professional skills to enhance overall effectiveness.

Our findings also contribute to the literature on person perception. Reviewing this literature, Brambilla et al. (2021) point to a shift from a two-factor to a three-factor model, with morality added as a third factor beyond competence and the sociability aspect of warmth. They distinguish morality, understood as comprising virtues like honesty and trustworthiness, from sociability (warmth), understood as an orientation to affiliate and form connections with others. They further emphasize the primacy

of moral perceptions in how people evaluate others (see also Goodwin, 2015). Values are closely linked to morality, relating to what is considered good or bad. In particular, it is self-transcendence values – the main focus of the present study – that overlap most closely with the morality dimension in person perception. As such, our findings on the interplay between perceived values and perceived warmth may help clarify or advance our understanding of morality and its role in person perception.

The present study is limited by our inability to establish causality. The perceptions we examine are highly interlinked, such that the primacy of perceived self-transcendence and perceived warmth may be difficult to isolate in real-world encounters. In this study, we manipulated perceived self-transcendence, so we can infer that perceived self-transcendence promotes perceptions of warmth and an expectation of forming a good relationship. We suggested that the former determines the latter. However, this causality should be further tested. Future studies could also examine additional mechanisms, other than warmth, by which perceived self-transcendence values might facilitate relationship formation – for instance, by enhancing feelings of trust and confidence. As with other studies linking traits and values, our research is limited by the use of explicit, language-dependent measures, with the risk of capturing the shared essence rather than the differentiated concepts. To reduce this concern, we relied on previously validated measures and manipulations. Future studies could explore novel ways to measure or manipulate perceived values and trait perceptions as well as investigate the alternative causal influence – testing whether warmth and competence perceptions influence value perceptions.

The quality of relationships is inherently dyadic, involving mutual perceptions and interactions between both parties in the relationship. While our study focuses on how clients and employees rate the quality of their relationships with therapists and managers, it is important to acknowledge that these perceptions represent only one side of the relational dynamic. Therapists and managers may have their own distinct perspectives on the relationship, shaped by their expectations, experiences and interpretations of the interactions. Interestingly, Van Der Wal et al. (2024) found that a person's self-transcendence values predict their own perception of relationship quality but do not predict their partner's view of the relationship. This highlights the importance of considering both perspectives in future research to provide a more holistic understanding of relationship quality and to explore whether congruence or mismatch in perceptions similarly affect functional relationships.

Past research has demonstrated the varied ways values influence behaviour (see review by Sagiv & Roccas, 2021). Our study joins contemporary research demonstrating the influence of *perceived* values, showing their impact on fostering fruitful relationships within the realm of functional interactions. We demonstrated that the quality of relationships with therapists and managers rises when individuals in these professions are perceived as holding self-transcendence values, even when competence in these professions is related to the opposing values of self-enhancement. These results underscore the significance of perceived values in the establishment of significant relationships and highlight their effect over previously established value-based mechanisms. Notably, we discuss the challenge of attributing self-transcendence values to managers, who are commonly associated with self-enhancement characteristics but, for the sake of fostering effective relationships, should ideally be perceived as endorsing self-transcendence values.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Adi Amit: Conceptualization; methodology; writing – original draft; funding acquisition; supervision. **Shani Oppenheim-Weller:** Conceptualization; funding acquisition; writing – original draft; methodology; formal analysis; supervision. **Yuval Karmel:** Methodology; formal analysis.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest with respect to the authorship or publication of this article.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

All research materials, data and analysis code are available at https://osf.io/qn3je/?view_only=2885b47514964037abf2ae58975675d1.

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Additional supporting information can be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.

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