



Study Of Swedish Lawyers' Work Situation

Tasha Mesick
Jens Näsström

Supervisor: Professor Gunn Johansson
Psychology graduation thesis, 20 points SEM 2005
STOCKHOLM UNIVERSITY – INSTITUTE OF PSYCHOLOGY



Study Of Swedish Lawyers' Work Situation*

Harmful levels of stress and their related disorders are a well-established phenomenon among American lawyers. With no comparable research available on their Swedish counterparts, this study aims for an increased understanding of the working conditions and health problems of both the respondent group and its demographic subgroups. A questionnaire filled out by active members (N=2318) of the Swedish Bar Association showed lawyers placing relatively high in Emotional exhaustion and Perceived efficacy but closer to average with Cynicism, as per Maslach's Burnout Inventory – General Survey (MBI-GS). A hierarchical regression analysis showed how professional conditions (Quantitative and Qualitative workload, as well as Over-commitment) to a greater degree than demographic factors predicate Quality of sleep, Emotional exhaustion and Cynicism among Swedish lawyers. All in all, results indicate a work-life situation consisting of strains as well as resources in the form of high results in Job satisfaction and Perceived efficacy.

Keywords

Swedish lawyers

working conditions

health problems

burnout

Maslach's Burnout Inventory – General Survey

* This study was made possible by funding, administrative assistance and consultation in professional matters by the Swedish Bar Association. We'd like to direct a special thank you to Secretary-General Anne Ramberg and Deputy General Counsel Mary Billing for great cooperation. We'd also like to thank the lawyers for their helpful input in the study, as well as our supervising professor Gunn Johansson for invaluable help.

Introduction

There's been significant research conducted on the mental health among lawyers in North America, and findings are disheartening to say the least (Daicoff, 1997; Elwork & Benjamin, 1995; Elwork, 1997). Studies in this area show how stress and related ailments such as depression, anxiety disorders and addiction is a common and growing problem in the U.S. legal profession (Allen, 1997; Andrew, Benjamin, Darling & Sales, 1990; Eaton, Anthony, Mandel & Garrison, 1990). For example, surveys show lawyers to be the most depressed out of 104 occupations in the United States (Eaton et al., 1990), and that as many as 18% had developed an abusive relationship to alcohol after 2-20 years in the profession – increased to 25% after more than 25 years (Andrew et al., 1990). A study of disciplinary actions filed against American lawyers show stress-related illnesses and addictions to have caused 60% of the penalty measures in some parts of the country (Elwork & Benjamin, 1995, org. Spillis, 1991).

Stress among lawyers can thus have implications far beyond the legal profession. When lawyers are rendered unable to carry out their duties properly, it doesn't only affect themselves but also their clients and the legal system at large. As such, this issue is ultimately an important societal problem.

To the best of our knowledge, there's no similar research on Swedish lawyers. However, the Swedish Bar Association has highlighted the increasing problem with stress in an article series featured in the journal *Advokaten* (for example, Hellberg, 2000; Hellberg, 2002a; Hellberg, 2002b). The articles illustrate how lawyers' health insurances are increasingly fraught with stress-related ailments such as depression, fatigue, memory problems, exhaustion and burnout (Hellberg, 2002a). Furthermore, it appears that more and more client claims are caused by overworked lawyers (ibid.). During the period 2000-2002, over 40% of all lawyers who used health insurance referred to stress-related symptoms as reasons for sick leave (ibid.). This number rose to almost 50% during 2003-2004, rendering psychological disorders the most common illness among Swedish lawyers, followed by cardiovascular disease and musculoskeletal disorders – each accounting for 12% of sick leave (the Swedish Bar Association's annual report, 2004).

All in all, American and Swedish lawyer conditions are indicative of stressful work conditions. However, it's difficult to draw parallels between the countries due to differences in culture and legal systems. This study seeks to enhance understanding for the working situation of Swedish lawyers regarding stress and burnout.

Stress

According to Trumbull and Appley's (1986) dynamic process model, stress occurs upon an *imbalance* between requirements or demands – so-called *stressors* – and the individual's perceived ability to cope with and manage them. Stressors can either be demands from their surroundings or expectations they've placed on themselves. The stress process is triggered when burdens exceed the individual's ability to cope. Together, the various stressors amount to the individual's cumulative requirements (ibid.)

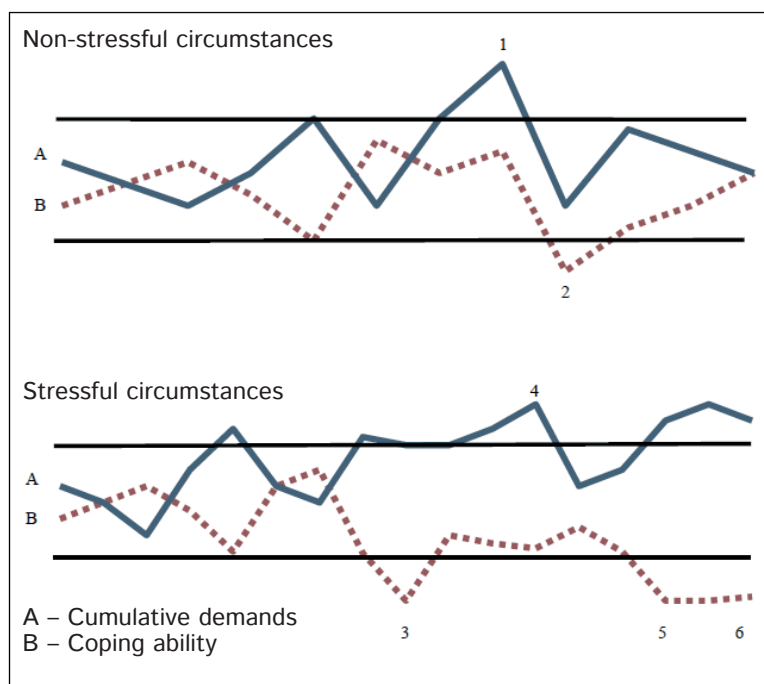
This model illustrates dynamics between stressors and the individual's physical, psychological, and social systems – together constituting the available resources which represent an individual's overall coping ability and resilience against stress (ibid.). The process perspective implies a complex interaction between these systems – in which changes in one of them can affect the entire individual, their relationship to the surroundings, and ultimately even the world around them.

With one system unable to manage the pressure caused by stressors, strain spills over to the remaining two. For example – stress-related anxiety overloads the psychological (Sapolsky, 2004) will in turn affect the social or physical systems. The interaction between systems can therefore lead to powerful negative spirals where problems become mutually reinforcing. Similarly, systems can also interact beneficially – a positive change in one system can generate a healthy synergy both within the individual and their relations to the outside world (Trumbull and Appley, 1986). The appearance of stress can, according to this model, be summarised the following way: *When the functioning of one or more of these systems results in a discrepancy between any stressor and the carrying or resistance capacity available, there is stress* (Trumbull & Appley, in 1986, p. 34).

The relationship between the individual's cumulative requirements and its capacity is illustrated in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1

The dynamic relationships between requirements and viability, as per Trumbull and Appley (1986).



The figure's two straight lines illustrate the range of stress an individual can endure. Both the cumulative requirements (A) as well as the individual's coping ability (B) fluctuate over time. As long as the distance between them doesn't exceed tolerable stress ranges, no unmanageable overload occurs. In other words, stress is negated if high demands coincide with a potency to deal with them, as in point (1). Similarly, individuals may respond well despite impaired coping ability – assuming the requirements are comparably low, as in point (2). Stress occurs either when the coping ability is reduced (3), the requirements are too high (4), or both (5). High demands combined with a gradually reduced coping ability (6) can result in traumatising stress, such as severe burnout (ibid.).

Burnout

According to Schaufeli and Enzman, burnout is a multidimensional stress reaction with specific work-related characteristics; *burnout is a particular, multidimensional stress-response that includes characteristic negative, job-related attitudes and behaviours not covered by the traditional job stress concept* (Schaufeli & Enzman, 1998, p. 38). This multidimensional reaction is conceptualised in Maslach's definition of the term. *Burnout is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and reduced personal accomplishment that occurs among individuals who work with people in some capacity* (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996, p. 4).

Maslach's definition of burnout is operationalised by the self-assessment form Maslach's Burnout Inventory (Maslach et al., 1996), which is now used in more than 90% of surveys in the field (Schaufeli & Enzman, 1998). Maslach's Burnout Inventory is available in three versions: Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS), Educator's Survey (MBI-ES), and General Survey (MBI-GS) (Maslach et al., 1996). The first is geared toward client-orientated professions, the second is intended for teachers, while the third was developed to examine broader categories of occupations. MBI-GS, which is what was used in this study, has a more general application and conceptualises burnout primarily as a *crisis in the practitioner's relationship to work* (ibid.). In this regard, Maslach's definition differs from other interpretations of the term in that she emphasises how burnout is a non-clinical syndrome afflicting ordinary, working populations (Maslach, 1982; Maslach, et al., 1996; Maslach & Leiter, 1999) and therefore unrelated to psychiatric diagnoses such as fatigue syndrome (National Board of health, 2003).

Three dimensions of burnout are measured in MBI-GS: Emotional exhaustion, Cynicism, and Perceived efficacy.

Dimensions of burnout

Emotional exhaustion is caused by a prolonged emotional overexertion (Maslach, 1982; Maslach, et al., 1996; Maslach & Leiter, 1999). This type of fatigue is particularly prevalent in so-called contact professions, where duties include personal contact, and is emotionally taxing due to heavy demands on empathy and interpersonal relations (ibid.). Maintaining a balance between over-commitment and detachment from one's work and clients is very difficult in contact professions, where both extremes lead to emotional strain. Keeping professional distance is likely to strengthen the individual's resistance to over-commitment and Emotional exhaustion, but can also become a risk in itself as an additional stressor and barrier for personal commitment and work satisfaction.

According to Maslach (ibid.), Emotional exhaustion is the first line of response to demands which exceed the individual's emotional resources. A common reaction of this imbalance is the development of a cynical outlook, which could be understood as a way to create emotional distance between oneself and the draining demands of work.

Cynicism is defined as a disconnected attitude towards the profession and clients (ibid.). Commitment shifts to negative indifference and empathy is replaced by a dehumanised view of the clients. Cynicism can be regarded as a sort of dysfunctional coping mechanism, since it reduces energy and thus impairs professional efficiency (ibid.). According to the previously mentioned stress model (Trumbull & Appley, 1986), Cynicism enables a temporarily increased ability to cope which in the longer term will weaken the individual's combined resources.

The third dimension of burnout concerns the individual's *Perceived efficacy* in carrying out professional duties (Maslach, 1982; Maslach et al., 1996; Maslach & Leiter, 1999). Perceived efficacy is believed to be reduced in conjunction with the development of Emotional exhaustion and Cynicism, and can result in a lowered professional self-esteem. Low Perceived efficacy has a depressive component which can manifest as mental resignation, lack of confidence, and social seclusion from co-workers and clients (ibid.).

According to Maslach (Maslach et al., 1996), burnout can thus be understood as a continuum – a gradual process starting with initial engagement. The latter refers to an energetic condition in which the practitioner strives for optimal job performance, convinced of their own efficiency, while burnout implies a state of exhaustion characterised by a cynical outlook and lack of professional confidence (ibid.).

Causes of burnout

Research in this field indicates how burnout is primarily a condition with organisational origins (Maslach & Leiter, 1999; Schaufeli & Enzman, 1998). This is an important point since focus is placed on the work environment rather than the individual, which negates social stigma and blame. Burnout being mainly attributable to professional conditions does however not render personal characteristics irrelevant. For instance, Maslach and colleagues (1982; 1999) claim demographic factors such as age, gender, and level of education to be of particular importance here.

The professional environment in itself contains several elements which can heighten the risk of burnout (Maslach, 1982; Maslach & Leiter, 1999; Schaufeli & Enzman, 1998). A significant factor here is professions with high demands in relation to the individual's available resources. These strains might involve work overload, challenging duties, or emotionally draining jobs (Maslach, 1982). Additional risk factors include a perceived lack of control, little to no social support at the workplace, and moral conflicts where job requirements are not aligned with the individual's values (Maslach & Leiter, 1999). Similarly, organisational culture as well as rules and standards for workplace relationships contribute to an environment which either prevents or increases the risk of developing burnout (ibid.).

Consequences of burnout

For those afflicted by burnout syndrome, the potential consequences can be severe and the recovery time long (Maslach, 1982; Maslach & Leiter, 1999, Schaufeli & Enzman, 1998). Emotional exhaustion, Cynicism, and reduced Professional efficacy can render the employee less conscientious, with a diminished commitment and gradually deteriorating performance, which obviously means a serious decline in productivity (Maslach, 1982; Maslach & Leiter, 1999). Another consequence is that of private life, with worsened relations with family and friends (ibid.). Psychiatric disorders such as anxiety, depression, and sleeping problems are common burnout consequences (Maslach, 1982; Maslach & Leiter, in 1999; Schaufeli & Enzman, 1998; Wade, 2002). It can also assume somatic manifestations; headaches, gastrointestinal discomfort, back and neck pain, chronic fatigue, and so forth (ibid.). The result is a destructive spiral with emotional stress, immune deficiencies and insomnia, factors which in themselves hinder recovery (Maslach & Leiter, 1999; Ekman & A.c, 2002; Wade, 2002). Further on – cognitive effects such as impaired concentration, learning problems and memory difficulties have all been documented (ibid.). According to Trumble and

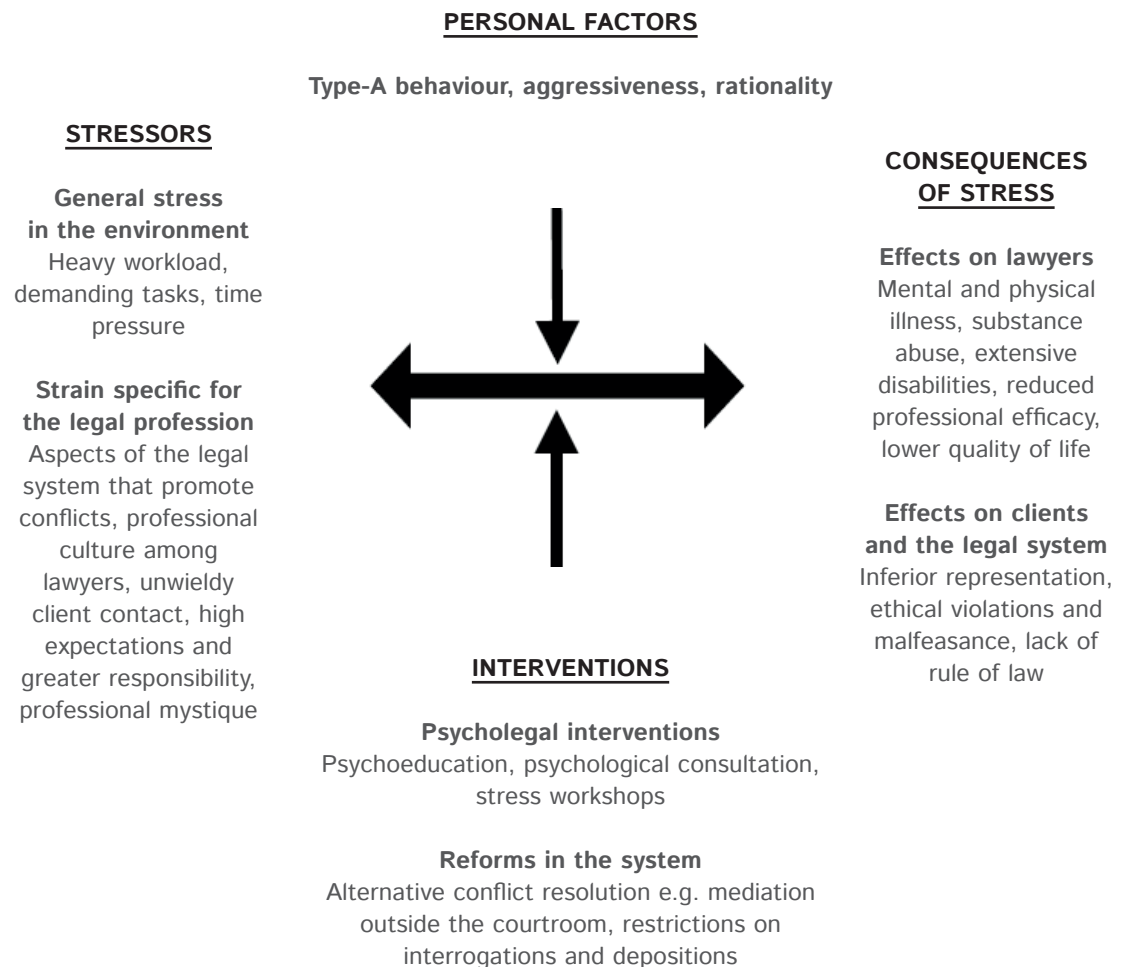
Appley's model (1986), this can be perceived as wide-ranging consequences on the psychological, social, and physical systems.

A model of stress among lawyers

In light of the research on American lawyers' work situation, Elwork and Benjamin (1995) have developed a model specifically for stress among lawyers. The model identifies four core areas which are central to the understanding of stress within this occupation: stressors, consequences of stress, personality factors, and interventions.

FIGURE 2

Model for stress in lawyers, freely after Elwork & Benjamin (1995).



Stressors

Elwork and Benjamin's model (1995) contain two categories of stressors in the legal profession. The first is *general stress in the environment* and includes classic factors such as high workload, demanding tasks and time constraints. The second category concerns *stresses specific to the legal profession*.

According to the model, lawyers face stressors which are unique for their profession. For example – there are aspects of the US legal system which promote conflict, as well as a certain lawyer culture requiring a zealous professional style (ibid.). According to the authors, legal-specific stressors are likely to include the large burden of responsibility and challenging client relations. A complicating factor in lawyer-client relationships are the basic assumptions and expectations of the cooperation's goals (Maslach, 1982). Whereas

lawyers might enter the collaboration with intentions of providing legal aid, the client may have various problems and emotional needs with which they unconsciously expect help from the lawyer (ibid.). Thus, the relationship contains unspoken demands, silent expectations and emotive needs which can contribute to a stressful work situation for lawyers.

The authors also regard Cherniss' (1980) theory of *the professional mystique* as a possible factor in understanding inherent strains within the legal profession. The professional mystique is a concept referring to prevalent public misconceptions about qualified occupations, lawyers being one example. An obvious side-effect of the professional mystique is how it tends to create unrealistic expectations from the public, but also from legal students (ibid.). Newly graduated lawyers' encounters with everyday reality can as such be considered a difficult transition and reassessment, which can in itself contribute to the development of stress and burnout. Similarly, the professional mystique can cause difficulties in creating a realistic picture of one's own responsibilities and limitations. Unrealistic expectations from clients along with unfulfilled hopes about the degree of autonomy, self-fulfilment and collegiality within the occupation can be regarded as strains associated with the so-called professional mystique (ibid.).

In Elwork and Benjamin's original model (1995) *personal factors* are included as a third category of stressors. However, we assume that personal factors – which according to the model include type-A behaviour, a strongly rational orientation and characteristics such as aggression – affect the relationships between stressors and their consequences to a greater extent, which is why they've been placed in their own category.

Consequences of stress

The model for consequences of stress is divided into two categories; *effects on lawyers* as well as *effects on clients and the legal system* (ibid.). The first category includes stress-induced mental and physical conditions, addiction, as well as cognitive, emotional and social disabilities. With this comes decreased effectiveness in the professional practice and a generally reduced quality of life. Concerns also include consequences for clients and the judicial system – incompetent representation, ethical violations and malfeasance, as well as breaches in rule of law (ibid.).

Interventions

In the category *interventions*, Elwork and Benjamin (1995) have collected responsive action to *consequences of stress* which emerged from studies performed in the United States. Intervention consists of two main areas; *psycholegal interventions*, and *reforms in the system*. The first group is an interdisciplinary area between psychology and law. Examples include training in basic psychology – so-called psychoeducation – psychiatric consultation, and stress management workshops. The psychological interventions were developed based on American research and have proven effective in reducing and preventing stress and burnout (Daicoff, 2004; Elwork & Benjamin, 1995).

The second group of interventions is aimed at the legal system, which to a large extent dictates the rules of the game for lawyers and is therefore an important work environment factor. The American system promotes a very aggressive and confrontational lawyer style, which is assumed to strongly contribute to stressful work conditions for U.S. lawyers. One way of reducing the rigors of the lawyers' work situation is therefore to implement

reforms in the system. Examples include suggestions pertaining to mediation outside the courtroom and restrictions in the amount of hearings and depositions (Elwork & Benjamin, 1995).

Despite the fact that Elwork and Benjamin's model is based on research into American lawyers, we find the model helpful. We'd also like to point out that there's established research in the field to take advantage of, should Swedish and American lawyers' work situations turn out to be comparable.

Purpose

The survey's purpose was to identify stressors in the professional environment of Swedish lawyers – partly for the profession as a whole, partly for different subsets. The survey was also intended to highlight the extent to which lawyers' demographic background and working conditions correlate to health problems and burnout.

Questions

1. To what extent does the survey participants' reported burnout compare to Maslach's Burnout Inventory – General Survey (MBI-GS), and how do their levels relate to those of comparable groups?
2. Are there any differences in working conditions, health problems and burnout among groups of lawyers in regards to their field of practice, gender, geographic region, age, professional experience and number of colleagues at the office?
3. What working conditions and demographic factors are most strongly related to health problems and burnout among lawyers?

Method

The study plan was prepared with understanding acquired from literature, research, and qualitative interviews with practicing lawyers. It also included a questionnaire filled out by members of the Swedish Bar Association. The survey guidelines were approved with minor modifications during a meeting at the Bar Association's headquarters

Procedure

Printing and distribution of the questionnaire was administered and financed by the Bar Association. The survey was sent by post to all active members and also included a cover letter (Appendix A) from the Bar Association, information about the survey (Appendix B) and a stamped envelope addressed to the Department of Psychology at Stockholm University. The information explained how participation was on a voluntary basis and guaranteed full confidentiality. This was ensured by the Bar Association dispatching the parcels, questionnaires not having any identifying marks, and responses being sent directly to the University. The cover letter included instructions on how to fill out the questionnaire, last response date, and relevant contact information. Three weeks after the first mailing, a reminder was sent from the Bar Association to all potential participants by e-mail (Appendix C) as well as posted on the Bar Association's intranet. After an additional week had passed, another reminder was sent by e-mail (Appendix D), at which point the time for replying was extended by two weeks.

Encoding and creation of the data file was conducted by a commercial company. The cost of this was covered by the Bar Association.

Research participants

After consultation with the Bar Association, it was decided to invite all active lawyers to participate in the survey. Lawyers inactive due to retirement, disability pension, long-term sick leave, personal leave, parental leave, and so forth were excluded. As such, the survey was addressed to the entire community of practicing Swedish lawyers.

In total, 3 841 envelopes were sent out and, following the two reminders, 2 318 completed questionnaires were returned – rendering a response rate of 60.3%.

The participants' demographic background is described in *Table 1*. Most participants were men, the average age was about 50 and professional experience around 15 years. Just over a third work in metropolitan areas. This analysis approaches the lawyer community against the background of demographic information obtained from the Bar Association. As shown – besides the number of colleagues at the office, there are no significant differences in demographic context between the group of responders and the entire lawyer community. The difference in number of colleagues at the office is however assumed to depend on incomplete documentation for the entire profession, since 40% are not represented.

TABLE 1

Demographic data for the entire population and group respondents.

	The entire population				The responding group			
	N	M	SD	%	N	M	SD	%
Age	3896	50	10.76		2237	49.76	10.51	
Work experience, # years	3884	13.34	10.50		2280	14.72	10.12	
Number of colleagues					2278	30.54	66.56	
Sex	4361				2257			
• Men				79.8				78.8
• Women				20.2				21.2
Geographical area					2262			
• Big city								61.1
• The rest of the country								38.9

The questionnaire

Data was collected using a questionnaire compiled by the authors specifically for this purpose (Appendix E).

Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey

The three dimensions of burnout were investigated by utilising the scales *Emotional exhaustion*, *Cynicism*, and *Perceived efficacy*, which constitute the MBI-GS (Swedish translation by MBI-GS, Maslach et al., 1996).

The scale *Emotional exhaustion* indicates the respondent's lack of emotive energy (5 items; e.g. "I feel emotionally drained by my work"), *Cynicism* reflects an indifferent or detached attitude to work (5 items; e.g. "I've become less involved in my work"), while *Perceived efficacy* concerns the respondent's work efficiency (6 items; for example: "I'm sure I am effective and get things done at work"). Responses are ranked on a scale from 0 (never) to 6 (always). High scores on Emotional exhaustion and Cynicism combined with low scores on Perceived efficacy indicate severe burnout.

Working conditions and health problems

The survey participants' working conditions were investigated using the scales *Quantitative workload* (Beehr, Walsh & Taber, 1976), *Qualitative workload* (Sverke, Hellgren & Öhrming, 1997), Job satisfaction (Sverke, Hellgren, Sjöberg & 1997 based on Brayfield & Rothe, 1951) and Over-commitment (Sverke & Hellgren, 2002).

Quantitative workload refers to the sheer quantity of tasks (3 items; e.g. "I often have much to do at work"), while *Qualitative workload* refers to the quality of accomplishment (4

items; e.g. "My work contains elements that place too high demands with regards to my capacity"). *Job satisfaction* indicates the respondent's contentment with their work (3 items; e.g. "I'm satisfied with the job I have"), while *Over-commitment* measures the ability to separate professional from private life (6 items; e.g. "My work is on my mind even on weekends"). The statements are ranked on a scale from 1 (Not true at all) to 5 (Completely true), where high scores on Qualitative and Quantitative workload as well as Over-commitment indicate a large degree of work-related stress, whereas high scores on Job satisfaction indicate professional fulfilment.

Physiological concerns were examined using the scales *Health problems* (Isaksson & Johansson, 1997 based on Andersson, 1986) and *Quality of sleep* (Gustafsson, 2003).

The scale *Health problems* refers to physical ailments (10 items; e.g. "Heart or chest pain?") While *Quality of sleep* pertains to different sleeping problems (4 items; e.g. "I wake up several times a night and have trouble falling back asleep"). The claims are ranked on a scale of 1 (never or almost never) to 5 (always or almost always), where high scores on *Health problems* and *Quality of sleep* indicate a number of health and sleeping issues.

Demographics

The questionnaire also included questions related to demographics; *gender*, *age*, *field of practice* (Business law, Employment law, Corporate law, Criminal law, etc.), *geographic area* (Stockholm/Malmö/Gothenburg or the rest of the country), *professional experience* and *number of colleagues* at the respondent's office. Questions regarding field of practice and geographical area were deemed interesting by representatives of the Bar Association. The survey also allowed participants to comment freely, such response was however not taken into consideration in this analysis.

Data processing

A software called The Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) was used for analysis of the feedback and correlation calculations (Brace, Kemp & Snelgar, 2003). A progressive hierarchical regression analysis was employed to investigate to which extent demographic factors and working conditions could predict Health problems, Quality of sleep, Emotional exhaustion, Cynicism and Perceived efficacy.

Results

Working conditions, health problems and burnout

Descriptions of and reliability for all the survey's parameters are described in *Table 2*. Among other things, it illustrates how the participants are to a higher degree quantitatively rather than qualitatively burdened ($M = 3.41$ respectively 2.22), find their job highly satisfying ($M = 4.11$), are somewhat over-committed ($M = 3.16$) and report moderate health and sleep problems ($M = 1.61$ and 2.19 , respectively).

TABLE 2

Number of observations, mean values, standard deviations and reliability coefficients for all scales.

Scale (number of items)	N	M	SD	α
Quantitative workload (3)	2269	3.41	0.94	0.77
Qualitative workload (4)	2271	2.22	0.86	0.75
Job satisfaction (3)	2288	4.11	0.89	0.94
Over-commitment (6)	2285	3.16	0.99	0.88
Health problems (10)	2218	1.61	0.57	0.77
Sleep quality (4)	2280	2.19	0.77	0.71
Emotional exhaustion (5)	2278	2.09	1.21	0.83
Cynicism (5)	2203	1.67	1.03	0.74
Perceived efficacy (6)	2230	4.36	0.80	0.78

Burnout among Swedish lawyers and other comparable groups

Table 3 shows mean values for the three scales of MBI-GS (Emotional exhaustion, Cynicism, and Perceived efficacy) to vary between studies of different professional groups and nationalities. Comparatively, the Swedish lawyers are relatively high in terms of Emotional exhaustion ($M = 2.09$) and Perceived efficacy ($M = 4.36$) and closer to the average regarding Cynicism ($M = 1.67$).

TABLE 3

The number of observations, mean values, standard deviations, and reliability coefficients for the three subscales of the burnout scale MBI-GS reported for lawyers in the present study, as well as for comparable groups in previous studies.

	Emotional exhaustion				Cynicism			Perceived efficiency		
	N	M	SD	~	M	SD	~	M	SD	~
Sweden										
• Lawyers ¹	2318	2.09	1.21	0.83	1.67	1.03	0.74	4.36	0.80	0.78
• IT consultants ²	186	2.36	1.08	0.78	2.32	1.53	0.75	-	-	-
Holland										
• University staff ³	336	1.46	0.87	0.86	1.55	0.96	0.72	3.25	0.82	0.73
• Computer engineers ³	179	1.89	1.00	0.87	1.74	1.00	0.74	3.54	0.47	0.69
• Officials	956	1.57	1.11	-	1.54	1.07	-	4.14	0.96	-
Finland										
• IT consultants ⁴	289	2.09	1.26	-	1.46	1.32	-	4.80	1.04	-

¹ = present study ² = Eriksson Hallberg, 2005 ³ = Taris et al., 1999 ⁴ = Maslach et al., 1994

Table 4 shows a categorisation of reporting on MBI-GS for a large number of professionals in North America (Maslach et al., 1996). According to this analysis, the Swedish lawyers' burnout levels fall within the category of "medium" for both Emotional exhaustion and Cynicism as well as Perceived efficacy.

TABLE 4

Categorisation of MBI-GS values based on North American sample (N = 3727, Maslach et al, 1996).

subscales MBI-GS	Range of reported burnout		
	low (lower third)	medium (middle third)	high (upper third)
Emotional exhaustion	≤ 2.00	2.01-3.19	≥ 3.20
Cynicism	≤ 1.00	1.01-2.19	≥ 2.20
Perceived efficacy	≤ 4.00	4.01-4.99	≥ 5.00

Field of practice, health problems and burnout

A substantial contingent of the lawyers (22%) provided more than one answer to the question concerning main field of practice (Appendix F), despite instructions to only specify one option. It's impossible to determine whether any of the specialisations are dominant or to what extent they focus on the different fields. For this reason, we have divided the participants into two groups – those who reported a specific field a practice, and those who gave multiple answers.

Single vs. multiple practice areas

Business law, criminal law, and family law were the largest categories in both of these groups (Appendix F). The trend was for practice fields with low representation among lawyers with only one principal focus area to be more common among those with versatile operations. It is thus apparent how there are very few lawyers entirely dedicated to, for example, administrative or insurance law.

In Table 5, the two groups are compared in some demographic aspects. Minor differences in gender distribution and number of colleagues at the office were detected. A higher rate of female (25.7%) than male (20.1%) lawyers responded with multiple practice areas. Lawyers active within multiple fields typically worked at firms which were on average smaller (16.2 colleagues) than those who reported a primary focus (34.7 colleagues).

TABLE 5

Demographic information for lawyers with one business area focus, diversified activities, as well as the whole group of respondent.

	One response			Multiple responses			One + multiple responses		
	M	SD	%	M	SD	%	M	SD	%
N		1784			504			2288	
Age	49.00	10.56		52.40	9.93		49.76	10.51	
Job experience	14.35	10.13		15.97	9.99		14.72	10.12	
No. of colleagues	34.65	71.55		16.22	41.88		30.54	66.56	
Sex									
• Male			79.9			74.3			78.8
• Female			20.1			25.7			21.2
Geographical area									
• Big city			61.1			61.7			61.1
• Rest of the country			38.9			38.3			38.9

Thus, the demographic differences between lawyers reporting one field of practice and those with mixed activity were negligible. For the comparison of groups within different fields, we therefore chose to focus on those who gave a single response.

An analysis of variance showed statistically significant differences regarding working conditions, health issues, and burnout among the three largest practice fields (Appendix G). Family law attorneys and criminal lawyers showed similar stress symptoms with higher Qualitative workload, Emotional exhaustion, and Cynicism than business lawyers. Consequently, these two fields experienced health and sleep problems to a higher extent, as well as lower efficiency, compared business lawyers. However, there were no significant differences between lawyers in family and criminal law. The statistically established differences in averages for the three biggest business focus areas are displayed in *Figures 3 and 4*.

FIGURE 3

Significant average scale values for Qualitative workload, Health problems and Quality of sleep in the three main areas of activity: business law, criminal law, and family law.

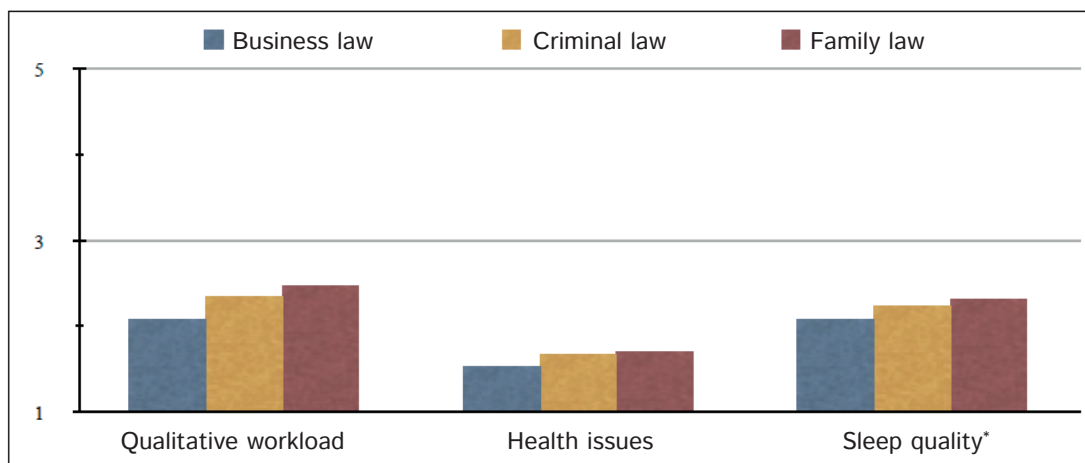
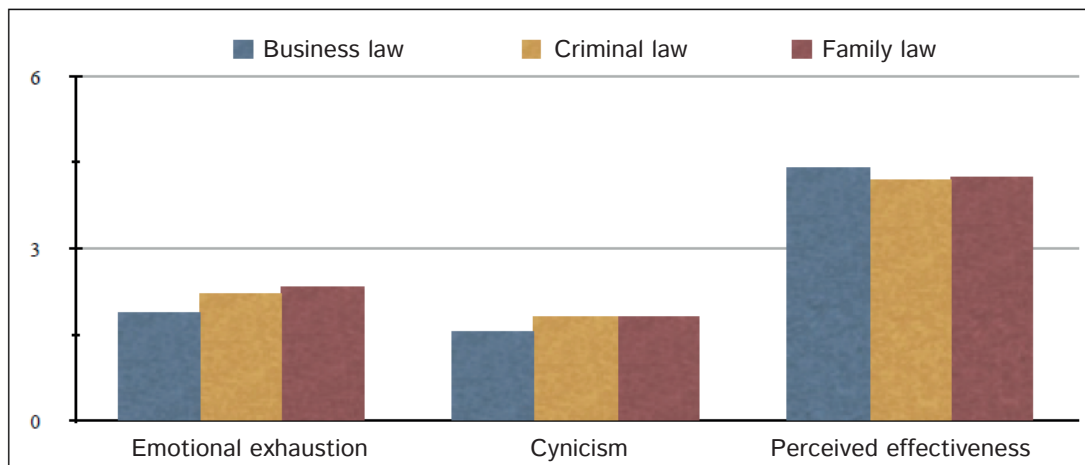


FIGURE 4

Significant average scale values for the burnout scale's subscales for the three main activity areas: business law, criminal law, and family law.



Other demographics in relation to health problems and burnout

Correlation calculations (Appendix H) and average values (Appendix I) illustrated how results among other demographic subgroups varied slightly regarding working conditions, health problems, and burnout.

Women reported higher levels of stress than men, though it was only Quantitative workload, Health problems, Quality of sleep and Emotional exhaustion where the differences were statistically significant. These are reported in the *Figures 5 and 6*.

FIGURE 5

Average results for Quantitative workload, Health problems and Quality of sleep for men and women.

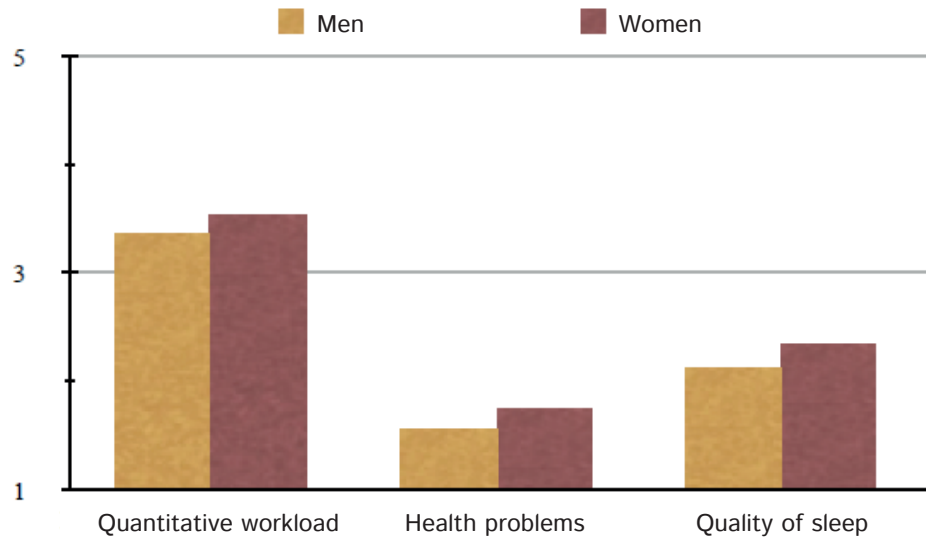
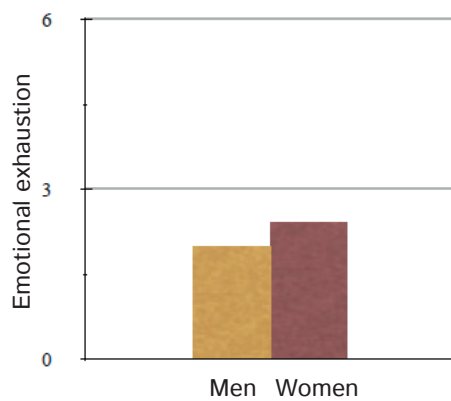


FIGURE 6

Average reporting of Emotional exhaustion for men and women.



Only minor differences in Qualitative workload and Perceived efficacy were detected between metropolitan areas and the rest of the country. Lawyers in rural areas reported slightly higher Qualitative workload and lower Perceived efficacy than their colleagues in the bigger cities.

Less experienced lawyers reported higher stress levels than their older colleagues. Significant differences were identified for Over-commitment, both Quantitative and Qualitative workload, Quality of sleep, Emotional exhaustion, Cynicism, and Perceived efficacy. Similarly, the junior lawyers felt less fulfilled with their work compared to more senior colleagues.

The general trend is for those with the least professional experience to report higher strain in all parameters except Health problems. However, those with shorter professional experience reported higher values for Perceived efficacy than their veteran colleagues.

With regards to the number of colleagues at the office, there were only minor differences. There was a small tendency for those who either worked alone or had few colleagues to report higher workload than those at larger firms. The only significant discrepancies were found in Quantitative workload, Quality of sleep, and Perceived efficacy.

Conditions which overall predict health problems and burnout

In order to examine the various demographic factors and work-related conditions relevant to health problems and burnout, a hierarchical regression analysis was conducted. The authors' analysis of correlation relationships are presented in *Figure 7*.

FIGURE 7

The model of hierarchical regression analysis.

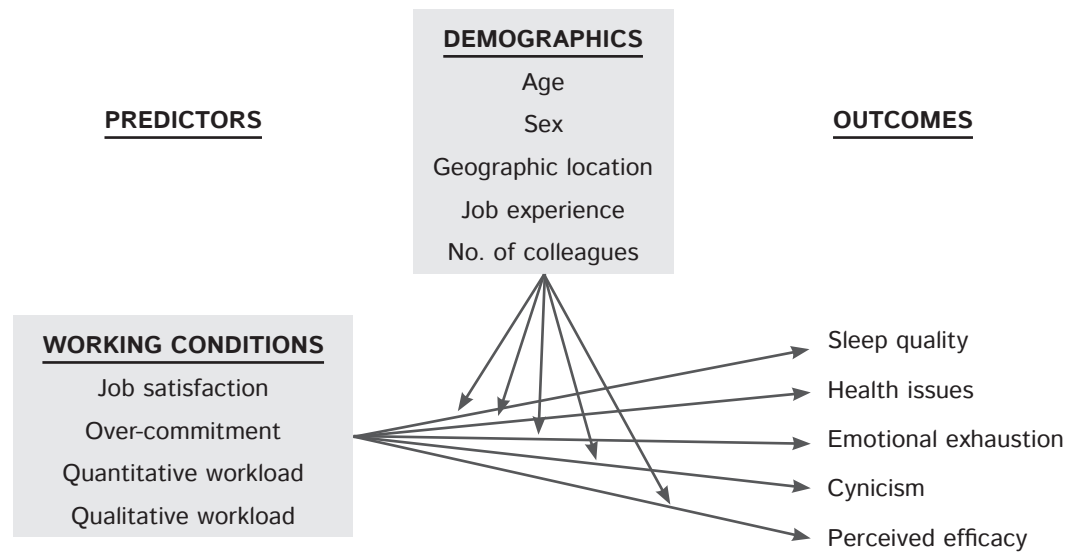


TABLE 6

Results of progressive hierarchical regression analysis with standardised regression coefficients (N = 2314).

Results are presented in *Table 6*. First up is age and gender, secondly geographic area, professional experience and number of colleagues at the office – and in the third step Quantitative workload, Qualitative workload, Job satisfaction, and Over-commitment.

	Health disorders			Sleep quality			Emotional fatigue			Cynicism			Perceived efficacy			
	Step	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Age		.013	.015	.055	-.016	.039	.105	-.179	-.167	-.051	-.106	-.162	-.038	-.040	-.072	-.135
								***	***		***	*				***
Sex		.140	.140	.142	.109	.104	.110	.104	.103	.107	.002	.004	.019	.023	.026	.015
		***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***					
Geographical area			.013	-.007		.001	-.023		.070	.028		.058	.026		-.061	-.054
								**			*			**	**	**
Job experience			-.011	.019		-.085	-.046		-.044	.004		.044	.062		.068	.065
						*						*				
Number of colleagues			-.022	-.019		-.055	-.052		-.046	-.045		-.041	-.025		.045	.032
						*	**		*	**						
Quantitative workload				-.009			.014			.125			-.030			.085
										***						***
Qualitative workload						.120				.201			.181			-.072
						***				***			***			**
Job satisfaction					-.131		-.208			-.317			-.526			.359
					***		***			***			***			***
Over-commitment						.261		.344		.324			.113			-.021
						***	***	***	***	***			***			
R ²		.019	.020	.166	.013	.019	.288	.052	.061	.516	.011	.018	.422	0.003	.011	.159

* p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001

As shown by Table 6, it's primarily Quality of sleep, Emotional exhaustion and Cynicism which are predicated to a significant extent by the selected parameters. Furthermore, it was shown how variables of age, geographic area, work-life experience, number of co-workers as well as Quantitative workload had little to no bearing on their predication. They also proved less significant for Health problems and Perceived efficacy. Generally, the third-step variables provided stronger contributions to the mutually explained variance than age, sex and the variables in step two.

With the regression model, the proportion of explained variance was 29% for Quality of sleep, 52% for Emotional exhaustion, and 42% for Cynicism.

Figures 8, 9, and 10 show examples of relationships between variables in light of the regression analysis. Figure 8 illustrates the negative correlation between Quality of sleep and Job satisfaction, and the positive relationship between sleeping disorders and Over-commitment.

FIGURE 8

Relationship between Quality of sleep and well-being vs. Over-commitment.

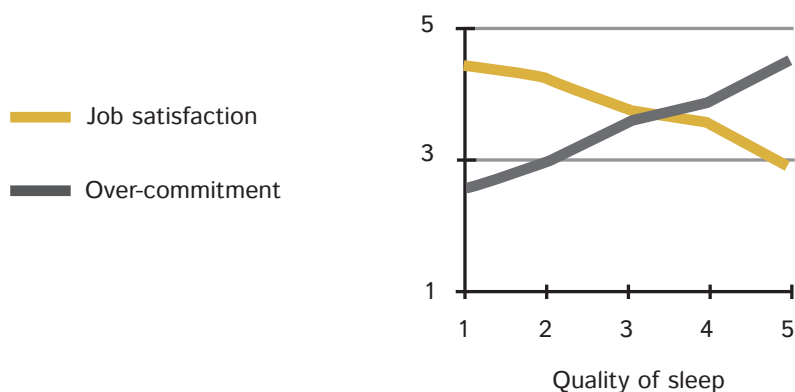


Figure 9 shows a similar pattern with a positive correlation between Emotional exhaustion and Over-commitment, as well as a negative relationship between well-being and Emotional exhaustion.

FIGURE 9

Relationship between Emotional exhaustion and Job satisfaction vs. Over-commitment..

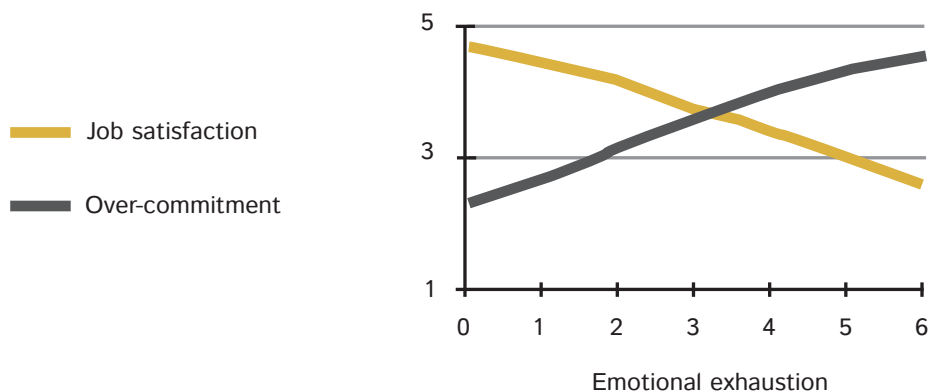
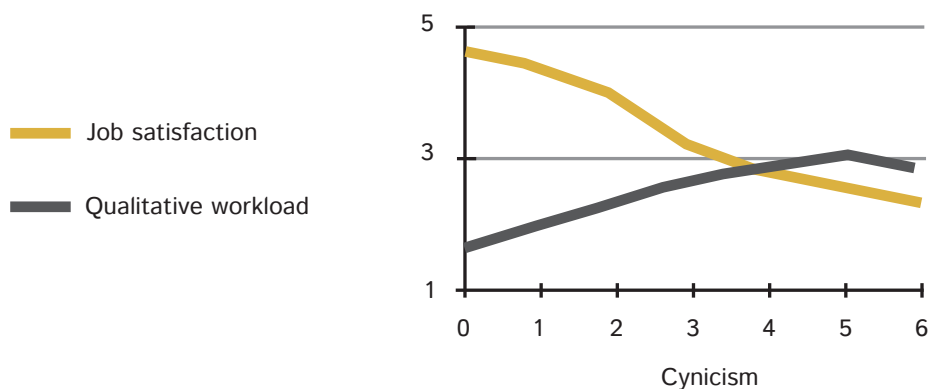


Figure 10 demonstrates a negative relationship between Cynicism and Job satisfaction, and a positive correlation between Cynicism and Qualitative workload.

FIGURE 10

Correlation between cynicism and well-being at work vs. Qualitative workload.



Discussion

This section features a discussion of the study's questions. Coming up next is a focused look on the important variables, a discussion of the study's methodological strengths and weaknesses, as well as the findings' implications.

Discussion

To what extent does the surveyed lawyers report burnout according to Maslach's Burnout Inventory (MBI-GS), and how do their levels compare to other professions?

Swedish lawyers score relatively high on the scales for Emotional exhaustion and Perceived efficacy, but Cynicism scores are closer to the mean when compared with other MBI-GS surveys of various professional groups. Comparisons to similar studies on lawyers from other countries would've been most interesting, but as far as we know there are none in the research literature. The selection of comparator groups was made under assumptions of similarities in educational status and work situation regarding intellectual stress.

According to Maslach's (Maslach et al., 1996) normalisation, developed against the background of the MBI-GS surveys of American professionals, Swedish lawyers fall within the "medium" category on all MBI-GS scales. One should however be careful when drawing conclusions based on the normalisation (Schaufeli & Enzman, 1998), since it's well-documented that results on MBI-GS vary in light of cultural context (Taris et al., 1999). For example – Leiter (Knowledge for Health, 2005) suggests there's a massive cultural difference between the United States and Europe, in particular Northern Europe where MBI-GS scores are associated with more debilitating symptoms than those reported from the United States. Following this line of reasoning, the results of Swedish lawyers could potentially be an underestimation and reflect more severe symptoms of burnout compared to the U.S. normalisation. The categorisation of the Swedish lawyers' results on the MBI-GS should therefore be considered with certain reservations.

One should also take into account the so-called "healthy workers effect" – this reasoning suggests that all surveys of occupations in strenuous working conditions reflect only those who are healthiest, since their more stressed colleagues may have already left the profession. In this instance, the respondents represent active and healthy employees within the profession – since lawyers who were not active due to long-term sick leave and similar were not included. This could result in the population appearing less strained than it actually is. Further on, one might speculate whether the most stressed lawyers even took the time to answer the questionnaire, and what significance this might have had for survey results.

An interesting pattern emerges with Swedish lawyers' profile in regards to burnout – the combination of relatively high scores for Emotional exhaustion and Perceived efficacy. These factors are usually in stark contrast to each other, where high scores for Emotional exhaustion correlate to low scores for Perceived efficacy (Maslach et al., 1996). Following Maslach and colleagues' (ibid.) definition of burnout development as a gradual process ranging from professional commitment to exhaustion, the attorneys' profile could be indicative of early stages of burnout;

Emotional exhaustion has already developed, whereas the Perceived efficacy is at the time of the survey still intact.

Are there differences in working conditions, health problems, and burnout among groups of lawyers in regards to field of practice, age, gender, geographic area, professional experience, and number of colleagues at the office?

This study has shown there to be some differences. Lawyers with family and criminal law as main field of practice reported generally higher stress than those mainly focusing on business law. The greatest disparity was with regards to Qualitative workload and Emotional exhaustion (Appendix G). According to Maslach's terminology (Maslach & Leiter, in 1999), the human law profession can to a higher degree than for instance business law be regarded as a so-called contact profession. Contact with vulnerable clients is an essential part of work duties. In accordance with research in this area, the present study shows how family and criminal law – both defined as contact professions – run significantly higher risk of developing burnout. The requirements for both empathy and a professional distance to clients in great need of help are in this regard considered emotional strains, prompting developments of Emotional exhaustion and Cynicism. This is in line with American research, which has demonstrated how certain legal specialisations are associated with more stress than others (Elwork, 1997, Zimmerman, 1983, Eisel, 1994).

Female lawyers reported more stress and lower Job satisfaction than their male counterparts. This is also mirrored in international research, which shows female lawyers to a higher degree than men expressing professional dissatisfaction and perceiving the work-life environment as more negative and demanding (Elwork & Benjamin, 1995, org. The American Bar Association, 1991, Anleu, 1991, Hirsch, in 1989, MacCorquodale & Jensen, 1993, Rosenberg, Perlstadt & Phillips, 1993, Weinberg & Tittle, 1987). Additionally, American female lawyers report specific gender-related stress factors such as sexual harassment and workplace discrimination (Elwork & Benjamin, in 1995, the American Bar Association, 1990). This problem has also been highlighted in Sweden (Jusek, 2006), which means it's possible that sexual harassment and discrimination against female lawyers play a role in their answers for this study.

Swedish studies on women in leadership positions indicate a higher sense of conflict between work and private life, as well as a greater overall workload than male colleagues (Frankenhaeuser, in 1995, org. SCB, 1990/1991). According to Trumbull and Appley's dynamic process model (1986), the gender differences likely stem from women's greater responsibilities in the social, psychological and physical systems. For example; the so-called double burden of professional life coupled with unpaid domestic labour such as household chores and childbearing. Examples of strain on the physical system for double burdened women in skilled professions include heightened blood pressure and secretion of stress hormones after 5 pm on working days, in contrast to values measured in males at the same time (Frankenhaeuser, 1995).

According to Maslach's (1982) research, there are gender differences in the experience and reporting of various aspects of burnout. She argues that women to a greater extent experience Emotional exhaustion compared to men, who are in turn more likely to develop Cynicism (ibid.). In the present study, however, women placed higher for Emotional exhaustion ($M = 2.43$ respectively 2.00), and very close to the men for Cynicism ($M = 1.72$, respectively 1.66).

In terms of age and experience, it turned out those who reported the most strain were the youngest and least experienced lawyers. Naturally, there's a certain interaction between the two variables – where the youngest are also those with the least experience, which obviously accounts for the similarities between them. According to Maslach (1982), there's a strong negative correlation between age and burnout, but while work experience

plays an important role it's not the full explanation. Personal maturity also seems to prevent veterans from developing burnout (ibid.). Presumably, social support systems such as collegiate networks and family are well-established with increased age – which according to Trumbull and Appley's model (1986) contributes to an increased ability to cope with harmful stressors.

Research indicates how burnout symptoms decrease with age and professional experience, and most demonstrably for Emotional exhaustion and Cynicism (Schaufeli & Enzman, 1998). This tendency was reproduced in the present study, particularly noticeable for Emotional exhaustion (Appendix I). Schaufeli and Enzman (1998) have demonstrated how burnout often occurs early in a career, and for American lawyers the critical point appears to come around two years of professional practice (ibid.). This is in line with the present study's findings, which showed lawyers with a working experience of zero to five years place highest for both Emotional exhaustion and Cynicism (Appendix I). It bears mentioning, however, that this group showed no evidence of reduced efficiency – quite the opposite.

One could also imagine the so-called professional mystique to be a contributing factor to the perceived workload during early days of practice, where newly graduated lawyers' preconceived notions about their occupation can in themselves become stress factors (Cherniss, 1980). According to Maslach (1982) burnout in early stages results in a kind of "natural selection" process, in which those who are afflicted leave the profession after a few years. The older lawyers are thus individuals who have passed the critical stage and made a career in the profession, which is why it's natural to find lower levels of burnout among them (ibid.). That young lawyers, especially women, leave the profession to build a future in other occupations is also a current problem within the Swedish lawyer community, as brought to public attention by *Advokaten* (Ramberg, 2006).

The number of co-workers at the office appears to play some role in the experience of stress, where those who worked alone or with only a few colleagues reported higher Quantitative workload, more sleeping disorders, and slightly lower scores in Perceived efficacy. The findings are consistent with other research in the area, where social support has proven to shield against work-related stress (Ekman & Arnetz, 2002; Schaufeli & Enzman, 1998; Wahrborg, 2002). According to Trumbull and

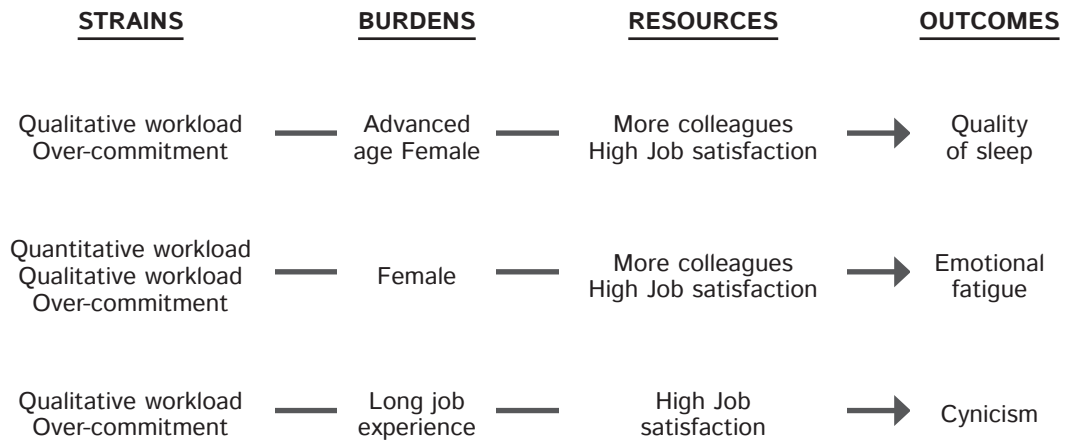
Appley's stress model (1986), social assistance strengthens the resources in the social system – at which point the individual's coping ability increases.

Which working conditions and demographic factors are most strongly related to health problems and burnout among lawyers?

The results of a tiered hierarchical regression analysis showed Qualitative workload, Job satisfaction, and Over-commitment to have the highest correlation to sleeping problems, Emotional exhaustion and Cynicism. From the demographic perspective, gender was most strongly related to Emotional exhaustion and insomnia, with age also playing some role in the latter. A graphical representation of the regression analysis is presented in *Figure 11*, where strenuous working conditions as well as both detrimental and strengthening demographic factors are all shown as predictors to various outcomes.

FIGURE 11

Graphic representation of the regression analysis results.



As shown, the variables of age and experience take on another meaning than in the descriptive analysis. We can see how advanced age in combination with female gender, Qualitative workload and Over-commitment contribute to worsened Quality of sleep. In other words, older women with higher Qualitative workload and Over-commitment constitute an exception against the more general pattern where younger lawyers report more sleeping problems. The parameter work-life experience also stands out in the regression analysis, in that it's a strong indicator for Cynicism in combination with high Qualitative workload and Over-commitment.

Discussion of selected variables

Qualitative workload was shown to be a considerably contributing factor to sleeping disorders, Emotional exhaustion and Cynicism. *Quantitative workload* on the other hand was only related to Emotional exhaustion. As such, it would appear as if it's the complexity of duties, heavy responsibilities and unreasonable demands rather than the actual amount of work which pave the way for sleeping problems, Emotional exhaustion and Cynicism. Since the Qualitative workload scale doesn't identify the specific stressors, one can only speculate. Elwork and Benjamin's model (1995) suggest that Qualitative workload is likely to contain both stressors from the general environment as well as the legal profession itself. Overbearing responsibility and unreasonable demands are likely to be at least partly attributable to lawyer-client relations, where clients' needs and problems often contain a psychological component which lies both outside the lawyer's responsibilities and areas of competence. Consequently, they exert emotional strain on the lawyer. According to Maslach (Maslach, 1982; Maslach et al., 1996), this is the kind of stress which results in Emotional exhaustion, Cynicism, and finally a reduced efficiency.

Over-commitment was also shown to be a strong contributing factor to sleeping problems, Emotional exhaustion and Cynicism. Eriksson Hallberg (2005) has in her doctoral thesis made empirically grounded distinctions between two kinds of commitment. One variant is associated with type-A behaviour, which is the type of commitment usually detected in driven and performance-oriented individuals. The second is driven by pathos, internal motivation and desire (ibid.). According to Eriksson Hallberg, the type-A variety of dedication doesn't lead to burnout in itself, but primarily to exhaustion and cardiovascular disease. The second variant on the other hand, termed "passionate commitment", can

lead to burnout (ibid.) – it has similarities to Maslach's description of pre-burnout conditions (Maslach, 1982; Maslach & Leiter; 1999). Schaufeli and Enzman might have been on to something when they examined a meta-analysis (Schaufeli & Enzman, 1998, org. Lee & Ashforth, 1996) and found the level of inner peace to correlate somewhat higher with burnout than satisfaction based on external factors such as status and money. To become a lawyer is a long and arduous process, it requires both motivation and high performance. American research confirms type-A-like character traits to be more common among law students than the population at large (Daicoff, 1997, Daicoff, 2004), but needless to say there's of course representation of both kinds of commitment in the profession. One interesting question raised is how different kinds of commitment affect the physical and mental health of lawyers – and by extension, the results of this survey. As far as the authors can determine, both types affect the scale *Over-commitment*, which is why Eriksson Hallberg's distinction (2005) might be worth taking into consideration for future studies in the field.

In Schaufeli and Enzman's research summary (1998) *Job satisfaction* shows significant negative correlation to burnout. In the present study, Job satisfaction appears to serve in a protective fashion against developments of health issues and burnout – primarily sleeping problems, Emotional exhaustion, and Cynicism. Although demographic factors showed differences in Job satisfaction, the lawyers overall seemed very content ($M = 4.11$) with their work, which stands in stark contrast to surveyed conditions among American lawyers (Elwork & Benjamin, 1995, American Bar Association, 1991).

Methodological strengths and weaknesses

Common criticisms of surveys relate to reliability, validity, and generalisability. This study, however, shows satisfying levels of reliability and generalisability. As shown in *Table 2*, Cronbachs alpha for the parameters used scored consistently high (0.71-0.94), indicating credible measurement instruments and high reliability. The study is based on a comprehensive survey aimed at the overall population of active Swedish lawyers, which also bolsters reliability and contributes to a high level of generalisability. The fact that essentially no demographic differences were found between the overall lawyer population and those who participated in the study strongly contributes to its generalisability (*Table 1*).

Of the 3 841 questionnaires sent out, 2 318 were returned – adding up to a fully acceptable response rate of 60.3%. According to representatives of the Swedish Bar Association, this should be considered a high response rate for this target group.

A methodological weakness of this study is that it's a cross-sectional survey, which compared to longitudinal studies is an impediment in drawing conclusions about causality. A repetition of the survey at a later occasion would significantly strengthen its validity. A more concrete methodological issue concerns the question of main field of practice. The response options were compiled as a joint effort with representatives of the Swedish Bar Association, in order to be relevant for practitioners of all legal areas. Such a large proportion (22%) giving more than one answer indicates how many do not consider themselves as having *one main field of practice*, while 5.3% checked "Other field", indicating that the response options weren't entirely all-encompassing. This problem, along with the subsequent difficulties in analysis, raises the issue of whether the practice field categorisation was methodologically correct.

Seen from a broader perspective it should also be taken into account how due to the selected scales, this study only examines certain aspects of Swedish lawyers' working

situation and health problems. The reason we opted to use MBI-GS was primarily due to its status as a well-proven instrument (Schaufeli & Enzman, 1998), with a reliability and structure which has been empirically established in a number of studies (Maslach et al, 1996; Schaufeli & Enzman, 1998; Tony et al, 1999). However, it should be mentioned that some criticism has been levied towards MBI-GS, mostly concerning a perceived oversimplification of the burnout conceptualisation (Schaufeli & Enzman, 1998).

How this survey only reflected certain aspects of the prevailing conditions was made abundantly clear by the open-ended commentary. These included personal depictions of stress and burnout in the legal profession, various reactions to the survey and suggestions for further areas of exploration. Unfortunately this material couldn't be processed within the study's timeframe, which would have been preferable for overall understanding.

Implications of the findings and further research

The results are largely accommodated within Elwork and Benjamin's model (1995) for stress among American lawyers. Many of the same stress factors have been identified in Swedish lawyers' working conditions and consequences are similar, albeit somewhat less intense and comprehensive. The high Job satisfaction among the Swedish, as well as differences in the legal systems, presumably plays a decisive role. The significance of personal factors remain open for future research to investigate.

A better understanding of the parameters' clinical expressions would be desirable in continued research on Swedish lawyers. Of particular interest are Qualitative workload, Over-commitment and Job satisfaction, since they were proven important in understanding health problems and burnout among survey participants. A supplement in the form of qualitative data, such as the open-ended commentary many participants provided in the questionnaire, would be invaluable for this.

Burnout in Swedish lawyers is often preceded by passionate professional commitment. Appropriate interventions – vocational training, psychoeducation, stress management, consultation, and so on – are effective strategies for developing and taking advantage of this engagement. Daicoff (2004; 2005) has, in the course of his research on American lawyers, concluded how lawyer styles which to a much greater extent take psychological needs into account would be able to facilitate and improve the quality of their work. The authors' view is that a corresponding approach would be beneficial in Sweden in order to improve lawyers' working conditions and job performance, but also the clients' position and ultimately overall appropriation of justice.

References

- Allen, R. A. (1997). Alcoholism, drug abuse and lawyers: Are we ready to address the denial. *Creighton Law Review*, 31, 265-266.
- Andersson, K. (1986). Development and testing of a questionnaire system concerning work environment and health condition. Report 2:1986, Yrkesmedicinska clinic, Örebro.
- Andrew, G., Benjamin, A.G., Darling, E.J., & Sales, B.D. (1990). The prevalence of depression, alcohol abuse, and cocaine abuse among United States lawyers. *International Journal of Law & Psychiatry*, 13, 233-246.
- Beehr, T. A., Walsh, J. T., & Taber, T.D. (1976). Relationship of stress to individually and organizationally valued states: Higher order needs as a moderator. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 61, 41-47.
- Brace, N., Kemp, R., & Snelgar R. (2003). *SPSS for psychologists: a guide to data analysis using SPSS for Windows*. Palgrave Macmillian: New York, NY.
- Brayfield, A.H., & Rothe, H. F. (1951). An index of Job satisfaction. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 35, 307-311.
- Cherniss, C. (1980). *Professional burnout in the human services*. New York: Praeger.
- Daicoff, S. (1997). Lawyer, know thyself: A review of empirical research on attorney attributes bearing on professionalism. *American University Law Review*, 46, 1337-1427.
- Daicoff, S. (2004). *Lawyer, know thyself: A psychological analysis of personality strengths and weaknesses*. American Psychological Association: Washington, DC.
- Daicoff, S. (Downloaded November 2005). Brief description of the vectors of the comprehensive law movement – and their points of intersection. <http://users.law.capital.edu/sdaicoff/vectors1.htm>
- Eaton, W., Anthony, J.C., Mandel, W., & Garrison, R. (1990). Occupations and the prevalence of major depressive disorder. *Journal of Occupational Medicine*, 32, 1079-1081.
- Ekman, R., & Arnetz, B. (eds.). (2002). *Stress: the molecules, the individual, the organization, the society*. Stockholm: Liber.
- Elwork, A. (1997). *Stress management for lawyers: How to increase personal & professional satisfaction in the law*. Gwynedd, PA: The Vorkell Group.
- Elwork, A. & Benjamin, A.D. (1995). Lawyers in Distress. *Psychiatry & Law*, 23, 205-229.
- Eriksson Hallberg, U. (2005). *A thesis on fire: Studies of work engagement, Type A behavior and burnout*. Stockholm: Department of Psychology, Stockholm University.
- Frankenhaeuser, M. (1995) *Feminine, masculine, stressful*. Wiken: Höganäs.
- Gustafsson, P. (2003). Questionnaire. Stockholm: Karolinska Institutet;
- Hellberg, H. (2000). The Association wants to prevent burnout in the corps. *The Lawyer*, 4, 4-5.
- Hellberg, H. (2002a). Stress and burnout taxes the lawyers' insurances. *The Lawyer*, 4, 15.
- Hellberg, H. (2002b). Listen to the body's signals. *The lawyer*, 4, 16-17.
- Hellgren, J, Sjoberg, A., & Sverke, M. (1997). Intention to quit: Effects of Job satisfaction and job perception, in F. Avallone, J. Arnold, & K. de Witte (Eds.), *Feelings work in Europe* (pp. 415-423). Milan: Guerini.
- Isaksson K., & Johansson, G. (1997). *Contractual pension with profit and loss*. Stockholm: Folksam.
- Jusek. (Downloaded February 2006). Discrimination at the office requires action. <http://www.jusek.se/templates/JusekNews.aspx?id=13434>

- Knowledge for health. (2005). *Stress and stress-related illnesses*. (DVD). (Available by order from Karolinska University Education AB, Fogdevreten 2A, 171 77 Stockholm.)
- Maslach, C. (1982). *burnout: The cost of caring*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall
- Maslach, C., Jackson, S. E., Leiter, M.P. (1996). *Maslach's Burnout Inventory* (3rd Ed.). Palo Alto, California: Consulting Psychologist's Press
- Maslach C. & Leiter, M.P. (1999). *The truth about burnout – How the job causes personal stress and what you can do about it*. Stockholm: Bokförlaget Natur och Kultur.
- Ramberg, A. (2006). Wanted: young lawyers. *The lawyer*, 1, 4-5
- Sapolsky, R.M. (2004). *Why zebras don't get ulcers*. Stockholm: Nature and Culture.
- Schaufeli, W. & Enzman, D. (1998). *The burnout companion to study & practice: A critical analysis*. London: Taylor & Francis Limited.
- The National Board of Health and Welfare. (2003). *Fatigue syndrome – Stress-related mental illness*. The National Board of Health and Welfare: Stockholm.
- The Swedish Bar Association's annual report (2004). The Bar Association. Fälth & Hässler.
- Sverke, M., Hellgren, J., & Öhrming, J. (1997). Hospital corporatization: How are nurses' job perception and work-related attitudes affected? *Reports from the Department of Psychology*, Stockholm University, 1997, No. 839.
- Sverke, M., & Hellgren, J. (2002). Questionnaire. Stockholm: Department of Psychology, Stockholm University.
- Sverke M., Hellgren, J. & Näswall, K. (2004). Questionnaire. Stockholm: Department of Psychology, Stockholm University.
- Taris, W.T., Schreurs, G.J.P., & Schaufeli, B.W. (1999). Construct validity of the Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey: a two-sample examination of its factor structure and correlates. *Work & Stress*, 13, 223-237.
- Trumbull R. & Appley, M.H. (1986). *Dynamics of stress: physiological, psychological and social perspectives*. New York: Plenum.
- Währborg, Peter. (2002). *Stress and the new illness*. Stockholm: Bokförlaget Natur och Kultur.

Appendix A. Cover letter from the Bar Association

Stockholm September 15, 2005

Study of lawyers' work-life situation

Within the next few days, all members of the Swedish Bar Association will be sent a survey about lawyers' work-life conditions. The purpose is to increase knowledge about the occupation's professional environment and health. The Swedish Bar Association believes this study to be important for understanding the profession's unique situation regarding strains, and the opportunities to alleviate them.

The survey will be conducted by the Department of Psychology at Stockholm University, on behalf of the Swedish Bar Association. The results of the survey will be published in the magazine Advokaten.

The questionnaire takes about ten minutes to complete, and we hope you'll help us by answering the questions.

The completed questionnaire needs to be returned in the enclosed envelope **no later than October 7, 2005**.

Participation is of course on a voluntary basis, but it's important for survey reliability that you answer the questions.

Please contact the team conducting the study if you have any questions.

Thank you in advance for your participation!

Appendix B. Informational letter about the investigation

To. G.J.
Department of Psychology
Stockholm University
106 91 Stockholm



QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EXAMINATION OF LAWYERS' WORKING SITUATION

This survey is part of a psychology graduation thesis at Stockholm University. The aim of the study is to garner better insight into Swedish lawyers' situation regarding work-related strains, and the opportunities to alleviate them. Your answers will thus contribute to a better understanding in an area of research which has so far gone unnoticed.

Full confidentiality and anonymity is guaranteed. No third party, employers, or representatives from the Bar Association will see the completed questionnaires, only those responsible for the survey will have access to them. We who work with the study are subject to professional confidentiality. The results will be presented on a group level, and no single individual will be identifiable.

To bear in mind when filling out the questionnaire. For accurate representation, it's important that you respond to the questions; you cannot be replaced by anybody else. The last page has space for freeform comments.

When filling out the questionnaire, we ask that you carefully read each question. Insert an (X) in the box which best represents the response relevant for you. If neither of the alternatives suit you, choose the alternative closest to your own view. There are no right or wrong answers – it's *your personal opinion we're after*. Some questions recur in slightly modified form, this is by design and is meant to strengthen the result's reliability.

We would be grateful if you could return the questionnaire in the enclosed envelope as soon as possible. However, no later than October 7!

Thanks in advance for your participation!

Scientifically responsible is Professor Gunn Johansson (gj@psychology.su.se).

If you have questions about the survey, feel free to contact the responsible parties:

Jens Näsström
jpnasstrom@mac.com

Tasha Mesick
tasha.mesick@telia.com

Appendix C. Reminder letter 1, sent on October 4th



Survey of lawyers' work situation

Earlier this autumn, a questionnaire regarding lawyers' professional situation was sent out from the Department of Psychology at Stockholm University.

We'd like to remind you that the last date to submit responses to the questionnaire is **October 7.**

Kind regards

The Bar Council Secretariat

Appendix D. Reminder letter 2, sent on the October 12th

Stockholm, October 12, 2005

Reminder – questionnaire on lawyers' working situation

As previously announced, the Bar Association commissioned The Department of Psychology at Stockholm University to conduct a survey in order to obtain a better understanding for lawyers' working conditions and health.

The initial response time for the survey expired on October 7. However, it's been noted that only slightly over half of the addressed members have responded.

A satisfactory response rate is required to ensure statistical reliability, in order for the survey results to form a basis for the Association's work in protecting all members' professional interests.

In consultation with the Department of Psychology, the Association has therefore extended the response time for the questionnaire.

The Department graciously accepts replies no later than **October 19**.

It only takes about 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

If you have already responded, I ask you to ignore this reminder.

Anne Ramberg

Appendix E. The Questionnaire

First off, a few questions about yourself.

These inquiries are relevant for studying inconsistencies in results between men and women, or for examining the importance of age, professional experience and field of practice in regards to work-life perception.

1 Age?

2 Gender?

- Male
- Female

3 Primary type of practice? (Insert just one checkmark)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business law | <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual property law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Labour law | <input type="checkbox"/> International assignments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Company law | <input type="checkbox"/> IT law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal matters | <input type="checkbox"/> Competition law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EC law | <input type="checkbox"/> Bankruptcy law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family law | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Real estate law | <input type="checkbox"/> Procedural law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Property law | <input type="checkbox"/> Tort law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance law | <input type="checkbox"/> Tax law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative law | <input type="checkbox"/> Transaction law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | |

4 Where are you active?

- Stockholm/Gothenburg/Malmö
- Rest of the country

5 Number of years working as a lawyer?

6 How many active legal practitioners work in your organisation?

You will find below a number of assertions about how you look upon your work and your professional assignments. Read each claim and check the box for the answer you resonate the most with.

1	I can usually find enough time to finish my tasks	1	2	3	4	5
2	It's a frequent occurrence that I'm forced to work under heavy pressure	1	2	3	4	5
3	I often have too much to do at work	1	2	3	4	5
4	Unreasonable work demands are placed on me	1	2	3	4	5
5	Too much responsibility is placed on me at work	1	2	3	4	5
6	I have tasks which are too difficult to manage	1	2	3	4	5
7	My work contains elements that put too high demands on my capacity	1	2	3	4	5
8	I thrive at my current place of employment	1	2	3	4	5
9	I'm content with the job I currently have	1	2	3	4	5
10	I get satisfaction from my work	1	2	3	4	5
11	I often think about work-related problems first thing when I wake up in the morning	1	2	3	4	5
12	Once I get home, putting aside all thoughts of work is easy	1	2	3	4	5
13	Family and friends have mentioned that I sacrifice too much for the sake of work	1	2	3	4	5
14	I can rarely stop thinking about my job	1	2	3	4	5
15	Even during the evenings when I'm off, I'll often be thinking of work	1	2	3	4	5
16	Work is in my thoughts even on weekends	1	2	3	4	5

1 - Is not true at all
5 - Is completely true

Some questions about your health.

Have you during the last 12 months suffered from ...

17	Gastrointestinal discomfort?	1	2	3	4	5
18	Problems from heart or chest?	1	2	3	4	5
19	Joint pain?	1	2	3	4	5
20	Muscle aches?	1	2	3	4	5
21	Problems with neck/shoulder pain?	1	2	3	4	5
22	Back pain?	1	2	3	4	5
23	Headache?	1	2	3	4	5
24	Skin changes or itching?	1	2	3	4	5
25	Respiratory ailments?	1	2	3	4	5
26	Long-lasting colds?	1	2	3	4	5

- 1 - Never or almost never
- 2 - A few times
- 3 - A few times per month
- 4 - A few times per week
- 5 - Always or almost always

Have you during **the last** two weeks ...

27	Had difficulty falling asleep	1	2	3	4	5
28	Had a hard time waking up	1	2	3	4	5
29	Woken up at several points during the night and at times had a hard time falling back asleep	1	2	3	4	5
30	Felt tired because of sleeping problems	1	2	3	4	5

- 1 - Never
- 2 - Rarely
- 3 - Sometimes
- 4 - Often
- 5 - Always

Finally, a few more claims about how you look on work and your assignments.

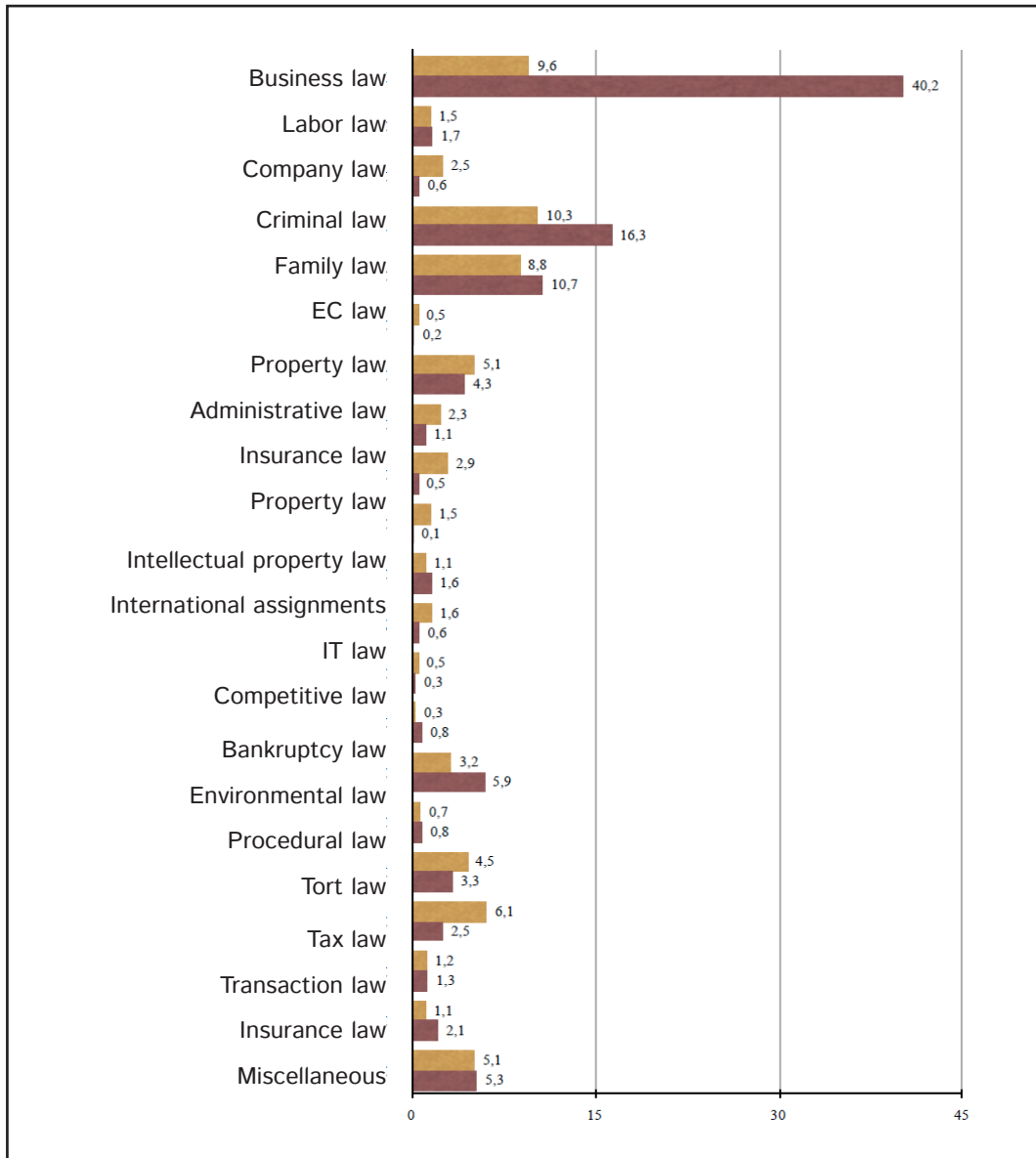
31	I feel completely exhausted when the working day is over	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
32	I have become less engaged in my work	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
33	I have performed many valuable things in this job	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
34	I am certain that I am efficient and get things done on the job	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
35	I feel emotionally drained by my work	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
36	According to my own opinion I do good work	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
37	I can effectively solve the problems that arise at my work	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
38	I feel I contribute effectively the organization's activities	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
39	I feel tired when I get up at morning to meet a new working day	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
40	I just want to take care of my work and not be bothered by other things	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
41	I doubt that my work means something	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
42	I feel burned out by my work	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
43	I have become less interested in my work since I started this job	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
44	To work a whole day is really stressful for me	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
45	I feel excited when I accomplish something at work	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
46	I no longer believe that my work is of any use	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Never - 0 - Never
 Almost never - 1 - A few times during the year
 Rarely - 2 - A few times per month or less
 Sometimes - 3 - A few times per month
 Often - 4 - Occasionally during the week
 Very often - 5 - A few times per week
 Always - 6 - Every day

Do you have any comments you'd like to add? Leave comments on this page! Return the completed questionnaire using the enclosed prepaid envelope – preferably already today!

Thanks ever so much for your participation!

Appendix F. Comparative percentile distribution of main field of practice with single/multiple answers



Appendix G. Significant differences between commercial law, criminal law, family law, and all indices used in the study

Averages	Quantitative workload	Qualitative workload	Job satisfaction	Over-commitment	Health problems	Quality of sleep	Emotional exhaustion	Cynicism	Perceived efficacy
Business law – Criminal law		-,25***			-,15***	-,14*	-,33**	-,24**	-,20**
Business law – Family law		-,38***			-,16**	-,23**	-,46***	-,24**	-,17*
Criminal law - Family law									

* $p < ,05$ ** $p < ,01$ *** $p < ,001$

Appendix H. Significant product-moment correlations between demographic variables and all indices used in the study

	Quantitative workload	Qualitative workload	Job satisfaction	Over-commitment	Health issues	Quality of sleep	Emotional fatigue	Cynicism	Perceived effectiveness
Age	-,249**	-,102**	,206**	-,104**		-,042*	-,213**	-,117**	-,043**
Gender	,075**				-,129**	-,114**	-,146**		
Geographic area		,089**							
Work experience	-,231**	-,116**	,171**	-,110**		-,078**	-,199**	-,004**	
No. of colleagues	,089**					-,044*			,067**

* $p < ,05$ ** $p < ,01$

Annex I. Means and standard deviations for all variables in the study, broken down by gender, geographical area, age, work experience, and the firm's size

	N =	Quantitative work load		Qualitative work load		Job satisfaction		Over-Commitment		Health problems		Sleep-quality		Emotional fatigue		Cynicism		Perceived efficiency	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Men		3.38	.93	2.21	.85	4.12	.88	3.15	1.00	1.57	.55	2.14	.76	2.00	1.20	1.66	1.02	4.34	.81
Women		3.55	.92	2.25	.90	4.06	.93	3.23	.95	1.75	.60	2.36	.80	2.43	1.21	1.72	1.07	4.40	.78
Big city		3.41	.91	2.15	.85	4.09	.91	3.16	.99	1.60	.56	2.19	.77	2.06	1.20	1.64	1.05	4.40	.79
Rest of the country		3.42	.97	2.31	.87	4.12	.87	3.15	1.00	1.61	.58	2.18	.78	2.14	1.22	1.73	1.00	4.27	.82
Age																			
26-30	28	3.83	.86	2.42	.83	3.63	.91	3.18	1.04	1.69	.62	2.11	.84	2.84	2.20	1.99	1.24	4.35	.87
31-35	199	3.62	.77	2.32	.77	3.74	.98	3.37	.92	1.64	.54	2.23	.78	2.48	1.12	2.00	1.16	4.38	.75
36-40	227	3.52	.77	2.19	.84	4.01	.87	3.21	.92	1.61	.52	2.14	.77	2.27	1.19	1.71	1.05	4.46	.79
41-45	285	3.61	.85	2.28	.87	4.02	.88	3.16	1.01	1.59	.54	2.22	.78	2.30	1.17	1.69	1.00	4.38	.74
46-50	279	3.55	.86	2.27	.88	4.08	.89	3.17	.92	1.61	.51	2.24	.78	2.20	1.21	1.73	1.10	4.38	.84
51-55	319	3.51	.88	2.33	.89	4.05	.88	3.23	1.01	1.60	.59	2.25	.81	2.02	1.20	1.69	.97	4.27	.79
56-60	333	3.38	.96	2.17	.89	4.24	.86	3.19	1.04	1.60	.59	2.16	.74	1.93	1.25	1.59	.98	4.35	.81
61-65	174	3.04	.96	2.07	.77	4.38	.75	3.05	.97	1.63	.60	2.14	.78	1.73	1.11	1.53	1.01	4.31	.86
over 65	89	2.32	1.02	1.77	.81	4.55	.91	2.60	1.03	1.52	.60	1.94	.65	1.43	1.07	1.38	.85	4.28	.92
Professional experience																			
0-5	483	3.56	.83	2.31	.84	3.89	.94	3.29	.95	1.63	.55	2.23	.79	2.40	1.23	1.78	1.11	4.39	.79
6-10	316	3.56	.85	2.26	.85	4.11	.90	3.16	.93	1.60	.55	2.22	.76	2.18	1.16	1.71	1.03	4.41	.76
11-15	354	3.47	.91	2.20	.88	4.14	.82	3.14	.98	1.58	.52	2.17	.81	2.08	1.19	1.63	1.01	4.33	.77
16-20	289	3.53	.88	2.23	.90	4.08	.90	3.19	1.02	1.64	.63	2.28	.79	2.02	1.18	1.72	.98	4.23	.83
21-25	247	3.63	.94	2.22	.87	4.17	.81	3.21	1.00	1.59	.57	2.10	.72	1.96	1.23	1.59	1.01	4.39	.79
26-30	163	3.12	1.02	2.03	.79	4.27	.88	2.98	1.02	1.60	.61	2.13	.73	1.86	1.20	1.64	.98	4.33	.85
31-35	70	2.69	1.05	1.93	.73	4.48	.76	2.92	1.02	1.53	.57	2.08	.72	1.47	1.01	1.44	.94	4.35	.88
36-40	24	2.36	1.04	1.75	.87	4.70	.82	2.58	1.18	1.50	.61	1.85	.67	1.30	.94	1.40	.79	4.54	1.04
over 40	20	2.40	.93	1.78	.72	4.64	.95	2.61	1.05	1.47	.47	1.87	.70	1.36	1.04	1.18	.70	4.45	1.01
Number of colleagues																			
0-1	358	3.09	1.10	2.30	.98	4.09	.95	3.09	1.08	1.72	.64	2.25	.82	2.16	1.38	1.76	1.09	4.26	.88
2	175	3.45	.98	2.40	.89	4.09	.96	3.14	.99	1.69	.68	2.26	.81	2.20	1.21	1.88	1.10	4.29	.82
3-6	483	3.48	.90	2.22	.83	4.20	.81	3.21	1.02	1.58	.54	2.20	.76	2.08	1.20	1.56	.94	4.36	.81
7-10	213	3.59	.86	2.30	.84	4.10	.91	3.23	.92	1.58	.49	2.23	.81	2.13	1.16	1.74	.98	4.40	.74
11-20	205	3.32	.81	2.07	.76	4.17	.80	3.12	.95	1.55	.50	2.18	.72	1.97	1.02	1.55	.96	4.39	.79
21-30	97	3.51	.80	2.01	.80	4.09	.84	3.12	.92	1.62	.54	2.16	.71	2.12	1.12	1.78	1.04	4.26	.80
31-40	81	3.48	.85	2.16	.82	4.02	.96	3.15	.95	1.53	.55	1.97	.74	1.94	1.15	1.63	.98	4.45	.72
41-50	66	3.50	.93	2.05	.73	3.92	1.01	3.15	.93	1.52	.52	2.00	.76	1.97	1.25	1.70	1.27	4.46	.87
over 50	290	3.60	.77	2.14	.82	3.99	.92	3.20	.95	1.55	.51	2.12	.73	2.05	1.16	1.65	1.08	4.46	.7

