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‘Lawyers and Work-Life Balance’

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Executive Summary

The concept of work – life balance is a general term that includes organizational initiatives that enhance the experience gained from work, while at the same time it includes the strengthening of the experience gained from non - professional activities. There are 5 main models of work – life balance: the segmentation, the spillover, the compensation, the instrumental and the conflict model. Work – life balance is affected by factors such as the sex, the age, the nature of work, the career stage and the work hours and days. The present study focused on the work – life balance in the case of lawyers, examining a sample of 53 lawyers. It was concluded that work life imbalance can cause high stress, feelings such as dissatisfaction and mood disorders, thus affecting various aspects of a lawyer's life such as his well – being, job satisfaction and even his physical and mental health.

Keywords

Work – life, balance, lawyers, imbalance.

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Introduction

Research background

The balance between work and personal life has been a subject of study for several researchers. This relationship has been associated with both sexes, taking into consideration the efforts of the enterprises to support their employees so as to achieve this balance (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Nowadays, personal life becomes more complicated mostly because of the changes that take place in family life. In addition, the number of women entering the professional field is rising, while a growing number of single parents raise their children themselves (Amato et al, 2003). These factors have caused difficulties to the employees who try to balance their personal and professional lives. In several cases the professional tasks have invaded the personal life and therefore the pressure affects the performance of the employees (Hyman et al., 2003). The present dissertation aims at investigating the concept of work – life balance in general and more specifically, in the case of lawyers. Work – life balance is a concept of contemporary interest, since it is an issue which regards both the quality of work and the quality of life. Taking into consideration the specific nature of the lawyer's profession, it is important to study if work – life balance can be achieved, by what means and what is the influence of the work – life imbalance on the quality of work and life.

Aims & objectives

As it has already been argued above, the aim of this study is to investigate if and how lawyers manage to balance between their personal lives and the high demands of their work, as well as which are the consequences when they fail to achieve such a balance. Towards this aim, five research questions are posed, concerning how the participant lawyers self – evaluate the work – life balance they achieve, which are the main factors that influence work – life balance, which is the influence of the work – life imbalance in their job satisfaction and well – being, which are the main consequences of work – life imbalance and which policies contribute towards achieving work – life balance.

Dissertation outline

The thesis is divided in certain chapters that aim to properly address the aforementioned aim and objectives of the research:

Introduction

A brief introduction presents the significance of the study as well as its aims and objectives.

Chapter 1: Work – Life Balance

Chapter 1 consists of the literature review. The concept and the five models of work – life balance are defined. The factors which influence the work – life balance, the connection between work – life balance, job satisfaction and well-being, as well as consequences of work – life imbalance and policies that enhance work – life balance are outlined.

Chapter 2: Research methodology

Chapter 2 describes the methodology of the research. That is the type of the research, how was the sample assembled and the data collected, which were the limitations of the research and the research questions posed.

Chapter 3: Data Analysis

Chapter 3 deals with the analysis of the data collected. It consists of a reliability analysis of the questionnaire used for the study and with the presentation and analysis of the participants' answers.

Chapter 4: Conclusions - Recommendations

Chapter 4 consists of the main results of the research. It compares the results of the present dissertation with results from other similar studies and suggests some guidelines on future work which can be made on the subject.

1 Work – Life Balance

1.1 Defining Work – Life Balance

Several definitions have been presented so far regarding the concept of work – life balance. This concept is a general term that includes organizational initiatives that enhance the experience gained from work, while at the same time it includes the strengthening of the experience gained from non - professional activities. Similarly, the programs of work – life balance are defined as benefits financed by the employers or as the working conditions that help the employees balance between professional and non - professional duties (Cascio, 2000, p. 166).

Also, the concept of work – life balance refers to the various policies and programs adopted by the companies. These programs mainly include the establishment of policies in the workplace, the primary aim of which is to help the employees so as to reconcile their occupational and family duties. Many of these programs are designed in accordance with the legal framework in each country that they are applied and include settings related to maternity, paternity, etc. Therefore it is a concept that refers to policies aimed at achieving a better balance between professional and family responsibilities (Redmond et al., 2006, p. 15).

Respectively, the employees have different perceptions regarding the concept of work – life balance. It has been argued that many workers believe that they balance between personal and professional lives in case their employer respects and supports their desire to successfully combine professional and non - professional roles and in case their employees are willing to help them succeed. Hence, the perception of employees regarding the concept of work – life balance is associated with a high commitment of an individual to the professional tasks, with increased job satisfaction, psychological well-being and with a limited conflict of roles (O'Neill et. al., 2009).

In addition, the definitions regarding the work – life balance focus on the roles undertaken by a person who is trying to balance between professional with non-professional obligations and responsibilities (De Cieri et al, 2005, Smith & Gardner, 2007). This concept has also been defined as the satisfaction you receive from an employee's personal life, along with the proper

functioning of the professional roles, while at the same time there is minimal conflict between these sectors (Clark, 2001, p. 349).

Moreover, the balance between work and personal life are defined based on the employees' free time available, the extent to which the work overlaps other activities and other aspects of one's life, age, gender, ethnicity, and finally the time spent by the worker with the other persons of his environment (Fisher & Layte, 2003; Jager, 2001).

In addition, Kalliath and Brough (2008) argue that the term "work – life balance" includes various aspects, among which the different roles that a person undertakes, the fact that there should be equity among the roles, a certain level of satisfaction in each domain and the fact that these roles should be characterized by fulfillment. At the same time they suggest that there is a conflict between the domains, while the individual should have a certain level of control in each domain.

Also, Grawitch et al (2010) suggested that the relationship between personal and professional life mostly refers to the allocation of the available resources and rather than on the balance between the two sectors. Therefore, this research did not focus on the way that the personal life affects the professional one and vice versa, but mostly focused on the personal objectives of the employees and on the way that they choose to allocate their available resources. According to this study the relationship between personal and professional life refers to the way that people choose to allocate their personal resources as well as on the decision making process.

1.2 Models of Work – Life Balance

1.2.1 The segmentation model

According to the segmentation model, the two sectors are not associated and hence they are considered totally distinct and independent (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). In addition, according to the segmentation model there is no influence between the two domains. Therefore, it is considered a theoretical approach rather than a model that could be applied theoretically (O'Driscoll, 1996).

1.2.2 The spillover model

Contrary to the segmentation model, the spillover model argues that there is an inter – linkage between the two sectors and therefore the experiences, behaviours and attitudes of work can

affect the ones of life and vice versa (Almeida et al, 2002; Hammer et al, 2005; Piotrowski, 1979). Therefore, according to this model one domain can influence the other and this influence could be either positive or negative. Nevertheless, it is considered an influence the causes and the effects of which are not clearly defined (O'Driscoll, 1996).

1.2.3 The compensation model

According to the compensation model, the probable shortages in one sector could be replaced by the other sector. Hence, the employees that report a high level of satisfaction in their professional duties could make up the lack of satisfaction in their personal lives (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Hence, what probably lacks in one domain regarding the expectations or the satisfaction level, can be compensated by other domain (O'Driscoll, 1996).

1.2.4 The instrumental model

The instrumental model argues that in case one of the sectors is successful, then the success of this sector could affect positively the success of the other sector (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Therefore, according to this model the success of one domain enhances the success of the other domain (O'Driscoll, 1996).

1.2.5 The conflict model

According to the conflict model, both work and life are sectors characterized as highly demanded and therefore they could not be compatible. As a result, the employee has to make several sacrifices in one sector so as to be successful in the other sector (Burke, 2000). Hence, this model suggests that each domain of a person's life is demanding and therefore the right choices should be made so as to minimize the conflicts among these domains (O'Driscoll, 1996).

1.2.6 The extension of the work – life balance models

Grisslich et al (2012) further extended the work – life models through adding one more variable, that is to say the amount of time that the individuals wish to dedicate to themselves. Hence, according to the researchers the model includes three domains which should be balanced. Finally, the researchers argued that the extended model is used to predict greater variance regarding the effects of the work – life imbalance in the individual's health.

1.3 Influential Factors

1.3.1 The individual factors

Gender is listed among the individual factors of the lawyers that influence their work – life balance and it has become an integral part of the studies related to the relationship between paid work and personal and family life. Hence, the perceptions between men and women regarding the balance between the two sectors have been studied as well as the impact of the imbalance on their health (Smithson & Stokoe, 2005).

It has also been observed that women who work from home can have more flexibility and independence, but this form of occupation could lead them to more hours of work per day and more days per week. The working environment is also important when examining the work – life balance as it affects the quality of life, and it has been observed that women who work from home have higher levels of anxiety when they have to care for their children and do the housework (Valcour & Hunter, 2005).

In addition it has been argued that both men and women wish to work in companies that support work – life balancing programs. Men benefit more from these programs, as they feel more satisfied from their professional success, even if they do not pay much attention on their personal life. On the contrary, women pay equal attention on their work and on their personal life and they feel satisfied when they are successful in both areas. Also, women who fail to have a successful personal life, feel unhappy and disappointed (Burke, 2002). Another study reached to the conclusion that 83% of women and 72% of men reported a strong role conflict between personal life and work (Rosen, 1991).

Also, over the past years a growing number of men take up more responsibility regarding the care of the house, due to the increasing number of divorces and to the more active participation of men in parenting (Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998). As a result the men employees try to balance the roles they have undertaken and this effort results often in intense anxiety and confused responsibilities between working and personal tasks (Tennant & Sperry, 2003).

Moreover, the effort of the employees to cope with the roles they have undertaken is related to the time pressure, the role conflict or the lack of social support. This effort is largely dependent on the age of the employees, as it has been observed that it is more intense in young employees,

aged from 30 to 40 years old, and it is mainly observed in employees who are at the beginning of their professional career (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998).

In addition, Emslie and Hunt (2009) argued that the work – life balance depends on the gender of the employees. The researchers performed semi – structured interview with employees from 50 to 52 years old so as to investigate their opinions regarding the work – life balance. The study reached to the conclusion that the role of the gender is very important when trying to balance between the two domains. Hence, most of the women that participated in the research reported that they face difficulties balancing among the roles they have undertaken, while on the contrary most of the men employees reported that at present they do not face such difficulties. Finally, there were some common characteristics between the employees, since regardless of their gender they both reported that they consider themselves “pragmatic workers”.

Respectively, Smith and Gardner (2007) also suggested that the work – life balance is associated with the employees’ gender, as well as with their age. Thus, they performed a research in 153 individuals who worked in an enterprise in New Zealand. The study reached to the conclusion that mostly the female participants and the younger employees use the work – life balance programs offered by the company. Also, the employees who reported that they are mostly supported by the company’s supervision use the offered initiatives.

The age of the employees and its contribution to the work life balance in Canada has also been studied by Cooke and Cooper (2013). In particular they investigated the degree to which the employees of more than 50 years manage to achieve balance between the domains when working more than 50 hours weekly. They observed that it is usual for the employees of more than 50 years old to work more than 50 hours weekly and that they are characterized by higher job satisfaction. In addition, most of the employees in that case are male and they are usually occupied in managerial positions. Thus they suggested that more motives and opportunities should be provided to these employees so as to manage to achieve balance between the domains.

Also, Hantrais and Ackers (2005) studied the balance between the roles of the female employees in Europe. In particular, they conducted interviews with female employees in France, Spain and Poland so as to explore the factors that determine the choices between personal and professional life. They observed that the choice is a complex decision and it is influenced by governmental policies and regulations applied in each company. Moreover, despite the fact that there are

differences in the policies applied in each country and even in different regions of the same country, there are policies which are more family - friendly that can bring more benefits to the employees. For this reason it is suggested that there should be taken into account the family factor in balancing personal and professional life of female employees.

Similarly, Mathew and Panchanatham (2011) investigated the efforts of the female employees South India so as to balance between personal and professional life. In particular, the researchers chose the case of India because the occupational policies applied in the country are more beneficial for the male employees. Nevertheless, over the past years several changes occurred to the social and cultural environment and they resulted to the increase of the provided educational opportunities and to the recognition of the professional skills of the female employees in India. Also, most female employees in the country are actively involved in business but because of the social and family traditions they are facing many difficulties in balancing personal and professional life. Finally, the study concluded that the female employees reported high workload, health problems, problems in the time management and lack of support from the social organizations.

Moreover, another individual factor is the career stage of the employees. Darcy et al (2012) investigated the work – life balance of employees in various career stages, taking also into consideration their age. The sample of the study was composed by 10 enterprises and totally 729 individuals in Ireland. They observed that most of the work – life balance strategies applied at present are undifferentiated and thus they are ineffective and characterized by high cost. Therefore, it is important for the managers to take into consideration the career stage of the employees, as well as their age. The parenting status was not taken into consideration. The study reached to the conclusion that there are not great differences among that factors that influence the work – life balance in employees of various career stages. This means that the employees make efforts so as to balance between the two domains in each career stage, regardless of their age and their marital status.

Similarly, Drew and Murtagh (2005) also investigated the work – life balance taking into consideration the career stage and they mostly focused on the managers. Hence, they studied senior managers of both sexes in a company in Ireland. They focused on the work – life balance policies that according to the participants should be applied so that there would be no

discriminations between male and female employees and so as to enhance their leadership capabilities. In addition, they observed that the flexibility of the employees regarding their occupation, such as their ability to work from home etc is preventing the balancing between the two sectors. Also, male employees choose to transfer some of their duties at home to their wives so as to be able to work long hours, while on the contrary most female employees aim at a flexible schedule so as to have a good quality of life and to dedicate more time to their families.

Also, Chandra (2012) compared the eastern and the western perspective in balancing personal and professional life. The research was based on a literature review, on the collection of secondary data regarding the working hours and the family condition of the employees in different countries, the policies of balancing between the roles in 25 eastern and western countries, the evaluation of these policies as well as semi - structured interviews with the managers of 50 multinational corporations and 50 companies in India. The research reached to the conclusion that in Asian the gender of the employees plays an important role in their perceptions regarding the balance between the two domains. Moreover, multinational companies implement policies based on flexible working hours contrary to the companies of India which are implementing policies designed in order to achieve higher profit. Consequently, the companies in the U.S.A. and in Europe implement policies that enhance the employees to achieve balance between personal and professional life.

Similarly, Mordi et al (2013) studied the opinions of 102 managers in the banking sector of Nigeria regarding the work – life balance. The study focused on a sample of 20 banks of the country. They observed that the managers were adequately informed regarding the applied policies regarding the work – life balance, as well as regarding the possible consequences when there is imbalance between the domains. Nevertheless, they observed that there were significant differences on the managers' perceptions regarding the results of the applied work – life balance policies. Also, it is observed that the most used strategy is favoritism, while they observed that the cultural factor should also been considered when designing work – life balance policies.

In addition, Wattis et al (2013) studied the work – life balance of the female employees with children. In particular they studied the experiences of the female employees with children regarding the balancing between the two domains. They observed that the female employees face several difficulties in balancing between the personal and the professional duties and they

suggested that the policies applied by the European Union have contributed significantly in achieving work – life balance.

1.3.2 The organizational factors

Over the past decades there have been significant changes in the working hours. Specifically, several employees are now forced to move from formal occupation of eight hours per day at different occupational forms and they usually work more than five days per week or more hours per day. Many workers today are forced to work even on Saturdays and Sundays more hours than usual (Bharat, 2008).

Another study realized in India concludes that firms in the country have been trying to balance the two sectors through applying flexible or part-time occupation and though providing childcare services. Nevertheless, the participants of this research reported that they have not managed to balance their professional and personal duties and for this reason there should be improved the working conditions and the working environment should be pleasant so as to enhance their efficiency (Doble & Supriya, 2010).

In addition Ahmad et al (2011) studied the consequences of the work – life imbalance in a sample of 100 women employees in the banking sector of Pakistan. The researchers took into consideration factors such as the participants' earnings, their responsibilities at home, the climate of the banks that they worked and their financial needs. They observed that this imbalanced was mostly caused by the responsibilities at home and by the climate at work.

Also, Berg et al (2003) argued that another organizational factor that affects the work – life balance is the workplace environment and culture. Thus, they observed that, through studying the cases of employees who worked in three manufacturing companies, the employees in more high – commitment industries managed to achieve balance between the two domains because their perceptions and their attitude towards the company were positively affected.

Hill et al (2003) also studied the organizational factor and their association with the work – life balance. Thus, they investigated three types of organizational factors, including the traditional, the virtual and the home office. Their study was based on the fact that a growing number of the modern companies use electronic means to perform their operations. Hence, the sample was composed by 4.316 employees in the traditional office, 767 employees in the virtual office and

441 employees in the home office. The study reached to the conclusion that it is more possible for the employees that have chosen the home office to achieve balance between the two domains contrary to the employees that have chosen the traditional office.

Another interesting organizational factor is the size of the company. Hence, Adame – Sanchez and Miquel – Romero (2012) studied the impact of the small and medium sized enterprises in Spain on the work – life balance of the employees. Thus, they took into consideration factors referring to the ownership of the companies, as well as the attitude of the companies' managers. The research tool used was the structured interview with the managers of the companies. The study reached to the conclusion that only few small and medium sized enterprises in Spain apply at present work – life balance policies. Nevertheless, the applied policies differ among the companies depending on the managers' attitude. Therefore, it is suggested that the managers' attitude towards the work – life policies is improved, while the ownership structure does not seem to affect significantly the applied policies.

Similarly, Cegarra -Leiva et al (2012) also studied the impact of the managers' attitude on the work – life balance in small and medium enterprises in Spain. The sample of the research was composed by 149 managers and concluded that the employees achieve balance between the two domains and job satisfaction in case that the enterprises are characterised by work – life balance culture, rather than in case they apply work – life balance policies.

The work – life balance in Spain has also been investigated by Navarro – Astor (2011). In particular, the study focused on the case of the employees working the constructions and the purpose of the research was to investigate the cultural differences regarding the work – life balance between the employees in Spain and in other European countries. Hence, the interview has been used as a research tool in a sample of 40 employees in the sector. The study reached to the conclusion that most of the employees in the construction face problems achieve balance between the two domains mostly because of the fact that they have difficult to follow time – schedule and because of the fact that they work overtime often. In addition, these problems are more intense in the female employees, while on the contrary the male employees who are married and more than 50 years old argued that they have managed to achieve balance between the two domains. Finally, higher degree of flexibility has been observed in the salaried employees, contrary to the self – employed. Therefore, no great cultural differences have been

observed between the employees in Spain and in other European countries, such the United Kingdom and Australia.

Hobson et al (2011) investigated the work – life balance in employees in Hungary and Sweden. The researchers took into consideration the different working time rule between the two countries, the gender of the employees, the legal system etc. They reached to the conclusion that in both countries, the employees, regardless of their gender and educational level, reported that they face time pressure and that they feel that they do not dedicate enough time in neither of the domains. However, it should be mentioned that the employees in the Hungarian enterprises reported more inequalities in the work – life balance, mostly because of the institutional problem in the companies of the country.

In addition, Tanaka et al (2011) studied the relationship between balancing the personal and the professional life and the working conditions in Japan. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the two sectors through studying the professional experiences of the nurses employed in a Japanese university hospital. In the survey a questionnaire was used as a research tool, which was sent to 1,236 nurses and of whom 1,081 replied. The questionnaire included questions regarding the demographic characteristics of the participants, the living conditions, their suggestions regarding the improvement of the working environment and finally their motivations to participate in professional activities. The study concluded that nurses in Japan have not yet developed a complete and clear picture of the meaning and the importance of the balance between personal and professional life. As for the working environment, it was observed that most of the participants want to improve their quality of life, the flexibility in the working hours and to achieve lifelong education. Furthermore, participants who reported higher degree of balance between the two sectors argued that they received higher job satisfaction and that they are more motivated. Therefore, the concept of balance between personal and professional life has not yet been clarified by the nurses of Japan. For this reason it is proposed to better inform the nurses on the balance between the two domains as well as to provide advices so as to achieve balance between personal and professional life.

Similarly, Avgar et al (2011) studied the work – life balance in the shareholders in 173 hospitals focusing on the case of the United Kingdom. In particular the researchers investigated the degree to which the work – life balance strategies applied were successful. Finally, they presented a

model which could be used so as to evaluate the influence of the work – life balance strategies regarding the financial performance of the hospitals.

Moreover, Abendroth and denDulk (2011) studied the various types of support provided to the employees so as to balance between personal and professional life. In particular, the researchers studied the relationship between emotional status, family support and organizational institutions in a sample of 7,867 employees in 8 European countries. The research concludes that there is a positive correlation between the emotional state of the employees and the support they receive from the companies in which they are employed.

Also, Forstenlechner and Lettice (2008) investigated the work – life balance and the challenges that the young lawyers face. The researchers studied the cases of 300 lawyers, using both questionnaires and interviews as research tools. The study reached to the conclusion that the majority of the young lawyers focus on achieving higher profits and they mostly focused on their professional duties rather than on their personal lives. In addition, it was observed that most of the participants were forced to work overtime and thus they faced imbalance between the two domains.

Similarly, Wallace (2006) studied the case of the female lawyers and the extent to which they achieve balance between the personal and the professional life. The study reached to the conclusion that most of the female lawyers face difficulties in achieving balance between the two domains. In addition, they argued that this imbalance is mostly influence of the characteristics of the legal firms and that most of the participants in the research reported that they feel unsatisfied from their professional career.

Finally, Bacik and Drew also studied the work – life balance in lawyers. The study reached to the conclusion that when regarding to the female lawyers they rarely achieve balance between the two domains because they usually work overtime, the working conditions are not favorable in achieving balance between personal and professional life and thus it is suggested that the balance between the two domains when regarding to the lawyers is significantly affected by the gender.

1.4 Relationship between WLB, Job Satisfaction and Well-Being

The relationship between work – life balance, job satisfaction and well – being has also been investigated. Hence, Gropel and Kuhl (2009) argue that the work – life balance refers to the sufficiency of time that a person can afford both for the occupational duties and the social life. Therefore, in order to investigate the relationship of the sufficiency of time they argued that the greater the sufficiency of time, the higher the job and the personal satisfaction. The research was based on the study of a sample of students and a sample of employees and reached to the conclusions that the sufficiency of time for the personal and occupational duties, as perceived by the participants in the research, could only predict a person's well – being only in case that this person's needs are satisfied during this period of time.

In addition, Grant – Vallone and Donaldson (2001) investigated the relationship between the work – life imbalance and the well – being. Therefore, they investigated the consequences of the work – life imbalance in a person's well – being. The sample of the study was composed by 342 employees in a U.S.A. region. The study reached to the conclusion that the work – life imbalance influences negatively a person's long - term well – being, taking into consideration the social bias.

Also, Kawase et al (2012) investigated this relationship taking into consideration environmental and cultural factors. Thus they studied the case of women surgeon in Japan, in Hong Kong and in the U.S.A. The sample of the research was composed by 822 women, 252 of which finally participated in the study. The researched reached to the conclusion that most of the Japanese participants focused on their professional duties, which they considered their first priority. On the contrary, the observed that most of the participants of Hong Kong and the U.S.A. focused on their personal duties. Also, they argued that the level of job satisfaction was high in the participants regardless their nationality. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that almost 20% of the U.S. participants argues that they are not completely satisfied with their job, while more than 75% of them believe that they are not treated equally to the men surgeons. In addition, more than half of the Japanese participants believe that are not treated as favorably as men at home. Finally, the researchers suggest that in order to improve the surgeons' job satisfaction and well – being, their schedule should become more flexible, while they should be supported as for the child rearing.

The association of work – life balance with the job satisfaction has also been investigated by Keeton et al (2007) who studied a sample of 2.000 physicians, taking into consideration demographic characteristics, such as the age, the gender and their specialty. They reached to the conclusion that most female and most male employees reported that they were highly job satisfied with their careers, while on the contrary they were moderately satisfied with the balance between the two sections.

The job satisfaction and its association with the work – life balance has also been studied by Morganson et al (2010). The purpose of this study was to investigate the differences between the programs applied in order to balance between personal and professional life and the degree of job satisfaction. Hence, data from 578 employees were collected through the Internet, occupied in different job positions. The survey reached to the conclusion that the office employees and the people who work from home have similar levels of job satisfaction and watched similar programs of between balancing personal and professional life. Also, the office employees who held managerial positions argued that they felt greater need to participate in such programs compared to the workers who are not occupied in managerial positions. Finally, it was suggested that the greater the flexibility provided to the two domains the more the benefits deriving for the employees.

In addition, Waumsley et al (2010) studied the balance between personal and professional life focusing on the conflict between the professional tasks in the sports psychologists. The number and the complexity of the tasks were discussed and it was proposed a psychological model through which the employees could organize their professional duties and to ensure free time so as to balance between the domains.

Finally, Smith et al (2011) studied the relationship between the work – life balance and the quality of life in the female employees in the United Kingdom. They observed several inequalities regarding the roles between the genders since a growing number of female employees are now entering the workforce, while at the same time that have several social duties to take care of.

1.5 Consequences of Work-Life Imbalance

Several consequences are related to the work – life imbalance. Actually, it has been observed that the taking care of the children, the need to balance among multiple roles of everyday etc. have serious consequences on the health of workers and their interpersonal relationships. However, these effects differ between the sexes. Specifically, women continue to have the primary role regarding the care of the children, regardless of their occupation. Therefore, many women employees face difficulties trying to cope with the roles that they have undertaken (Hyman & Summers, 2004). The failed effort of an employee to balance between personal and professional life affects its health condition and results in occupational exhaustion and depersonalization. The burnout leads to emotional exhaustion and to the development of a negative or cynical attitude, while the employee might evaluate itself negatively (Maslach et al 1996).

Also the effort of the employees to balance between work and personal life increases the level of stress that a person feels. This leads to emotional exhaustion, that feeling characterize by extreme fatigue from work, depersonalization, such as the development of a negative attitude towards other people and reduced sense of personal achievement, such as a negative evaluation of the performance and the achievements (Platsidou & Agaliotis, 2008).

In accordance with these findings are also the findings of the research conducted by Kalliath et al (2012). They observed that the work – life imbalance is associated with high level of stress in the social employees in Australia in a sample of 439 participants. The researchers concluded that the participants who had not managed to balance between the two domains suffered from psychological strain.

In addition, the consequences of the work – life imbalance are mainly related to the health of the employees, which include professional exhaustion and depersonalization. Hence, this imbalance leads to emotional exhaustion and to the development of a negative or cynical attitude, while the employee evaluates negatively oneself and this leads to low self-esteem and personal integration (Maslach etc. 1996).

Respectively, Hammig et al (2011) argued that the work – life imbalance is associated with musculoskeletal disorders because it contributes to the increase of the stress levels. Thus they conducted a research in four enterprises in Switzerland, while the sample was composed by

6,091 employees. They reached to the conclusion that the work – life imbalance is associated with back and neck pain. Finally, they suggested that work – life imbalance contributes to the development of high levels of stress in the employees.

Moreover, it should be noted that in most cases the job burnout occurs in occupations that require daily and frequent contact with other people, a fact that creates anxiety. Especially in the service and the banking sector, it is observed that exhaustion and cynicism result in emotional burnout, while depersonalization is considered as a special case of cynicism and burnout (Schaufeli et al, 1996).

It has also been observed that the imbalance between the two domains is associated with suicidal behaviour, as well as with psychological problems. Hence, Platt et al (2012) studied the impact of the work – life imbalance on the health of veterinary surgeons. The study was based on a systematic review of previous researches. The researched reached to the conclusion that the imbalance between the two domains can cause suicidal behaviour, stress and it could lead to the development of mental problems. In addition, it might cause job dissatisfaction, a fact that affects negatively the veterinary surgeons' well – being.

Moreover, it has been argued that the work – life imbalance can affect negatively the employees' marital quality. Thus, Mathhews et al (1996) studied the cases of 337 couples of employees so as to investigate the impact of the work – life imbalance on their family life and marital quality. They reached to the conclusion that the conflict between the two domains, regardless of the gender of the employees, could lead to psychological distress and it could affect negatively the marital quality. Finally, it has been observed that the couples that do not manage to balance between life and their professional duties become more hostile and less supportive.

Shrestha and Joyce (2011) studied the nurses in Australia and they observed that mostly the female and the young nurses in Australia face greater difficulty balancing between personal and professional life. The failure to achieve balance between the two domains is associated with health problems and lack of prosperity, while a significant percentage of the nurses were keen to retire earlier from their professional duties. In the survey 3,906 nurses participated, of whom 53% said they had actually managed to achieve a balance between personal and professional life. Also, female employees reported a higher degree of balance between the roles compared to male employees. Furthermore, balance between the roles was also reported by employees to whom

there have been provided opportunities for leisure activities and who did not experience any health problems. However, those who had not achieved a balance between the domains reported that they had been unable to ensure professional licenses and wished that their working hours were not fixed. Therefore, these employees reported that they wanted to minimize the total working hours, while it should be noted that the researchers did not take into account factors regarding the family and the social status.

In addition, Wirtz and Nachreiner (2010) studied the effect of working overtime on the social behavior and the physical health of the employees. In particular, they observed that the employees reported working many hours per day as well as working during the weekend or the evenings. They observed that in this case the employees do not manage to achieve balance between personal and professional life and in several cases they present mental health problems. Moreover, the higher the number of hours that an employee works weekly, the harder it is to achieve a balance between the domains. Therefore, the employees who work long hours are more likely to develop mental health problems.

1.6 Programs and policies that enhance the achievement of work – life balance

It has been observed that over the past years the employers have recognized the need to create and to implement programs that will help the employees balance between personal and professional life (Lockwood, 2003). However, these programs were interrupted by the recent financial crisis. Hence it is argued that it is important to apply initiatives at organizational level so as to balance between the two sections under the current economic conditions (Naithani, 2010).

Such programs affect the employees' performance and offer them more flexibility regarding the decision making process and their autonomy. Hence they contribute so that the employees develop a positive attitude towards the professional duties, the psychological wellbeing, as well as higher performance. Also, it has been a strong correlation between employees' perceptions regarding the relationship between the work – life balance and the professional burnout (Karasek & Theorell 1990; Parker & Wall, 1998).

In addition it has been observed that the programs and the policies that aim at balancing the personal and the professional life can bring several benefits to both employees and employers. However, such benefits are not just limited social and psychological ones, but they also include economic benefits. The economic benefits of the programs were the main reason for which several companies and organizations follow a policy of balancing between the two sectors. These programs help the companies so as to enhance the productivity and to increase profitability, while at the same time the employees develop a relationship of trust towards the organization (Hudson, 2006; Byrne, 2005). Furthermore, it has been observed that the employees that participated in such programs are able to use more talents and abilities at work. These programs improve the employees' health condition and they are associated with a higher degree of job satisfaction and a reduction in the number of resignations and dismissals (McDonald & Bradley, 2005). Also, these programs aim at preventing the employees from burnout and exhaustion, which refers to the fatigue resulting from long-term involvement in an extremely demanding job (Leiter & Schaufeli, 1996).

Also, the programs and the policies are applied by the enterprises so as to reduce the work-related stress, which can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional state that occurs when a person's employment is not compatible with its capabilities or needs. It is often associated with various diseases, such as hypertension, cardiovascular problems, substance abuse, frustration and a reduction of overall mental and physical wellbeing (OSHA, 1999).

In order to achieve balance between personal and professional life, Atkinson and Gregory (1986) proposed the creation of flexible companies at which the tasks are divided into different sections and the experience that the employees gain is completely diverse from the expectations of the employer. In their research they suggested companies which were characterized by operational flexibility, that is to say from development and gradual transition of the employees among the tasks, from flexibility of the workforce and from a flexible system of remuneration (Atkinson & Gregory, 1986).

In addition Ridby and O'Brien - Smith (2010) studied the interventions proposed by the trade unions of the employees so as to achieve a balance between the personal and the professional life. The survey was conducted via interviews with representatives of the trade unions so as to explore the issues related to balancing between personal and professional life and to propose

strategies. The research concludes that there are significant differences among the employers regarding the benefits deriving from the programs applied so as to balance personal and professional life, while it has also been several observed differences between the trade unions of different sectors.

The opinions of the trade unions have also been studied by Gregory and Milner (2009) who investigated the balance between personal and professional life in France and the in United Kingdom. The researchers note that most trade unions in the developed countries are implementing strategies so as to balance personal and professional life and so as to achieve flexibility between the roles. The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that influence these strategies and for this reason there were chosen the cases of the U.K. and France, in which different working regimes and different approaches of balancing programs for personal and professional life are applied. The study concludes that the trade unions of the two countries take into account the gender of the employees when designing programs to balance between the roles, as well as the working hours and the professional responsibilities. However, the programs of balancing between personal and professional life applied in the United Kingdom are considered more modern, especially those implemented in the public sector, but there were noted serious limitations in their initiatives taken by the employees.

2 Research methodology

2.1 The type of the research

The present study involves a combination of both a primary and a secondary research. The primary research is conducted via the quantitative research and it includes the collection and the input of the primary data, as well as their analysis. On the other hand, the secondary research involves a literature review of a pre – existing knowledge and it foregoes the primary research. In addition, the secondary information can be collected quickly and at low cost. Also, the information is already published, that is to say that they can be accessed easily and rapidly. Despite the advantages of the secondary data, the primary information is also important in the present study. Through the primary research there can be collected data relevant and sufficient to the examined subject (Ober, 2008).

In addition, the secondary data are collected via a secondary research and they derive from past studies. Moreover, the secondary research includes the study of what has already been written regarding a phenomenon or a situation. This means that the aim of the secondary research is to define what is already known and to enable the evaluation of the existing knowledge. Therefore, it could be defined as the discovery of the already known (Skittidis, 2006).

2.2 The data collection method

It has already been argued that in the present study a qualitative and a quantitative research will be used. The data of the quantitative research are collected via a questionnaire. The questionnaires are widely used in the researches so as to collect and analyze responses from a large number of participants, which compose the sample of the research. Thus, the responses of the participants regarding their perceptions and their behaviors towards a grand variety of subjects are controlled examined via the questionnaire, which is composed by standardized questions (Saunders et al, 2009). It is suggested that in the present essay it is used a questionnaire which includes several types of questions and therefore both open and closed format questions, as well as dichotomous questions.

In addition, the quantitative research is based on the collection of numerical data, which are analyzed via a statistical analysis and they are considered unbiased. Moreover, the information collected via the quantitative research is presented in numerical form, contrary to those collected via qualitative research that are not presented in numerical form (Howe & Eisenhardt, 1990).

Furthermore, the method to be used for the collection of the secondary data is the literature review. The secondary data are information published by other researchers who did not study directly the subject of the present essay (Borg & Gall, 1979). The literature review was chosen so as to identify the importance of this study and so as to expand the knowledge regarding the work life balance in the case of the lawyers. Also, the existing knowledge has been studied and taken into consideration, while a literature gap was identified. Hence, the literature review was chosen so as to find out and fill up the gap in the existing literature. Therefore, the study presents the various views regarding the examined subject and via the literature review the existing knowledge has been examined and presented (Greenfield, 1996). Also, the secondary data are collected through scientific articles, dissertation, conference proceeding etc and it is considered a low cost, practical and quick method to collect the secondary data (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

Finally, the data deriving from the quantitative research will be analyzed statistically using the statistical package SPSS 20.0. Absolute and relative frequencies were used for both qualitative and quantitative data. Furthermore, for the quantitative data, means and variances were also used. For each item of the questionnaire, a bar chart or a pie chart was designed to visualize the answers to this specific item.

In order to minimize any problems during the quantitative analysis, it should be made sure that the questionnaire is properly designed and that there are no missing data. Moreover, the data will be examined for their reliability and for their validity.

2.3 Sample and sample methodology

The sample is very important when conducting a research. Several factors should be taken into consideration, such as the available time, the cost and the accessibility. Moreover, the sample group should be representative of the total population so as to be able to generalize the findings (Cohen et. al., 2007). In particular, it is important to define the size of the sample. In most cases, it is suggested that the larger the sample, the greater the reliability, however the aims and the objective of the research should be taken into consideration. Nevertheless, a sample size of at

least thirty is considered necessary for any statistical analysis to take place, while the access to the sample should be ensured (Cohen et. al., 2007, Denfcombe, 2007). Taking into consideration the limitations of the research and the fact that lawyers are a small subgroup of the general population and a subgroup which is hard to have direct access to, the sampling method selected for the present study is linear snowball sampling. An initial subject – participant is selected and then, every next subject - participant is indicated by the previous one. In this way, the questionnaire of the study was handed out to 123 lawyers from the Bar Association of Trikala. From the 123 questionnaires, only 53 were returned fully completed. Thus, the sample of the present study is determined at 53 lawyers who will participate in the quantitative research.

2.4 Limitations of the Research

Several limitations are expected to be presented during the research of this study. The present study is costly and time – consuming. Moreover, the case of a specific sector is examined since the survey focuses on the lawyers; therefore it is difficult to generalize the findings in other sectors as well. Another limitation refers to the size of the sample. Furthermore, since the sampling method is snowball sampling, the sample will be subject to numerous biases. Initial subjects tend to nominate people that they know well. Because of this, it is highly possible that the subjects share the same traits and characteristics, thus, it is possible that the sample is only a small subgroup of the entire population of lawyers. Nevertheless, it should be argued that the lawyers that will participate in the survey have already been informed regarding the purpose of the study and thus they have expressed their willingness to complete the questionnaires.

Moreover, the data collected have been examined carefully so as to avoid possible errors. Also, records have been kept that can be used in future research. The data that have been collected through the literature review have not been plagiarized and every reference is mentioned so as to protect the intellectual property. Finally, the confidentiality of the answers is guaranteed, while human rights and personal thoughts have been respected.

Furthermore, several ethical issues arise when conducting a study. The ethical issues arise in every stage of the research procedure. Therefore, ethical issues might regard the nature of the study, such as differences in intelligence, the context of the study, such as the high demands of the research, the research procedure to be followed, which is a very stressful condition for the

researcher, the method used for the collection and the type of the data, the sample and the participants, especially when the collected information is too personal, and finally the publication of the data so that the participants will not feel embarrassment (Cohen et. al., 2007).

2.5 The scope, the research questions and the research questionnaire

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the work – life balance focusing on the case of lawyers. Thus, it is investigated if and how the lawyers manage to achieve balance between their professional duties and their personal life. In addition, the research questions of the study are the following:

Q₁: How do lawyers self – evaluate their work – life balance?

Q₂: Which are the main factors that influence the balance between work and life in the case of lawyers?

Q₃: Which is the influence of the work – life balance in the lawyers' job satisfaction and well – being?

Q₄: Which are the consequences of the work – life imbalance?

Q₅: Which policies contribute to achieving work life balance?

A research questionnaire was designed specifically to answer the questions above. The questionnaire consists of 21 Likert, multiple choice and dichotomous questions. Most of the questionnaire's items were closed – form questions. The questionnaire was used to collect information about the participants' demographics, their working conditions and others, which is used to estimate their work – life balance. Thus, the items of the questionnaire were linked with the research questions stated above. In particular, question 4 of the questionnaire regards **Q₁** and questions 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 regard **Q₂**. Questions 13, 14 and 18, regard **Q₃**. Question 19 regards **Q₄**, while 20 and 21 regard **Q₅**. Since **Q₃** and **Q₄** are intertwined, questions 11,12,15,16 and 17 regard both **Q₃** and **Q₄**.

3 Data Analysis

3.1 Introduction

In the present section, the results from the analysis of the questionnaire data are presented. The results for each item are presented also in forms of diagrams. However, it is considered necessary to also conduct a reliability analysis of the questionnaire which was used for the present dissertation.

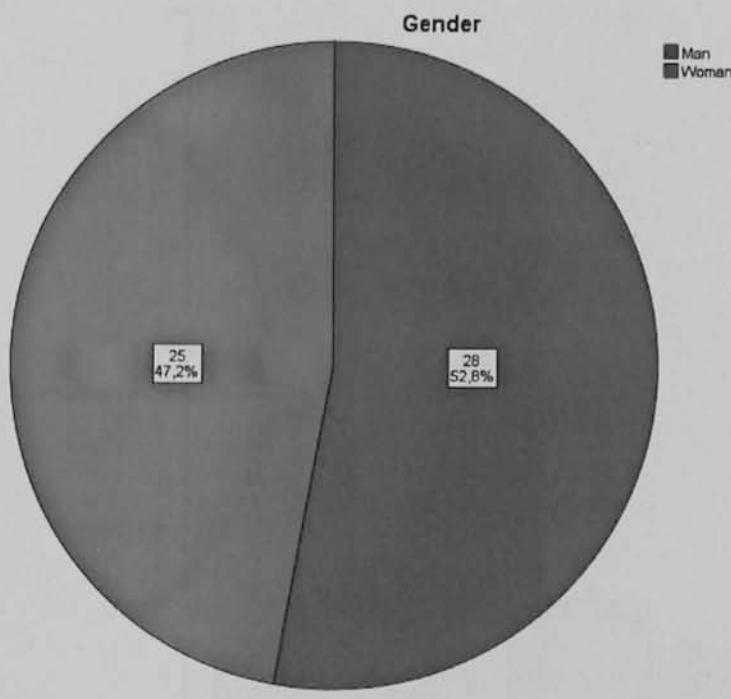
3.2 Reliability Analysis

Reliability is defined as the extent to which a questionnaire or any measurement procedure produces the same results on repeated trials. In the present dissertation, Cronbach's alpha α coefficient for internal consistency was used as an estimate of the reliability of the questionnaire. A questionnaire is considered to be consistent if Cronbach's alpha coefficient is greater or equal to 70 ($\alpha \geq 0.70$).

The Cronbach's alpha α coefficient was found to be 0.772, while removing any item from the questionnaire does not lead to an increase of α . Hence, the questionnaire is characterized as internally consistent and reliable for the needs of the present study.

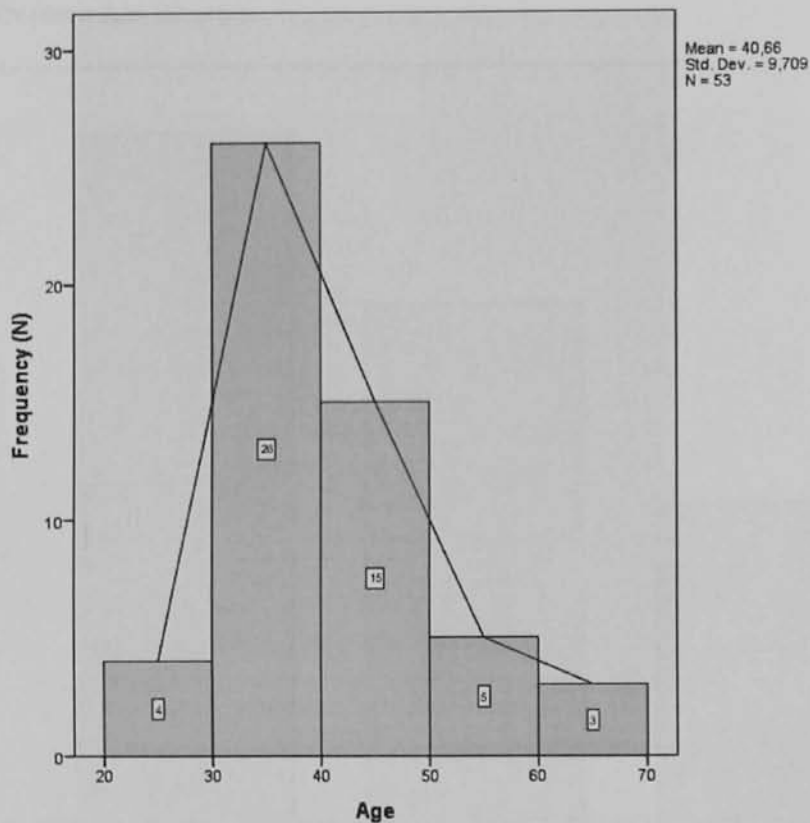
3.3 Data Presentation

The sample consists of 53 lawyers, 28 men and 25 women.



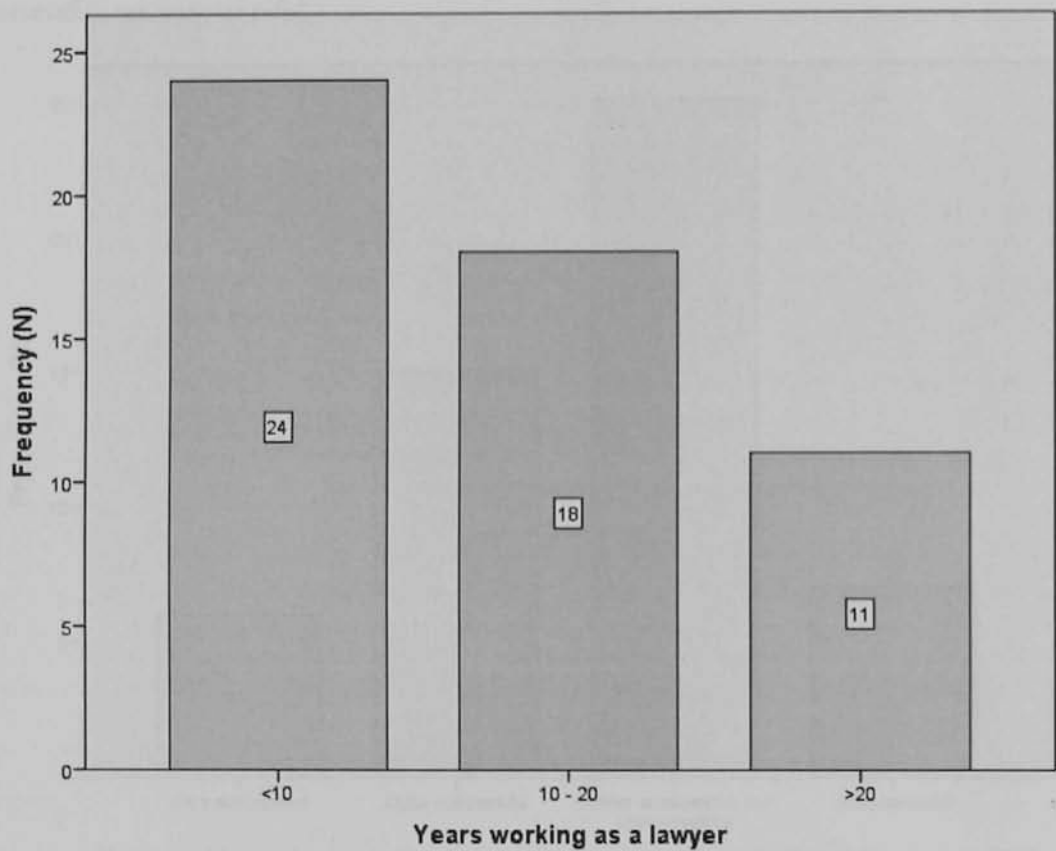
Graph 3.1: Gender.

The mean age of the participants was 39.6 ± 9.8 years and ranged from 26 to 65 years (39 years range).



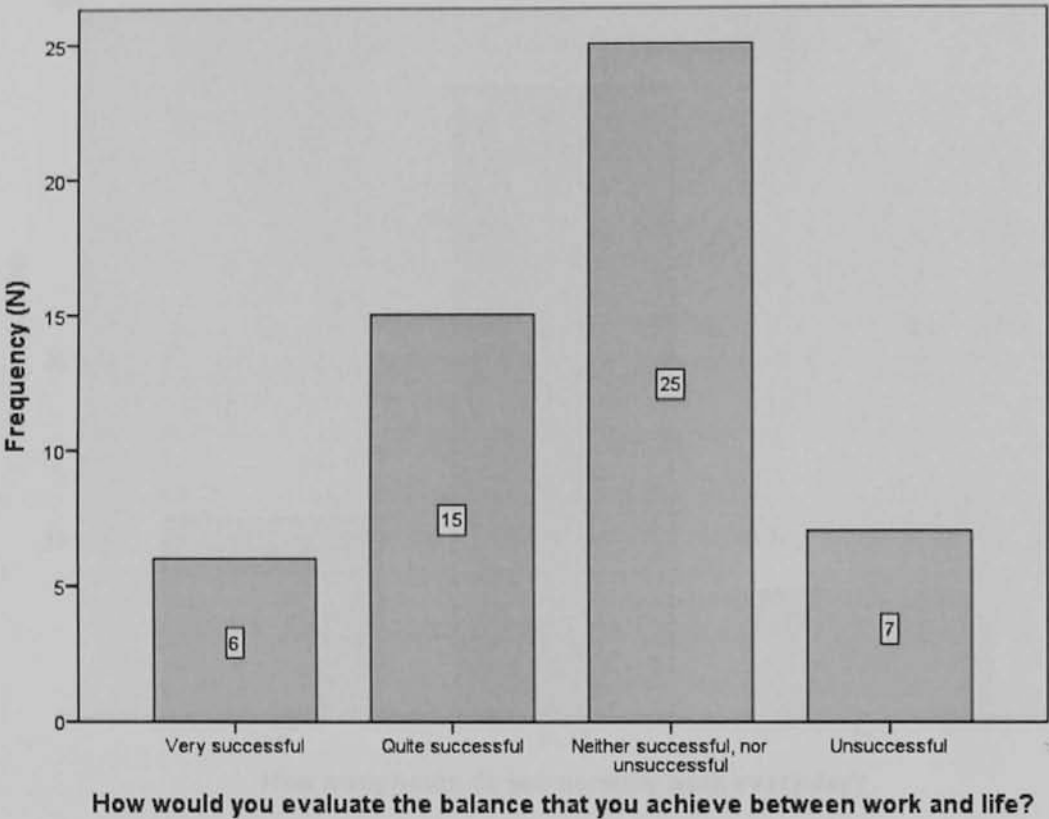
Graph 3.2: Age groups of participants.

Most of the participants have been working as a lawyer less than 10 years ($N=24$, $f=45.2\%$), while 18 ($f=34\%$) of them have been working from 10 to 20 years and 11 ($f=20.8$) have been working for more than 20 years.



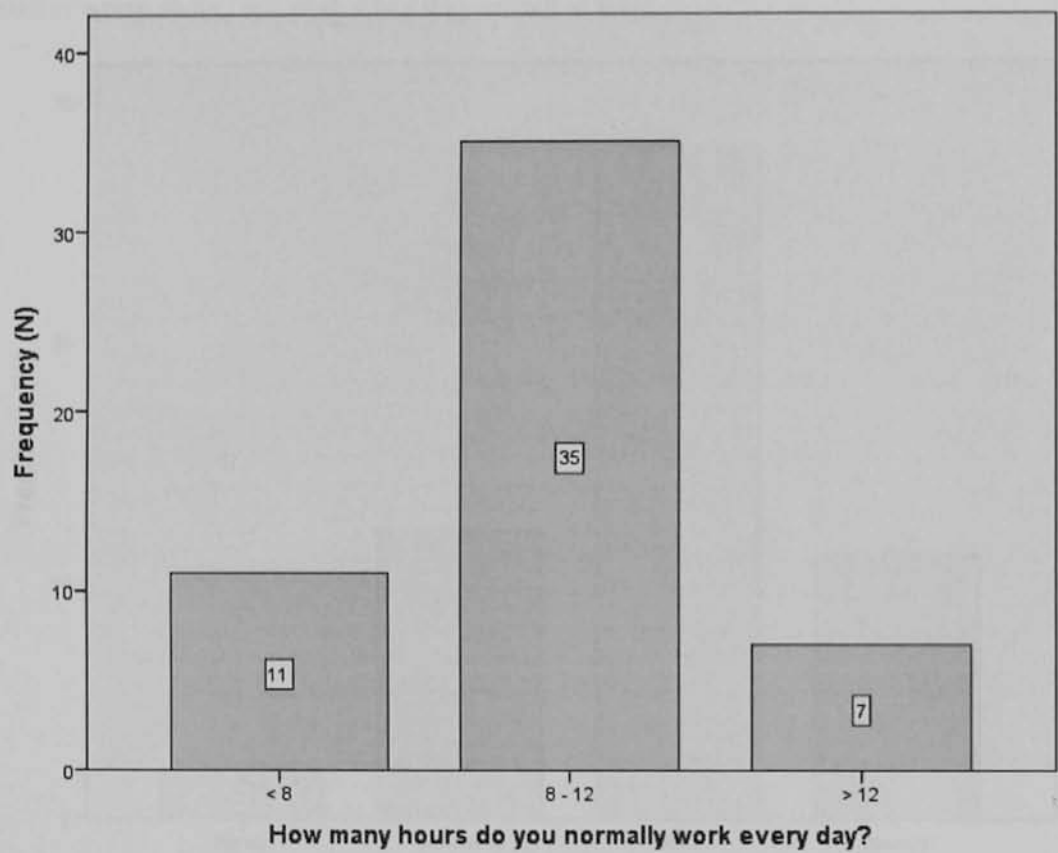
Graph 3.3: Years working as a lawyer.

As for how the participants self – evaluate their work – life balance, it has been observed that 6 of them (f=11.32%) evaluate it as very successful, 15 (f=28.3%) of them as quite successful, 7 (f=13.21%) of them as unsuccessful, while the majority (N=25, f=47.17%) evaluate it as neither successful, nor unsuccessful.



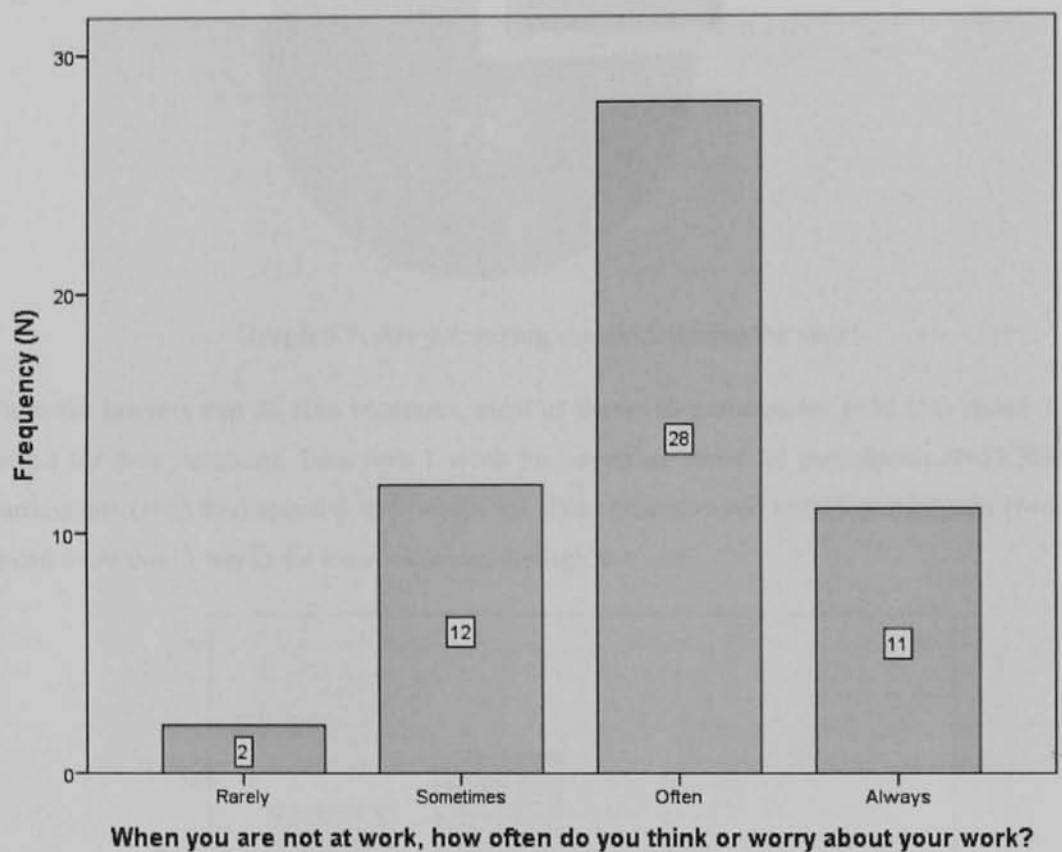
Graph 3.4: How would you evaluate the balance that you achieve between work and life?

Regarding the hours of work in a normal day, most of the lawyers (35 participants, $f=66\%$) work from 8 to 12 hours, 11 work less than 8 hours ($f=20.8\%$), while only 7 ($f=13.2\%$) work more than 12 hours.



Graph 3.5: How many hours do you normally work every day?

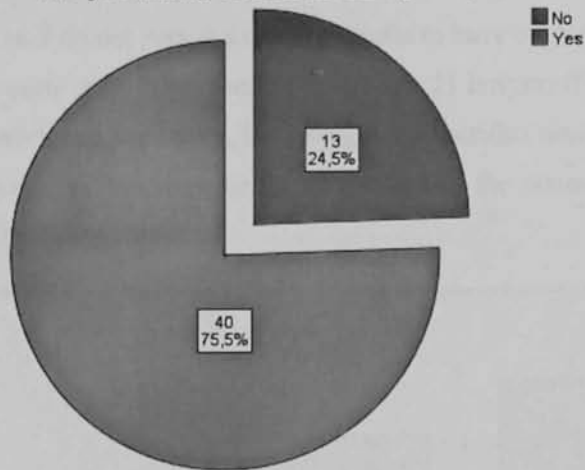
When they are not at work, most lawyers who participated in the present dissertation often think or worry about their work (28 participants, $f=52.8\%$). Also, 12 of them ($f=22.3\%$) sometimes think or worry about their work, 11 ($f=20.8\%$) think or worry always and just 2 ($f=3.8\%$) rarely think or worry about their work when they are not at work.



Graph 3.6: When you are not at work, how often do you think or worry about your work?

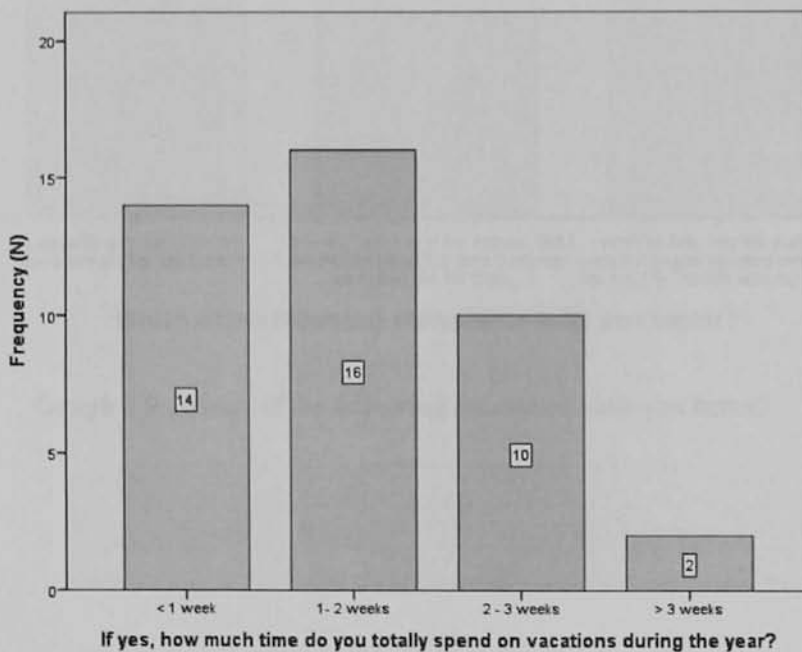
The mean time that the participants had to relax or pursue activities that they enjoy, after an average work day, was found 3.11 ± 1.68 hours and ranged from 0 to 10 hours (10 hours range). The majority of the participants take vacations through the year (40 participants, $f=75.5\%$). However, 13 participants ($f=24.5\%$) do not take vacations at all.

Are you taking vacations during the year?



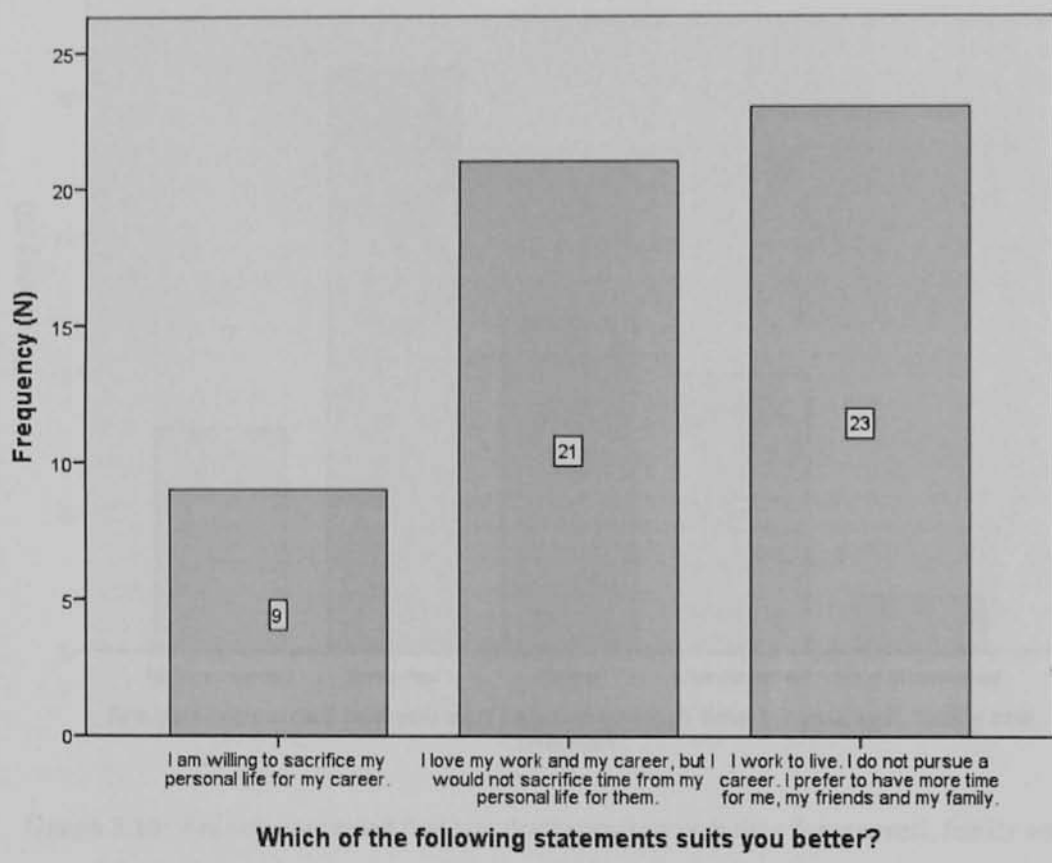
Graph 3.7: Are you taking vacations during the year?

From the lawyers that do take vacations, most of them (16 participants, $f=38.1\%$) spend 1 to 2 weeks for their vacations. Less than 1 week for vacations spend 14 participants ($f=33.3\%$), 10 participants ($f=23.8\%$) spend 2 to 3 weeks for their vacations and only 3 participants ($f=4.8\%$) spend more than 3 weeks for their vacations through the year.



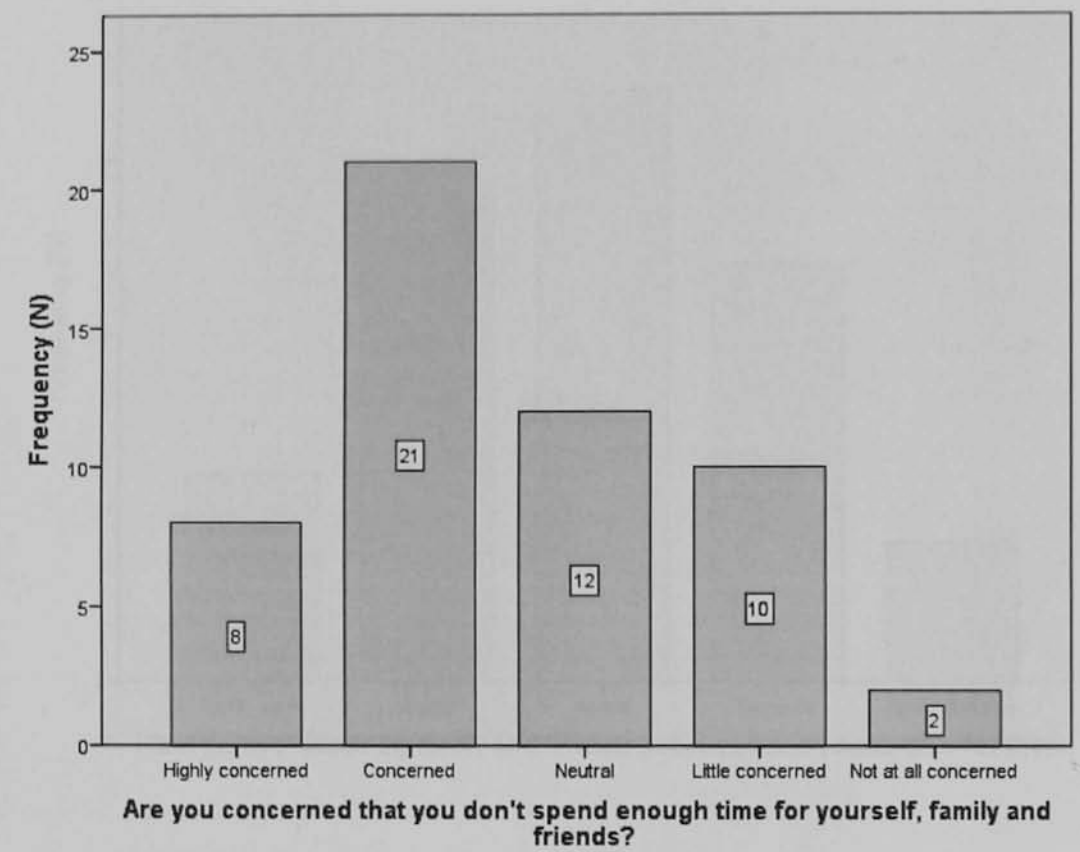
Graph 3.8: If yes, how much time do you totally spend on vacations during the year?

The vast majority of the lawyers (23 participants, $f=43.4\%$) were found to agree more with the statement: “I work to live. I do not pursue a career. I prefer to have more time for me, my friends and my family”. At the same time, it has been observed that 21 lawyers ($f=39.6\%$) agree with the statement: “I love my work and my career, but I would not sacrifice time from my personal life for them” and 9 lawyers ($f=17\%$) were found to agree with the statement: “I am willing to sacrifice my personal life for my career”.



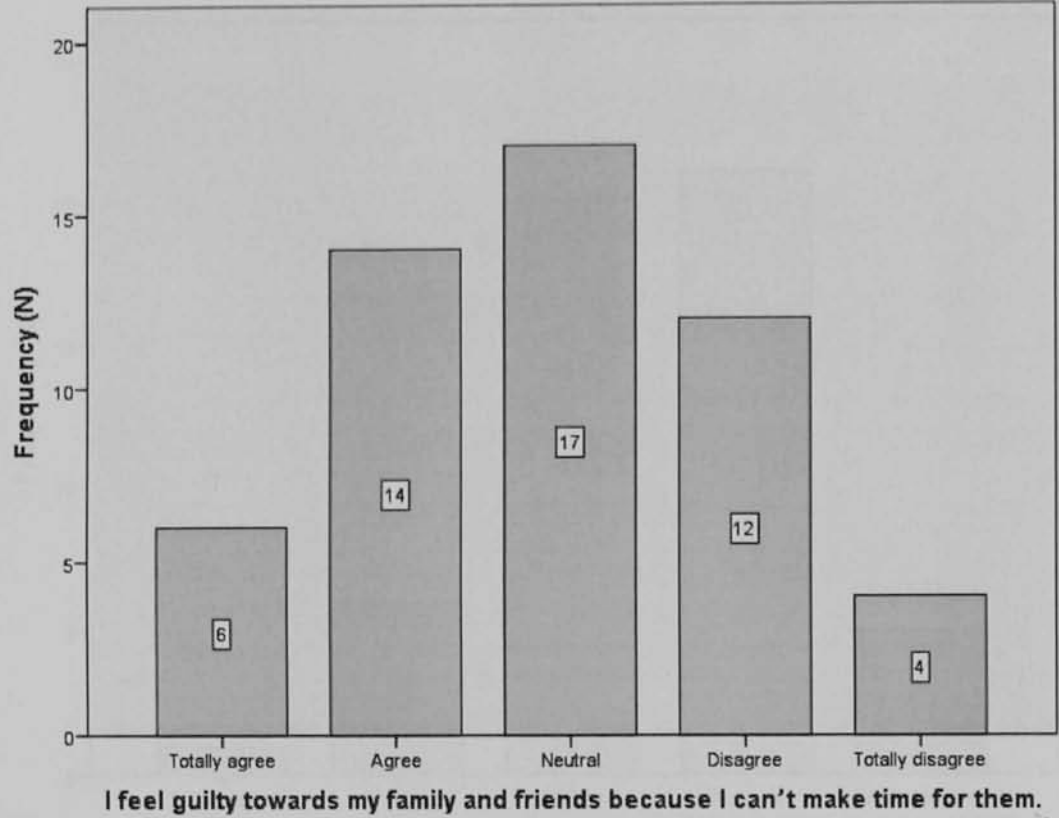
Graph 3.9: Which of the following statements suits you better?

As far as how much concerned the participants are that they don't spend enough time for them and their families and friends, 21 (f=39.6%) were found concerned, 12 (f=22.6%) neutral, 10 (f=18.9%) little concerned, 8 (f=15.1%) highly concerned and just 2 participants (f=3.8%) were not concerned at all.



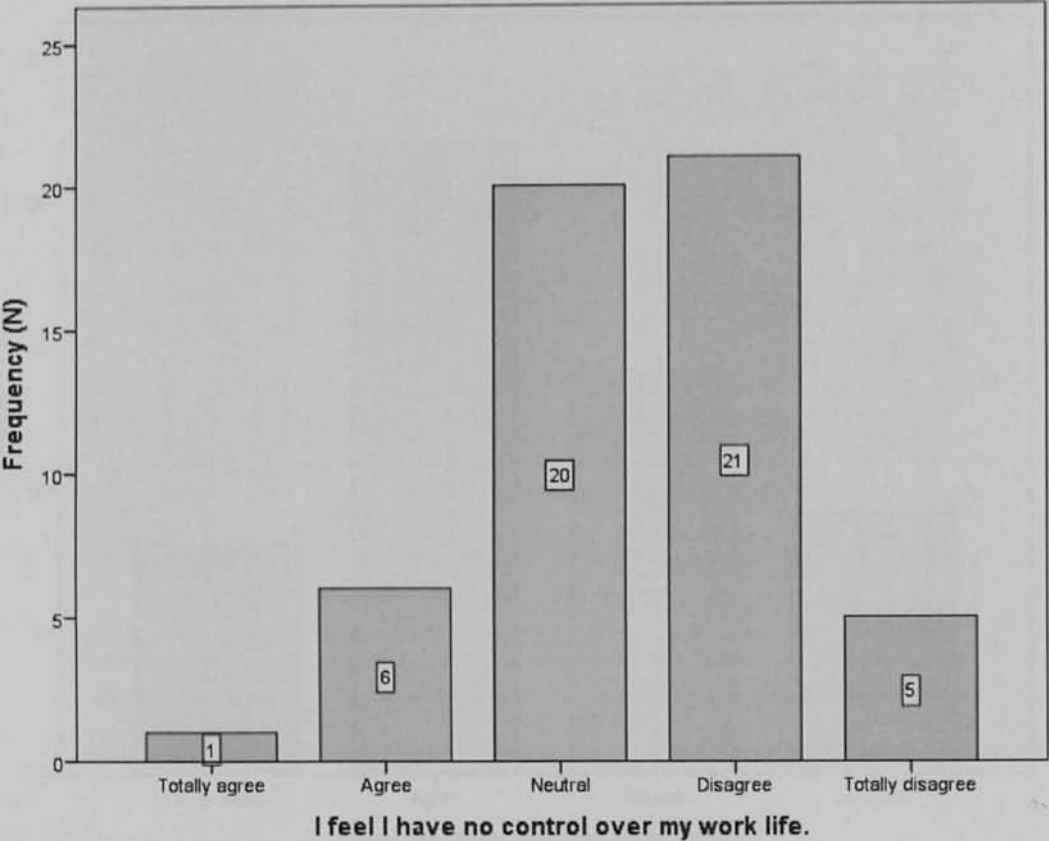
Graph 3.10: Are you concerned that you don't spend enough time for yourself, family and friends?

Towards the statement “I feel guilty towards my family and friends because I can’t make time for them”, 17 participants (f=32.1%) were found to be neutral, 14 (f=26.4%) to agree, 12 (f=22.6%) to disagree, 6 (f=11.3%) to totally agree and 4 (f=7.5%) to totally disagree.



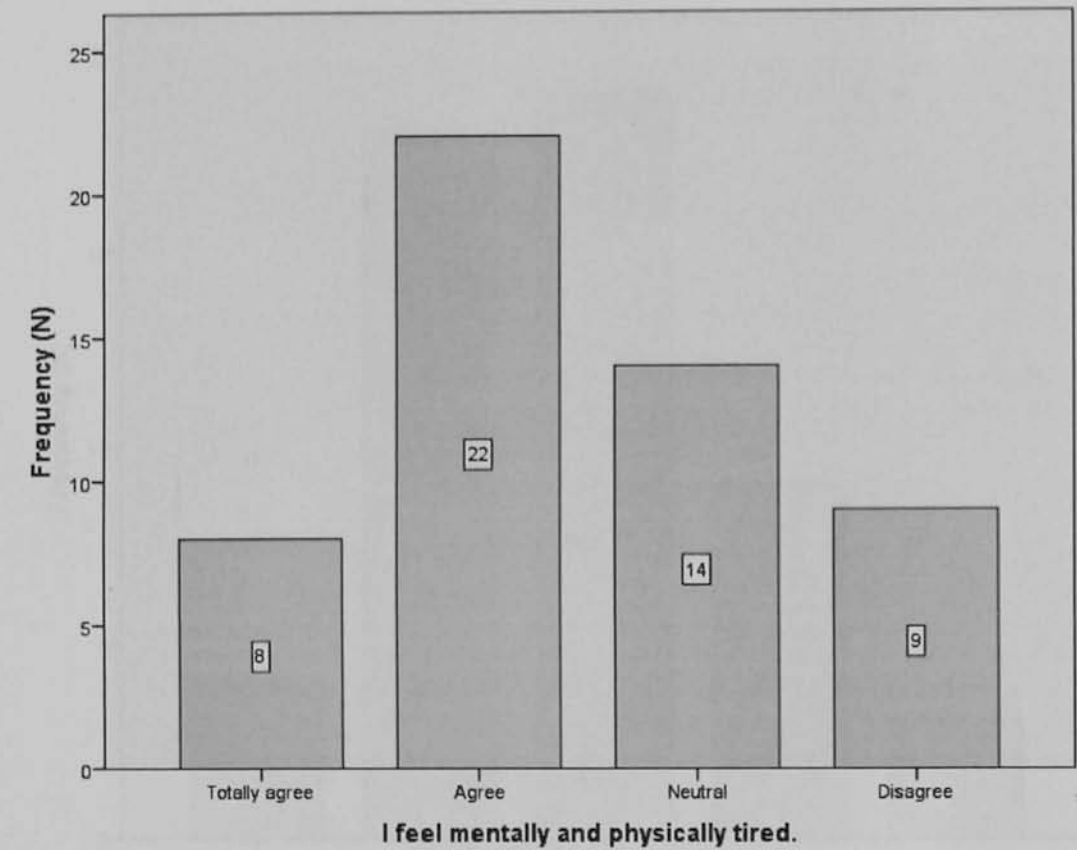
Graph 3.11: I feel guilty towards my family and friends because I can’t make time for them.

With the statement “I feel I have no control over my work life”, 21 participants (f=39.6%) disagree, 20 (f=37.7%) are neutral, 6 (f=11.3%) agree, 5 (f=9.4) totally disagree and only 1 (f=1.9%) totally agrees.



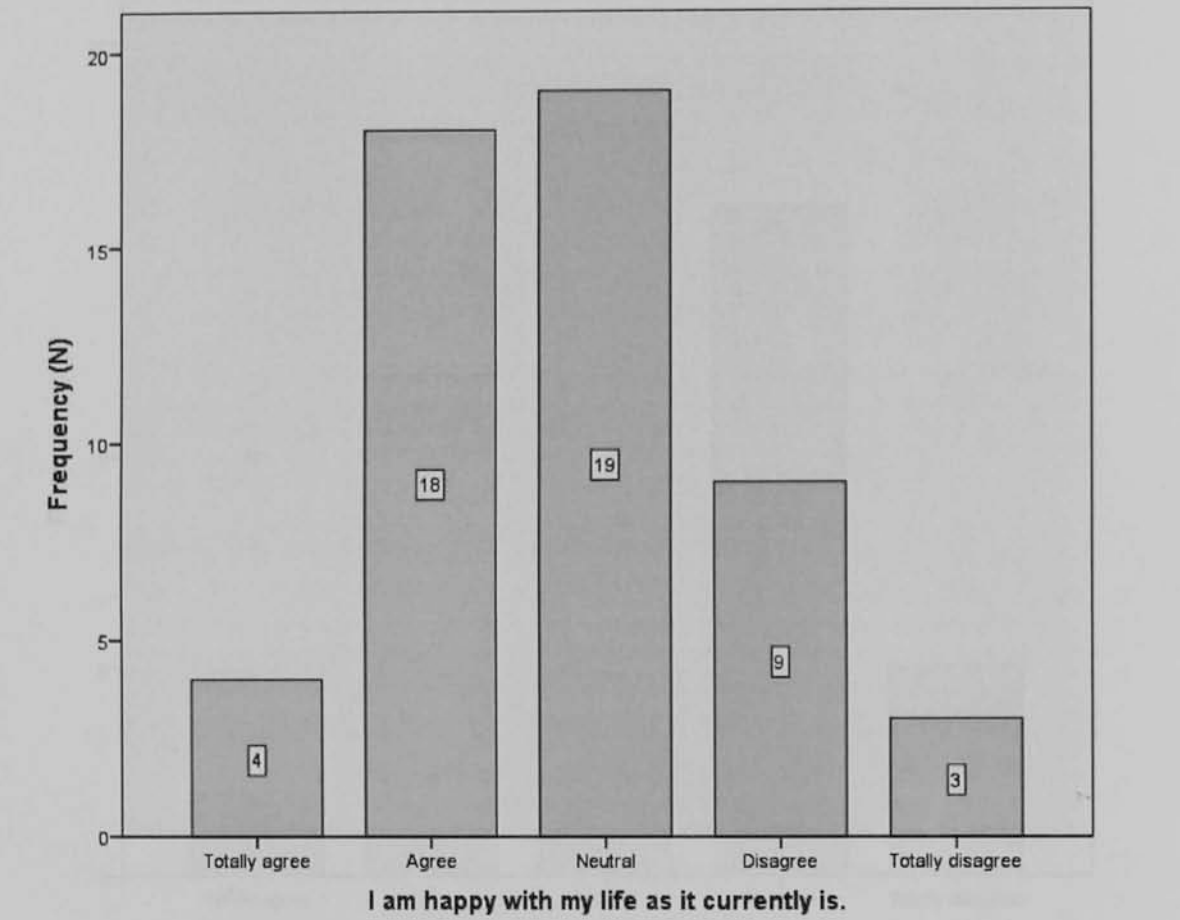
Graph 3.12: I feel I have no control over my work life.

It has also been observed that with the statement “I feel mentally and physically tired” most of the lawyers (22 participants, $f=41.5\%$) agree, 14 ($f=26.4\%$) are neutral, 9 ($f=17\%$) disagree and 8 ($f=15.1\%$) totally agree.



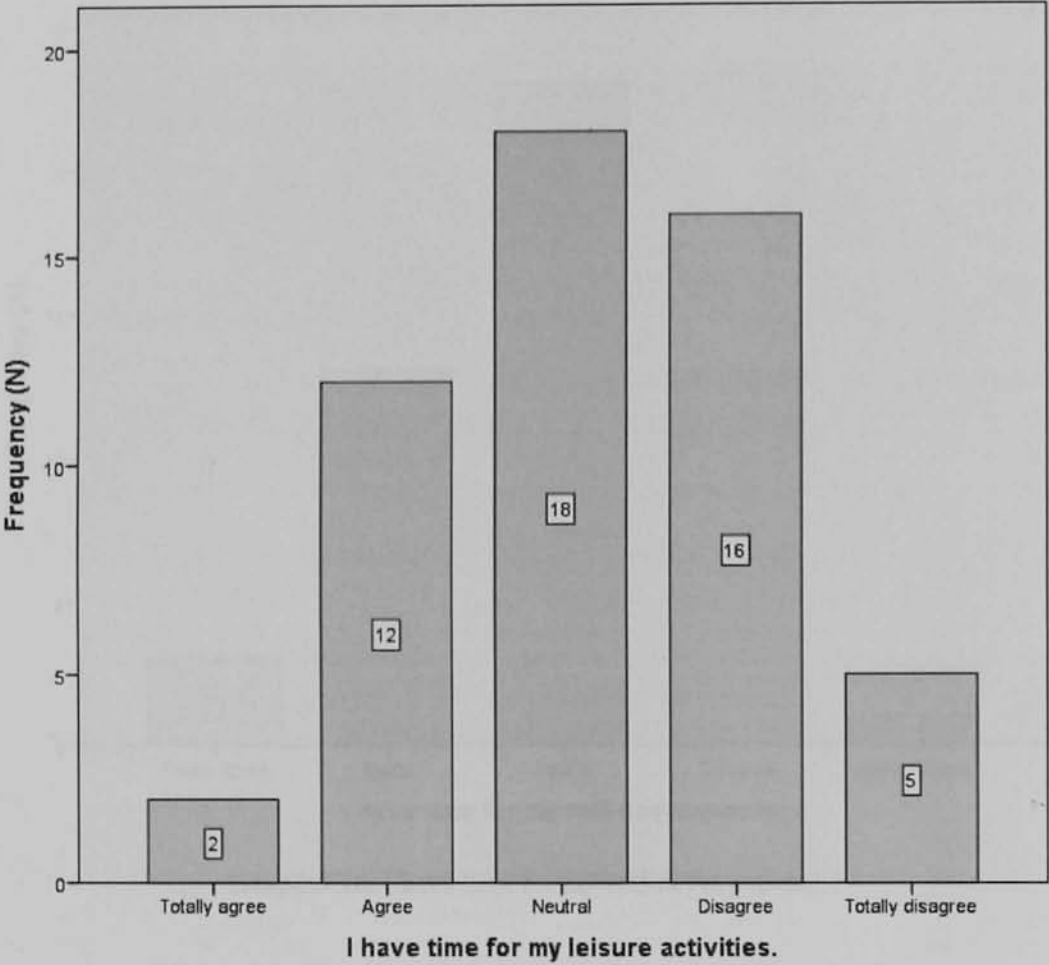
Graph 3.13: I feel mentally and physically tired.

Regarding the statement “I am happy with my life as it currently is”, 19 lawyers (f=35.8%) are neutral, 18 (f=34%) agree, 9 (f=17%) disagree, 4 (f=7.5%) totally agree and 3 (f=5.7%) totally disagree.



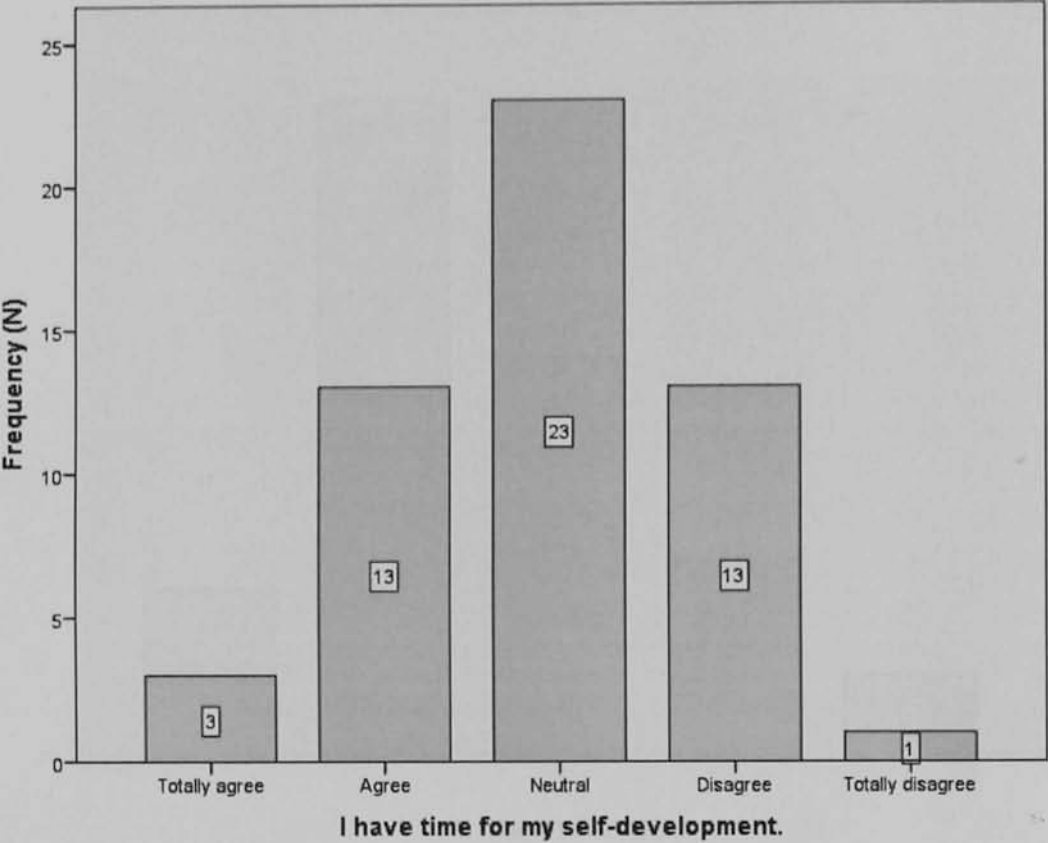
Graph 3.14: I am happy with my life as it currently is.

As far as the statement “I have time for my leisure activities” is concerned, it has been observed that most of the participants are neutral (18 participants, f=34%), 16 (f=30.2%) disagree, 12 (f=22.6%) agree, 5 (f=9.4%) totally disagree and just 2 participants (f=3.8%) totally agree.



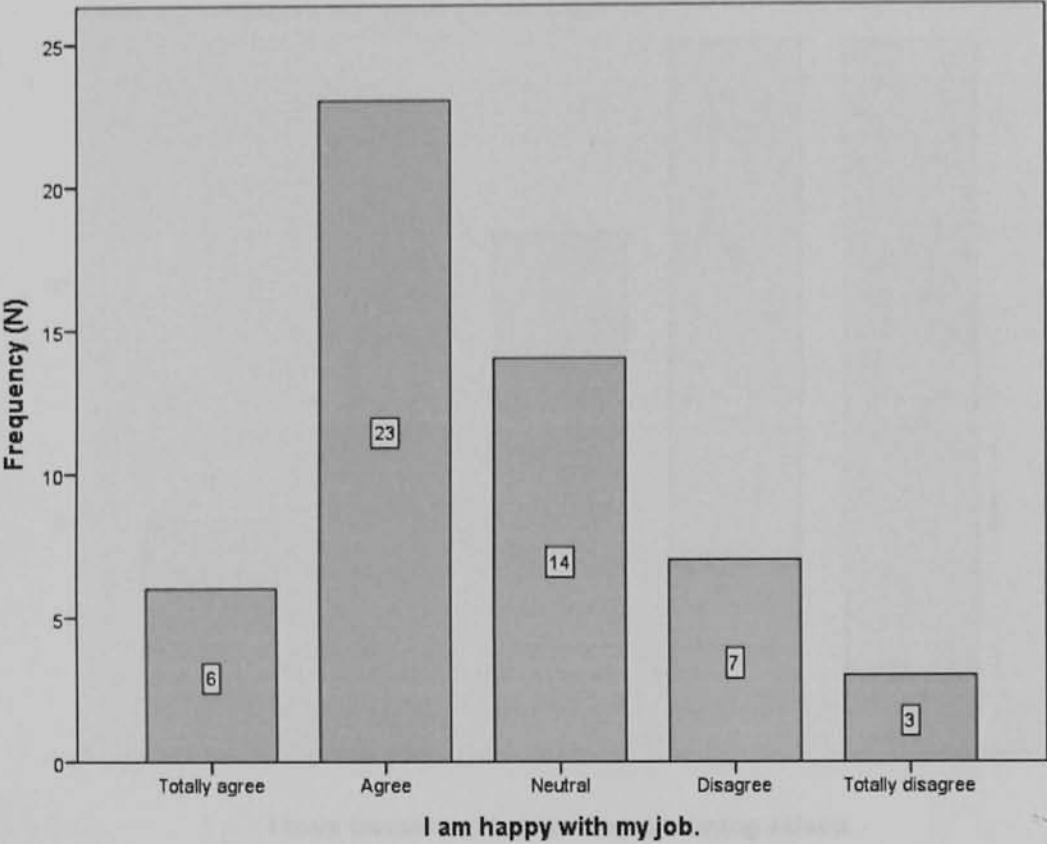
Graph 3.15: I have time for my leisure activities.

Regarding the statement “I have time for my self-development”, almost half of the participants (N=23, f=43.4%) are neutral, 13 (f=24.5%) agree and 13 (f=24.5%) disagree, while 3 (f=5.7%) totally agree and only 1 lawyer (f=1.9%) totally disagrees.



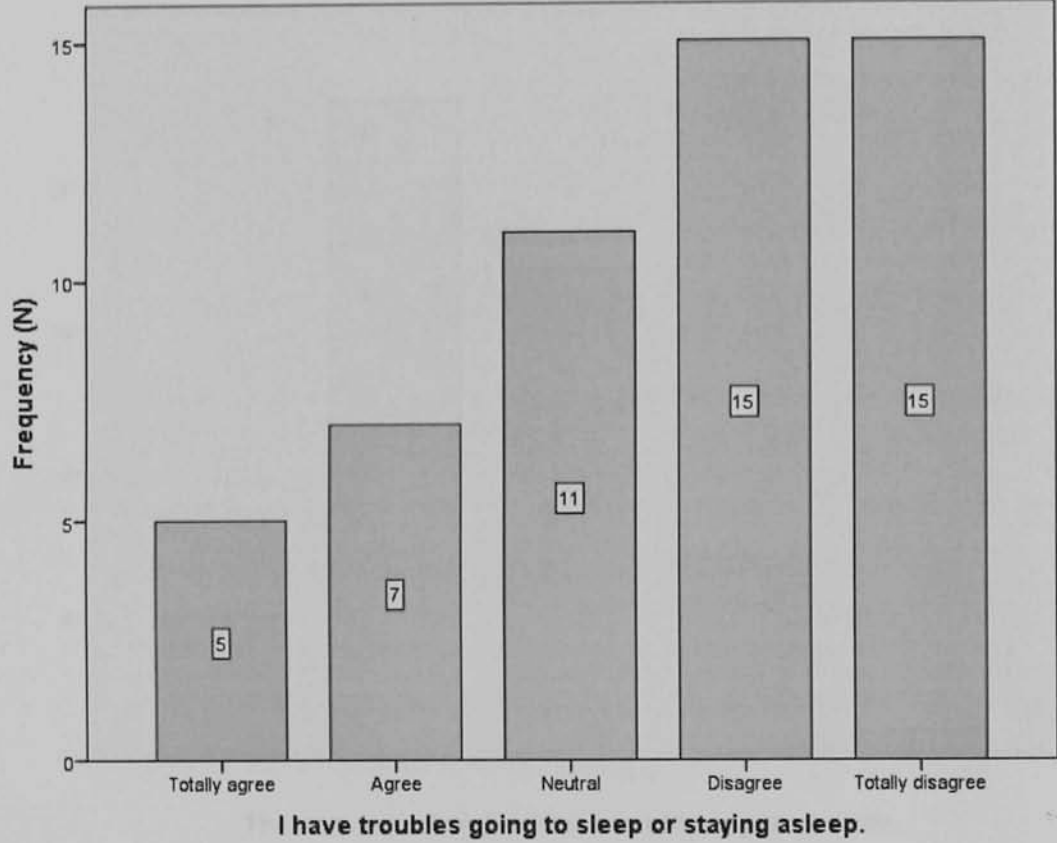
Graph 3.16: I have time for my self-development.

As for the statement “I am happy with my job”, it is observed that the majority of the lawyers agree (N=23, f=43.4%), 14 (f=26.4%) are neutral, 7 (f=13.2%) disagree, 6 (f=11.3%) totally agree and 3 (f=5.7%) totally disagree.



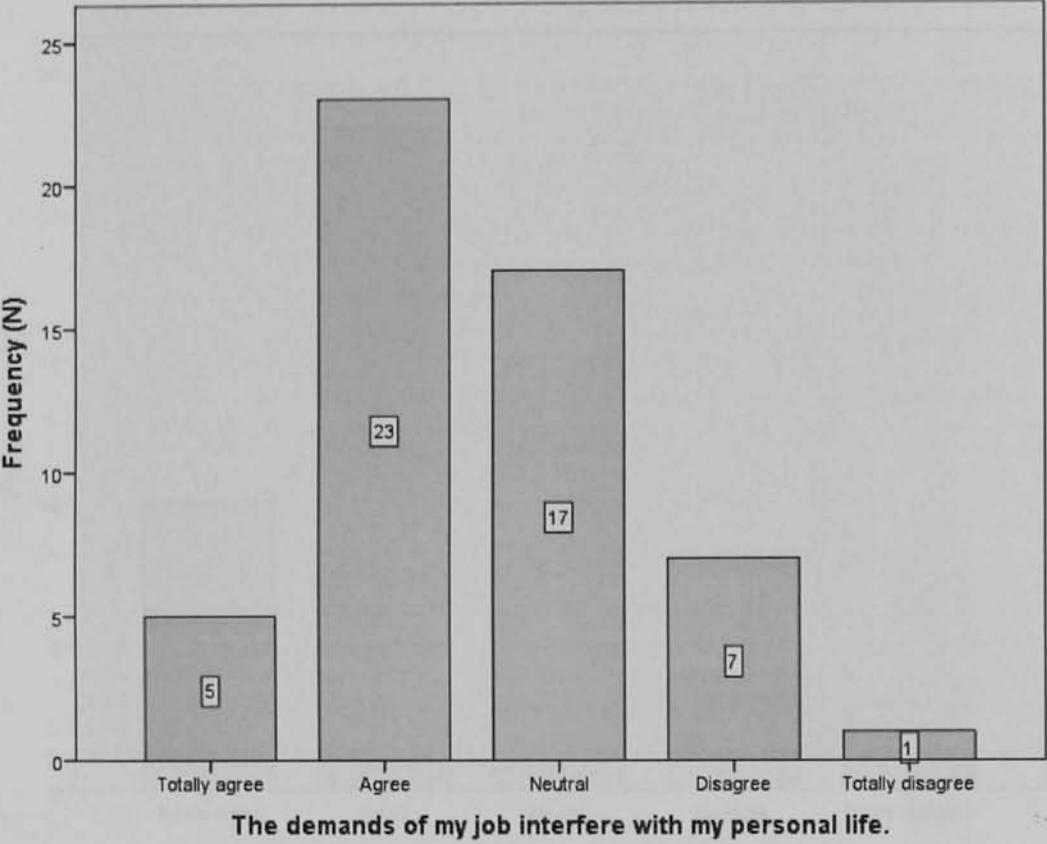
Graph 3.17: I am happy with my job.

With the statement “I have troubles going to sleep or staying asleep”, 15 participants (f=28.3%) were found to totally disagree, 15 (f=28.3%) to disagree, 11 (f=20.8%) were found to be neutral, 7 (f=13.2%) to agree and 5 (f=9.4%) to totally agree.



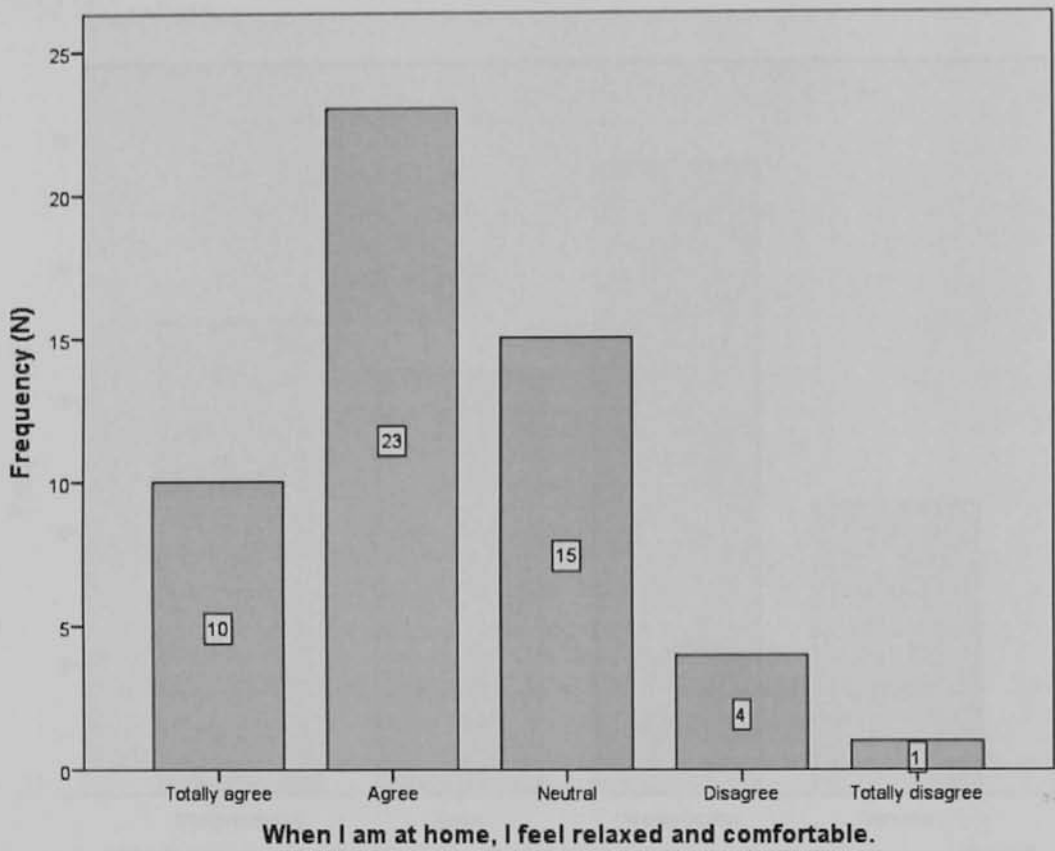
Graph 3.18: I have troubles going to sleep or staying asleep.

The majority of the lawyers (N=23, f=43.4%) agreed with the statement “The demands of my job interfere with my personal life”, 17 (f=32.1%) were neutral, 7 (f=13.2%) disagreed, 5 (f=9.4%) totally agreed and only 1 lawyer (f=1.9%) totally disagreed.



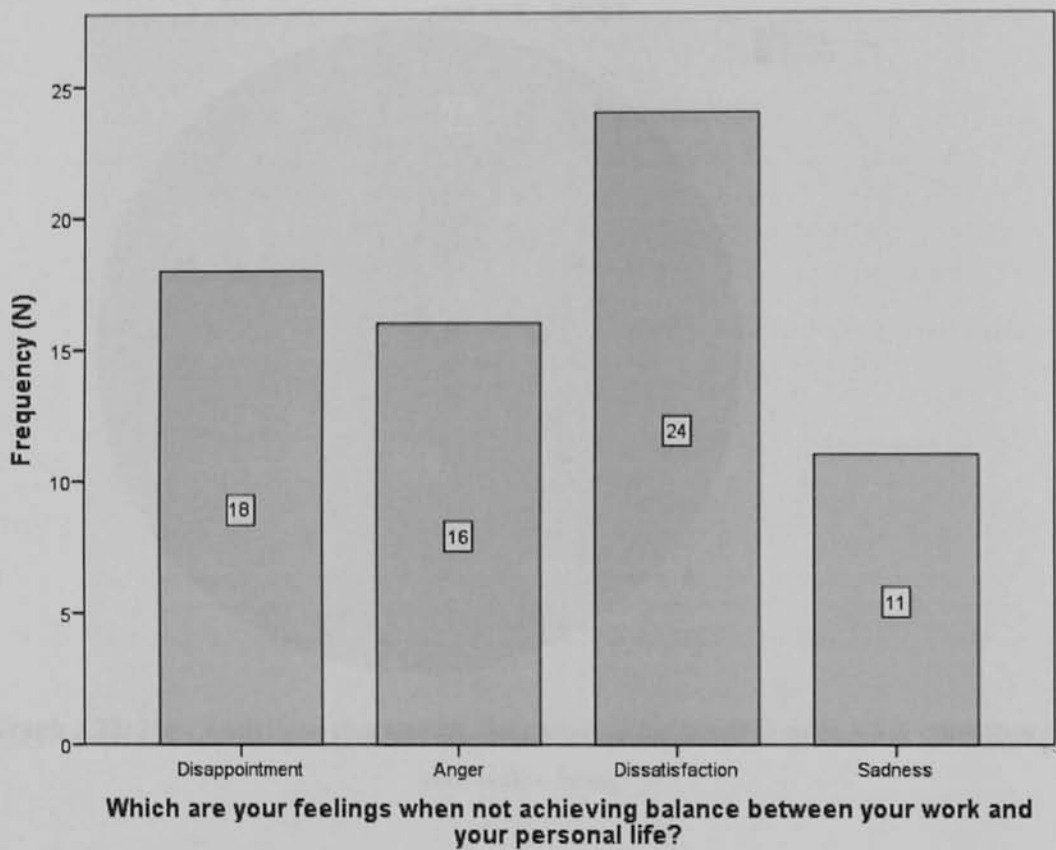
Graph 3.19: The demands of my job interfere with my personal life.

Lastly, with the statement “When I am at home, I feel relaxed and comfortable”, most of the participants (N=23, f=43.4%) were found to agree, 15 (f=28.3%) were found to be neutral, 10 (f=18.9%) to agree totally, 4 (f=7.5%) to disagree and 1 (f=1.9%) to disagree totally.



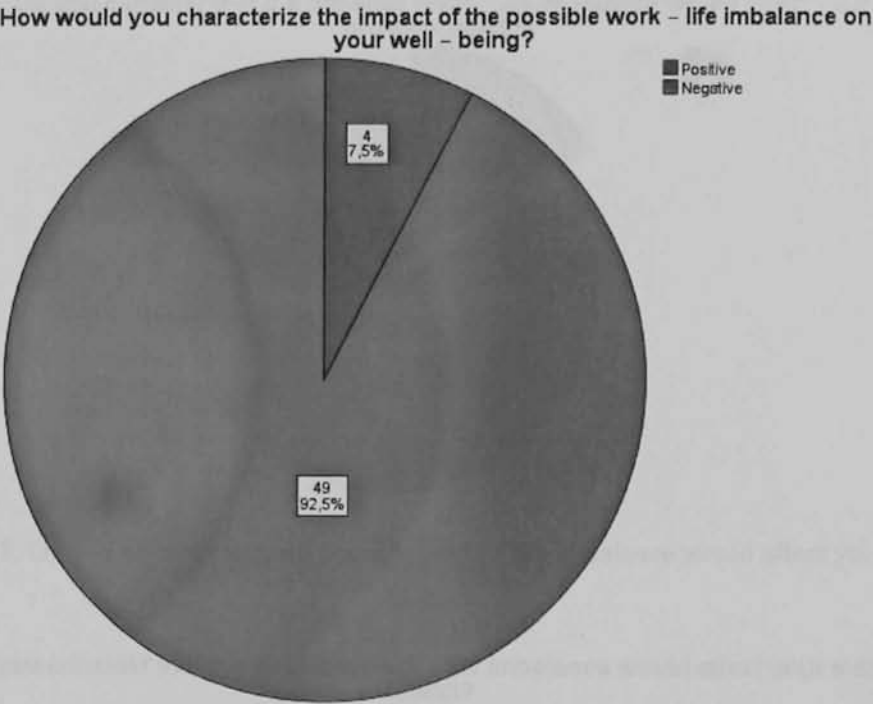
Graph 3.20: When I am at home, I feel relaxed and comfortable.

Almost half of the lawyers who participated in the dissertation (N=24, f=45.3%) reported that they feel dissatisfaction when they do not achieve balance between their work and their personal life. Also, 18 lawyers (f=34%) reported that they feel disappointment, 16 (f=30.2%) anger and 11 (f=20.8%) sadness.



Graph 3.21: Which are your feelings when not achieving balance between your work and your personal life?

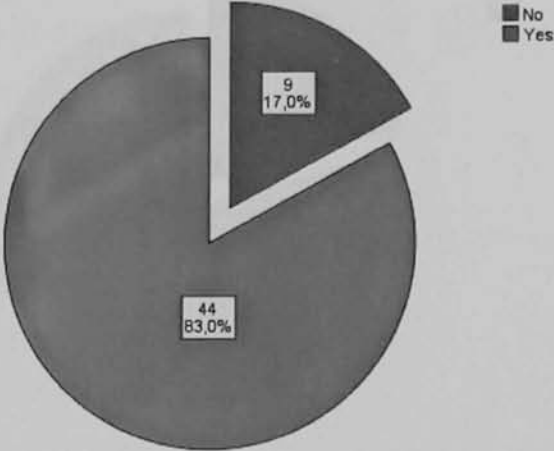
The vast majority of the participants (N=49, f=92.5%) reported that the work – life imbalance affects negatively their well – being and only 7 (f=7.5%) reported positive consequences of the work – life imbalance on their well – being.



Graph 3.22: How would you characterize the impact of the possible work – life imbalance on your well – being?

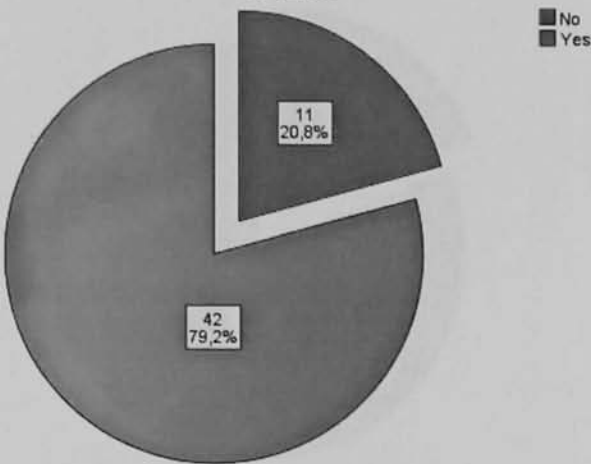
Regarding the work – life imbalance and their health, most lawyers consider that the work – life imbalance could affect their physical health (N=44, f=83%), as well as their mental health (N=42, f=79.2%).

Do you consider that the possible work – life imbalance would affect your physical health?



Graph 3.23: Do you consider that the possible work – life imbalance would affect your physical health?

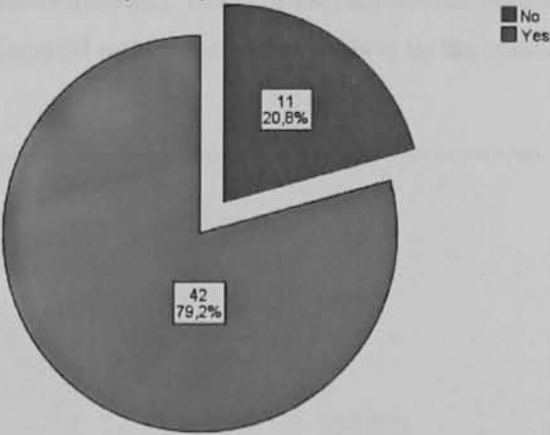
Do you consider that the possible work – life imbalance would affect your mental health?



Graph 3.24: Do you consider that the possible work – life imbalance would affect your mental health?

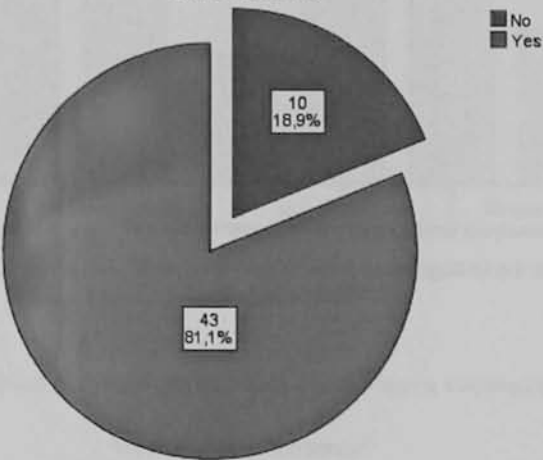
Furthermore, 42 participants (f=79.2%) think that the work – life imbalance could damage the relationship with their friends and families and 43 participants (f=81.1%) consider that the work – life imbalance could also influence their job satisfaction.

Do you consider that the possible work – life imbalance would affect the relationship with your family and your friends?



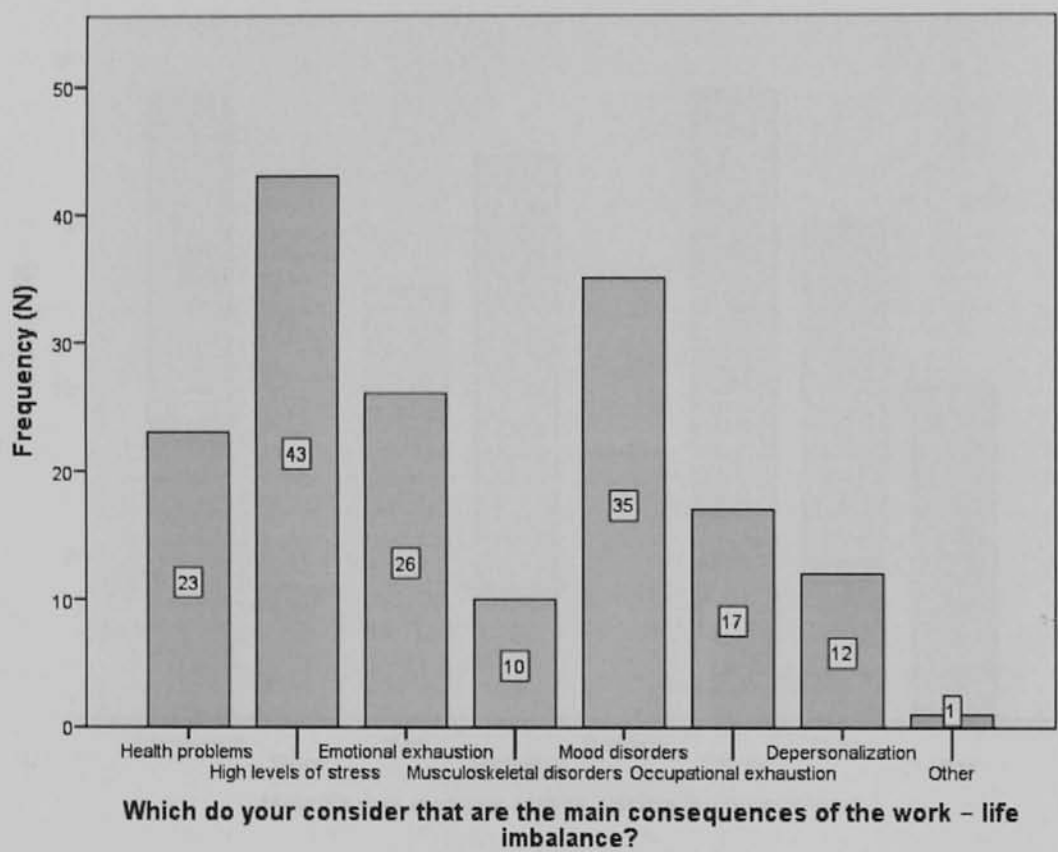
Graph 3.25: Do you consider that the possible work – life imbalance would affect the relationship with your family and your friends?

Do you consider that the possible work – life imbalance would influence your job satisfaction?



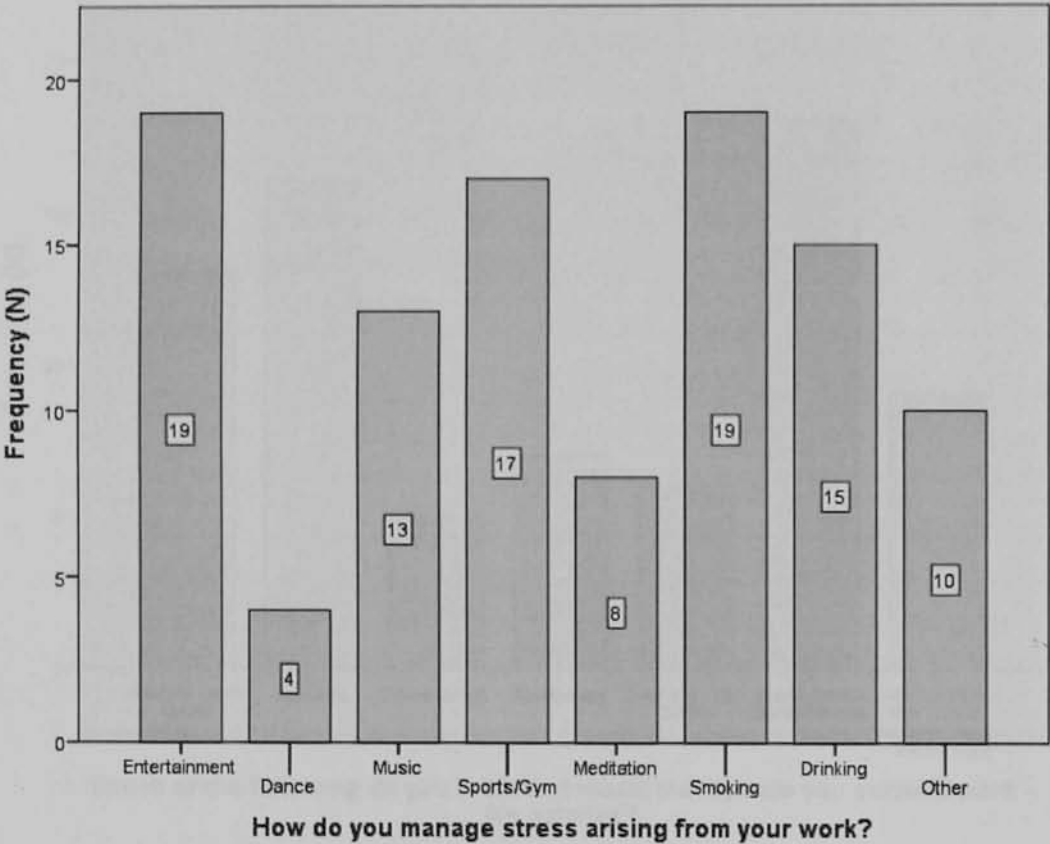
Graph 3.26: Do you consider that the possible work – life imbalance would influence your job satisfaction?

As for the main consequences of the work – life imbalance, it has been observed that high stress is considered to be the most common (43 participants, $f=81.1\%$). Also, 35 lawyers ($f=66\%$) consider mood disorders, while 26 participants ($f=49.1\%$) considered emotional exhaustion, 23 ($f=43.4\%$) considered health problems, 17 ($f=32.1\%$) considered occupational exhaustion, 12 ($f=22.6\%$) considered depersonalization, 10 ($f=18.9\%$) considered musculoskeletal disorders and 1 ($f=1.9\%$) considered existential reflections on life goals to be the main consequences of work – life imbalance.



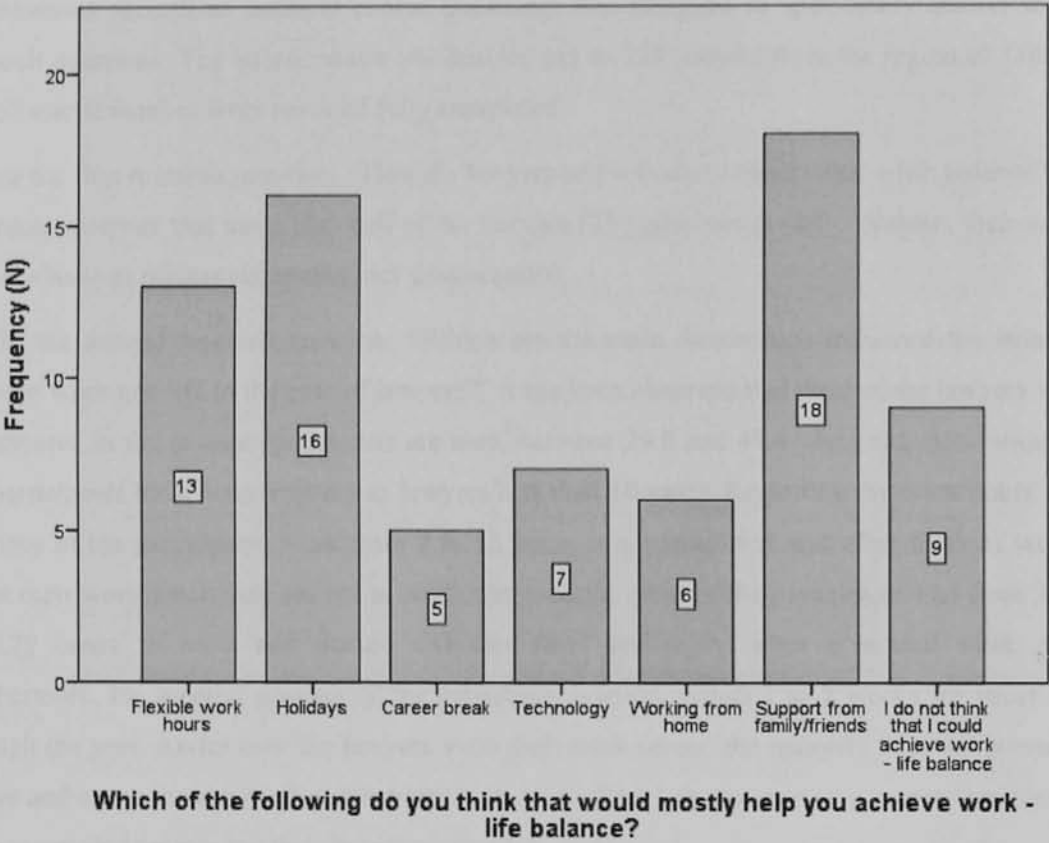
Graph 3.27: Which do you consider that are the main consequences of the work – life imbalance?

Regarding how the participating lawyers manage stress arising from their work, 19 (f=35.8%) reported through entertainment and 19 (f=35.8%) by smoking. Also, 17 (f=32.1%) go for sports or to the gym, 15 (f=28.3%) manage stress by drinking, 13 (f=24.5%) by listening to music, 8 (f=15.1%) through meditation, 4 (f=7.5%) by dancing while 10 participants (18.9%) manage stress arising from work through other activities, such as resting, talking walks, eating and talking with friends and family.



Graph 3.28: How do you manage stress arising from your work?

As for how the participants think that they could achieve work – life balance, 18 lawyers (f=34%) considered through support by their families and friends, 16 (f=30.2%) by taking holidays, 13 (f=24.5%) by having flexible work hours, 7 (f=13.2%) by the use of technology in their work (laptops, smart phones and others), 6 (f=11.3%) by working from home, 5 (f=9.4%) by taking a career break, while 9 lawyers (f=17%) who participated in the present dissertation think that they could not achieve work – life balance by any means.



Graph 3.29: Which of the following do you think that would mostly help you achieve work - life balance?

4 Conclusion

4.1 Main results and Relevance to Objectives

The subject of the present study was the work – life balance in the case of lawyers. For this reason, 5 research questions were posed and a questionnaire consisting of 21 questions (likert, dichotomous as well as multiple choice questions) was designed to specifically answer these research questions. The questionnaire was handed out to 123 lawyers from the region of Trikala and 53 questionnaires were returned fully completed.

As for the first research question: “How do lawyers self – evaluate their work – life balance?” it has been observed that more than half of the lawyers (25 participants) self – evaluate their work – life balance as neither successful, nor unsuccessful.

As for the second research question: “Which are the main factors that influence the balance between work and life in the case of lawyers?” it has been observed that most of the lawyers who participated in the present dissertation are men, between 29.8 and 49.4 years old. Also, most of the participants have been working as lawyers less than 10 years. Regarding the work hours, the majority of the participants work from 8 to 12 hours in a normal day and often think or worry about their work when they are not at work. On average, most of the participants had from 1.43 to 4.79 hours to relax and pursue activities that they enjoy, after a normal work day. Furthermore, the greatest number of the participant lawyers spends 1 to 2 weeks for vacations through the year. As for how the lawyers view their work career, the majority does not pursue a career and agree most with the statement: “I work to live. I do not pursue a career. I prefer to have more time for me, my friends and my family”.

As for the third research question: “Which is the influence of the work – life balance in the lawyers’ job satisfaction and well – being?” it has been observed that the most common feelings lawyers experience when not achieving work – life balance are dissatisfaction and disappointment. Also, the majority of the lawyers consider that the imbalance between their work and their personal life affects negatively both their well – being and their job – satisfaction.

As for the fourth research question: “Which are the consequences of the work – life imbalance?” it has been observed that the main consequences of work – life imbalance are the high levels of stress that arise, mood disorders and emotional exhaustion.

As far as both the third and fourth research questions are concerned, it has been observed that most of the participating lawyers are concerned that they don’t spend enough time with their friends and families. Furthermore, the greatest number of the participants agrees with the statements “I feel mentally and physically tired”, “I am happy with my job”, “The demands of my job interfere with my personal life”, “When I am at home, I feel relaxed and comfortable”. Moreover, it was found to be neutral towards the statements “I feel guilty towards my family and friends because I can’t make time for them”, “I am happy with my life as it currently is”, “I have time for my leisure activities”, “I have time for my self-development”, while disagrees with the statement “I feel I have no control over my work life” and totally disagree with the statement “I have troubles going to sleep or staying asleep”. In addition, most of the lawyers who participated in the dissertation consider that imbalance between their personal life and their work could not only affect their physical and mental health but also their relationship with their friends and families.

Lastly, as for the fifth research question: “Which policies contribute to achieving work life balance?” it has been observed that the most common practices to manage the high levels of stress arising from the lawyers’ work are entertainment, smoking and going for sports or to the gym. As for how the participants consider that they could achieve a better level of work – life balance, it has been observed that support from their families and friends, taking holidays and flexible working hours schemes are considered to be the most effective solutions amongst lawyers.

4.2 Comparison with other studies

The results of the present dissertation agree with the results of some studies, while disagree with the results of others. The present study concluded that most of the participants work from 8 to 12 hours. Hence, the present study agrees with the study of Bharat (2008) in which it was observed that many workers today are forced to work for more than 8 hours in a normal work day. Also, the present study agrees with the study of Navarro – Astor (2011) which states that employees

face problems in achieving work – life balance because of the fact that they have difficulties to follow their time – schedules and because of the fact that they work overtime often.

In the present study, only a minor 11.3% of the participants considered that working from home could help them achieve work – life balance. This result disagrees with the study of Hill et al (2003) which concluded that it is more possible for employees that work from home to achieve work – life balance.

In the present study, it has been observed that most of the participants do not pursue a career and would prefer to have more time for their personal life. In contrast with this result, Forstenlechner and Lettice (2008) observed that the majority of the young lawyers focus on achieving higher profits and that they mostly focused on their professional duties rather than on their personal lives. However, they also observed that most of the participants were forced to work overtime and thus they faced imbalance between the two domains, a result which agrees with the present dissertation.

In addition, the present study concluded that the work – life imbalance affects negatively a person's well – being, a result which is in agreement with the study of Grant – Vallone and Donaldson (2001).

Maslach et al (1996) concluded that the work – life imbalance can affect a person's health condition and lead him to occupational exhaustion. Also, Platsidou & Agaliotis (2008) stated that effort to balance between work and personal life increases the level of stress that a person feels, a result which was also supported by the study of Kalliath et al (2012). This result agrees with the findings of the present dissertation which states that the main consequences of work – life imbalance are the high levels of stress, the mood disorders and the professional exhaustion, as well as that work – life imbalance may harm even a person's physical health.

Furthermore, Platt et al (2012) reached the conclusion that the imbalance between the work and personal life can cause suicidal behaviour, stress and could lead to the development of mental problems. Also, Wirtz and Nachreiner (2010) concluded that the higher the number of hours that an employee works weekly, the harder it is to achieve a balance between the domains. Therefore, the employees who work long hours are more likely to develop mental health problems. Hence, the results above agree with the findings of the present study which states that the work – life imbalance can also affect a person's mental health.

4.3 Future work

As considered above, the present study was subject to several limitations. The main limitations were the size of the sample, the cost and the time needed to collect the data. The sample consisted of 53 lawyers from the Bar Association of Trikala which counts in total 313 members (as of 31/12/2012). Future studies could be made using bigger samples, collected from other regions of Greece, as well. Furthermore, a comparative study of the work – life balance in the case of lawyers of could be made, comparing samples collected from Greece and other European countries, or even worldwide.

Further, as also stated above, because of the sampling method used in the study (linear snowball sampling), the sample may be subject to bias. Hence, future studies could employ different sampling methods such as simple random sampling on a population of lawyers.

Moreover, the quantitative research in the present dissertation was based on information collected through questionnaires. Also, items of the questionnaire were closed – ended (the participant had to select from a list of answer choices). Thus, future studies could also integrate personal interviews with lawyers as a mean to collect the quantitative data or even questionnaires with open – ended questions, giving the participants the chance to provide information that seems appropriate to them.

In addition, this study didn't distinguish between freelance lawyers and lawyers working for law firms. Hence, a future research could compare the work – life balance between freelance lawyers and lawyers working in law firms.

Also, the present study did not investigate the relation of the demographics of the lawyers (such as the sex, the marital, social and economical status) and their work – life balance. Hence, future studies could investigate if there is a correlation between the demographics of the participants and their work – life balance. In particular, it could be investigated in which ways (both positive and negative) the demographics affect the work – life balance of the lawyers.

Furthermore, it has been observed that the work – life imbalance can affect a person's physical and mental health. Future studies could investigate if any certain diseases or mental disorders are linked to the absence of balance between work and personal life.

Finally, the present study focused in the work – life balance in the case of lawyers. In order to generalise the findings of the present study in more general populations, comparative studies between lawyers and other professions could be made.

4.4 Conclusion

It has been observed that work – life balance is a very important aspect which affects the quality of life and work. Because of the nature of the lawyer's profession, it is hard for a lawyer to achieve a satisfactory level of balance but, also, it is crucial to do so. It is very important for a lawyer to understand the necessity of work – life balance in order to secure, not only his physical and mental health, but also his job satisfaction. Both freelance lawyers and law firms, big and small, should adopt policies and programs which enhance work – life balance, varying from support from friends and family on an individual level to flexible work hours and working from home on company level. This way, both the quality of a person's life and job satisfaction are assured and his productivity and effectiveness are increased.

Concluding the dissertation, it is suggested that the present study has contributed to Management Science through expanding the existing knowledge about the work – life balance in the specific case of the lawyer's profession. The new information refer to the factors that influence a lawyer's work – life balance, the influence and the negative consequences of the work – life balance on the quality of work and life and to policies through which a better level of work – life balance may be achieved. The findings of the study may be used by lawyers or law firms to be informed on the factors that influence work – life balance, the consequences of work – life imbalance as well as on the policies that help achieve balance between work and personal life, but also by future researchers for comparisons with their researches.

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Appendices

Questionnaire (English version)

<u>Questionnaire</u>

1. Gender

- Male☐
- Female☐

2. Age

.....

3. Years working as a lawyer

- <10☐
- 10-20☐
- >20☐

4. How would you evaluate the balance that you achieve between work and life?

Very successful	Quite successful	Neither successful, nor unsuccessful	Unsuccessful

5. How many hours do you normally work every day?

- <8☐
- 8-12☐
- >12☐

6. When you are not at work, how often do you think or worry about your work?

- Never ☐
- Rarely ☐
- Sometimes ☐
- Often ☐
- Always ☐

7. After an average work day, about how many hours do you have to relax or pursue activities that you enjoy?

Number of hours:

8. Are you taking vacations during the year?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

9. If yes, how much time do you totally spend on vacations during the year?

- <1 weeks ☐
- 1-2 weeks ☐
- 2-3 weeks ☐
- >3 weeks ☐

10. Which of the following statements suits you better?

- I am willing to sacrifice my personal life for my career. ☐
- I love my work and my career, but I would not sacrifice time from my personal life for them. ☐
- I work to live. I do not pursue a career. I prefer to have more time for me, my friends and my family. ☐

11. Are you concerned that you don't spend enough time for yourself, family and friends?

Highly concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Little concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not at all concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. In what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Totally Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Totally Disagree
I feel guilty towards my family and friends because I can't make time for them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel I have no control over my work life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel mentally and physically tired.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am happy with my life as it currently is.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have time for my leisure activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have time for my self-development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am happy with my job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I have troubles going to sleep or staying asleep. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

The demands of my job interfere with my personal life. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

When I am at home, I feel relaxed and comfortable. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

13. Which are your feelings when not achieving balance between your work and your personal life?

- Disappointment ☐
- Anger ☐
- Dissatisfaction ☐
- Sadness ☐
- Other(s). Please, specify: ☐

14. How would you characterize the impact of the possible work – life imbalance on your well – being?

- The work – life imbalance affects positively my well – being ☐
- The work – life imbalance affects negatively my well – being ☐

15. Do you consider that the possible work – life imbalance would affect your physical health?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

16. Do you consider that the possible work – life imbalance would affect your mental health?

- Yes☐
- No☐

17. Do you consider that the possible work – life imbalance would affect the relationship with your family and your friends?

- Yes☐
- No☐

18. Do you consider that the possible work – life balance would influence your job satisfaction?

- Yes☐
- No☐

19. Which do you consider that are the main consequences of the work – life imbalance?
(Check all that apply)

- Health problems☐
- High levels of stress☐
- Emotional exhaustion☐
- Musculoskeletal disorders☐
- Mood disorders☐
- Occupational exhaustion☐
- Depersonalization☐
- Other(s). Please, specify:☐

20. How do you manage stress arising from your work? (Check all that apply)

- Entertainment☐
- Dance☐
- Music☐

- Sports/Gym ☐
- Meditation ☐
- Smoking ☐
- Drinking ☐
- Other(s). Please, specify: ☐

21. Which of the following do you think that would mostly help you achieve work - life balance?

- Flexible work hours ☐
- Holidays ☐
- Career break ☐
- Technology (Laptops, cell phones and/or others) ☐
- Working from home ☐
- Support from family/friends ☐
- I do not think that I could achieve work – life balance ☐

Questionnaire (Greek version)

Ερωτηματολόγιο

1. Φύλο

- Αντρας☐
- Γυναίκα☐

2. Ηλικία

.....

3. Πόσα χρόνια δουλεύετε ως δικηγόρος;

- <10☐
- 10-20☐
- >20☐

4. Πώς θα αξιολογούσατε την ισορροπία που επιτυγχάνετε ανάμεσα στην εργασία και την προσωπική σας ζωή;

Πολύ επιτυχημένη	Αρκετά επιτυχημένη	Ούτε επιτυχημένη, ούτε αποτυχημένη	Αποτυχημένη

5. Πόσες ώρες εργάζεστε συνήθως κάθε μέρα;

- <8☐
- 8-12☐
- >12☐

6. Όταν δεν είστε στην εργασίας σας, πόσο συχνά σκέφτεστε ή ανησυχείτε γι' αυτή;

- Ποτέ☐
- Σπάνια☐

- Μερικές φορές ☐
- Συχνά ☐
- Συνέχεια ☐

7. Μετά από μια συνηθισμένη ημέρα εργασίας, πόσες ώρες έχετε για να ξεκουραστείτε ή για να εξασκήσετε δραστηριότητες που σας αρέσουν;

Αριθμός ωρών:.....

8. Πάτε διακοπές μέσα στο χρόνο;

- Ναι ☐
- Όχι ☐

9. Αν ναι, πόσο χρόνο ξοδεύετε συνολικά για τις διακοπές σας μέσα στο χρόνο;

- <1 βδομάδα ☐
- 1-2 βδομάδες ☐
- 2-3 βδομάδες ☐
- >3 βδομάδες ☐

10. Ποια από τις παρακάτω δηλώσεις σας ταιριάζει καλύτερα;

- Είμαι πρόθυμος/η να θυσιάσω την προσωπική μου ζωή για την καριέρα μου. ☐
- Αγαπώ τη δουλειά μου και την καριέρα μου, αλλά δεν θα θυσίαζα χρόνο από την προσωπική μου ζωή για αυτές. ☐
- Δουλεύω για να ζήσω. Δεν κυνηγώ την καριέρα. Προτιμώ να έχω περισσότερο χρόνο για μένα, τους φίλους μου και την οικογένειά μου. ☐

11. Ανησυχείτε ότι δεν αφιερώνετε αρκετό χρόνο στον εαυτό σας, στην οικογένειά σας και στους φίλους σας;

- Ανησυχώ πολύ☐
- Ανησυχώ☐
- Ουδέτερο☐
- Δεν ανησυχώ πολύ☐
- Δεν ανησυχώ καθόλου☐

12. Σε ποιο βαθμό συμφωνείτε με τις παρακάτω δηλώσεις;

	Συμφωνώ Απόλυτα	Συμφωνώ	Ουδέτερο	Διαφωνώ	Διαφωνώ Απόλυτα
Αισθάνομαι ένοχος/η απέναντι στην οικογένειά μου και τους φίλους μου, γιατί δεν μπορώ να βρω χρόνο για αυτούς.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Νιώθω πως δεν έχω καθόλου έλεγχο πάνω στην εργασιακή μου ζωή.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Νιώθω ψυχικά και σωματικά κουρασμένος/η.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Είμαι χαρούμενος/η με τη ζωή μου όπως είναι σήμερα.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Έχω χρόνο για δραστηριότητες αναψυχής.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Έχω χρόνο για την ανάπτυξη της προσωπικότητάς μου.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Είμαι χαρούμενος/η με την εργασία μου. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Δυσκολεύομαι να κοιμηθώ ή να διατηρήσω τον ύπνο μου. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Οι απαιτήσεις της δουλειάς μου εμπλέκονται με την προσωπική μου ζωή. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Όταν είμαι στο σπίτι, νιώθω χαλαρός/ή και άνετα. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

13. Ποια είναι τα συναισθήματά σας όταν δεν επιτυγχάνετε ισορροπία μεταξύ της εργασίας σας και της προσωπική σας ζωής;

Απογοήτευση ☐

Θυμός ☐

Δυσaréσκεια ☐

Λύπη ☐

Άλλο(α). Παρακαλώ, προσδιορίστε: ☐

14. Πως θα χαρακτηρίζατε την επιρροή στην ευεξία σας από την ενδεχόμενη έλλειψη ισορροπίας μεταξύ προσωπικής και επαγγελματικής ζωής;

Η έλλειψη ισορροπίας μεταξύ της προσωπικής και επαγγελματικής ζωής επηρεάζει θετικά την ευεξία μου. ☐

Η έλλειψη ισορροπίας μεταξύ της προσωπικής και επαγγελματικής ζωής επηρεάζει αρνητικά την ευεξία μου. ☐

15. Θεωρείτε ότι η ενδεχόμενη έλλειψη ισορροπίας μεταξύ της προσωπικής και επαγγελματικής σας ζωής θα μπορούσε να επηρεάσει τη σωματική σας υγεία;

Ναι ☐

Όχι ☐

16. Θεωρείτε ότι η ενδεχόμενη έλλειψη ισορροπίας μεταξύ της προσωπικής και επαγγελματικής σας ζωής θα μπορούσε να επηρεάσει την ψυχική σας υγεία;

Ναι ☐

Όχι ☐

17. Θεωρείτε ότι η ενδεχόμενη έλλειψη ισορροπίας μεταξύ της προσωπικής και επαγγελματικής σας ζωής θα μπορούσε να επηρεάσει τις σχέσεις σας με την οικογένεια και τους φίλους σας;

Ναι ☐

Όχι ☐

18. Θεωρείτε ότι η ενδεχόμενη έλλειψη ισορροπίας μεταξύ της προσωπικής και επαγγελματικής σας ζωής θα μπορούσε να επηρεάσει την επαγγελματική σας ικανοποίηση;

Ναι ☐

Όχι ☐

19. Ποιες θεωρείτε ότι είναι οι κυριότερες συνέπειες της έλλειψης ισορροπίας μεταξύ εργασίας και προσωπικής ζωής; (Επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)

Προβλήματα υγείας ☐

Υψηλό στρες ☐

Συναισθηματική εξάντληση ☐

Μυοσκελετικές παθήσεις ☐

Διαταραχές της διάθεσης ☐

Επαγγελματική εξάντληση ☐

Αποπροσωποποίηση ☐

Άλλο(α). Παρακαλώ, προσδιορίστε: ☐

20. Πώς διαχειρίζεστε το άγχος που δημιουργείται από την εργασία σας; (Επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)

- Διασκέδαση ☐
- Χορός ☐
- Μουσική ☐
- Σπορ/ Γυμναστήριο ☐
- Διαλογισμός ☐
- Κάπνισμα ☐
- Ποτό ☐
- Άλλο(α). Παρακαλώ, προσδιορίστε:..... ☐

21. Ποιο από τα παρακάτω πιστεύετε ότι θα σας βοηθούσε περισσότερο να επιτύχετε ισορροπία εργασίας - ζωής;

- Ευέλικτο ωράριο εργασίας ☐
- Διακοπές ☐
- Προσωρινή διακοπή καριέρας ☐
- Τεχνολογία (φορητοί υπολογιστές, κινητά τηλέφωνα και / ή άλλα) ☐
- Εργασία από το σπίτι ☐
- Υποστήριξη από την οικογένεια / φίλους ☐
- Δε θεωρώ ότι θα μπορούσα να επιτύχω ισορροπία μεταξύ εργασίας και προσωπικής ζωής ☐