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The influence of the stress factor in the legal practice

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Abstract. Along with well-known sources, we observe, for the modern person, that the work environment is a stress source who can contribute to the individual life quality deterioration. Professional stress, like it's called in the law literature, is the stress generated from activities of workplace and from the environment in which those activities occur. This type of stress can generate a multitude of atypical manifestations in a person and can have different durations correlated with the stress factors intensity. Maintaining the effects of the stress factors for long period of time can favor the somatic illnesses or even the organic ones. The explicit recommendation of specialists is to identify the most significant stress factors at the work place then take appropriate action to eradicate their causes, or, when possible to limit their effects. The law is a liberal professional, serving justice. So it's a fact that without it as part of the judicial system, justice cannot prevail in an effective manner. Even if it's essential to the judicial system, the law is internal to a dramatic decorum, open to threats. We cannot question the high degree of professional stress that is laid upon the members of this practice, and even the young attorneys at the beginning of their careers, who just graduated and have high dreams and strive to excel professionally, are at risk. Regrettably, with the beginning of the practice their dreams slowly dissipate, in the existential void, because of the long wait at the courthouse and the disappointment that deciding parties (judges and prosecutors) of the justice scene are imposing and impedes upon the justice spirit of the young attorneys

Keywords. influence, stressors, professional activity, lawyers

Introduction

The concept of „stress” has his origin in the physiological research done on animals by Hans Selye (1950) who describes the so-called general syndrome of adaptation. Mc. Grath (1970, see Holdevici, 1995) considered that „the stress is produced every time an imbalance between demands and possibilities of response of the body show”. „Stress” has in general two meanings:

- Stressful situation that refers to a harmful physical stimulus or an event of strong influential significance
- The state of the body, characterized by a high tension, the mobilization of all the physical and mental resources of the organism to face the threat (Holdevici, 1995)

The conceptual term of mental stress was ” invented” by Hans Selye, a huge opportunity to evaluate – psychologically and medically – the limits of ”human machinery” (Balzac), to face the adversities of life. Thus, the human Is prevented and instructed, in various ways, which Alvin Toffler

define it by the term *overload*, which affects three major aspects of the psyche: sensorial, informational and decisional (all having an essential affective resonance). From this definition, we deduct that stress is negative. Recent studies fortunately show, the existence of both stress forms, negative stress called "distress" and positive stress called "eustress".

Lazarus and Folkman define stress as a "cognitive and behavioral effort (with strong affective expression, we would add) to reduce, master, or tolerate the external or internal demands that exceeds the personal resources". (1984)

From the existing definitions in the literature about the psychical stress, the most appropriate seems the definition, somehow detailed (but including most stress-triggering circumstances) given by M. Golu: "A state of tension, strain, discomfort, determined by sensorial agents with negative (or positive, we would add, like, "eustress"), frustration or repression of motivations (needs, desires, aspirations – including underestimation, difficulty or impossibility to solve some problems". In addendum to this definition (Iamandescu 1998-1999) beside emphasizing the dichotomy and a strong importance for the body of negative (distress) and positive (eustress) agents, are represented by the inclusion of the stress generated situations of cognitive-affective and volitional overload (even during a passionate activity for the person) and the effects, insidiously propagated to the cerebral cortex, of some physical agents (noise, often with a negative affective resonance), chemical (environmental pollution) and biological (disease, as a source of viscerocortical reflexes), all these non-psychological stimuli producing – ultimately – a "secondary mental stress" (Iamandescu, 1993).

F. Sinton states that the concept of stress is any action or a group of conditions, in which an individual does not react properly or reacts only with the price of excessive wear and tear of the body. A stress body it's in imbalance. The stress being an unnatural and unpleasant state, the body tries to reestablish the balance, by using all the defense mechanisms to fight against the stress inducing element. The equilibrium can be established, besides the case in which the stress it's too intense or too long. In both situations, the body is exhausted. From another point of view, the stress is a dire situation that mobilizes the body to respond, to resist to threats or to an external load (Sinton, Papari, 1999).

The concept of professional stress

In any occupational stress management program, the first stage refers to clarifying the different types of reactions that may occur as a result of events and to establish the degree of danger they have, so that employees are able to recognize to themselves or to others these symptoms (Cahill, Landsbergis, Schnall 1995).

It's very important to mention that the stress is a normal reaction to an abnormal one and has the main role to protect us from a threatening situation, allowing the following: focusing our whole attention on the threat; enabling maximum energy; preparing for action in order to respond to the threat.

Those symptoms are the premises of more serious disorders, and if the manifestations are repetitive it is beneficial to consult a mental health professional. Unlike the daily stress factors, there are other stress factors occasionally like: family death, divorce, illness, marriage, birth, change in financial situation, each person is subjected to stressful situations in the professional environment.

J.B Stora (1999) presents six categories of professional stress sources: company standing; the role within the company; career development; workplace relationships; organizational structure; family/ work relationship.

Regarding the adaptation to stress is the Allan Mc. Lean (1979) concept taken from G. Johns (1998 page 451) about people who can efficiently support stress. So, after his opinion those individuals have the following characteristics:

- They know themselves and accept their qualities and defaults
- They have other fields of interest and they are not obsessed with work
- They can act different to stress instead having headaches or being depressed
- They accept those individuals that have different style and values
- They are active and productive at work and outside the working space

Disruptive factors for attorneys, which contribute to the occurrence of professional stress

The professional pressure also affects experienced lawyers. Lawyers are marginalized and the tension comes from different directions, but we can't ignore the fact that other law professionals are also to blame. The performance of lawyers is sometimes immature and reprehensible, with adverse consequences on the image of the profession, but not limited to this type of damage.

Surely, although lawyers face important image problems, recovery will find its source in the efforts of the own professional community members. There was no other way, there is not and there will be no other way. The best lawyers, the most involved and the united will be the promoters of innovative solutions to change the public perception and to regain confidence in the act of justice.

Attorneys, as the forefront of the judicial system, will succeed of any litigant who wishes to exercise his legal right, against any abusive action and illegal interference capable of shaking the respect for fundamental human rights and by extension, to weaken the legal law system.

Anywhere in Europe, both member and non member states of European Union, the lawyers meet, express their dissatisfaction, denounce the pressure on their profession, on their physical and psychical integrity and own independence, by disapproving the malcontent manifestations towards this profession which must elevate to its true value.

Each national system is facing, however, specific problems and each professional legal organization asks for the same rules and regulations toward the security and stability of the law profession as a supplemental warranty for the human rights and legal system.

Through the eyes of every layman we can notice the way in which the law world changes, the terminology and the dialect of this science does not follow the classical legal thinking and it diversifies exponentially.

Algorithms for analyzing the human behavior are presented in court illegally everywhere, algorithms that would probably empty our utility, since sufficient variables can be conceived to analyze the degree of social, criminal, fiscal, civil deviance etc.

However within every human being exist a grain of social disobedience, but this is the indisputable proof of human individuality, which subscribes to the complexity of the human personality.

There are current difficulties serious and important enough, and it would be advisable to insist on identifying a solution, an intervention in optimal time, to prevent duration, before a whole range of professionals are categorized and viewed with hostility. It's a fact that the practice of law is indispensable as an individual profession as an organizational structure and is characterized mainly by responsibility and efficiency.

Objectives

This study has the following objectives:

1. Measuring the stress level in the practice of law.

2. Identifying the stress sources and how lawyers respond to professional stress factors.
3. In determining how the lawyers react to the stress situations derived from their professional activity.

Hypotheses

With the definite intention of finding out how lawyers are exposed to stressors and how they act in stressful situations, variables measured through the questionnaire `` Stress map `` and `` Mentality towards work ``, I decided that in order to meet the objectives of the research to formulate the following working hypotheses:

1. The presumption that there is a negative correlation between lawyers performance/ determination and the professional pressures to which they are exposed.
2. The presumption that there is a positive correlation between the professional satisfactions felt by the attorneys and their fulfillment or professional determination
3. The presumption that there is a negative correlation between the self-esteem of attorneys and the obligation/ avoiding for the professional activity
4. The presumption that there are significant differences in the emotional feelings manifested by female lawyers and those manifested by male lawyers.
5. The presumption that it exists significant differences regarding time management between attorneys who handle a larger number of cases (150-200) and those who handle a smaller number of cases (90-150)
6. The presumption that there are significant differences in the management of a crisis situation between experienced attorneys and those with less experience.

Study participants

A sample of 60 active lawyers was selected for the research and the following categories were considered: age, professional experience, number of cases in the last three years and gender.

I used the following specific tools to conduct the research: the questionnaire "Stress Map" and "Mentality towards work".

Data analysis and processing

Hypothesis 1. The presumption that there is a negative correlation between lawyers performance/ determination and the professional pressures to which they are exposed

Table 1. Correlation of the analyzed variables professional pressures and fulfillment/ determination.

		Fulfillment and determination	Professional pressure
Fulfillment and determination	Pearson Correlation	1	-,308*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,017
	N	60	60
Professional Pressure	Pearson Correlation	-,308*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,017	
	N	60	60

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

According to table one it appears that there is a negative correlations between professional pressures and professional fulfillment/ determination with a correlation Pearson factor of -0,308 at a level of 0,05 – hypothesis 1 is confirmed.

So, study shows that if the professional pressures are manifested at a low level, the professional fulfillment is ensured, *per a contrario* if the pressures are high, strong, the fulfillment and determination are diminished.

The legal profession is under constant pressure that can be enormous. As an example, the situations which generate pressure would be:

- The desire and sustained effort towards perfection;
- The time factor established by the court of law and judges for rendering the procedural documents;
- The extensive documents research;
- Stress associated with the possibility of losing the client lawsuit, although the lawyer has strong arguments for winning it;
- Low number of clients and cases, with consequences on financial satisfaction;
- Communication with clients is sometimes difficult due to their lack of understanding of the judicial mechanism; modest training; low tolerance towards justices; disconsidering the attorney work efforts;
- Sometimes the fights between lawyers in the courtroom are also brought into private life;

In an article published in "ABA Journal", the attorneys are subjected to high pressures to increase efficiency in the work place. According to studies, an attempt was made to introduce a conceptual mode designed to understand, to evaluate and to improve the conditions that causes a high degree of stress through a multidisciplinary approach which implies both findings in the fields of legal and mental health.

The stress study shows that the attorneys are at high risk of developing mental and psychical distress leading to professional incapacity.

In 2001, Johns Hopkins University interviewed 12.000 employees about depression. The interview revealed that the legal practice holds a leading position on the list of professions with a high depression rate.

A quality of life survey conducted by the North Caroline Bar Association in 2002 reported that more than 26% of its members had symptoms of depression. Almost 12% of them confessed that they had suicidal thoughts at least once a month (Michael J. Sweeney, 2002).

In the article „Lawyers: are we a profession in distress?“ Rick B. Allen, a graduate of Creighton Law University in 1966, currently an attorney and Director of Nebraska Legal Aid Service, presents some relevant statistical data supporting the idea that the law is an extremely stressful profession. He refers to a study prepared in 2003 by G. Andrew H. Benjamin, Elaine J. Darling and Bruce D. Sales „The prevalence of depression, alcohol and cocaine dependency in the United States of America“, which shows a high percentage of attorneys are alcohol dependents.

There are personality traits and demographic characteristics that make some lawyers more prone to stress. There are many causes that contribute to the stress of attorneys, like: time pressure, work overload and lack of time for themselves and their families. Also, the high volume of new attorneys has led to an increase in pressure due to competition in their profession (A. Elwork, 1977). Individual traits can be considered as external stress-amplifying factors.

Rick. B Allen states that perfectionism is a common personality trait among lawyers. The perfectionism leads to a direction of life that requires total control. The attorneys live by a life philosophy saying `` I must do my job perfectly or I will fail. The details are most important ``. The lawyers are `` thinkers ``. The legal system of contradictions brings feelings of hostility, cynicisms, aggression, fear and low self esteem. If an attorney cannot handle effectively those emotions, than is very probable that he/she feels stressed.

Hypothesis 2. The presumption that there is a positive correlation between the professional satisfactions felt by the attorneys and their fulfillment or professional determination

Table 2. Correlation of the analyzed variables professional satisfactions and fulfillment/ determination.

		Fulfillment and determination	Professional satisfaction
Fulfillment and determination	Pearson Correlation	1	-,358**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,005
	N	60	60
Professional Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	-,358**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,005	
	N	60	60

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

According to table 2, there is a positive correlation between professional satisfaction and fulfillment/ determination with a Pearson factor correlation of 0,358, at a level of 0.01 – hypothesis 2 is true.

The concept of professional satisfaction is the most studied concept in the organizational behavior research (Spector, 1977). It is certain that professional satisfaction contributes in shaping an image that conveys fulfillment and emphasizes the well-being of the individual.

Job satisfaction is any combination of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that causes a person to honestly say that he or she is satisfied with the job (Hoppo 1935). Another definition considers job satisfaction as a sense of accomplishment and success of the individual at work. Kaliski (2007) considers that professional satisfaction is directly related to the performance and subjective well-being of the individual and that it derives from a job that the individual practices with pleasure, a job that the individual carries out well and a job for which the individual is paid. Moreover, professional satisfaction involves enthusiasm and happiness about the workplace and is the key ingredient that leads to recognition, income, promotion and the achievement of other goals that lead to a sense of accomplishment. In law, too, professional satisfaction translates into the privilege of interpersonal interaction and the discovery of various personalities that determine the correction of personal mistakes and the development of the lawyer`s character, the joy of representing a person in need who sees the attorney as a "savior" who considers him an „ally in battle”, the ability to identify solutions to various legal problems, permanent accumulation, the constant acquirement of knowledge, customer satisfaction, appreciation of the opponents and other participants involves in the legal procedure and obvious, financial satisfaction.

On the other hand, however, the greatest satisfaction of the legal profession is the victory in lawsuits and very few professions offer the pleasure of enjoying the sweet taste of victory. The legal profession brings multiple satisfactions that correlate perfectly with the professional fulfillment.

According to a study published in 2018, "Attorneys at the height of their career: 30 years. Longitudinal study of personal life and workplace satisfaction" by J. Monahan and J. Swanson from Law University of Virginia, it was found among other things, that career and

personal life satisfactions are considered elevated, approx. 70% of the respondents are happy with the decision of becoming lawyers and approx. 91% are happy with their personal life. The study shows that there are two approaches to attorneys satisfaction, there are so different that we would be tempted to ask ourselves if they study the same matter. According to the first perspective, the attorneys are inclined to depression and drugs consumption, more than other professional categories. United States of America is confronted with an epidemic regarding the anxiety and suicide among lawyers. The second approach to job satisfaction among attorneys is derived as a consequence of applying some scientific methods in measuring their work fulfillment. It was found that lawyers are not as disappointed in their profession as the empirical findings have shown. It was shown that a low number of lawyers have negative opinions about their workplace or career.

A major advance in studying the lawyers satisfaction, regarding their career, was observed when the project "After project JD`s" results were published with the support of The US Bar Association. The project followed the careers of a statistically representative sample of over 8000 attorneys admitted to the bar since 2000. The last monitoring took place in 2012. Following the comparison of the results from 2007 with those from 2017, the data indicated to a large extent, the same answers as those from the previous evaluations, the conclusion being that the level of job satisfaction of attorneys is relatively high.

Hypothesis 3. The presumption that there is a negative correlation between the self-esteem of attorneys and the obligation/ avoiding for the professional activity

Table 3. Correlation of the analyzed variables: self-esteem and obligation/ avoiding professional activity

		Obligation and avoiding	Self-esteem
Obligation and avoiding	Pearson Correlation	1	-,512**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000
	N	60	60
Self-esteem	Pearson Correlation	-,512**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	
	N	60	60

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

According to table 3, there is a negative correlation between self-esteem and professional obligation/avoiding with a Pearson factor correlation of -0,512, at a level of 0.01-hypothesis 3 is true.

Self-esteem reflects a global affective relationship to one`s self, independent of objective reasons related to personal satisfaction or disappointment (James, 1809/1950). In other words, according to this definition, self-esteem is an affective constant that includes appreciation, acceptance and self evaluation (Savin-Williams and Demo, 1983).

Between self-esteem and confidence, there is a distinction that psychology recognizes. If self-esteem refers to feelings that we have by looking at our ego, the self confidence relates to beliefs in ourselves. In other words, self-esteem relates to affection and self-confidence relates to our knowledge.

Regarding the concept of low self-esteem, the literature has outline two major opinions on how this manifests itself and the consequences it produces in the psychological functioning of the individual.

Some researchers share a somber vision about low-esteem individuals. According to this opinion, the low-esteem individuals have a wide range of cognitive, affective, motivational and defective behavior patterns, which determine their social misfit. Such of individuals evaluate themselves negatively in most areas, easily accept negative feedbacks about themselves, experience multiple negative emotions, are prone to anxiety and depression, adopt ineffective strategies in the face of obstacles (Brockner 1983; Brown & Dutton, 1995). In the vision of other more "optimistic" researchers, the individuals with low-esteem define themselves by caution and insecurity without necessarily being socially misfit. In fact, such people have behavioral styles aimed at minimizing the exposure of personal deficiencies (Baumeister, 1989).

This study highlighted a negative correlation between the self-esteem of legal professionals and the perception of the profession as an obligation and even the avoidance of professional activity. The attorneys with a low-esteem will feel the professional activity as a load and will be also avoidant of service duties.

Low-esteem between among attorneys will be reflected in activities like:

- Selection and engagement in litigations – they will choose law suits with a low level of complexity, this option being influence by factors like: fears in being able to cope with a high professional level; doubts regarding fairness of the judicial bodies which have a decisional litigation power; the tendency of under evaluate the jury conclusion; the fear that a doubtful professional service can bring sanctions (judicial fines, criminal complaints and disciplinary sanctions);
- Customer`s reaction to rejection of petition request or loss of lawsuit. They fear of negative affective reactions that can be felt in case of failure like: humiliation, lack of motivation and shame. In case of law-esteem attorneys, there is a tendency to limit *ab initio* chances of winning, showing lack of optimism;
- Low research efforts in studying other similar cases;
- relationship with customers - low self-esteem lawyers will avoid clients with prominent authoritarian personalities fearing of being criticized and disapproved; communicating with a authoritarian personality client, the attorney will not be able to impose his point of view, he will not be able to impose limits and so those lawyers are not willing to professionally absorb emotionally charged information, themselves having difficulty managing their own feeling;
- Repeated failures will cause low self-esteem lawyers to shift responsibility for failure, blame, abilities and lack of effort to themselves, all culminating with the tendency of avoiding professional responsibilities.

Hypothesis 4. The presumption that there are significant differences in the emotional feelings manifested by female lawyers and those manifested by male lawyers.

Table 4. Differences between emotional feelings manifested by female and male attorneys

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
simptome.emotionale	Equal variances assumed	28,015	,000	-3,303	58	,002	-8,867	2,684	-14,239	-3,494
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,303	38,083	,002	-8,867	2,684	-14,300	-3,434

According to table 4, there is a significant difference between emotional feelings manifested by female and male attorneys, at a level of 0,002, showing that female have stronger emotional symptoms than male lawyers.

Hypothesis is true. The result can be explained by the fact that women are more sensitive, emphatic and selfaware of their emotional feelings than men.

A study (MANCOVE) conducted by M. Pilar Matud from Psychology Faculty at University La Laguna from Tenerife, Spain regarding gender differences in stress and coping styles, it was shown that women had higher scores in terms of induced daily stress factors, chronic stress than men. Women have higher stress levels than men and their coping is focused on the emotional side.

The study showed that women scored higher than men in terms of somatic symptoms and psychological stress. The sample was formed from 2816 people, 1566 women and 1250 men with ages between 18 and 35, all participants from Canary Islands, Spain.

In an article published on the website of the Association of American Psychologist, entitled "Gender and Stress", mentioned that men and women report different reactions to tress, both from psychical and mental point of view. The article presents a statistic that highlights the fact that women have more emotional and mental symptoms of stress than men.

Another study was conducted in 2010 by Governmental Medical College in Sangli, India, formed from 150 attorneys out of 240 who work in Sangli Bar. The research was aimed to identify gender differences between lawyers regarding professional stress and the emotional symptoms experienced by lawyers. The results showed that there are gender differences in how women feel professional stress, in the sense that they experience greater stress with a higher emotional impact than men.

Judicial practice is filled with civil suits concerning family ties, but also with criminal cases concerning actions committed against family members. Especially such disputes cause imbalances in the emotional system, which is fragile for women attorneys. The life stories of the clients are diversified, but the problems related particularly to children, the ones happening to certain victims, the citizen freedom and liberties are issues settled in court, which most of the times affect the psychological state of the women lawyer, causing obvious emotional symptoms, which can result in severe disorders such as anxiety and depression. The stressful situations faced by female lawyers in their professional activity generate reactions with a decisive emotional impact, which contribute in a damaging way to the modification of the psychological comfort of the affected person.

Women have a better memory than men, are more connected to the feelings of those around them, and professional situations can bring back well-preserved emotions, some extremely painful. At the same time, the woman`s conscientiousness, the desire for perfection, the involvement she shows at work, are elements that can contribute to the development or

significant emotional symptoms compared to men who are more emotionally detached from work tasks.

The development of psycho-emotional symptoms is based on the emphatic component of the individual personality. Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. At the neuron level, the main area of the brain activated by empathy is the cingulate cortex. The cingulate is positioned like a belt in the middle of the cerebral cortex and is considered part of limbic system, which has to do with emotion, learning and memory. Empathy physically resides in this area. The regions associated with empathy in the cingulate gyrus are larger in women than men and generally smaller in people with schizophrenia, who are often tragically isolated in their emotions and deceived about other people`s feeling (Chopra D., Tanzi R., 2012).

In a study conducted by Varum Warriier from Cambridge University in the UK, recently published (March 2018) in the medical journal Translational Psychiatry, researchers turned to genetics to find the answer to the question "Why are women more emphatic than man?". The researchers found that despite women`s better results in terms of "Emotional Quotient" (EQ) compared to men, there is no genetic basis for these differences. In other words, although genetically, men and women appear identical, there are quite large differences in empathy.

We cannot minimize in establishing the level of empathy, the social, biological and hormone factors and also the traditional acknowledgment that women understand better the feelings of others.

Hypothesis 5. The presumption that it exists significant differences regarding time management between attorneys who handle a larger number of cases (150-200) and those who handle a smaller number of cases (90-150)

Table 5. Differences between experienced than less experienced attorneys in terms of time management.

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
managemental.timpului	Equal variances assumed	9,962	,003	-2,618	58	,011	-2,200	,840	-3,882	-,518
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,618	39,230	,012	-2,200	,840	-3,899	-,501

According to table 5, there is a significant difference between experienced and less experienced attorneys regarding time management, at a level of 0,003, in the sense that lawyers who handle a larger number of cases manage time better. – the hypothesis 5 is true.

The lack of time is an actual problem in work tasks, is a feature of the society in which we live. Often it happens that the work load is bigger, individuals work harder and still they are not able to finalize important tasks timely. Career professionals understood the importance of efficient time management in ensuring success.

Time is an important stress source not to be neglected. It was proven that it exists a relationship between time stressors, professional satisfaction and some illnesses: high cholesterol, arrhythmia, hypertension etc.

The common mistakes in using the time are: work hard and fast; reducing time spent on certain activities instead of others considered less important; working in the same time on multiple tasks, thinking that you are using better your time; the concept that if you are very busy

results in better outcomes; if you have a higher responsibility, you have to work harder to signal involvement and efficiency; to allow more time to some cases, the results being a correct and well-substantiated one.

Time management means efficient coordination of professional activity. Time management involves better abilities, self-management skills that a professional must have to better plan the work load.

For lawyers, time is of the essence because their specific profession is subject to pressure regarding the deadlines provided by legal or judicial system for procedural documents fillings or for participating in court hearings. Experience in professional activity involves awareness of the importance of time and the formation of skills needed to implement efficient time management methods.

The current research has confirmed that lack of work experience can lead to significant waste of time, which can bring disruptions in labor productivity. The attorneys with fewer cases, most of the time at the beginning of their career, try to give a major importance to a single task instead of others, equally significant, fail to transmit information to clients within a time frame, which ascertain unjustified long meetings, uses electronic devices for a long time, but in most cases not for the purpose of fulfilling work tasks, they lack punctuality, postpone difficult tasks and sometimes do not prepare their meetings in time.

Poor time management causes imbalances in the work process and inevitably becomes an important source of stress. In the situations of inefficient management, the stress is subtly manifested: the withdrawn people will become even more withdrawn and non-communicative, those who prefer loneliness will avoid the company of other individuals, even more, those who will work late will work even harder. Paul R. Godin proposes a suggestive definition of the concept of time management: `` a personal process of scheduling, anticipating and reacting in a planned effective and efficient predictive manner ``.

Lawyers who have a busy schedule have learned to optimally manage the time allowed to their profession. Time management helps them to achieve their goals, to set priorities, to get an overview of the tasks to be performed, to communicate better, to replace tasks, to maintain balance in professional and personal life, to resist and adapt better to change.

Studies over time (Kahn, Byasiere, 1992) have highlighted the common sources of occupational stress: time, meetings, unwanted situations (unfavorable working conditions, sudden changes in activity) and anticipation (fear, pleasant surprises).

Hypothesis 6. The presumption that there are significant differences in the management of a crisis situation between experienced attorneys (more than 20 years) and those with less experience.

Table 6. Significant differences between experienced and less experienced attorneys regarding mastering a certain situation.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower		Upper
stapanirea situatiei	Equal variances assumed	,204	,653	-3,285	58	,002	-4,200	1,278	-6,759	-1,641
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,285	47,481	,002	-4,200	1,278	-6,771	-1,629

According to table 6, there is a significant difference between experienced and less experienced attorneys, at a level of 0,002, in the sense that experienced attorneys are better at managing a crisis.

The crisis is defined by C. Zamfir and L. Vlasceanu as a period of a system characterized by the appearance of difficulties the surge of conflicts, an aspect that affects its normal functioning, triggering strong pressure for change.

In Raymond Moudon dictionary, the crisis is defined as: that moment when the control mechanisms and the identity of a group are subjected to unforeseen trials, considered transitional, dangerous and with uncertain resolutions (R. Boudon, 1996).

From a psychological perspective, crises can be life moments that are part of the normal evolution of the human being, corresponding to some stages or phases of its genetic development.

In the field of public relations, the crisis has been defined as: a major unpredictable event that can lead to negative effects, the can affect the organization as a whole or just a sector, employees, products, services, financial condition and its reputation.

J. P. Rossart proposes a classification of crises, respectively internal crises that have either a vindictive character requests regarding working conditions, remuneration, professional training), or a destructive character (mistakes made by people that lead to tensions, damage etc.). Crises can be also external, due to natural (natural disasters) or human factors (aggressions, vandalism etc.).

In the legal profession, there are sometimes crisis situations like negative, internal struggles within the organization, low number of cases, loss of a high rank professional leader, without having a proper replacement for him and last but not least the financial stress.

Obviously, crisis situations are adequately managed by experienced lawyers, who have gained both life and work experience over time. They are able to devise specific response strategies to crisis situations, observing certain guidelines in solving such unpleasant circumstances: calmness, correctly assessing the nature and size of the crisis, balance the professional establishment or law firm, understanding its causes and identifying solutions, dynamic crisis reevaluation and bring an ascending trend by recording successes.

In difficult situations for the law firm, crisis communication if of particular importance. Such communication is attributed to the coordinating/ titular lawyer, who represents the professional entity and fulfills the role of communicator, but it is reflected on the entire team of lawyers. In a situation of threatening reputation, the law firm must provide a quick and concise answer.

R. Mullerate`s study "The impact of crisis in legal profession,, states that the impact of the economic crisis (2008-2020) targets the following segments: the hourly fee will be replaced by a price for the entire project, established at the beginning of the legal assistance contract; an initial, flat-rate fee will be established, followed by a bonus in case of success; the financial crisis will primarily affect big law firms than small law firms, so a crisis brings primarily a decrease in honoraries for well established professional law firms and the client will return to the traditional relationship "intuit personae" with the lawyer; at the same time, the hierarchy will change in the big law firms – if until now it was pyramidal hierarchy, it will tend to a cylindrical one.

Unfortunately, in EU, there is a discrepancy between the interests of the Bar Associations and the interests of big law firms, which are increasingly tempted to enter the commercial circuit, to the detriment of defending the interests of law. There is a perceivable split between the interests of the Bar Associations and the interests of law firms, with deontological and fiscal consequences. Another current trend is to stop outsourcing professional services to law firms and to hire legal advisers to make the most efficient use of legal advice. All these ideas lead to the conclusion that in a crisis, medium, small and individual law firms

are adapting better to changes (<http://www.juridice.ro/profesia-de-avocat-si-criza-intoarcerea-la-valorile-fundamentale.html> accessed May 20, 2019).

Conclusions

Within the actual legislation, the legal profession is unconfined and independent under the law. In his work, the attorney promotes and defends rights, liberties and legal duties of men.

This noble vocation of defense has evolved over time on two levels: freedom of pleas and the existence of legislative rules to practice it.

The practice of law is not a job and probably not even a profession, but a life style.

In the practice of law, the activity takes place in a competitive environment favorable of transforming the attorney into a person vulnerable to stress. Lawyers work hard, have short deadlines and are emotionally involved, the case substantiation requires long hour so they feel like losing control over their own personal lives.

The study highlighted that the legal profession is subjected to different pressures and the stronger they are, the lower the fulfillment in work, in their career and vice versa, if the pressures are few and of low intensity, the feeling of professional fulfillment appears. This work referred to scientific research, which showed that in law, as in other professions, stress is high. The female attorneys are more vulnerable to stress-generating situations, as their organic, biological structure is dominated by emotions.

A Romanian psychologist states that "the law is a profession that involves great responsibility". Beautiful at it is, is also stressful. There is a permanent competition that involves overloading cognitive mechanisms (attention, thinking etc.), volitional (willingness), which involves a high physical, mental, intellectual consumption. "The attorney's amygdale complex (brain area) is on autopilot and will generate primordial defense mechanisms. The attorney is always defending the client. His vegetative nervous system works with the sympathetic one, both of them being always on high alert" (Maria Verdi, psychotherapist).

In conclusion, the practice of law is subject to higher stress influx and consequently the attorneys are in danger of developing serious illnesses that could incapacitate them. The stress can cause mental problems from mild neurosis to deep depression, all of them which can culminate in suicide.

It is important for lawyers to understand the stress phenomenon, to be open to the first stress symptoms, to recognize and acknowledge them and to be aware of the importance of having a quick response in eliminating or limiting stress factors. They need to become their own attorneys when it comes to their health, take control of their lives and recognize everyday problems in their professional and personal life, and then develop strategies to manage them. Stress elimination or diminishment improves performance, quality of the professional activity and thus the benefits. Ensuring a balance between professional and private life must be a priority for attorneys, both for self satisfaction or for those close to them who need a functional family.

The lawyer's thinking build on the conviction that stress and work in excess are ensuring and warrants success, must be updated and introduced into their consciousness that the stress is a dysfunction which systematically compromises the human being, causing anxiety, depression or even suicide.

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