I am a stressed lawyer, get me out of here: drivers of stress in front-line employees of professional services firms

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Dedication

To those who gave…

Fatemeh, Bahram, and Mahdieh.

Abstract

Working in professional services firms imposes high levels of job stress on professional service providers, such that three-quarters of solicitors are reported to have moderate to extreme levels of job stress. This research aims to identify different drivers of job stress in professional services firms. In reviewing the extant literature on the job stress of professional front-line employees, several gaps have been identified, notably in understanding the role of clients in the process of service delivery.

Based upon the job demands-resources theory, a series of hypotheses were developed and tested using the results of a paper-based survey of 230 senior B2B solicitors in the UK. The results showed that time pressure, as a challenge demand, causes job stress in senior solicitors if it exceeds a certain level. Job autonomy, as a job resource, was also found to buffer the effect of time pressure on job stress. The analysis also indicated that there is a positive link between administrative hassles, as a hindrance demand, and job stress in professionals.

Regarding the role of clients in the process of service delivery, the results suggested that frequency of client participation positively affects job stress of senior solicitors. Similarly, low quality of client participation was found to have a positive relationship with job stress. The results also demonstrated that emotional intelligence, as a personal resource, positively moderates the effects of frequency and low quality of client participation on job stress.

This study has produced several contributions. First, it introduces challenge stressors to the marketing literature. Second, it examines client participation as a demand in addition to the traditional job demands. Third, this study suggests low quality of client participation as an uninvestigated aspect of client participation. Regarding the managerial

implications, this research provides guidelines for managers of professional services firms to understand and manage job stress in their front-line employees.

Keywords:

Job demands-resources theory, Challenge demands, Hindrance demands, Time pressure, Administrative hassles, Frequency of client participation, Low quality of client participation

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1. CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

1.1 An overview of the study

This research investigates and examines job stress in front-line employees of professional services firms. Emphasizing the critical role of job demands, this research attempts to position job stress as a fundamental element of the well-being of front-line employees in professional services firms. This research relies on two bodies of literature, namely services marketing and occupational health psychology, to address the research objectives. Statistical procedures have been applied to develop the measures for the purpose of investigating the relationships between job stress and its drivers.

The current chapter provides an overview of the research. It starts by introducing the phenomenon and highlighting the importance of job stress in professional front-line employees. It then continues by discussing the gaps in the pertinent literature and the objectives of the study. Thereafter, the research questions and the research contributions will be presented. The chapter finishes by outlining the organization of the thesis.

1.2 Research background

Being at the centre of a three-cornered fight of services firms, boundary spanners are under immense pressure by both clients (for service quality and care) and firms (for productivity and efficiency) (Bateson, 1992, Singh, 2000). Therefore, the adverse effects of boundary spanners' job stress, which refers to subjective perception of the experienced stress (Cavanaugh et al., 2000), on service quality and client satisfaction can lead to client attrition and market share loss (Chan and Wan, 2012). Boundary spanners, known as front-line employees, are defined as employees who externally represent a firm and have an information processing role (Fisher and Hutchings, 2013). Recent statistics from the

British Labour Force Survey (2018) depict that 15.4 million working days were lost due to job stress in the UK in 2017/18, which ranks job stress above cancer, strokes, and heart attack as the main reason for long-term sickness leave. Indeed, job stress is the number one major endemic issue in the legal profession. The legal sector in the UK contributed £26 billion to the UK's gross value added (GVA) in 2016 and is the second-largest legal services market behind the US (TheCityUK, 2018). However, according to The Law Society (2018), more than 75% of solicitors have experienced moderate to extreme levels of stress. They attribute the core of the stress problem in law firms to the incorrect organizational culture that admires and actively encourages being overwhelmed. Unfortunately, in such a work environment, portrayed by overwhelming demands from firms and clients, it is highly expected that the above-mentioned trend will continue.

Due to the increasing trend of job stress, a plethora of studies have been conducted to investigate the nature of workplace stress and stressors in employees. Organizational psychology, work and employability, management, and marketing literature have all significantly contributed to our understanding of different drivers and outcomes of workplace stress (e.g. Keller, 2001, Sonnentag et al., 2012, Zablah et al., 2012, Auh et al., 2016, Menguc et al., 2017).

Generally, scholars have explained workplace stressors from two points of view. In the first viewpoint, stressors have only negative and adverse effects on employees and firms (e.g. Singh, 2000, Ashill et al., 2009). Arguing based on empirical studies, advocates of this perspective believe that job stressors yield increased emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and turnover intention, and decreased job satisfaction and job

commitment (Sager, 1994, Singh, 2000, Ashill et al., 2009, Jung and Yoon, 2014). In this perspective, all stressors are assessed as hindrance demands that have the potential to prevent goal attainment and personal growth (Crawford et al., 2010, Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). Stressors in this perspective are seen as constraints and barriers that hinder employees from achieving their goals.

On the other hand, proponents of the second perspective argue that some stressors can be appraised as challenging, and have the potential to lead to positive outcomes in addition to the efforts that they cost (Babakus et al., 2009, Crawford et al., 2010, Menguc et al., 2017). Therefore, stressors in this perspective are categorized as either challenge stressors or hindrance stressors. It is posited that challenge stressors, in addition to the pressure that they impose, are positively correlated with job engagement (Crawford et al., 2010). Individuals evaluate challenge stressors as stressful demands that can promote future gains and personal growths. Coping with challenge stressors is motivating because they are appraised as opportunities to gain, learn, and evidence one's proficiency to be rewarded (Prem et al., 2017). However, at the same time, dealing with these demands is arduous and can cost effort.

Regardless of these perspectives, existing literature has identified several sources of stress in the workplace that can lead to increased job stress, including accumulated conflicting demands, time pressure, unrealistic goals and targets, poor leadership and management style, as well as lack of support and job/personal resources. In particular, marketing literature has extensively used role theory and job demands-resources (JD-R) theory to investigate potential drivers and outcomes of workplace stress. However, despite

mounting evidence in the marketing literature acknowledging the importance of different drivers of job stress in boundary spanners, we have not yet comprehended the concept of workplace stress and its different antecedents. Indeed, the complexity of the nature of workplace stress perpetuates a number of significant research gaps.

1.3 Gaps in the literature

There is a large volume of published studies in the literature investigating job stressors of employees. In view of the fact that some stressors motivate employees, as discussed before, the occupational health psychology literature has classified stressors into two categories, namely challenge and hindrance stressors. While the psychology literature has well documented and examined both challenge and hindrance stressors, there is a dearth of studies in the services marketing literature that investigate empirically how different stressors impact the job stress of front-line service providers (e.g. LePine et al., 2004, Crawford et al., 2010, Widmer et al., 2012, Prem et al., 2017). Unlike the hindrance demands that have been extensively examined in the marketing literature, challenge demands have received scant attention. In other words, most studies investigating stressors in the context of marketing so far have only focused on the degree of the stressors rather than on the different types of stressors. The current study attempts to address this gap by capturing different types of stressors, namely challenge and hindrance stressors, in the context of services marketing. Additionally, the extant studies state that job stressors, in general, linearly affect job stress, but this research posits that the effects of challenge and hindrance demands on job stress are non-linear and linear, respectively (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004, Stock and Bednarek, 2014, van Woerkom et al., 2016).

Moreover, despite plenty of studies in the service marketing and boundary spanners literature using the JD-R theory investigating different demands and role stressors, there is still insufficient knowledge about the demands that a boundary spanner receives from the presence of his/her clients since the role of clients in the process of service delivery has not been dealt with in depth in this regard (e.g. Demerouti et al., 2001, Schmitz and Ganesan, 2014, Sleep et al., 2015, Breevaart and Bakker, 2018). A shortcoming of the JD-R theory is that the investigated demands have been limited to the job demands rather than the demands that are originated from the presence of clients. Both challenge stressors, such as time pressure, workload and cognitive demands, and hindrance stressors, such as administrative hassles, role ambiguity and role conflict, refer to those aspects of the job that are originated from the tasks and the role (Babakus et al., 2009, Crawford et al., 2010, Zablah et al., 2012, Breevaart and Bakker, 2018). The presence of the client in the process of service delivery can be a demand for professionals, but the JD-R theory is silent about this presence in service delivery and the ways in which it can engender job stress in professional boundary spanners (Chan et al., 2010).

Participation of the client in the process of service delivery can be a source of stress for front-line employees in professional services firms. Chan et al. (2010) argued that client participation shifts more power to the client from the service provider, leading to more role conflict and workload for service employees. This power shift is particularly important in professional services firms in which a collaborative relationship between service provider and client is needed for favourable service outcomes (Ouschan et al., 2006, Chan et al., 2010).

Service providers' decreased power may also attenuate the service script, affecting the process of service delivery negatively. This power shift can also cause role incongruence, meaning discrepancy between service providers' perception of job responsibilities and clients' expectations (Chan et al., 2010). Further, as a result of participation, clients may make unexpected requests which can be incompatible with role scripts and impose role conflict on service providers. Service providers receiving incompatible demands from their clients have to expend more energy and effort to satisfy the demands of both their clients and their own firms, enhancing their job stress. The bulk of research on the role of different demands in employees' job stress has only focused on demands that are related to the role and the tasks (i.e. challenge demands and hindrance demands), as opposed to client participation, which has been investigated to a much lesser extent as a demand (e.g. Singh, 2000, Babakus et al., 2009, Menguc et al., 2017, Petrou et al., 2019).

Furthermore, although there are abundant studies on client participation in the marketing literature, there has been little discussion about different aspects of this construct. The definition of client participation as the *extent* to which a client participates in the process of service delivery, focuses only on the *frequency* aspect of client participation and there is a paucity of studies investigating the *quality* aspect of it (Dong et al., 2008, Chan et al., 2010, Dong et al., 2015). The importance of the quality aspect of client participation is more noticeable in professional services firms, particularly for law firms in which clients have to provide high-quality information about their needs and cases in order to receive a high-quality service (Chan et al., 2010). For instance, if a client does not furnish his/her solicitor with clear and relevant information, the solicitor cannot be expected to be able to process the information well and deliver a high-quality service. Thus, it is reasonable to argue, that in addition to frequency of client participation, low quality of client

participation can impose stress on professional service providers. So far, however, a review of the marketing literature indicates that previous works have only investigated the frequency aspect of client participation rather than its quality aspect.

A further gap is that only a limited number of empirical studies have investigated the moderating roles of resources on the links between demands and health-impairment processes from the JD-R perspective (e.g. Dollard et al., 2013, van Woerkom et al., 2016). The role of resources is more remarkable in law firms in which demands are pervasive and law firm are unlikely to be able to minimize the demands that senior solicitors experience. Therefore, it is the role of resources to buffer the detrimental effects of demands on service providers. So far, however, there has been little discussion about the ways in which job and personal resources help service providers to manage and handle the demands they face.

1.4 Research objectives and research questions

Considering the above-mentioned background and research gaps, the aims of this research are threefold. The first objective is to investigate how different job demands (i.e. challenge and hindrance demands) impact on job stress in front-line professional service providers. In line with the literature and the context of the study, time pressure and administrative hassles have been considered as the challenge and hindrance demands in this research, respectively, imposing excessive constraints on professional service providers (Crawford et al., 2010, Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). Time pressure in this study is defined as the perceived limitation of available time to complete one's tasks (Henderson et al., 2006). This study also defines administrative hassles as "*rules,*

regulations, and procedures that remain in force and entail a compliance burden for the organization but have no efficacy for the rules' functional object" (Bozeman, 1993, p. 283).

Second, this study aims to examine how client participation as a demand affects the job stress of professional service providers. Client participation refers to the involvement of clients in the process of service delivery. On one hand, client participation in the process of service delivery produces stress for service providers, and, on the other hand, client participation is vital for service delivery in professional services (Chan et al., 2010). Additionally, as client participation is not a job characteristic, it cannot be categorized into the traditional job demands (i.e. challenge and hindrance demands). Thus, in this study, client participation has been considered as a demand that originates directly from service receivers. The third purpose of this study is to investigate the construct of client participation in more depth by contextualizing it. While several studies have considered client participation as the *degree* of participation, in line with the context of the study, this research aims to examine the *quality* aspect of client participation (i.e. low quality of client participation) in addition to the frequency aspect as two demands (e.g. Dong et al., 2008, Ngo and O'Cass, 2013, Dong and Sivakumar, 2017, Delpechitre et al., 2018).

A further objective of the study is to test the role of different resources (i.e. job and personal resources) in buffering the effects of demands on the job stress of professionals. Job resources are those aspects of the job that diminish demands and help employees to achieve their goals (Demerouti et al., 2001). Personal resources also refer to those personal aspects that help individuals to be resilient in difficult circumstances (Hobfoll et

al., 2003). While most studies investigating the effects of resources on the well-being of employees have been limited to job resources (e.g. Miao and Evans, 2013, van Woerkom et al., 2016, Petrou et al., 2019), this research aims to examine the role of both job resources and personal resources in attenuating the detrimental effects of demands. Job autonomy, which is defined as "*the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out*" (Hackman and Oldham, 1976, p. 258), has been considered as the job resource in this study. Autonomous employees are deemed to be less affected by time pressure and administrative hassles since they have more opportunity and discretion in carrying out the work. Emotional intelligence (EI), which refers to "*the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions*" (Salovey and Mayer, 1990, p. 189), has also been measure to capture the personal resource aspect of this research. As emotional intelligence enables employees to manage and boost their relationships with their clients, it is argued that the effect of client participation on the job stress of employees will be buffered.

To operationalize the above-mentioned research goals, the following research questions are introduced:

1. How do job demands (i.e. time pressure and administrative hassles) drive job stress in professional front-line employees?
2. How do different aspects of client participation (i.e. frequency and low quality of client participation) drive job stress in professional front-line employees?

3. How does job autonomy buffer the effects of time pressure and administrative hassles on job stress?
4. How does emotional intelligence buffer the effects of frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation on job stress?

Senior B2B solicitors were asked to reveal information on time pressure, administrative hassles, frequency and low-quality participation of a particular client in order to address the above-explained research questions.

1.5 Expected contributions of the study

This study, which seeks to address how and when different job demands as well as different aspects of client participation can drive job stress in professional front-line employees, aims to make several contributions. Specifically, by considering client participation as a demand in addition to different job demands and contextualizing the construct of client participation, this research attempts to produce three contributions.

First, this study stands among the few investigations introducing challenge stressors, in addition to hindrance stressors, to the marketing literature to provide a more holistic view (e.g. Zablah et al., 2012, Menguc et al., 2017). Since most of the demands investigated in the marketing literature have been limited to the hindrance demands (e.g. role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload) (e.g. Singh, 2000, Ashill et al., 2009, Babakus et al., 2009, Petrou et al., 2019), confirming previous findings, the present study attempts to contribute to the existing literature by examining how a challenge demand in addition to a hindrance demand impacts the job stress of professional front-line employees—hence,

offering a more realistic picture. While traditionally job demands have been argued to have linear relationships with job stress, the investigator unfolds a novel right-half U-shaped relationship (i.e. a U-shaped relationship that does not have the left end of the U) between the challenge demand and job stress.

Several challenge demands, such as time pressure, responsibilities, workload, job complexity, and organizational changes, have been investigated in different contexts and sectors. However, it is argued that demands are context specific (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). Considering the context of this study, the investigator has specifically focused on time pressure to capture challenge demand (Demerouti et al., 2001, Crawford et al., 2010). The reason for this focus is that time pressure is a prevalent source of stress in law firms and solicitors often face detrimental levels of time pressure, and the associated job stress decreases their productivity (Morgan, 2014). Considering the context of law firms, time pressure, compared to other challenge stressors, such as responsibility, workload, or job complexity, is more closely related to psychological costs, such as job stress (Prem et al., 2017)[1].

Additionally, the present study captures hindrance demand by measuring administrative hassles that solicitors experience. Although there are empirical studies stating that there is a positive relationship between administrative hassles and negative attitudes such as emotional exhaustion, job demotivation, job dissatisfaction, and stress perception

[1] These points have been strongly supported in the preliminary interviews with solicitors. For instance, a senior associate in a law firm stated: "*Everything is urgent [...]; the urgency is if you don't hurry up and finalize the agreement, you are going to lose the business transaction and the multimillion dollar thing will collapse [...]; we have different deadlines for different things but it's always urgent. This urgency can push solicitors forward, but dealing with this pressure on a daily basis is overwhelming*".

(Greenglass et al., 1997, DeHart-Davis and Pandey, 2005, Moynihan and Pandey, 2007, Giauque et al., 2012), no one – to best of the researcher's knowledge – has explored the relationship between administrative hassles and job stress in law firms in particular. Solicitors need to go through a lot of red tape at work when they are carrying out their jobs. Filling in several legal forms for clients, completing excessive computer work in addition to their core tasks, and dealing with various restrictive rules and regulations are the common daily red tape that solicitors experience. Therefore, building on Giauque et al.'s (2012) work, the present study argues that examining the relationship between administrative hassles, as a hindrance demand, and job stress in the context of law firms provides additional insight into how daily administrative hassles can generate negative attitudes such as job stress particularly in law firms.

Second, this study contributes to the theory of JD-R by shedding new light on the presence of the client in the process of service delivery. The researcher expands the JD-R theory by adding client participation as an extra demand in addition to the conventional job demands in order to investigate how different sources of demands affect the job stress of professional front-line employees. Although the primary focus of marketing literature in JD-R-based studies has been on hindrance demands, the psychology literature is far more advanced and already looked at the challenge demands as a unique type of job demands in studies that are based on the JD-R theory. The marketing literature mainly conceptualised role ambiguity, role conflict, and work overload as job demands whereas the psychology literature has predominantly focused on time pressure and workload as challenge stressors and cognitive and emotional demand as hindrance stressors when conceptualising job demands (e.g. Singh, 2000, Bakker et al., 2004, Ashill et al., 2009,

Babakus et al., 2009, Breevaart and Bakker, 2018). As such, in both stream of literature, the idea of client participation as a type of job demand has been widely overlooked.

I, therefore, posit and observe how clients can directly impose stress on professional service providers. More specifically, the present study attempts to empirically examine the relationship between client participation and job stress and, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, this research is the first that investigates this relationship in the context of law firms. The importance of investigating client participation lies within the fact that participation of clients in the process of service delivery is vital and inseparable in legal services, because clients need to actively participate and furnish service providers with relevant information, enabling solicitors to serve them properly.

Third, existing literature indicates contradictory findings about the relationship between client participation and job stress. For instance, while Chan et al. (2010) found a positive relationship between client participation and job stress in employees, Chen et al. (2015) empirically showed that client participation negatively affects job stress in service providers. In this research, I propose that, traditionally, prior studies have treated client participation as a construct that refers only to the degree of the client participation (e.g. Chan et al., 2010, Gallan et al., 2013, Dong et al., 2015, Delpechitre et al., 2018). However, I reason that, in addition to the degree of client participation, the quality aspect must also be taken into account, particularly in professional services in which the interaction between service provider and client is inevitable (O'Malley and Harris, 1999). Hence, this research is novel in the way in which it investigates the role of client participation in the process of service delivery. I argue that distinguishing between

frequency and quality aspects of client participation can best help to explain the contradictory findings in the existing literature.

Provision and transfusion of information by clients is the initial step in the process of service delivery in the context of law firms. Solicitors use the provided information to deliver the service and, if the provided information is of low quality, they will not be able to use it to deliver the service, which can increase the stress of service providers. Hence, it can be argued that, in addition to the frequency of client participation, low quality of client participation can also be a stressor in service providers. The information provided by a client can be seen as the input of the process of service delivery. Therefore, if the client does not participate well and provides low-quality information, the solicitor will not be able to serve the client well, because unclear and irrelevant information can mislead solicitors. In addition, low levels of quality of client participation can lead to a delay in the process of service delivery, which yields decreased relationship quality and increased stress. In the worst scenario, solicitors may fail to win the case, negatively affecting both their reputation and that of their firm.

Notwithstanding the fact that the quality aspect of client participation is vital for professional services firms, such as law firms, it has been overlooked in previous research, and this study attempts to contribute to the body of the literature by investigating the role of this facet of client participation in professional services firms. As far as the investigator knows, the relationship between low quality of client participation and job stress of employees has not been examined in the literature. The results of this study

indicate that both aspects of client participation (i.e. frequency and low-quality) work as stressors and augment job stress in professional front-line employees.

Furthermore, this research adds to a growing body of literature on the role of resources in perceived job stress of service providers. Early studies of the JD-R theory suggested that resources initiate motivational processes such as job engagement (e.g. Demerouti et al., 2001, Schaufeli et al., 2002, Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). The present study contributes to the current literature by investigating the moderating roles of a job resource (i.e. job autonomy) and a personal resource (i.e. emotional intelligence) in buffering the detrimental effects of job demands and client participation on job stress in professional service providers.

Job autonomy furnishes solicitors with resources, which can assist employees by compensating drained resources caused by job stress and serve to lessen the negative effects of job demands (Grandey et al., 2005). Since autonomous employees can decide how to deal with the job demands they face, they are able to use their skills and discretion to buffer the detrimental effects of demands on job stress (Stock and Hoyer, 2005). Job autonomy has been examined as a moderator of the attitude-behaviour relationships in several contexts (e.g. Grandey et al., 2005, Stock and Hoyer, 2005). However, as far as the investigator knows, no one has empirically examined the moderating role of job autonomy on the effects of time pressure and administrative hassles on job stress.

In addition, emotional intelligence, as a personal resource, enables solicitors to manage their emotions, such as overwhelmedness and stress, and their social relationships (Farh

et al., 2012). Emotionally intelligent employees have more positive social interactions because they are able to accurately perceive people's emotions (Miao et al., 2017). Thus, the set of skills EI offers is vital for solicitors when they interact with their clients. However, to the best of the investigator's knowledge, the role of service provider's EI has not been investigated when the client heavily participates in the process of service delivery. Therefore, this research attempts to contribute to the literature by examining the moderating role of emotional intelligence on the effects of frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation on job stress in the context of law firms.

1.6 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into six chapters discussing the different phases of the research project. Chapter one is the introduction of the thesis explaining the research background and the gaps in the pertinent literature. Additionally, research goals, research questions and the contributions of the study are discussed in this chapter. The second chapter illustrates an extensive literature review on the theory of job demands-resources and client participation. The main constructs of the research – challenge demand (i.e. time pressure), hindrance demand (i.e. administrative hassles), frequency of client participation, low quality of client participation and job stress – are introduced and defined in Chapter two.

The third chapter elucidates the theoretical justifications used to develop the conceptual research model. Drawing on the pertinent theory, hypotheses of the study are developed in this chapter. Specifically, the researcher explains the conceptual model and describes how the antecedents of the model (i.e. time pressure, administrative hassles, frequency of

client participation and low quality of client participation) drive job stress in professional front-line employees. Further, in addition to the moderating effects of job autonomy on the relationships between job demands and job stress, the moderating impact of emotional intelligence on the paths between the aspects of client participation and job stress will be theoretically argued and justified.

Chapter four explains the methodological approach of the study and the ways in which the data is collected for testing the developed hypotheses. Specifically, the research design, the sample, the scales for measuring the constructs, and the data analysis techniques are explained. Chapter five begins by providing an overview of the descriptive statistics of the sample. As the main purpose of Chapter five is to test the hypotheses, necessary tests such as data screening checks, reliability and validity tests, exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and common method bias analysis have been performed prior to the process of hypotheses testing. Chapter six as the last chapter of the thesis discusses the results of the empirical study. This final chapter finishes by explaining the theoretical and managerial implications, the limitations, and the directions for future research.

1.7 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided a broad overview of the current study. The background of the research has been explained and the gaps in two bodies of the literature were identified. Thereafter, the objectives of the study, the research questions, and the contributions made by this study were outlined.

2 CHAPTER TWO: Literature review

2.1 Chapter overview

The current chapter provides an extensive literature review on pertinent theories. Before presenting the theory of JD-R as the theoretical perspective of this research, the demand-control model, the effort-reward imbalance model and the theory of conservation of resources being the theoretical foundations of JD-R theory are described briefly. Generally speaking, the aim of this chapter is threefold. First, the researcher attempts to extensively review the pertinent literature. Second, the main constructs of the study are introduced and defined. Third, this chapter endeavours to highlight the theoretical research gaps in in the pertinent literature.

This chapter is organized as follows. First, the theoretical foundations of the JD-R theory – which are the demand-control model, the effort-reward imbalance model and the theory of conservation of resources – are explained. Second, in addition to introducing the constructs of time pressure, administrative hassles, job autonomy and emotional intelligence, the literature on the JD-R theory and its theoretical rationales is extensively reviewed. Third, after introducing and discussing the first gap related to the JD-R theory, a summary of the characteristics of professional services firm, the literature on client participation, and the second research gap will be reviewed and described.

2.2 Background theories

2.2.1 The demand-control model

The main tenet of the demand-control model is that employees who have highly demanding jobs with low levels of control over these jobs experience strain at the highest level (Karasek, 1979). In contrast, if an employee working in a highly demanding job is

provided with sufficient decision latitude and job control, personal growth and learning will be at the highest level. These jobs, known as *active jobs*, enable employees to use all the available resources to cope with the demands they face. In addition to the *high strain jobs* and *active jobs*, Karasek (1979) also argued that jobs characterized as a combination of low demand and high job decision latitude are *low strain jobs*. The demand-control model also posits that the combination of low job demands and low job control leads to *passive jobs,* decreasing active problem-solving. Figure 2.1 depicts different combinations of job demands and job control in the demand-control model.

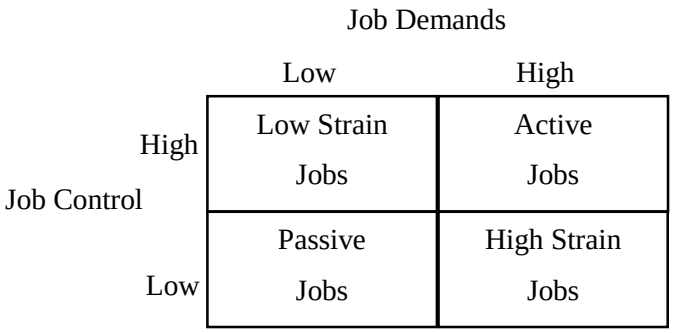


Figure 2.1 Job demands-control model

source: adopted from Karasek (1979)

In general, the job demands-control model suggests that psychological strain results from the combination of the demands an employee experiences and the job control s/he has (Karasek, 1979, Bakker and Demerouti, 2014). Although the demand-control model has been considered to have a prominent position in the occupational health psychology literature, there are empirical studies that do not support the interaction effects argued in the model (e.g. De Rijk et al., 1998, de Jonge et al., 2010). The inconsistent results of the demand-control model studies are attributed to some methodological and conceptual limitations (de Lange et al., 2003, Bakker and Demerouti, 2014). For instance, de Lange et al. (2003) argue that a potential reason is that the methodological quality of the earlier

research has not been taken into account, which can bias the findings of the studies. Moreover, earlier studies on the demand-control model do not clearly establish and justify the mechanisms through which job demands interact with job control.

2.2.2 The effort-reward imbalance model

Initially developed by Siegrist (1996), the effort–reward imbalance model underlines *rewards* rather than the *decision latitude*. The core idea of the effort-reward imbalance model is that the imbalance between effort and reward generates job stress in employees. Specifically, the combination of low reward and high effort can yield distress, leading to physical health risks such as cardiovascular risks and mild psychiatric disorders (Siegrist, 2008, Bakker and Demerouti, 2014). Efforts are categorized as extrinsic (e.g. organizational demands and obligations) or intrinsic (e.g. coping patterns and need for control). Rewards are also given to employees by three mechanisms, namely money, esteem and status control (i.e. safety and opportunity). Employees who feel that what they gain is not commensurate with their efforts are more likely to have high levels of job stress.

2.2.3 Conservation of resources theory

A further theory of stress is conservation of resources theory, which endeavours to describe that individuals are motivated to preserve their existing resources and to acquire new resources (Hobfoll, 1989). Resources in this theory are defined as "*objects, states, conditions, and other things that people value*" (Halbesleben et al., 2014, p. 1335). According to the core tenet of this theory, employees experience job stress on three occasions: first, when they lose their resources; second, when there is a threat that the

current resources could be lost; and, third, when the resources that they gain are not proportionate to their expending of resources (Hobfoll, 2011).

Halbesleben et al. (2014) identified two principles in the theory of conservation of resources, the first of which explains the priority of resource loss over resource gain. Employees prefer not to lose their current resources rather than to gain new resources. In other words, individuals are more harmed when they lose an existing resource than they are satisfied when they acquire a new resource. This principle suggests that losing a resource has more impact than attaining a similar resource. For instance, it is more unpleasant to have a decrease in payment than it is satisfying to have a similar increase in payment.

There are numerous empirical studies indicating that the strain stemming from resource loss can be reflected as a form of depression, physiological outcomes and burnout (Hobfoll et al., 2003, Melamed et al., 2006, ten Brummelhuis et al., 2011). However, this principle has a motivational side as well, implying that employees actively engage in particular behaviours to avoid resource loss.

The second principle of conservation of resources is resource investment. Hobfoll (2001) states that employees invest their resources for preserving their resources, acquiring new resources, and recuperating from the previous losses. As a coping strategy, employees invest their resources to prevent future resource losses (Halbesleben et al., 2014). Additionally, Hobfoll (2001) explained that employees possessing more resources are more likely to gain even more resources since they have more resources to invest. In a

similar vein, employees with fewer resources are expected to experience resources losses as they have fewer resources to invest.

2.2.4 Criticism of the early theories

The above-mentioned models suffer from some drawbacks. First, although job stress and motivation are two inter-related states in employees, studies using the early models often only investigated one side of the job stress-motivation relation. For instance, ten Brummelhuis et al. (2011) showed that employees who are chronically exhausted due to the job stress they are experiencing become demotivated over time. The second critique is that, although it can be argued that simplicity is an advantage of these models, this simplicity lessens the complex reality of work conditions into only a few variables that are unable to reflect a real and complete image of working organizations. While the early models often investigate a limited number of stressors such as physical demands, lack of job control, lack of rewards and psychological demands, a comprehensive list of job demands and job resources has been created by numerous studies on job stress covering constructs such as time pressure, job responsibilities, role conflict, role ambiguity, administrative hassles, and organizational politics (see Keller, 2001, Bolino and Turnley, 2005, Crawford et al., 2010, Jung and Yoon, 2014, Bakker and Demerouti, 2017, Zhang et al., 2018).

Third, these models focus on some variables without explaining why these particular variables are the most important stressors in employees (Bakker and Demerouti, 2014). It is evident that the importance of different demands and resources varies in different work environments. For instance, the effort-reward imbalance model states that money,

esteem reward, and status control are the most prominent resources for employees, while other kinds of job resources, such as leadership support, are more substantial for certain job environments (e.g. start-ups). Similarly, it is not clear why physical work pressure is considered as the most serious demand in the demand-control model and other job demands have been overlooked.

Although the early models provide considerable insights for scholars and practitioners, they suffer from notable disadvantages. Covering the above-mentioned drawbacks, the theory of JD-R was introduced by Demerouti et al. (2001). JD-R theory has been widely used in the services marketing literature so far, explaining both the stress and motivation mechanisms as well as covering a comprehensive list of demands and resources (e.g. Babakus et al., 2009, Zablah et al., 2012, Auh et al., 2016, Lee et al., 2017, Menguc et al., 2017).

2.3 Job demands-resources theory

The core of the JD-R theory is based on the idea that all types of job characteristics can be classified as either job demands or job resources (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). This theory further posits that different working conditions (i.e. job demands and job resources) initiate both motivational (such as job engagement) and health-impairment processes (such as job stress) that are very different in nature (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017, Demerouti et al., 2001). Given its widespread use in occupational and organizational psychology, the JD-R theory has become sophisticated in terms of delineating what job demands and resources are, how they interact, and how they instigate

motivation and stress processes. In the following sections, different kinds of demands and resources are discussed in detail.

2.3.1 Job demands

Job demands are "*those physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical or mental effort and are therefore associated with certain physiological and psychological costs*" (Demerouti et al., 2001, p. 501). Early studies on the JD-R theory identified a wide range of job demands and provided empirical evidence in support of their impact on the health-impairment process (see Demerouti et al., 2001, Schaufeli et al., 2002). However, recent studies suggest that job demands also play a motivational role, distinguishing between challenge demands and hindrance demands (see Podsakoff et al., 2007, Crawford et al., 2010, Zhang et al., 2018).

Challenge job demands refer to stimulating stressors that cost effort but may promote personal growth or gains, whereas hindrance job demands refer to hindering stressors or work circumstances that involve excessive constraints that prevent or at least interfere with personal growth or achieving valued goals and gains (Crawford et al., 2010, Van den Broeck et al., 2010). In line with the context and consistent with the existing literature (Ohly and Fritz, 2010, LePine et al., 2016, Prem et al., 2017), time pressure in this study is considered as a challenge job demand. Statistics show that two-thirds of solicitors have reported that they perceive too much time pressure at work, reflecting the prevalence of time pressure in law firms (Morgan, 2014). Time pressure pushes employees to complete allocated tasks in a limited time (Thomas et al., 2011). Although working under such good stressors can be considered by individuals as rewarding work experiences that are

well worth the extra efforts, the researcher posits that time pressure is a stressor that, in addition to its rewarding outcome, increases job stress.

Kühnel et al. (2012) posited that time pressure is a challenge demand because it has a motivating potential that can stimulate employees in carry out a task in a limited amount of time. They argued that time pressure has the potential to furnish employees with personal gain. Hence, time pressure can motivate employees to use problem-solving coping strategies such as augmenting effort and infusing more energy into their tasks. Similarly, Widmer et al. (2012) conceptualized time pressure as a challenge demand. They reasoned that employees consider time pressure as a challenge demand because they can cope with its stress to some extent. Employees can overcome the pressure of time by increasing their effort. Widmer et al. (2012) empirically showed that employees who experience time pressure have more positive attitude toward life. They also found that time pressure increases organization-based self-esteem.

Similar to the above-mentioned findings, Maruping et al. (2015) stated that time pressure motivates employees to engage in activities that help them solving their problems at workplace. They discussed that if employees evaluate that completing the tasks is still doable within the time available, they will become proactive for accomplishing the assigned tasks. However, they confirmed that too much time pressure is detrimental for employees because they would be overwhelmed and distracted, which decreases performance and increases job stress. Syrek et al. (2013) also classified time pressure as a challenge demand, and they reasoned that successfully overcoming time pressure can form the perception of increased personal accomplishment and recognition. However,

they stated that, in addition to the motivating aspect of time pressure, it has positive correlation with strains. They seconded that too much time pressure can exhaust employees, leading to health-impairment processes such as job stress and burnout.

Time pressure is a challenge demand in law firms for different reasons. On one hand, time pressure for solicitors can be translated into more work and more cases, which can ultimately yield more monetary and non-monetary gains. Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that solicitors welcome the pressure of time, to some extent, to use their skills and knowledge to gain more achievements. In other words, successfully coping with time pressure through increasing the level of effort can yield an increased sense of personal recognition and accomplishment (Lepine et al., 2005, Syrek et al., 2013).

On the other hand, time pressure is a common demand in law firms, such that approximately 66% of solicitors have expressed that they experience too much time pressure on a daily basis (Morgan, 2014). In addition, the preliminary interviews of this research confirmed that, regardless of the solicitors' experience, they need to confront and manage the pressure of time at work. Thus, it can be concluded that, while time pressure offers gains and achievements, it can be burdensome and unpleasant. The relationship between time pressure and job stress has been examined in different contexts such as technological companies, governmental organizations, and universities (Webster et al., 2011, Widmer et al., 2012). However, this relationship has not been investigated in the context of law firms and considering the above-mentioned unique characteristics of the context of law firms, this study attempts to contribute to the extant body of literature by examining the relationship between time pressure and job stress in senior solicitors.

Similarly, existing literature has introduced administrative hassles, role conflict and role ambiguity as examples of hindrance job demands (Crawford et al., 2010). This study uses administrative hassles to capture hindrance job demand because, as Bakker and Demerouti (2017) argued, hindrance job demands are context specific; while role conflict and role ambiguity are likely to be minuscule in *senior* professionals, administrative hassles tend to be perceived as barriers that unnecessarily hamper employees in progressing towards their objectives (Crawford et al., 2010, Van den Broeck et al., 2010). Additionally, after conducting several interviews with solicitors, the investigator concluded that administrative hassles considerably hinder solicitors and negatively affect their performance[1].

2.3.2 Job resources

Job resources are "*those physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that may do any of the following: (a) be functional in achieving work goals; (b) reduce job demands at the associated physiological and psychological costs; (c) stimulate personal growth and development*" (Demerouti et al., 2001, p. 501). In line with the demand-control model, the JD-R theory proposes that some resources buffer the effects of job demands on strain, implying that employees experiencing job demands may still remain productive and motivated and not experience high levels of exhaustion, when they are provided with sufficient resources (Bakker et al., 2005). In other words, resources

[1] For example, a partner in a global law firm mentioned: "*A lot of the hindrance demands that I see you've written down there I see every day in my role as a partner at [...], particularly the administration side. [...]. One of the things that happens to partners in global firms like this and me is that I've got a role as a real estate partner but I'm also head of the hospitality and leisure sector. So, I've got many admin roles that impinge on my day to day [activities], but I still have to deliver day to day to clients*".

play moderating roles in the JD-R model because they palliate the negative consequences of job demands by facilitating the overcoming of a specific demand. Job resources facilitate goal attainment at work, meaning that goals tend to be impacted by different resources (Bakker et al., 2005). In addition, job resources are able to change the employees' perception of job demands and stressors, and decrease their negative consequences (Dollard et al., 2013, Petrou et al., 2019). In the presence of resources, demands would be perceived as less stressful by employees since they feel there are resources through which they can cope with the demands (Dollard et al., 2013). One possible job characteristic that can lessen the effects of job demands is the extent to which facets of the job are controllable (Bakker et al., 2005). Therefore, the researcher considers job autonomy as the job resource in this study.

Literature revealed that autonomous employees have more motivation and self-confident at workplace (Grandey et al., 2005). Empirical findings show that employees with high levels of job autonomy behave more creatively. Conducting a study in an R&D context, Wang and Cheng (2010) demonstrated that job autonomy strengthens the positive relationship between benevolent leadership of supervisor and creativity of employees. They reasoned that autonomous employees are more self-determined and have less external constraints. Therefore, autonomy enables employees to creatively confront job demands they experience. Similarly, Grandey et al. (2005) demonstrated that job autonomy significantly buffers the effect of emotion regulation on job dissatisfaction and emotional exhaustion. They argued that since job autonomy furnishes individuals with more control over their jobs, employees would be less affected by job demands and perceive less stress.

Wang and Netemeyer (2002) stated that perceived job autonomy signals employees that management trusts his/her skills and abilities and, thus, lets the employee to have control over his/her tasks. They argued that autonomous employees are able to use their capabilities, creativity, and knowledge to deal with challenges they face and feel more resourcefulness, increasing their confidence. Conducting their empirical study in the context of salespeople, the results showed that autonomous salespeople have higher learning effort and self-efficacy, which ultimately increases sales performance (Wang and Netemeyer, 2002). In a similar fashion, Chung-Yan (2010) expressed that due to the control and discretion autonomous employees have, they are able to more effectively deal with different job demands. He also highlighted that job autonomy is negatively related to emotional distress and stated that employees with low levels of job autonomy are not resourceful to resolve problems and to overcome job demands. Although the moderating role of job autonomy has been highlighted in the literature, it is not still clear how autonomous employees can buffer the detrimental effects of challenge and hindrance demands such as time pressure and administrative hassles, particularly in the context of law firms in which time pressure and administrative hassles are the prevalent job demands and high levels of job autonomy is given to senior solicitors.

The JD-R theory also posits that personal resources play a similar role as job resources to alleviate the negative impact of job demands on strain, and at the same time enhance the positive impact of challenge job demands on motivation (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Personal resources are defined as "*aspects of the self that are generally linked to resiliency*" (Hobfoll et al., 2003, p. 632). They are those individual characteristics that

are: (1) beneficial in coping with stressful circumstances and (2) useful to ameliorate stressful situations or goal achievement (Van den Heuvel et al., 2010). Employees who possess high levels of personal resources are better at handling stressful situations and cope with pressure at work, and in turn experience less stress (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007).

A personal resource can be a physical, psychological, social or cognitive resource that an individual can possess (Xanthopoulou et al., 2012). Previous studies have addressed different personal resources such as optimism, self-efficacy, and resiliency (Xanthopoulou et al., 2009a, Xanthopoulou et al., 2009b, Van den Heuvel et al., 2010). In this research, the researcher considers emotional intelligence as a personal resource. An emotionally intelligent individual has the ability to accurately perceive, evaluate, regulate and control emotions in themself and others (Salovey and Mayer, 1990, Mayer et al., 1999). Congruous with the definition of personal resources, EI helps employees to be resilient in stressful situations (Miao et al., 2017). Moreover, high-EI employees are more capable of surviving in stressful situations since they are more likely to be able to detect the sources of stress and eliminate them (Gabbott et al., 2011). For instance, conducting an empirical study on the context of professional service providers, McFarland et al. (2016) found that emotionally intelligent service providers are less affected by the detrimental effects of stressors. They reasoned that high EI service providers have more ability to identify the sources of stress. They also stated that EI enables employees to disconnect from unpleasant affective situations.

In a similar fashion, Ciarrochi et al. (2002) discussed that high EI individuals have ability to manage their negative emotions. Their results demonstrated that individuals who have

less ability to manage their emotions are more likely to experience negative feelings such as stress. Employees high in EI are also more able to attain goals at work because they are more likely to have the ability to prevent resource drainage that causes stress and exhaustion (Côté and Miners, 2006, Miao et al., 2017). Gooty et al. (2014) argued that emotional intelligence is a resource for individuals, which allows them to cope with unpleasant and stressful situations. However, although there are several studies in the literature investigating emotional intelligence as a set of abilities that helps employees to manage stressful situations, to the best of the investigator, no one has considered emotional intelligence as a personal resource in a service context in which clients heavily interact with service providers. Accordingly, the researcher posits that EI serves as a personal resource for solicitors at work specifically when interacting with their clients.

As previously argued, far too little attention has been paid to challenge demands, as opposed to hindrance demands, in the literature on marketing. The researcher argue that service providers face both challenge and hindrance demands at the same time. Hence, investigating both challenge and hindrance demands gives a more realistic image of work demands. In addition, the demands discussed in the literature are all originated from tasks, and the role and the presence of clients as a demand has been neglected by the JD-R theory. Given the fact that professional front-line employees need to communicate continuously with their clients, the researcher argues that they are susceptible to perceiving too much demand from their clients. Highlighting the above-mentioned research gaps, Table 2.1 demonstrates a summary of research examining job stressors using the JD-R theory.

Table 2.1 Empirical research on the JD-R theory

Study	Source of data	Nature of study	Job demands	Resources	Role of client	Main findings and conclusions
Singh (2000)	Sample 1: 159 customer service employees Sample 2: 147 bill collection representatives	Empirical	Demands: • Role ambiguity–company • Role ambiguity–customer • Role conflict–intersender • Role conflict–resources and demands	Resources: • Boss support • Task control	Not examined	There is a distinction between quality and productivity in FLEs. As burnout increases, FLEs are able to keep their productivity level but, their quality level will be decreased.
Demerouti et al. (2001)	374 employees in various industries	Empirical	Job demands: • Physical workload • Time pressure • Recipient contact • Physical environment • Shift work	Job resources: • Feedback • Rewards • Job control • Participation • Job security • Supervision support	Not examined	Job demands and job resources have positive and negative effects on exhaustion and disengagement, respectively.
Bakker et al. (2004)	146 employees in various industries	Empirical	Job demands: • Workload • Emotional demands • Work-home conflict	Job resources: • Autonomy • Possibilities development • Social support	Not examined	Job demands impact on exhaustion and burnout positively, leading to decreased in-role performance. In addition, job resources impact on disengagement negatively, leading to higher extra-role performance.

Table 2.1 (continued)

Study	Source of data	Nature of study	Job demands	Resources	Role of client	Main findings and conclusions
Schaufeli and Bakker (2004)	1698 service employees in an insurance, an occupational health and safety service, a pension fund company and a home-care institution	Empirical	Job demands: • Work overload • Emotional demands	Job resources: • Feedback • Social support • Supervisory coaching	Not examined	Job demands and lack of resources predict burnout in service employees, whereas job engagement is affected only by available resources. Further, turnover intention is predicted by burnout and job engagement.
Bakker et al. (2005)	1012 employees of a higher professional education institute	Empirical	Demands: • Work overload • Emotional demands • Physical demands • Work–home interference	Resources: • Autonomy • Social support • Quality relationship with supervisor • Feedback	Not examined	Job resources buffer the negative effects of job demands on burnout.
Xanthopoulou et al. (2007)	714 employees of an engineering company	Empirical	Job demands: • Workload • Emotional demands • Emotional dissonance • Organizational changes	Job resources: • Autonomy • Social support • Supervisory • Coaching • Opportunities for professional development Personal resources: • Self-efficacy • Organizational-based self-esteem • Optimism	Not examined	Personal resources have a moderating role on the link between job demands and exhaustion. They also mediate the effects of job resources on job engagement.

Table 2.1 (continued)

Study	Source of data	Nature of study	Job demands	Resources	Role of client	Main findings and conclusions
Ashill et al. (2009)	170 front-line employees in the banking industry	Empirical	Demands: • Role conflict • Role overload • Role ambiguity	Resource: • Job resourcefulness	Not examined	Job resourcefulness moderates the effects of role stressors on emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and service recovery performance in FLEs.
Babakus et al. (2009)	530 front-line employees in the banking industry	Empirical	Demands: • Role ambiguity • Role conflict • Role overload	Job resources: • Supervisory support • Training • Rewards • Service technology support Personal resource: • Customer orientation	Not examined	Burnout mediates the influence of job demands and job resources on turnover intention and service performance in FLEs. Customer orientation moderates the negative effects of work demands on job outcomes and burnout.
Crawford et al. (2010)	-	Meta-analysis	Challenge demands: • Job responsibility • Time urgency • Workload Hindrance demands: • Administrative hassles • Emotional conflict • Organizational politics • Resource inadequacies • Role conflict • Role overload	Resources: • Autonomy • Feedback • Opportunities for development • Positive workplace climate • Recovery • Rewards and recognition • Support • Job variety • Work role fit	Not examined	Challenge demands impact positively on burnout and engagement. Hindrance demands impact positively on burnout and negatively on engagement. Resources impact positively on engagement and negatively on burnout.

Table 2.1 (continued)

Study	Source of data	Nature of study	Job demands	Resources	Role of client	Main findings and conclusions

Nahrgang et al. (2011)	-	Meta-analysis	Job demands:
			• Risks and hazards
			• Physical demands
			• Complexity
				Job resources:
				• Knowledge
				• Autonomy
				• Supportive environment
				  ○ Social support
				  ○ Leadership
				  ○ Safety climate
					Not examined	Burnout and compliance are predicted by job resources. Further, job resources make positive and negative impacts on job engagement and burnout, respectively. Job demands were also found to be negatively related to job engagement, whereas job resources have a negative relationship with burnout.

Zablah et al. (2012)	Meta-analysis (either salespeople or service providers)	Meta-analysis	Demands: • Customer workload • Persuasion use	Resource: • Customer orientation (CO)	Not examined	Performance and job engagement are predicted by customer orientation. In addition, customer orientation was found to negatively relate to job stress and turnover intention.
Menguc et al. (2013)	482 employees and 488 customers of an apparel retail company	Empirical	-	Job resources: • Autonomy • Supervisory feedback • Supervisor support	Not examined	Job autonomy moderates the relationships of supervisory feedback and supervisor support with job engagement in service employees.
Miao and Evans (2013)	223 salespersons in the manufacturing sector	Empirical	Demands (challenges): • Outcome control • Activity control	Resource: • Capability control	Not examined	Outcome control and activity control affect role ambiguity. Outcome control positively motivates role conflict and selling efforts.

Table 2.1 (continued)

Study	Source of data	Nature of study	Job demands	Resources	Role of client	Main findings and conclusions
Schmitz and Ganesan (2014)	221 B2B salespersons	Empirical	Complex demands: • Customer complexity • Organizational complexity	Resources: • Transactional leadership behaviour • Sales self-efficacy	Not examined	Resources moderate the effects of complex demands on role stressors. Further, complex demands have a direct impact on psychological behavioural responses of salespeople.
Yoo et al. (2014)	346 FLEs in the banking industry	Empirical	Demand: • Competitive intensity	Resource: • Person – organization fit	Not examined	Employees' person-organization (P – O) fit enhances achievement-striving motivation and lessens emotional exhaustion in FLEs. Competitive intensity was found to have negative effects on achievement-striving motivation and the link between P – O fit and employee achievement-striving motivation.
Román and Rodríguez (2015)	265 salespersons in various industries	Empirical	Demand: • Outcome performance	Resources: • Technology use • Technology self-efficacy • customer-qualification skills	Not examined	Customer-oriented selling and customer-qualification skills mediate the relationship between technology use and performance in salespeople.

Table 2.1 (continued)

Study	Source of data	Nature of study	Job demands	Resources	Role of client	Main findings and conclusions
Auh et al. (2016)	Study 1: 485 service employees in the banking industry Study 2: 70 MBA students Study 3: 132 service employees in the banking industry	Empirical	Demand: • Supervisor close monitoring	Job resource: • Supervisor customer service feedback Personal resource: • Power distance orientation/ submissiveness	Not examined	Power distance and customer service feedback moderate the link between close monitoring and burnout in FLEs. Burnout is predicted by close monitoring and customer service feedback.
Lee et al. (2017)	252 FLE-customer dyads in a retail bank	Empirical	-	Resources: • Job resources: o Team support o Working relationship with a supervisor • Self-efficacy • Quality orientation	Not examined	Self-efficacy impacts on FLEs' productivity. Quality orientation impacts negatively and positively on customer satisfaction and engagement, respectively. Job resources were also found to drive employee engagement.
Menguc et al. (2017)	Study 1: 800 FLEs in hospitals Study 2: 276 service employees in financial services, tourism and hospitality, and retailing sectors	Empirical	Organizational demand: • Performance-focused climate	Personal resource: • Self-efficacy Job resource: • Job autonomy Organizational resource: • Service failure recovery climate	Not examined	Climate appraisal (i.e. challenge or hindrance) is vital to determine how a resource affects engagement.

Table 2.1 (continued)

Study	Source of data	Nature of study	Job demands	Resources	Role of client	Main findings and conclusions
Nijssen et al. (2017)	174 sales managers	Empirical	Demand: • Sales organization ambidexterity	Resources: • Incentive management capabilities • Sales training capabilities • Cross-functional cooperation capabilities	Not examined	Sales organization ambidexterity is predicted by sales training, inter-functional cooperation and incentive management.
Breevaart and Bakker (2018)	271 elementary schoolteachers	Empirical	Challenge demands: • Cognitive demands • Workload Hindrance demands: • Role conflict • Family to work conflict	Resource: • Transformational leadership	Not examined	When employees perceive that transformational leadership is high, the relationship between challenge demands and job engagement becomes positive.
Petrou et al. (2019)	92 employees in various industries	Empirical	Demand: • Daily task conflict	Resources: • Daily increasing structural job resources • Daily increasing social job resources	Not examined	The relationship between task conflict and creativity is an inverted U-shaped relationship when employees' structural resources are high. While, when social job resources are high, the relationship becomes linear and positive.
This study	230 senior solicitors		Challenge demand: • Time pressure Hindrance demand: • Administrative hassles	Job resource: • Job autonomy Personal resource: • Emotional intelligence	Examined	

2.4 Challenge and hindrance demands

While hindrance demands are those stressors that involve extreme limitations, which prevent personal growth and the achievement of valuable goals, challenging demands reflect motivating stressors that are costly but have potential in promoting personal growth and gain (Van den Broeck et al., 2010). Table 2.1 depicts that hindrance job demands have been well studied in the marketing literature. However, there has been little discussion about the effects of challenge demands on the job stress of service providers, and the literature on marketing has tended to mainly focus on examining hindrance demands rather than investigating both hindrance and challenge demands at the same time. Service providers experience both challenge and hindrance demands at work. Ergo, capturing both challenge and hindrance demands enables us to have a more realistic picture of stressors in the workplace.

Measuring role conflict and role ambiguity as hindrance job demands, Singh (2000) found that role conflict and role ambiguity both negatively affect the productivity and service quality of front-line service providers. Role ambiguity refers to a lack of information and clarity about a role and the expectations that come with it, and role conflict is defined as the incongruity of the expectations about the role (Coelho et al., 2011, Miao and Evans, 2013). Singh's (2000) findings show that both role ambiguity and role conflict as hindrance demands prevent personal growths and gains, which can decrease customer satisfaction and loyalty. Similar to Singh's (2000) study, Babakus et al. (2009) examined how role ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload as job demands drive burnout, performance and turnover intention. Following the classic view of stressors considering

all the stressors harmful and negative, the assumption of their study was that job demands only impose negative emotions impeding motivation and personal growth.

Further, conducting research in the banking industry, Ashill et al. (2009) examined how role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload drive emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, leading to a decrease in front-line employees' service recovery performance, which supports the findings of Singh (2000) and Babakus et al. (2009). However, despite these findings demonstrating how hindrance job demands affect the performance and perceptions of service providers, marketing literature seems to lack sufficient empirical study about the roles of challenge demands. Capturing both challenge and hindrance demands gives us a more realistic image of the workplace, as employees and service providers experience both types of demands at the same time (Crawford et al., 2010). In response to this research gap, a number of marketing scholars have recently attempted to address this lack of understanding. However, it is still unclear how challenge demands in addition to hindrance demands affect the well-being of service providers.

Following this emerging research trend, this study argues that, as service providers experience challenge demands (e.g. time pressure, job responsibility, etc.) and hindrance demands (e.g. administrative hassles, role conflict, role ambiguity, etc.) at the same time, capturing both challenge and hindrance demands offers a more functional picture of the workplace. This thesis also reasons that, although investigating hindrance demands illustrates how job demands impose stress and prevent service providers from achieving personal growth and gains, capturing challenge demands can demonstrate how particular types of challenge demands have a different nature compared to hindrance demands.

More specifically, professional employees such as solicitors are known to be employees who favour being challenged and take and welcome different challenges to use and display their knowledge and skills (Nordenflycht, 2010, Hargrove et al., 2013). Furthermore, challenge demands such as time pressure, responsibility, and workload connote personal growth and development. Experiencing the pressure of time, workload and high responsibility can be interpreted as more work and cases, which means more monetary and non-monetary gains for professionals. Therefore, ignoring challenge demands and considering only hindrance demands as the only stressors gives an incomplete picture since, as mentioned before, the natures of challenge demands and hindrance demands are different and professional service providers experience both at the same time.

2.5 Client participation as a stressor

A review of the JD-R theory reveals that the investigated challenge and hindrance demands in the literature do not reflect the stress that is perceived directly from the client and the presence of the client (Demerouti et al., 2001, Bakker et al., 2005, Crawford et al., 2010, Auh et al., 2016, Bakker and Demerouti, 2017, Menguc et al., 2017, LePine et al., 2004). Demerouti et al. (2001) empirically examined a comprehensive list of demands comprising physical workload, recipient contact, time pressure, work shift, and physical environment. However, it seems that they neglected to consider other sources of demands such as clients/customers, even though more than one-third of their sample included professional service providers who have direct interaction with clients. Similarly, Bakker et al. (2005) conducted a study in a professional service context and investigated how job demands such as work overload, emotional demands, physical demands, and work–home interference predict exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy. Similar to

Demerouti et al. (2001), Bakker et al. (2005) clearly overlooked other origins of demands and it is not clear how the presence of a client can cause a health-impairment process such as burnout or stress. Although the above-mentioned studies cover a list of job demands, their presumption is that the process of health impairment occurs only due to the stressor that are related to the job tasks such as challenge and hindrance stressors. Overlooking different origins of demands creates a very misleading assumption, which can ultimately give an incomplete understanding of the demands that service providers experience.

Conducting a study in a service context, Menguc et al. (2017) discussed that a performance-focused climate imposes considerable psychological and physiological pressure on service providers. Consequently, a competitive and non-collaborative atmosphere can be created as the result of this performance-focused climate, which can potentially increase tension and stress. Similarly, Yoo et al. (2014) conceptualized competitive intensity as a demand that can cause emotional exhaustion in service providers. Competitive intensity refers to the extent to which service providers feel that the business environment is competitive and their competitors perform well. They reasoned that competitive intensity, as a job demand, not only disengages employees from their jobs, but also puts pressure on service providers, because extra effort and energy is needed to maintain task performance. Although Menguc et al. (2017) and Yoo et al. (2014) contributed well to the body of literature on the JD-R theory, it remains unclear how clients can impose stress on service providers through participating in the process of service delivery.

As a step forward, a study by Auh et al. (2016) investigated a supervisor-related demand, namely supervisor close monitoring, which can be considered as a demand stemming from a different source (i.e. supervisors). They argue that, when employees perceive that they are being closely monitored, they feel watched and pressured to comply with pre-defined behaviours, which can impose strain and stress. With respect to the fact that the sample of the present study consists of partners and senior solicitors who are rarely supervised by a manager, building upon Auh et al.'s (2016) work and the seminal work of Demerouti et al. (2001), this thesis contributes to the JD-R theory by introducing client participation as a demand, particularly in professional services firms in which clients heavily interact with service providers (Crawford et al., 2010, Bakker and Demerouti, 2017, Demerouti et al., 2001).

The investigator argues that, in addition to the traditional job demands (i.e. challenge and hindrance demands), client participation can put pressure on service providers, especially those who have regular interactions with clients. This study stands among few recent attempts that examine a less investigated source of stress, namely client participation, in professional services firms. It is argued that the presence of clients in the process of service delivery can be notable and a source of stress for professional service providers. One reason is that clients of professional services, compared to generic services, spend more money on their purchases. In addition, they are less knowledgeable than their service providers in regard to the complicated services that they are receiving (Reid, 2008, Nordenflycht, 2010, Sonmez and Moorhouse, 2010). Hence, it is very likely that clients heavily engage with and put pressure on their service providers to maximize their gains when receiving the service. Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that client participation (i.e. the frequency of client participation) is similar to hindrance demands in nature

because high levels of frequency of client participation require mental and physical effort, which impose physiological and psychological costs (Demerouti et al., 2001, Chan et al., 2010).

2.6 Professional services firms

Professional services are defined as "*services delivered by a provider with the skills acquired by lengthy training to apply in practice, competence in a field of knowledge*" (Stewart et al., 1998, p. 210). Professional services firms are deemed to be different from other types of firms (Harris and Piercy, 1998, Nordenflycht, 2010). An important distinction between professional services and non-professional services lies within the fact that professional services firms offer services that are highly complicated and order-based and delivered by highly skilled human resources, over an ongoing stream of interactions with clients (Reid, 2008). Additionally, compared to purchasing generic services, purchasing professional services is riskier and more expensive, but with more benefits for clients (Sonmez and Moorhouse, 2010).

The most essential characteristic of professional services firms is knowledge intensity, which implies that delivering a professional service relies on a considerable body of complicated knowledge (Nordenflycht, 2010, Starbuck, 1992). This knowledge intensity produces an *asymmetry of knowledge* between professional service providers and clients, which makes clients incapable of evaluating the skills of the service providers. On one hand, clients pay a great deal of money to receive professional services and, on the other hand, due to the knowledge asymmetry, they are unable to assess how expert is the service provider. Therefore, it is conceivable to assume that clients put effort into the process of service delivery to ensure a good-quality service and to decrease the level of the

knowledge asymmetry to reduce their perceived risk. Hence, the researcher argues that client participation in the process of service delivery, in addition to the conventional job demands, has the potential to put pressure on professional service providers and increase their job stress.

Conducting a qualitative study, Harris (2000) argued that clients' expectations of professional services firms, particularly law firms, have been elevated. Thus, clients are more inclined to increase their efforts to demand and to put pressure on service providers to ensure a high-quality service.

2.7 Client participation

Despite its inconsistencies, the services marketing literature has documented well the advantages of client participation in co-creation of the service (see Bendapudi and Leone, 2003, Dong et al., 2008, Chan et al., 2010, Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014, Dong et al., 2015). Nevertheless, the potential impact of client participation on employees' job stress and the resultant stress may have been overlooked, particularly from the JD-R theoretical perspective. The literature defines client participation as the extent to which a client shares information/knowledge or becomes involved in the process of service delivery (Dong et al., 2008, Chan et al., 2010, Dong et al., 2015). Considering customer participation as the extent to which a customer participates in delivering the service, Dong et al. (2008) investigated the role of customer participation in co-created service recovery from the customer viewpoint. Their findings illustrate that customer participation increases customers' satisfaction and role clarity, encouraging them to participate in future. Fang (2008) took a similar approach in a manufacturing context and captured

customer participation by measuring the degree to which customers become engaged in the process of new product development. Although he found that customer participation can positively affect new product speed to market, there is still a need to investigate customer participation more deeply and to examine different aspects of it.

Yi et al. (2011) argued that any form of customer engagement in the process of service delivery can be considered as customer participation behaviour. They maintained that customer participation includes required behaviours that are essential for a successful service delivery. Their results showed that, in addition to customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction is positively affected by customer participation. That is because the satisfaction of customers can be transferred to service providers through an emotional contagion procedure (Pugh, 2001).

Gallan et al. (2013) also investigated the role of customer participation in a healthcare context and captured customer participation by measuring the degree to which customers provide information and participate in decision making. They found that customer participation increases customers' perception of technical and functional quality, which can ultimately lead to increased customer satisfaction. They argued that customer participation positively affects service quality through quality contributions and monitoring mechanisms. However, although capturing customer participation by measuring the extent to which a customer participates in the process of service delivery or service co-creation provides valuable insight, obtaining other aspects of customer participation can offer a more in-depth understanding of the perception of service providers about the presence of clients in the process of service delivery. Previous studies

on customer participation have failed to address other aspects of client participation and only the degree of participation has been captured.

Further to the mentioned studies, Ngo and O'Cass (2013) empirically examined how customer participation affects service quality in services firms. Consistent with the previous studies, they stated that customer participation refers to the extent to which a customer engages in delivering the service. In line with Gallan et al.'s (2013) findings, Ngo and O'Cass (2013) showed that managers of services firms believe that customer participation positively increases the service quality of their firms. A further study in a service context by Sweeney et al. (2015) maintained that customer participation refers to the extent to which a customer exerts effort by taking a set of activities in the process of service delivery. In the same fashion, conducting an empirical study, Chan et al. (2010) discussed that customer participation in professional services firms is the extent to which a client shares and provides information to the professional service providers. This thesis argues that the degree of client participation does not necessarily give adequate information about the participation, and the quality aspect of client participation needs to be considered.

As a step forward in conceptualizing customer participation, Auh et al. (2007) contended that customers need to make constructive contributions in the process of service delivery, which implies that, regardless of the degree of participation, the helpfulness of customers should be taken into consideration. Similarly, Santos and Spring (2015) emphasized the importance of constructive feedback/information from customers during the process of service delivery in knowledge-intensive business services. They argued that lack of

constructive feedback from customers can negatively affect the effectiveness of service providers.

Regardless of the bright outcomes of client participation for both clients and service providers, the current study argues that, from an employee's point of view, high levels of client participation can cause job stress because clients may express unprotocoled and spontaneous behaviours and impose higher levels of demand diversity, which can lead to higher job stress (Chan et al., 2010). In addition, since clients are often not as knowledgeable as the professionals – particularly in the context of law firms – they may provide too much information and/or not distinguish between necessary and unnecessary information, which can increase uncertainty (Larsson and Bowen, 1989). Exposing professionals to excessive information can overwhelm them and increase their job stress.

Going back to the definition of client participation and building on the works of Auh et al. (2007), Chan et al. (2010), and Santos and Spring (2015), the researcher argues that, in the context of professional law-related services, apart from the *extent* to which a client participates, it would be half-baked if we ignore the *quality* aspect of participation, which has been neglected by the literature. In addition to the *frequency of client participation*, which tends to increase the job stress of front-line employees, the researcher argues that *low quality of client participation* can also drive the job stress of professionals positively. If clients provide unclear and irrelevant information, they are likely to increase the level of uncertainty, eventually leading to an increase in job stress (Miao and Evans, 2013). Moreover, Wales et al. (2013) state that the process of transforming and assimilating new information and knowledge is likely to impose strain and cost. Hence, clients providing

low-quality participation during the process of service delivery may cause more workload for employees because they need to digest more information, and may ask the clients to supply more (clear and relevant) information, thus delaying the service delivery, which can increase the level of job stress in the service provider. Therefore, it is convincible to reason that dealing with low quality of client participation requires sustained mental effort, which causes psychological costs (Demerouti et al., 2001, Bakker and Demerouti, 2017).

As mentioned earlier, most studies examining client participation have only investigated the extent to which a client participates in the process of service delivery, and so far there is still insufficient research on the quality aspect of client participation. Table 2.2 delineates different definitions of client participation, showing that the literature has neglected to focus on the quality facet of client participation. Thus, consistent with the literature and in line with the context, the researcher defines client participation as the degree to which a client supplies knowledge and information and the extent to which the provided information is of high quality (Auh et al., 2007, Chan et al., 2010, Santos and Spring, 2015).

Table 2.2 Empirical research on client participation

Study	Source of Data	Focus	Definition of Client Participation
Bendapudi and Leone (2003)	Study 1: 124 undergraduate students Study 2: 135 undergraduate students	The degree of customer involvement	"*The degree to which the customer is involved in producing and delivering the service*" (p. 14) (Dabholkar, 1990, p. 484).
Auh et al. (2007)	Sample 1: 1197 customers of financial services	The degree of customer's helpfulness	Co-production is defined as "*constructive customer participation in the service creation and delivery process and clarify that it requires meaningful, cooperative contributions to the service process*" (p. 361).
Dong et al. (2008)	231 undergraduate students	The degree of customer participation	"*The degree to which the customer is involved in producing and delivering the service*" (p. 124) (Dabholkar, 1990, p. 484).
Fang (2008)	143 component manufacturer–OEM customer dyads	The degree of customer participation	"*The extent to which the customer is involved in the manufacturer's NPD process*" (p. 91).
Fang et al. (2008a)	188 managers of OEMs in various industries	Breadth and depth of the customer's involvement	"*Customer participation refers to both the breadth and depth of the customer's involvement in the NPD process*" (p. 324).
Carbonell et al. (2009)	807 services firms	The degree of interaction between customer and service provider	"*The extent to which service producers interact with current (or potential) representatives of one or more customers at various stages of the new service development process*" (p. 537).
Chan et al. (2010)	349 customer-service employee dyads in financial services firms	Level of customer participation	"*The extent to which customers provide or share information, make suggestions, and become involved in decision making during the service co-creation and delivery process*" (p. 49).

Table 2.2 (continued)

Study	Source of Data	Focus	Definition of Client Participation
Feng et al. (2010)	139 manufacturing companies	The degree of customer involvement	"*The extent to which the firm incorporated the customer into product development and continuous improvement programs*" (p. 1385).
Yi et al. (2011)	Study 1: 332 customers, 142 FLEs and 31 managers Study 2: 106 MBA students	The degree of customer involvement and engagement	"*Customer participation behaviour refers to all forms of customer involvement and engagement in the value-creation process*" (p. 88).
Grissemann and Stokburger-Sauer (2012)	185 travellers	The degree of customer participation	-
Gallan et al. (2013)	190 customers of healthcare the industry	The degree of customer participation	"*The extent to which customers share information, provide suggestions, and engage in shared decision making—reflects customer effort in co-producing a service*" (p. 340).
Ho and Ganesan (2013)	Study 1: 121 E-MBA students Study 2: 110 technology-based manufacturers	The degree of customer engagement	Customer participation is defined "as the customer's engagement in its suppliers' collaborative efforts, including such actions as coordinating collaborative activities, mediating conflicts between supplier partners, and providing technical assistance" (p. 95).
Ngo and O'Cass (2013)	259 managers of services firms in various industries	The degree of customer involvement	"*The degree to which the customer is involved in producing and delivering the service*" (p. 1134) (Dabholkar, 1990, p. 484).
Eisingerich et al. (2014)	327 customers of financial services	The degree of customer's helpfulness	Customer participation refers to the active and responsible behaviours of a customer involved in the governance of the firm by providing constructive suggestions and helpful feedback on the ways in which the firm delivers its services.

Table 2.2 (continued)

Study	Source of Data	Focus	Definition of Client Participation
Dong et al. (2015)	Study 1: 187 business undergraduate students Study 2: 232 customers	The degree of customer participation	"The degree to which a customer contributes effort, preference, knowledge, or other inputs to service production and delivery" (p. 160).
Fidel et al. (2015)	210 SMEs	The degree of customer's collaboration	Customer collaboration is the extent to which customers provide information and feedback through team discussion, focus group, and interviews.
Revilla-Camacho et al. (2015)	547 customers of personal care centres	The degree of customer involvement	"The degree to which the customer is involved in producing and delivering the service" (p. 1608) (Dabholkar, 1990, p. 484).
Santos and Spring (2015)	Three KIBS providers	The degree of customer's contribution and helpfulness in the process of service delivery	The "extent to which, during the KIBS delivery process, customers comply with instructions, share good quality inputs, support decision-making and offer constructive feedback" (p. 89).
Sweeney et al. (2015)	1008 customers of healthcare centres	The degree of customer participation	Effort in Value Cocreation Activities (EVCA) is defined as "the degree of effort that customers exert to integrate resources, through a range of activities of varying levels of perceived difficulty" (p. 318).
Chang and Taylor (2016)	NPD literature	The degree of customer involvement	"Customer participation refers to a customer's involvement in the firm's NPD process" (p. 48).

Table 2.2 (continued)

Study	Source of Data	Focus	Definition of Client Participation`
Cui and Wu (2016)	245 new product managers	The degree of customer involvement in providing information, co-developing and innovating	-
Ranjan and Read (2016)	228 postgraduate students	The degree of co-creation and collaboration	In value co-creation, consumers collaborate either directly or indirectly with the firm by creating value along with the firm and playing active roles.
This study	230 senior solicitors	The degree of frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation	The degree to which a client supplies knowledge and information and the extent to which the provided information is high quality.

2.8 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided a comprehensive review of the pertinent literature. It started with an overview of a trajectory of scholarly studies investigating earlier models of job stress. Thereafter, the JD-R model as well as the research gaps in this theory were presented. Emphasizing the important role of the client in the process of service delivery, the chapter further presented the literature on client participation as a demand in addition to the research gap related to it.

3 CHAPTER THREE: Research model and hypotheses

3.1 Chapter overview

This chapter presents the hypotheses of the thesis. For this purpose, eight hypotheses are developed and proposed with regards to the drivers of job stress in professional front-line employees. Drawn from the theoretical arguments, the hypotheses in this thesis are composed of four direct and four moderating relationships trying to explain and justify the mechanisms through which independent variables drive professionals' job stress.

3.2 Conceptual framework

The definitions of the main constructs and the proposed conceptual model in this research are presented in Table 3.1 and Figure 3.1, respectively.

Table 3.1 Definitions of the constructs

Constructs	Definitions
Time Pressure	It refers to the perceived limitation of available time to complete one's tasks (Henderson et al., 2006).
Administrative Hassles	It refers to the "*rules, regulations, and procedures that remain in force and entail a compliance burden for the organization but have no efficacy for the rules' functional object*" (Bozeman, 1993, p. 283).
Frequency of Client Participation	It is defined as the extent to which a client shares information/knowledge or becomes involved in the process of service delivery (Dong et al., 2008, Chan et al., 2010, Dong et al., 2015).
Low Quality of Client Participation	It refers to the extent to which the information provided by the client is of low quality.
Job Autonomy	It is defined as "*the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out*" (Hackman and Oldham, 1976, p. 258).
Emotional Intelligence	It refers to "*the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions*" (Salovey and Mayer, 1990, p. 189).
Job Stress	It is defined "*as the subjective evaluation of the level of experienced stress associated with specific stressors, and job dissatisfaction, job search, and other negative work outcomes*" (Cavanaugh et al., 2000, p. 65).

In general, the framework displays the antecedents of job stress in professional front-line employees. The conceptual framework is composed of job demands (i.e. challenge and hindrance demands) and the aspects of client participation (i.e. frequency and low quality of client participation). Time pressure and administrative hassles were considered as the main challenge demand and the hindrance demand, respectively. The researcher postulates that the relationship between time pressure and job stress is a right-half U-shaped relationship. The researcher also reasons that administrative hassles increase the job stress of professional service providers. In addition, frequency of client participation is considered as a driver of job stress in front-line employees. The model also proposes low quality of client participation as an antecedent of job stress augmenting job stress.

Apart from the effect of time pressure on job stress, which is a right-half U-shaped relationship, other predictors have linear relationships with job stress. The logic lies within the fact that time pressure is a challenge demand and, according to the JD-R theory, challenge demands have the potential to promote personal growth and gains (Crawford et al., 2010, Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). Therefore, low levels of time pressure, as a challenge demand, are not expected to impose considerable stress on employees, because time pressure at its low levels can be manageable with a bit of effort but, beyond a certain point, managing the pressure of time becomes more difficult and stressful and it causes even more stress if employees become overwhelmed by time urgency. More specifically, job stress increases at an increasing rate as time pressure elevates, because, for instance, if an employee misses a client deadline due to the time pressure, it is very likely that s/he will be under pressure only from the client. But, if the employee misses several deadlines, it is very probable that the firm will step in and put the employee under pressure. In such a situation, apart from the pressure of the missed deadlines and the unsatisfied client, the

service provider must suffer pressure from the firm, which leads to considerable levels of job stress. Furthermore, at extreme levels of time pressure, as less time can be allocated to each task, it is very likely that the solicitor would not be able to complete his/her tasks properly/completely, leading to extra psychological strain. Therefore, it is convincible to theorize that there is a right-half U-shaped relationship between time pressure and job stress.

Unlike challenge demands, hindrance demands prevent personal growth and the achievement of valuable goals (Van den Broeck et al., 2010, Bakker and Demerouti, 2014). Thus, it is expected that hindrance demands, such as administrative hassles, cause stress even at the low levels. Employees need to use their resources to manage the administrative hassles that they face. The investigator argues that administrative hassles can generate the feeling of resource loss, which increases the level of job stress (Hobfoll, 2011, Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). According to their definition, administrative hassles not only have no efficacy for functional objectives, but also hinder service providers from achieving their core tasks, leading to the feeling of powerlessness and stress (Bozeman, 1993).

Furthermore, it is argued that clients participate in professional services in the form of providing and sharing information with professional service providers (Chan et al., 2010). However, providing and adding too much information can make the process of service delivery more complex, which overwhelms service providers, leading to higher job stress (Hoyer et al., 2010). In addition, clients may have unscripted behaviours when participating in the process of service delivery, which raises uncertainty, also increasing

job stress for professional service providers (Chan et al., 2010). Thus, it is reasonable to argue that, the more a client participates and shares information in the process of service delivery, the more likely it is that the service provider will feel stressed.

Notwithstanding this, frequency of client participation is only one aspect of client participation. Low quality of client participation as the second aspect of client participation captures the extent to which the participation and the provided information is of low quality. Low-quality participation makes service providers' jobs more difficult, because low-quality information prevents them from processing the information at a normal pace as they need more time to digest it. Therefore, it can be concluded that clients who have low quality participation make the work of service providers more complicated since low-quality information entails employees having to deal with unnecessary information, leading to more stress. Hence, low quality of client participation increases the level of job stress.

What is more, the job resource in this research (i.e. job autonomy) is argued to buffer the link between job demands and job stress. Emotional intelligence has also been considered as the personal resource in the conceptual model, moderating the relationship between the aspects of client participation (i.e. frequency of client participation and low-quality of participation) and job stress. Several control variables have also been used in the proposed model of the thesis in order to rule out potential alternative explanations of the dependent variable (i.e. job stress): namely, job position, gender, area of expertise, number of current clients, number of current cases, job experience, number of completed cases, workload percentage, industry, relationship age, existence of in-house solicitor, and branch size.

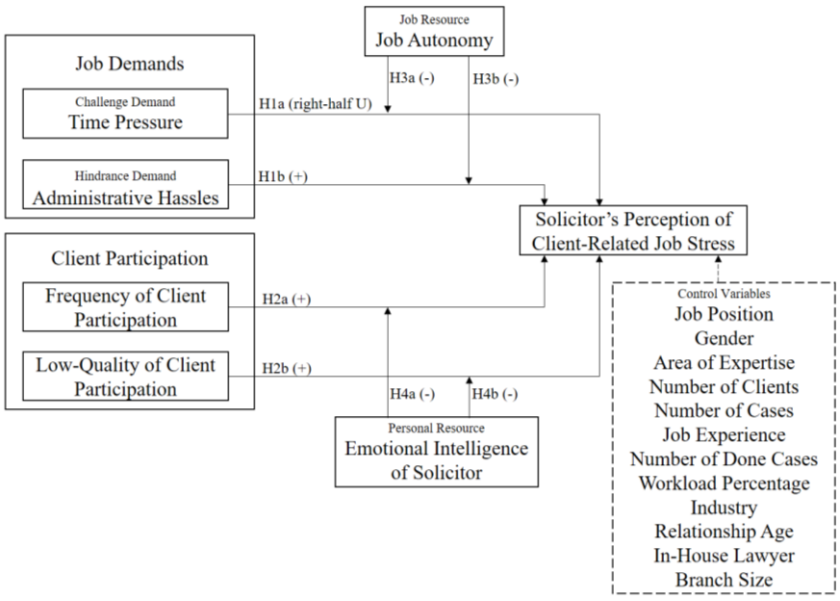


Figure 3.1 Conceptual model

3.3 Hypotheses development

In line with the proposed conceptual research model, eight hypotheses are proposed, four of which delineate the direct effects of time pressure, administrative hassles, frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation on job stress. A further four hypotheses were developed to test the moderating roles of job autonomy and emotional intelligence on the impact of job demands (i.e. time pressure and administrative hassles) and client participation (i.e. frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation) on job stress. The above-mentioned hypotheses are discussed in the following sections.

3.3.1 The effect of time pressure

Time pressure in this study is considered as a challenge stressor because it makes employees increase their efforts, leading to higher goal achievement (Lepine et al., 2005, Henderson et al., 2006). The literature argues that, depending on context, time pressure has the potential to yield both positive (e.g. job engagement) and negative (e.g. decreased

performance) outcomes (McDaniel, 1990, Lepine et al., 2005). In particular, there are empirical studies postulating that a curvilinear pattern can best explain the relationship between time pressure and job outcomes (Gardner and Cummings, 1988, Melamed et al., 2006, Lee et al., 2013). For instance, Zivnuska et al. (2002) found that time pressure has an inverted U-shaped relationship with job satisfaction and value attainment. They also found that the relationship between time pressure and turnover intention is of a U-shaped pattern.

The logic behind the curvilinear effect is that extreme low levels of time pressure do not stimulate employees enough to trigger their activation level because they lead to decreased cognitive engagement (Lee et al., 2013). However, as time pressure moves from the low level to the moderate level, it causes more motivation/activation and at some point triggers the effect, because employees feel that the challenge (i.e. time pressure) is doable, leading to the feeling of achievement (Crawford et al., 2010). Professional service providers welcome moderate levels of challenge stressors and consider them as opportunities to display their abilities and skills (Hargrove et al., 2013). Thus, time pressure at moderate levels not only creates the feeling of goal achievement, but also does not impose stress on professionals (LePine et al., 2016). In contrast, high levels of time pressure impose stress because employees will be overwhelmed by the time urgency. The optimum level of activation is when time pressure is at an intermediate level (Gardner and Cummings, 1988). The researcher reasons that, as it is very improbable to expect senior solicitors to have extreme low levels of time pressure at work, the left-half of the U-shape, which implies the disengagement process, is unlikely to occur. Therefore, with respect to the above-mentioned arguments, the researcher posits that the relationship

between time pressure and job stress is best described by a right-half U-shaped relationship.

First, as mentioned before, it is argued that moderate levels of time pressure do not generate job stress for professional employees because they consider such levels as achievable and challenging demands through which they can learn and develop opportunities. However, as time pressure increases, there will be a certain point beyond which addressing the pressure of time becomes more difficult and stressful, because, due to the lack of time, employees who experience time pressure have less control over their jobs and struggle with how to accomplish their tasks in the given time frame. According to the JD-R theory, employees who do not have control over their jobs are more likely to experience stress (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007, Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). More specifically, as the level of time pressure increases, employees perceive less control over their jobs, which generates more stress. It is expected that job stress increases at an increasing rate after a certain level of time pressure since, the more time pressure increases, the more employees feel that the tasks are unachievable. Consequently, they may become less confident in their jobs, which negatively affects their performance (Baer and Oldham, 2006). Therefore, it is expected that, in addition to the pressure of time, they will suffer extra pressure from their clients and firms to provide higher service quality and performance, yielding substantial stress.

Regarding the context of this study, senior solicitors are consistently exposed to time pressure to some extent, meaning that time pressure is a normal and routine phenomenon in professional firms particularly at the senior level (Hall and Lawler, 1970).

Additionally, Hunter and Thatcher (2007) argued that, compared to novice employees, experienced employees are more able to endure pressure at work because they are more likely to direct their concentration to their tasks when they are under pressure. Thus, it is reasonable to argue that senior solicitors, as professionals, are able to *tolerate* time pressure to some extent and not to experience job stress. However, as time pressure increases substantially, it becomes a major challenge and it is expected that solicitors will start to lose their tolerance and feel stress.

Second, employees perceive time pressure when there is a feeling of inadequate time to finish a task at work or to meet a deadline (Thomas et al., 2011). Thus, it is very likely that the potential negative consequences of not meeting a deadline induce stress in employees. In addition, missing deadlines may threaten the position of boundary spanners since it can have negative effects on clients and their own firm simultaneously, which increases job stress in service providers. For instance, missing a deadline related to a client can decrease the client's satisfaction as well as the firm's reputation. It is reasonable to argue that the job stress that missing several deadlines generates is considerably higher than the job stress that missing only a few deadlines imposes, because, even though missing a limited number of deadlines is still stressful, it is more manageable for senior service providers than missing several deadlines. In other words, a solicitor experiencing a *high level* of time pressure, as opposed to an *extreme level*, may still be able to complete a comprehensible percentage of his/her tasks, though there will be pressure and stress for the employee. However, extreme levels of time pressure do not allow the employee to complete a justifiable percentage of their tasks, since less time can be allocated to each task/case. Hence, job stress is expected to augment at an increasing rate as time pressure increases, because, at extreme levels of time pressure, in addition to the stress imposed

by the pressure of time, extra psychological pressure will be suffered due to the undone tasks. However, a senior solicitor is less likely to miss a deadline if the level of time pressure is not extreme. In addition, due to their experiences, senior solicitors can meet their deadlines with a bit of effort, but, as time pressure increases, it becomes more difficult to meet the deadlines and, consequently, the tasks impose more stress on employees (Zacher et al., 2014).

All in all, according to the JD-R framework and the activation argumentations, the researcher deems that the relationship between time pressure and stress is best characterized by a right-half U-shaped relationship. Therefore, based on the above-mentioned arguments, the researcher hypothesizes that:

Hypothesis 1a: *Time pressure exhibits a right-half U-shaped relationship with job stress.*

3.3.2 The effect of administrative hassles

According to the definition of administrative hassles, they are ineffective procedures that may reduce the performance of employees and firms because these tiresome procedures can increase the employees' workload (DeHart-Davis and Pandey, 2005). Firms with high levels of administrative hassles and a bureaucratic nature are deemed to be incompatible with professional employees' preferences (Nordenflycht, 2010). According to the JD-R theory, hindrance demands such as administrative hassles engender negative emotions and negative work outcomes because they hamper goal achievement and personal growth (Cavanaugh et al., 2000, Rodell and Judge, 2009, Crawford et al., 2010). Barclay (1991) and Davis (2013) argue that administrative hassles can generate negative psychological

consequences such as frustration. In this research, the researcher posits that administrative hassles can lead to job stress in senior solicitors in two different ways.

First, administrative hassles can waste resources such as time and cognitive ability because employees need to use resources to accomplish these ineffective procedures (i.e. to overcome these administrative hassles) (Pandey and Scott, 2002). Resource loss has been found empirically to be related to increased stress (Hobfoll et al., 2003). As the JD-R theory suggests, individuals endeavour to protect their resources and so they are likely to experience stress when they feel that they may lose their resources (Xanthopoulou et al., 2012, Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). The problem of resource loss is more noticeable in law firms in which senior solicitors need sufficient resources to ensure a high-quality service delivery for their demanding clients.

Second, administrative hassles create the feeling of powerlessness in which solicitors cannot fully control the outcomes of their jobs (DeHart-Davis and Pandey, 2005). Raub (2008) argued that firms having administrative hassles in their procedures tend to confine the decision-making power of employees because such firms are likely to have a mechanistic type of organizational design and procedures. In such a situation, it is likely that solicitors will feel that they are unable to have full control over their work and, as such, cannot complete their work on time (Barnett and Brennan, 1995). Thus, and following JD-R logic, when employees feel that their ability and power to address the demands in their jobs have been decreased, they are likely to experience job stress (Crawford et al., 2010, Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). Therefore, the researcher expects:

Hypothesis 1b: *Administrative hassles is positively related to job stress.*

3.3.3 The effect of frequency of client participation

Hsieh and Yen (2005) stressed that client participation is a potential driver of perceived workload. They argued that, as employees engage with clients in co-creation of the service, their efforts and the time spent to accomplish a given task are likely to increase since clients may not comprehend their roles in the process of service delivery. Hoyer et al. (2010) also postulated that, the more a client participates in co-creation of the service, the more complex the service delivery. They reason that, as the level of client participation rises, the number of limitations, co-ordination requirements and other non-monetary costs will increase. Further, Hsieh and Yen (2005) and Chan et al. (2010) posited that client participation is a source of stress in the service delivery process as it induces uncertainty and decreases the control power of boundary spanners. The presence of clients in the process of service delivery can increase their demandingness and the diversity of demands, which is expected to impose stress on employees. Here, the researcher extends such logic in a manner that discriminates the frequency and quality aspects of client participation.

With respect to the context of professional services firms, frequency of client participation refers to the extent to which a client participates in the process of service delivery by providing, sharing and exchanging information related to his/her case(s) (Auh et al., 2007, Chan et al., 2010). Exchanging of excessive amounts of information – particularly on a more frequent basis – can increase the level of service complexity for service providers since a high amount of information makes solicitors feel overwhelmed (Hoyer et al., 2010). Adding excessive amounts of information to a legal case can increase the number

of variables, which makes the process of decision making more complex. This issue is intensified further when the client does not have sufficient legal knowledge related to his/her case(s) and, consequently, redundant and unnecessary information is likely to be provided. Therefore, the solicitor needs to purify the information, which leads to more cognitive demand being imposed on him/her.

Moreover, frequency of client participation can be a source of uncertainty for professionals, particularly those who have to deal with clients that have unscripted behaviours. Clients may use their knowledge information to challenge solicitors by making suggestions and providing their gathered information and reading 'between the lines'. These behaviours are likely to increase uncertainty and task difficulties for solicitors, resulting in greater job stress (Chan et al., 2010). Thus, the researcher hypothesizes that:

Hypothesis 2a: *Frequency of client participation is positively related to job stress.*

3.3.4 The effect of low quality of client participation

Low quality of client participation refers to the extent to which the provided information by clients is of low quality (i.e. unclear and irrelevant). Low quality of client participation complicates solicitors' jobs as they need more resources to interpret and digest information provided by the client. Low-quality information also hinders the solicitor because it does not provide enough clues as to how to handle the case(s). Therefore, as information processing becomes more difficult, solicitors feel that they have a more difficult job to do and should spend more time dealing with a case/client, which can be translated into more stress. Furthermore, having unclear information leads to unnecessary

work as solicitors need to clean up the information, which increases the workload of service providers. Irrelevant and inaccurate information makes the work of solicitors difficult because irrelevant information as the input slows down the process of service delivery, which may yield tension and stress. Thus, the researcher hypothesizes that:

Hypothesis 2b: *Low quality of client participation is positively related to job stress.*

3.3.5 The moderating role of job autonomy

The researcher proposes that job autonomy moderates the effects of job demands (i.e. time pressure and administrative hassles) on job stress. Job autonomy allows employees to have higher internal motivation, self-esteem and be more effective in their firms (Grandey et al., 2005). Job autonomy also makes employees feel fewer external constraints and more freedom in performing their tasks (Wang and Cheng, 2010). Moreover, employees who are autonomous in their jobs are more flexible in carrying out their tasks, have more role breath, and have more discretion and power (Parker, 1998, Morgeson et al., 2005, Wang and Cheng, 2010). As a key element in the JD-R theory, job resources such as job autonomy enable employees to buffer the negative outcomes of job demands (Bakker et al., 2005, Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). Ergo, although it has been argued that job demands increase job stress, the researcher expects job autonomy to impact on the strength of these relationships and to dampen the negative effects of these demands.

First, employees who have time constraints in their jobs are likely to have higher levels of perceived lack of job control and higher levels of job stress (Teuchmann et al., 1999). However, job autonomy serves to provide resources and the feeling of freedom for

employees, which is expected to reduce the perception of lack of job control (Grandey et al., 2005). Autonomous employees have higher control over their tasks because they have the discretion to decide how to accomplish their jobs and have a sense of control over their job outcomes (Chung-Yan, 2010, Coelho and Augusto, 2010). Thus, it will become easier for them to cope with time pressure. By contrast, employees who have low levels of autonomy in their jobs are expected to feel that they do not have freedom over how to carry out the tasks, which intensifies the sense of lack of job control stemming from time pressures (Thompson and Prottas, 2005, Morrison, 2006).

As I discussed before, job autonomy gives a sense of power to professionals, which to some extent provides inviolability for them in their firms (Karasek, 1979). This immunity serves to buffer the perception of the negative consequences of time pressure or missing a deadline (Bizzi and Soda, 2011). As such, solicitors will experience less cognitive tension and job stress. In contrast, solicitors who lack job autonomy are less powerful in their firms. Thus, they perceive time pressure as a threat because losing a deadline due to the time pressure may threaten an employee's position in his/her firms. Therefore, job autonomy weakens the positive part of the right-half U-shaped relationship of time pressure and job stress. More formally, the researcher hypothesizes that:

Hypothesis 3a: *Job autonomy moderates the right-half U-shaped relationship between time pressure and job stress such that it becomes weaker as job autonomy increases.*

Administrative hassles to some degree consume the available resources of employees (Pandey and Scott, 2002). Due to this resource wastage, solicitors are likely to experience job stress. However, an autonomous employee is provided with resources (Grandey et al.,

2005). Therefore, a high level of job autonomy can compensate the drained resources stemming from administration hassles. Having job autonomy is also a signal from the management team implying that there is confidence in the employee's ability to carry out the assigned tasks. Consequently, the management team permits the employee to handle the job in the ways s/he prefers (Wang and Netemeyer, 2002). By contrast, employees having low autonomy are likely to have inertia towards their jobs (Parker et al., 1997). This inertia and passiveness can waste even more resources. Therefore, the process of resource loss caused by administrative hassles would be amplified, which leads to more job stress.

Furthermore, administrative hassles make solicitors feel that they do not have enough power to control their jobs (DeHart-Davis and Pandey, 2005). In addition, their decision-making power is restricted, leading to less ability to control the outcomes of their jobs. Job autonomy serves to diminish this powerlessness through giving autonomy and authority to professional staff (Wang and Cheng, 2010). High levels of job autonomy make employees feel that they are in control of their tasks and as such their perception of powerlessness would be reduced. In such a situation, a solicitor may perceive less stress because s/he is able to have more choice and freedom to perform the tasks and, more importantly, in how to perform them (Stock and Hoyer, 2005). In contrast, when employees face administrative hassles without having sufficient autonomy in their jobs, they perceive more powerlessness due to their inability to avoid formal rules in their organizations, leading to higher constraints (Morrison, 2006). Hence, it is convincible to reason that the intensified feeling of powerlessness would yield more job stress. the researcher thus hypothesizes that:

Hypothesis 3b: *Job autonomy moderates the relationship between administrative hassles and job stress such that it becomes weaker as job autonomy increases.*

Based on the buffering proposition of the JD-R theory, one may reason that job autonomy can moderate the effects of frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation on job stress (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). However, I argue that job autonomy does not necessarily buffer these effects. As mentioned before, frequency of client participation makes the process of service delivery more complex and uncertain, leading to higher overwhelmedness and job stress for service providers. Giving autonomy to solicitors does not necessarily attenuate this complexity since, according to the definition of job autonomy, autonomous employees have freedom and discretion in scheduling and the ways to carry out their tasks. Hence, job autonomy does not inevitably equip employees with abilities to decrease the level of complexity and overwhelmedness caused by frequency of client participation.

In the same vein, it was earlier discussed that low quality of client participation makes solicitors' jobs more difficult as they need to expend more cognitive resources to digest the low-quality information provided, which results in slowing down the process of service delivery, leading to more stress for service providers. The present study argues that providing job autonomy and control to solicitors does not necessarily furnish them with the relevant resources to more easily interpret the information or to decrease the unnecessary work stemming from low-quality client participation. Thus, it is persuasive

to conclude that job autonomy, as a job resource, does not buffer the effects of frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation on job stress[1].

3.3.6 The moderating role of emotional intelligence

Salovey and Mayer (1997) posit that emotionally intelligent people are able to have accurate awareness about their emotions and manage these emotions. Moreover, emotionally astute individuals can infer the emotions of other people and use this information in managing their social relationships. In conjunction with the JD-R theory (Demerouti et al., 2001, Bakker et al., 2014), the researcher considers emotional intelligence as a personal resource through which professionals can more effectively manage and control their relationships with their clients (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017).

Personal resources such as emotional intelligence are envisioned to condition the effects of the aspects of client participation (i.e. frequency and low quality of client participation) on job stress (Bakker et al., 2005, Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). Consistent with the definition of personal resources, emotionally intelligent employees are more likely to be resilient and rebound from negative conditions (Hobfoll et al., 2003, Miao et al., 2017). EI was also found to be related to positive social functioning, which enables solicitors to create more positive social relationships with their clients (Winkel et al., 2011). Furthermore, as solicitors with higher levels of EI are more adept at regulating their own emotions when communicating with clients, they know how to foster better social

[1] It is worth mentioning that, regardless of the above-mentioned arguments, relevant ad hoc tests will be conducted to show and support that job autonomy does not moderate the effects of frequency and low quality of client participation on job stress.

relationship with their clients, leading to better service participation from the clients (Miao et al., 2017). Hence, it is reasonable to expect that emotional intelligence negatively moderates the relationships between the aspects of client participation (i.e. frequency and quality) and job stress.

Frequency of client participation is likely to increase the level of complexity (Hoyer et al., 2010). As argued before, the more a client provides information, the more it becomes complex for the solicitor to handle the case(s), which may lead to job stress. Emotional intelligence, however, enables solicitors to perceive less complexity because, due to the ability to regulate and manage emotions, high-EI solicitors have more capability to control the level of perceived complexity and handle the stress stemming from it (Carmeli, 2003). Solicitors with higher levels of EI are better able to accurately perceive information from their clients and to prioritize it, which decreases the complexity (Jordan et al., 2002, Bande et al., 2015, Carmeli, 2003). It is therefore plausible to argue that EI diminishes the detrimental effects of excessive information on job stress. Inversely, in the absence of EI, solicitors would be less able to manage the complexity stemming from overwhelming information provided by clients. Thus, they would perceive more job stress (Carmeli, 2003, Gabbott et al., 2011).

On the one hand, frequency of client participation generates uncertainty for solicitors which leads to more stress and, on the other hand, emotional intelligence enables solicitors to buffer such uncertainty (McFarland et al., 2016). Given that employees with high levels of EI are more able to regulate their emotions (Kidwell et al., 2011), they are more likely to cope with uncertain situations by removing the sources of stress (Gabbott

et al., 2011). Additionally, EI helps solicitors to identify which of the unscripted behaviours caused by high frequency of client participation are contributing to their job stress, which enables them to eliminate the sources of uncertainty. By contrast, low-EI employees have lower emotional resilience in dealing with stressful situations (Gabbott et al., 2011). In addition, solicitors with lower levels of EI have less capability to detect the sources of their stress (Miao et al., 2017). Consequently, they would experience more job stress when perceiving uncertainty stemming from frequency of client participation. Thus, it is sensible to hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 4a: *Emotional intelligence moderates the effect of frequency of participation on job stress such that it becomes weaker as emotional intelligence increases.*

As discussed above, low quality of client participation can be costly for solicitors since more time and resources are needed to interpret and digest information, making the process of service delivery more difficult and causing an increase in job stress. However, emotionally savvy and intelligent professionals are more likely to employ problem-focused coping strategies (MacCann et al., 2011). It is expected that high-EI service providers engage in coping strategies that can solve the above-mentioned problem. For instance, as a problem-focused strategy, there are additional expectations on high-EI employees to find ways to more effectively interpret the provided low-quality information, which makes the process of information interpretation easier, leading to less stress for service providers. By contrast, low-EI employees tend to utilize emotion-focused or avoidant coping strategies (MacCann et al., 2011). Thus, low-EI solicitors are less likely able to pragmatically solve the problems caused by low-quality client participation.

In addition, high-EI solicitors are more resistant in stressful events compared to low-EI solicitors (Gabbott et al., 2011). They can also control and manage stressful situations more effectively due to their self-regulatory ability (Mayer and Salovey, 1995, Lee and Ok, 2012). Whilst high levels of EI enable employees to handle their perceived stress, low-EI employees are not only less capable of being adaptive and flexible when experiencing stress, but also vulnerable and less successful at managing stressful circumstances (Huang et al., 2010, Lee and Ok, 2012, Armstrong et al., 2011). Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that the stress originating from low quality of client participation is expected to be buffered in high-EI solicitors, while the stress will be intensified in low-EI employees due to their vulnerability to stressful events. More formally:

Hypothesis 4b: *Emotional intelligence moderates the effect of low quality of client participation on job stress such that it becomes weaker as emotional intelligence increases.*

As emotional intelligence is a personality trait, it may be argued that EI can potentially have a moderating role on the effects of time pressure and administrative hassles on job stress (Gabbott et al., 2011). However, regarding the argumentations discussed before, the researcher argues that emotional intelligence does not moderate the paths between job demands and job stress. As was mentioned, time pressure decreases the feeling of job control in employees, which causes job stress. Emotional intelligence is a set of abilities enabling individuals to perceive and manage emotions (Salovey and Mayer, 1990). Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that these emotional abilities do not necessarily help service providers to increase their control over their jobs. Additionally, time pressure

results in missing deadlines, and having a high level of emotional intelligence cannot be a factor in decreasing the negative consequences of missing a deadline, as they are external factors that are imposed on solicitors.

Furthermore, it was mentioned that administrative hassles waste employees' resources, yielding more stress for them (Pandey and Scott, 2002). According to the emotional intelligence literature, EI does not furnish individuals with additional resources (e.g. Salovey and Mayer, 1990, Mayer et al., 1999, Brackett et al., 2006). As noted before, administrative hassles also increase the perception of powerlessness by restricting the decision-making power in service providers (DeHart-Davis and Pandey, 2005). The emotional capabilities that EI offers to employees do not seem to be associated with employees' decision-making power in their firm. Hence, it can be concluded that emotional intelligence does not attenuate the detrimental effects of time pressure and administrative hassles on job stress[1].

3.4 Chapter summary

This chapter has exhibited the research framework of the thesis and presented the hypotheses. As the summary of hypotheses in Table 3.2 shows, out of the eight hypotheses developed, four hypotheses are related to the direct effects and four are presenting moderating effects.

[1] Regardless of the above-stated arguments, relevant ad hoc tests will be conducted to examine if emotional intelligence would have a moderating role on the effects of time pressure and administrative hassles on job stress.

Table 3.2 Summary of the developed hypotheses

Hypothesized path	Predicted path
H1a: Time Pressure → Job Stress	Right-half U
H1b: Administrative Hassles → Job Stress	Positive
H2a: Frequency of Client Participation → Job Stress	Positive
H2b: Low Quality of Client Participation → Job Stress	Positive
H3a: Time Pressure × Job Autonomy → Job Stress	Negative
H3b: Administrative Hassles × Job Autonomy → Job Stress	Negative
H4a: Frequency of Client Participation × Emotional Intelligence → Job Stress	Negative
H4b: Low Quality of Client Participation × Emotional Intelligence → Job Stress	Negative

4 CHAPTER FOUR: Research methodology

4.1 Chapter overview

This chapter begins with the philosophical approach of this research. Then, it presents the methodological choices as well as the research design, questionnaire design, sampling, and the process of data collection. The chapter finishes by detailing the specific required data analysis techniques for analysing and testing the data.

4.2 Research philosophy and approaches

A social phenomenon can be investigated with different approaches and paradigms (Benton and Craib, 2010). Positivism and interpretivism have been widely used in social sciences studies. Consistent with the research problem of the study, the investigator follows the most apposite paradigm to answer the research questions of the study. On the one hand, positivism is related to the objectivism view and quantitative research methods, and follows a deductive approach. Quantitative methods are used to analyse and test causality relationships between phenomena, objects and constructs. On the other hand, interpretivism is related to the subjectivism view. It follows an inductive approach and exploits qualitative methods to study social phenomena and answer research questions . Interpretivist researchers attempt to analyse social phenomena and research problems subjectively.

As this research attempts to build on theory to investigate and predict the antecedents and the origins of a social phenomenon, it needs to follow the positivism (i.e. quantitative) approach. The current approach is to test the hypotheses, although some interviews have been conducted prior to the empirical study. Therefore, the research design of this study

is based on the presumption that job stress is a measurable state in employees, as has been established in previous studies (e.g. Sonnentag et al., 2012, Zhang et al., 2018).

4.3 Research methodology

4.3.1 Exploratory interviews

Initial qualitative research was conducted as the first part of this research. A qualitative study enables researchers to explore the subject matter in more detail, to ensure that all relevant conceptual ideas are captured. It is also helpful and insightful as there is a dearth of work investigating the subject matter in the focal context (Creswell, 2003). An interview is "*an inter-change of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest*" (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p. 2). However, an interview is different from other types of conversations, since it follows a particular structure and objective (Tracy, 2013). Interviews help interviewer and interviewee to facilitate mutual understanding, reflection and explanation about a topic. They also furnish the respondents with an opportunity to express their experiences and understanding of phenomena. Thus, interviews assist researchers to have a better and deeper understanding of a topic and enable them to explore complex phenomena further that are hidden or unseen to them. Another benefit of interviews is that they create a mutual story in which interviewer and interviewee create and express the meaning rather than hold it in their minds (Tripp, 1983). In addition, interviews enable interviewees to become familiar with specific language and vocabularies of the context they are exploring (Tracy, 2013).

Interviews help interviewees to express their opinions, experiences, and motivations about the topic of interest or to provide information on issues that are no longer accessible.

They can also provide tacit knowledge about a topic by furnishing researchers with information that cannot be found in formal documents. Researchers also widely use preliminary interviews before conducting their empirical studies to make sure what they intend to examine is consistent with the context (Tracy, 2013). For instance, they can encourage respondents to express their opinion about a set of predefined hypotheses and verify if the mindset of the researcher reflects the real world of the workplace. As such, a series of interviews with 16 senior B2B solicitors (i.e. partners and senior associates) in large law firms based in the UK were conducted by the investigator. Table 4.1 lists the interviewees and their positions in their firms.

Table 4.1 List of interviewees and their positions

Firm	Interviewee	Position	Job experience	Gender
Firm1	I01	Associate	5 years	Male
	I02	Partner	13 years	Male
	I03	Partner	18 years	Female
Firm2	I04	Senior associate	10 years	Female
Firm3	I05	Senior associate	6 years	Female
Firm4	I06	Partner	21 years	Male
	I07	Partner	20 years	Female
	I08	Senior associate	8 years	Male
Firm5	I09	Partner	10 years	Female
Firm6	I10	Partner	9 years	Female
Firm7	I11	Partner	19 years	Female
	I12	Partner	17 years	Female
Firm8	I13	Senior associate	11 years	Female
Firm9	I14	Partner	15 years	Male
Firm10	I15	Associate	5 years	Male
Firm11	I16	Associate	6 years	Male

4.3.1.1 Aims of the interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used by the investigator as an appropriate method to conduct a preliminary exploration of how solicitors interact with their clients and the job demands they experience, and to provide a real picture of the context of law firms. This approach enables the researcher to encourage respondents to openly express their interpretations of the demands that they experience. The nature of semi-structured

interviews is organic and flexible, which helps the researcher to open a conversation with a set of questions stimulating discussion (Tracy, 2013). Therefore, the researcher adopted semi-structured interviews consisting of a set of open and broad questions.

The aims of the interviews were fivefold. First, the investigator aimed to expand his understanding of the empirical research context. Having several interviews with senior solicitors who work in law firms and regularly deal with clients enabled the investigator to become familiarised with the context of law firms in the UK. Second, participation of clients/customers in the process of service delivery/manufacturing is context-specific. Therefore, the investigator intended to develop an understanding of the ways in which clients participate in the process of service delivery, specifically in law firms, and impose stress on service providers.

Third, similar to client participation and in line with the JD-R theory (Demerouti et al., 2001, Bakker and Demerouti, 2014), job demands and resources are context-specific. Hence, the investigator aimed to make sure that time pressure and administrative hassles are the most common demands in the context of law firms. Moreover, job autonomy and emotional intelligence, as the job resource and personal resource, needed to be confirmed by solicitors as resources that help legal service providers in managing the sources of stress they experience. Finally, the investigator aimed to validate the structure of the developed hypotheses and the research model. Indeed, the interviews with the participants covered issues such as the ways in which a client interacts with the solicitor during the process of service delivery, different types of demands that a solicitor experiences in a law firm, and different types of resources that solicitors possess to cope with the demands.

All the interviews were conducted by the investigator personally and, on average, each interview lasted 40 minutes.

Before starting each interview, the investigator provided general information about the purpose of the research and the interviews. In addition, interviewees were assured that their responses will remain anonymous and be treated in the strictest confidence. Thereafter, the interviewees were informed briefly about the purposes of the research. Then, the investigator explained the constructs of the research model to each interviewee and evaluated whether the constructs had been perceived correctly. The investigator then asked the interviewees open-ended questions regarding the constructs of the conceptual model. During each interview, the researcher took notes and recorded the interview with a mobile phone. In the final section of the interview, the solicitors were asked to comment and provide feedback on the developed hypotheses and the linkages between the constructs. Generally speaking, the interviewed solicitors participated in the interviews openly and spoke freely about their experiences in their law firms.

The interview questions were grouped into five categories. The first category consisted of general questions about the interviewee and their background. The second section explored the ways in which the interviewees' clients participate in the process of service delivery and how their presence can impose stress on solicitors. In the third section, the researcher explored how different job demands impose job stress on the interviewees. The fourth section investigated how possessing different resources enables solicitors to manage the pressure of different stressors. And, finally, the investigator asked an open-ended question in the fifth section to allow the interviewees to provide more details and

to express more information on issues that were not investigated during the interview. Table 4.2 indicates the interview guide used for the present research.

Table 4.2 Interview guide

1. Introduction • Please, could you describe your job role? • Please, could you describe stress in your job in general?
2. Job demands • What are the different sources of stress in your job? Please explain. • The interviewee is then given a list of different types of challenge and hindrance demands, and then were asked to what extend each of these demands are more important to deal with in their day-to-day jobs. • What aspect of your job is most challenging, and despite being hard to achieve, you make the most effort since you can see the rewards for achieving them? • How does time pressure affect your job performance? (How much time pressure do you experience in your job?) Please explain. • What hinders you in your job and gives you the worse headache? Please explain. • How do administrative hassles affect your job performance? Please explain.
3. Client participation • How do clients participate in the process of service delivery? Please explain. • Which one matters most to you? Frequency of communication with a client, or quality of such a communication? Why?
4. Resources • What kind of resources are available to you in managing the demands you experience? • How does having autonomy in your role affect your job? • How does the emotional intelligence of solicitors play a role in relationships between them and clients?
5. Ending questions • Is there anything especial you would like to add?

4.3.1.2 Key findings and themes

The interviews were transcribed and coded by the investigator, and the results indicated six themes. The interviews depicted that solicitors face various demands, among which time pressure is the most commonly experienced challenge in law firms. Indeed, time pressure is seen as a fundamental challenge as, for these professionals, time is money literally. As respondent I04 states:

> "*Everything is urgent [...]; the urgency is, if you don't hurry up and finalize the agreement, you are going to lose the business transaction and the multimillion dollar thing will collapse [...]; we have different deadlines for different things but it's always urgent. This urgency can push solicitors forward, but dealing with this pressure on a daily basis is overwhelming.*"

Similarly, respondent I11 said:

> "*With email and the way that we do things now, it's different, clients expect to get a prompt response. When we are appointed to the clients now, they expect certain service-level agreements to be agreed with them, which I think, like an urgent instruction that comes in by email, needs to be responded [to] within the next 2-3 hours. If we have to get an urgent transaction documented, it has to be done within 24 hours of receiving the email; four days for non-urgent, etc., etc. So, we are up against that for most of our big clients. A firm like this must have some incredibly big clients that we act for, you know; some of the clients that I do work for are multinational global corporations that expect us to provide, you know, a fantastic service and we do [...] but it does cause stress for my team and for me in terms of making sure that I am being responsible for the delivery of the service within those expected time scales."*

Therefore, it can be concluded that time pressure is a notable challenge demand in law firms and solicitors need to face the pressure of time on a daily basis.

In addition, supporting the investigator's developed hypotheses, the interviewees emphasized that administrative hassles and red tape generate tremendous stress for solicitors since they prevent them from getting their jobs done due to the resource waste that they cause. For instance, formal procedures such as producing excessive documentation and reports distract solicitors from their core legal activities. As respondent I12 mentioned:

> "*A lot of the hindrance demands that I see you've written down there I see every day in my role as a partner at [...], particularly the administration side. [...] One of the things that happens to partners in global firms like this and me is that I've got a role as a real estate partner but I'm also head of the hospitality and leisure sector. So, I've got many admin roles that impinge on my day to day [activities], but I still have to deliver day to day to clients.*"

Similarly, respondent I02 highlighted that:

> "*They [administrative hassles] certainly increase job stress [...]; even bits of it do, so, I mean the admin, but I just think of it as a stress issue. They tend to think 'why am I doing this? I can't charge the client for it. I have trained for years to do something that actually I can go and get someone who is paid lot less than me to do.' That's what comes to mind quickly. So, even if you have secretary and admin people to do things, but you still get that. The same with the IT systems; so, computer systems, they don't work; printers that break down. All of that causes them to feel stress. So, that, I think, is probably just straightforward linked to stress.*"

These statements are consistent with Crawford et al.'s (2010) suggestion that administrative hassles cause job stress in employees. Thus, it can be articulated that, whilst challenge demands, such as time pressure, impose pressure on solicitors, hindrance demands, such as administrative hassles, hinder employees from carrying out their core tasks, causing job stress.

Moreover, consistent with the results of Chan et al. (2010), the interviews indicated that, the more clients participate in the process of service delivery, the more solicitors feel stress, as high levels of frequency of client participation make their job more difficult. This notion was exemplified by respondent I13:

> "*There are clients who think they are lawyers. They think that they are very good at interpreting the law. Even though they are not lawyers and they want to get involved in every single aspect [...]. Sometimes you do the draft of the contract for them, they don't look [at] what you've done; they will go in[to] the document, fix it up themselves, or they challenge you on a certain opinion. They will go and even they do research themselves, even though they're gonna pay for your service. And then, there are more difficult ones that they don't like the answer they've been given and so they try to seek a different interpretation and try to get [a] different result. And sometimes, they want you to rewrite your report [...]. And it is a disadvantage for the lawyer because it makes the job more difficult. Too much [client] involvement is difficult, especially if they are not legally trained; because what they might think is correct is not correct; then, it is very difficult to manage and it causes stress for us.*"

Similar to this, I05 seconded this notion:

> "*Participation can definitely put pressure on us, particularly if the client was a difficult person to get on with. Particularly, you know, sometimes, they give you too many documents and want to be involved. We have few clients like that here. But, you know, I do know people have clients, you know, their heart goes in their boots when they see the phone number or anything; you know, 'This person again!'.*"

Therefore, as the researcher expected, frequency of client participation can be a source of solicitors' job stress as '*too much involvement overwhelms solicitors*'. This is consistent with Chan et al.'s (2010) findings, which indicated that participation of clients can increase job stress of professional service providers.

The second aspect of client participation, as a source of stress, is low-quality client participation. The results of the interviews showed that clients who do not provide high-quality information increase the pressure on their solicitors, leading to more job stress. Respondent I03 emphasized the importance of the quality aspect of client participation and mentioned that, if a client does not provide relevant information, the process of service delivery becomes frustrating for the solicitor:

> "*Some clients are not very good at sharing information, because sometimes they don't know what information to give. [...] Some clients withhold information often because they don't want to, because it might not help them;*

it might not help the answers they are going to be given; they might have lost those information; they might cover [up] some information for some reasons. Sometimes, they [are] scared if they disclose something which is bad for their case. And then, your job is to ask [for] the right information and sometime it takes days to get a piece of relevant information. Sometimes you get clients that have so much information; they just give you a zip file of information: 'Here is all the info'. And it is up to you to filter through, work out which one is relevant or irrelevant, and find it. You don't get any good information, introduction about which one to review. To me, I find that very frustrating because so much of your time is wasted; particularly for large organizations."

This notion was also echoed by respondent I03:

"*One thing that I said that isn't really featuring here, is the sort of, actually, the way you get on with the client. I don't know if it's a part of customer participation really. It's actually the way that they participate. Because you can have a client that would be very involved in decision making or suggestions, and it's the way they do it [that] could be challenging and add to the complexity; like if they did it [in] an untimely fashion or made ridiculous suggestions or something like that. I mean, you are so much less likely to have, I mean, even if you are dealing with a highly responsible urgent heavy workload, if you work with organizations or people that you respect to get really on with, I think it's much less likely to have these problems than if you've got somebody who's overbearing and doesn't provide the information on time and when they do, it's, you know, in a difficult format and then they insist on*

> *using it, even though it's wrong. And all these – that's what makes life a lot more stressful.*"

Hence, it is reasonable to argue that low-quality client participation enhances the job stress of solicitors because low-quality information and participation make the solicitors' job more complex and difficult. These statements are consistent with the JD-R theory that demands increase job stress in employees. In general, the field interviews showed that solicitors differentiate between the frequency and the quality aspect of client participation, effectively seconding the investigator's conceptual contextualization. Specifically, the interviewed solicitors asserted that, in addition to the fact that the provision of excessive information from clients imposes pressure on solicitors, low-quality client participation can also hinder solicitors' work and increase their job stress.

Apart from the impact of the job demands (i.e. time pressure and administrative hassles) and the aspects of client participation (i.e. frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation) on job stress in solicitors, in line with the JD-R theory, the investigator reasons that resources (i.e. job autonomy and emotional intelligence) moderate the effects of the job demands and client participation on job stress, respectively. The results of the interviews supported this argumentation by highlighting the roles of job autonomy and emotional intelligence. As respondent I15 put it:

> "*[...] I think that's [autonomy] really important. [...] we try to give people enough autonomy that actually they don't just get spoon-fed and they always need someone to say, 'This is what you need to do next'. This autonomy*

enables them to face the challenges that they have. […] So, certainly, if you've got that [autonomy], you're more likely to do better."

This notion was also highlighted by respondent I07:

"*People don't like to feel that they're having someone breathing [down] their neck when they're making decisions for their jobs. When, you know, you've control over your job, it's easier to do your tasks than having someone dictating things.*"

Such thinking is consistent with Morgeson et al.'s (2005) argument about the importance of job autonomy stating that autonomous employees are more flexible in performing their tasks and in managing their job challenges.

Additionally, the interviews demonstrated that emotional intelligence plays an important role in the relationship between a solicitor and a client. For instance, respondent I08 stated that:

"*... certainly they [high EI solicitors] interact better with clients. I would say it reduces the amount of conflict between you and the client and ultimately, as per conflict with client, that's gonna lead to stress cause when it starts to worry about, other can go to somewhere else. So, I think particularly it gives more; we do as a professional that a client normally comes to us when there's [a] problem and it [is] something quite big that they worry about, so they want to get them resolved. So, I think being emotionally intelligent enough to pick up actually at one point: should you do something, at one point should you*

not, do they look happy or they're not. I think all of those things really help in terms of just trying to manage the client relationship. Particularly, the further up you go, I think, the higher in terms of the job role you get, the more that you are leading on a client relationship."

This notion is in line with the JD-R theory arguing that personal resources, such as emotional intelligence, can effectively help employees to manage and control their relationships with their clients (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017).

The interviews also indicated that the proposed research model is acceptable in reflecting drivers of solicitors' job stress; corroborating that the developed hypotheses are convincing and plausible. The list of control variables was vetted at this point, and certain additions were made. For instance, during the interviews, the investigator noticed that the solicitors' job stress level can vary depending on their position (e.g. partner, senior associate, etc.) and the area of their expertise (e.g. commercial, intellectual property, etc.). Moreover, the number of current clients and the number of current cases in general are potential factors that can affect the solicitors' level of job stress. Additionally, the interviews showed that the number of cases that a solicitor has handled for a specific client would indicate trust between the client and the solicitor, which can in turn affect the level of stress the solicitor perceives. Further, the interviewees stated that solicitors feel more stress when they consider a specific client as *important*. As a result, the investigator added a measure to the list of control variables that captures the percentage of the workload of the solicitor that is due to the cases of the considered client. Finally, the interviews indicated that clients with an in-house solicitor are more convenient to

work with, because this in-house solicitor and the solicitor have a mutual understanding regarding the technical aspect of the case. It is therefore reasonable to add a categorical variable to the list of control variables to determine whether the considered client has an in-house solicitor(s) or not.

The results of the interviews also directed the researcher to choose and develop appropriate scales for the constructs of the study. After finalizing the initial version of the questionnaire and before starting the process of data collection, the investigator also asked eight senior solicitors to check the face validity and content clarity of the questionnaire. Based on the feedback received from these solicitors, a few minor modifications were applied to the wording of some items.

4.3.2 Quantitative stage

Based on the literature that has been discussed in chapters two and three, the investigator developed the research model and the hypotheses. Then, after applying few minor conceptual changes (e.g., to controls) in accordance with the interviews, the quantitative part of the study was designed in order to collect data using a survey to test the hypotheses (Creswell, 2003). Collecting data through a survey is the most common method of investigation in quantitative studies in social sciences (Desai and Potter, 2006). Previous studies conducted in service contexts have deployed such an approach (e.g. Daunt and Harris, 2011, Menguc et al., 2017).

4.3.2.1 Data collection

The unit of analysis in this research is senior solicitors who have direct interaction with at least one focal client and are based in the UK. The researcher decided to focus on solicitors who work on business cases, rather than individual cases, for two main reasons. First, according to the interviews, frequency and quality aspects of client participation differ across client types. Clients have different levels and styles of participation, with this concept usually being the most acute and problematic in corporate cases. Second, solicitors who work on individual cases (e.g., divorce cases) would have numerous clients and each client is a tiny portion of the overall workload. A solicitor working on business cases would have a more limited number of important clients. Thus, the investigator excluded solicitors who only have expertise in individual cases.

For the purpose of sampling, this research defines a senior solicitor as a lawyer who works in a law firm with more than four years' job experience as a solicitor and has direct interaction with his/her client. Therefore, the sample description includes partners, senior solicitors, consultants and legal directors.

As this study aims to explore the situation in the UK, the sampling frame included senior solicitors who work in UK law firms. However, as the UK Law Society did not grant access to its list of solicitors, a census of the entire population of the study was not available. Therefore, using a list of 200 law firms provided by the Legal Technology (2017) based on firms' turnover, the investigator compiled a representative sampling frame of 14,196 business senior solicitors from the public profiles of the solicitors on their firms' websites. Out of the 14,196 solicitors, 1000 were selected randomly and

questionnaires were distributed to them through the post. The investigator received 257 responses and, after removing incomplete questionnaires (i.e. those with more than 10% of missing value (Hair et al., 2010)) and those with job experience less than four years, 230 usable questionnaires were retained(23% response rate).

4.3.2.2 Survey administration

There are different methods, such as post, fax, face-to-face interview, telephone and email, through which researchers can collect data (Boyer et al., 2002). Each of the above-mentioned methods is widely used by researchers, showing that, in some respects, they are viable and, in others, they are challenging.

The investigator adopted a paper-based survey to administer the process of data collection in this research. Web-based survey is considered as an efficient, fast and cheap method to collect data compared to paper-based survey (Dillman, 2007, Baruch and Holtom, 2008). Further advantages of online surveys are that they are more flexible in terms of design and format, they furnish researchers with more response-set information such as the location of each respondent, and they are faster and easier in terms of data entry (Granello and Wheaton, 2004). However, despite the advantages of online surveys, they suffer from low response rates compared to paper-based surveys (Shih and Fan, 2008). The investigator decided to adopt a paper-based survey for other reasons, too. First, due to the risk of phishing and hacking, solicitors may not wish to take the risk of clicking on a link in an email, reducing the response rate. In effect, they are likely to have more trust in a paper-based approach. Second, compared to web-based questionnaires, it is more convenient to put down paper-based questionnaires and continue completing them later.

This possibility is more noticeable when the target group is senior solicitors who are overwhelmed with their (digital) workload and may retain some fondness for traditional correspondence. Finally, and most importantly, for motivational purposes, the researcher decided to send a thank you gift which could easily be attached to the questionnaire. Hence, although the process of data collection through a paper-based survey is longer than that via a web-based survey, the research adopted a paper-based survey to distribute the questionnaires and the incentives among the senior solicitors.

Each questionnaire was printed on A4 paper and sent through the post along with the covering letter, the thank you gift and a pre-paid envelope. Each respondent sent back the completed questionnaire in the provided pre-paid envelope to the postal address of Leeds University Business School. The process of data collection took a total of three months and 230 usable questionnaires were returned.

4.3.2.3 Response rate enhancement

Due to the length of the survey coupled with the sheer busyness of the sampled informants, steps were taken to ensure an appropriate response (Dillman et al., 1993). There are a few options to effectively shorten the length of a survey without affecting the core constructs. Therefore, the investigator attempted to increase the response rate by adopting techniques provided by research methodology scholars. First, in order to enhance the credibility, the researcher accentuated the sponsorship of the sponsoring institution in the questionnaire. In addition, the affiliation of the investigator was highlighted in the covering letter (Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch, 1996). Thus, the logo of the University of Leeds was inserted into and highlighted on the covering letter.

Moreover, the investigator emphasized that the study is fully funded by Leeds University Business School. In addition to the researcher's name, contact details and position, the contact details and names of all three supervisors were provided in the covering letter. The supervisors played an active role in endorsing the research study to any informants that required this intervention.

Following Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch's (1996) suggestion, the investigator underlined the social and practical implications of the current project in the covering letter. According to the preliminary interviews, as job stress is a serious issue in law firms, the value and social utility of the project for the sector were accentuated. In addition to strict confidentiality, the researcher also assured the respondents that their responses will only be used for academic and statistical purposes according to the ethical guidelines of the University of Leeds.

Further, it has also been suggested that rewards and incentives can enhance the response rate of research work (Bruvold et al., 1990). This is certainly true of busy professional informants. The respondents were told that a summary of the research and findings would be provided after the study was completed. As senior solicitors normally have high workloads, the researcher decided to provide more motivation for the respondents. Hereupon, following Nederhof's (1983) advice, it was decided to attach a non-monetary incentive to each questionnaire to increase the response rate. Accordingly, the investigator provided a personalized incentive key ring, with the respondent's first name engraved on it, for each respondent as a thank you gift for his/her participation and as a

motivation booster. Considering the context of the study, the obtained response rate of 23% confirms the effectiveness of the investigator's data collection strategies.

4.3.2.4 Scale properties

Consistent with theoretical justifications and based on the purposes of the data analysis in this research, the investigator adopted a Likert-type scale to measure the main constructs of the research framework (i.e. time pressure, administrative hassles, frequency of client participation, low quality of client participation, job autonomy, emotional intelligence and job stress). Likert-type scales measure the extent to which respondents agree/disagree with the items of the constructs. A benefit of Likert-type scales is that they are easy for the respondents to understand (Malhotra and Birks, 2007). Likert-type scales are widely used and are considered as reliable and valid scales.

However, in order to avoid potential random or non-random errors when using the scales and the measures, two considerations were taken into account. First, if respondents are given an item with too many choices to answer, the possibility for response error will be increased (Lozano et al., 2008). A maximum seven-point Likert-type scale has been recommended by Hair et al. (2010). Since seven-point Likert-type scales are widely used in marketing and services marketing studies, the investigator used a seven-point Likert-type scale to measure the items of the constructs (e.g. Eisingerich et al., 2014, McFarland et al., 2016). Second, in order to enhance the reliability of the constructs, Hair et al. (2010) suggested using at least four items to measure the constructs. Therefore, apart from time pressure, all the constructs in this research have been measured with a minimum of four

items. Time pressure was originally measured with three items and the researcher did not add any additional item to the original scale used (Karasek, 1979).

4.3.2.5 Measurement

All the questionnaire item were obtained from previous studies and, in order to contextualize them, the researcher applied minor changes to the wording of some of them. A seven-point Likert-type scale (1 = 'strongly disagree', 7= 'strongly agree') has been used for all the items.

The questionnaire consisted of two main parts, based on whether the questions were specific to the chosen client or otherwise. The first section asked the respondents general demographic as well as emotional intelligence questions. The literature on emotional intelligence has introduced two approaches for measuring EI. The first approach is the ability-based approach through which the EI of each respondent is measured by his/her performance in a series of tests. The second approach considers EI as a personality trait and each respondent is given a self-reported scale to score his/her EI. This research adopted the latter approach and measured EI by a five-dimension scale provided by Brackett et al. (2006), asking solicitors to score their skills on *Perceiving Emotions* (four items), *Use of Emotions* (three items), *Understanding of Emotions* (four items), *Self-Management* (four items) and *Social Management* (four items).

The dimension of perceiving emotions measures the extent to which respondents are able to accurately read the emotions of other people when interacting with them. The second dimension of EI (i.e. use of emotions) asks respondents to score the extent to which they

use their emotions in different situations. The dimension of understanding emotions measures employees' ability to accurately express their emotions and intentions. The fourth dimension, self-management, asks employees to score the extent to which they have the ability to control and manage their emotions, particularly in stressful and unpleasant situations. The last dimension is social management, which measures the extent to which the respondents are able to manage and deal with others' emotions in difficult situations.

In the second part of the questionnaire, the researcher randomly asked each solicitor to consider his/her most or third most important client and answer the items of the survey according to the considered client. It was deemed important that this client should be considered as important by the respondent so that they were a potential source of stress. Nonetheless, use of the first versus third most important client protocol was designed to introduce some variety into the study.

The reason for asking respondents to answer the questions based on a particular client is that, during the interviews, interviewees emphasized that each client has its own conditions. In other words, the extent to which a client participates in the process of service delivery or the stress that s/he imposes is different from other clients. In addition, solicitors experience different levels of time pressure, administrative hassles and job autonomy when delivering their service to different clients. Hence, the researcher concluded that it is more reasonable to focus only on one client.

After asking the respondents to consider their most (or the third most) important client, the researcher measured their perceived time pressure, administrative hassles, frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation when dealing with the considered client. *Time pressure* reflects the extent to which a solicitor has time constraints in performing his/her tasks when working on his/her client's case(s), and was measured with a three-item scale adapted from Karasek (1979). The construct *Administrative hassles* was measured with a five-item scale developed by Podsakoff (2007). This construct captures the extent to which a solicitor faces red tape and paperwork when handling his/her client's case(s).

Frequency of client participation was measured based on a four-item scale adapted from Chan et al. (2010), Prajogo and Olhager (2012), and Cui and Wu (2016) capturing the extent to which the client participates in the process of service delivery by providing and transferring information to the solicitor. *Low quality of client participation* has been measured with four reversed items adapted from Yi and Gong (2013), Zelbst et al. (2010) and Fang et al. (2008b), which reflects the extent to which the information provided by the client is clear and relevant.

The researcher measured *job autonomy* with a four-item construct, developed by Wang and Netemeyer (2002), tapping the extent to which a solicitor has discretion and control in carrying out his/her tasks regarding the client's case(s). Adapting a scale from Bolino and Turnley (2005), the researcher measured *job stress* with four items reflecting the extent to which a solicitor experiences stress when working on his/her client's case(s). Table 4.3 shows the questionnaire items utilised this research.

Table 4.3 Constructs and measures

Item	Measure	Adapted from
	Time Pressure	Karasek (1979)
TP1	In the cases of this client, I am required to work fast.	
TP2	In the cases of this client, I do not have enough time to do my tasks in normal working hours.	
TP3	In the cases of this client, I do not have time to finish my tasks.	
	Administrative Hassles	Podsakoff (2007)
AH1	In the cases of this client, there is often a lot of "red tape" to go through in order to complete my tasks.	
AH2	In the cases of this client, I am required to complete excessive paperwork or computer work.	
AH3	In the cases of this client, there are many overly restrictive rules and regulations.	
AH4	In the cases of this client, I often have to complete unnecessary forms during my work.	
AH5	In the cases of this client, I often experience administrative hassles while trying to complete work.	
	Frequency of Client Participation	Chan et al. (2010), Prajogo and Olhager (2012), and Cui and Wu (2016)
FP1	Exchange of information takes place frequently with this client.	
FP2	I have frequent face-to-face meetings/communications with this client.	
FP3	This client spends a lot of time sharing information about his/her needs and his/her case.	
FP4	Transfer of information about this client's needs and preferences takes place frequently.	
	Low Quality of Client Participation	Fang et al. (2008b), Zelbst et al. (2010), and Yi and Gong (2013)
QP1	This client openly shares information with us. (R)	
QP2	This client provides accurate information, hence, information distortion is minimized. (R)	
QP3	This client shares relevant information about his/her cases. (R)	
QP4	The client gives me proper information. (R)	
	Emotional Intelligence	(Brackett et al., 2006)
	Perceiving Emotions	
EI_PE01	By looking at people's facial expressions, I recognize the emotions they are experiencing.	
EI_PE02	I am aware of the nonverbal messages other people send.	
EI_PE03	I can tell when a person is lying to me by looking at his or her facial expression.	
EI_PE04	My quick impressions of what people are feeling are usually accurate.	
	Use of Emotions	
EI_USE01	I often consult my feelings when making a decision.	
EI_USE02	When making decisions, I listen to my feelings to see if the decision feels right.	
EI_USE03	I am a rational person and don't like to rely on my feelings to make decisions. (R)	
	Understanding Emotions	
EI_UND01	I have a rich vocabulary to describe my emotions.	
EI_UND02	I could easily write a lot of synonyms for emotion words like happiness or sadness.	
EI_UND03	I have the vocabulary to describe how most emotions progress from simple to complex feelings.	
EI_UND04	My "feelings" vocabulary is probably better than most other persons' "feelings" vocabularies.	

Table 4.3 (continued)

Item	Measure	Adapted from
	Self-Management	
EI_SELF01	It is easy for me to deal with my feelings of anger.	
EI_SELF02	I can handle stressful situations without getting too nervous.	
EI_SELF03	I am able to handle most upsetting problems.	
EI_SELF04	I know how to keep calm in difficult or stressful situations.	
	Social Management	
EI_SOC01	When someone I know is in a bad mood, I can help the person calm down and feel better quickly.	
EI_SOC02	I know the strategies to make or improve other people's moods.	
EI_SOC03	I am good at helping others to feel better when they are feeling down or angry.	
EI_SOC04	I am the type of person to whom others go when they need help with a difficult situation.	
	Job Autonomy	Wang and Netemeyer (2002)
JA1	Considering the cases of this client, I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job.	
JA2	Considering the cases of this client, I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work.	
JA3	Considering the cases of this client, I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job.	
JA4	Considering the cases of this client, I am allowed to use personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work.	
	Job Stress	Bolino and Turnley (2005)
JS1	Working on the cases of this client is extremely stressful.	
JS2	Many stressful things happen to me when working on the cases of this client.	
JS3	I feel a great deal of stress because of the cases of this client.	
JS4	I almost always feel stressed because of the cases of this client.	

(R): reversed item

4.4 Control variables

The researcher used several control variables in this study to rule out alternative explanations and corroborate the robustness of the research model. At the employee level, the researcher measured solicitor's gender and job experience in years (natural logarithm) (Wieseke et al., 2007). During the pre-study interviews, the investigator was advised to consider some particular context-specific variables as they can potentially affect solicitors' job stress. Therefore, the investigators measured and controlled solicitors' job positions, areas of expertise, number of current clients (natural logarithm), and number of current cases among all of the clients (natural logarithm). Moreover, after asking

respondents to consider the most (or the third most) important client, the researcher asked them to indicate the number of cases that they have handled so far for the client (natural logarithm) and what percentage of their workload is imposed by the client (natural logarithm). The researcher also asked them to indicate what industry the client is in, how long they have been in a relationship with each other, whether the client has in-house solicitor(s) or not and the size of the branch in which the solicitor works (Bell and Eisingerich, 2007, Najafi-Tavani et al., 2018).

After measuring job position, gender, branch size, area of expertise, existence of in-house solicitor, industry type and relationship age with categorical variables, the researcher dummied them. The job position dummies capture whether the solicitor is a (1) partner, (2) consultant, (3) legal director or (4) senior associate. The expertise dummies reflecting solicitors' expertise areas differentiate between (1) business premises, (2) company and commercial, (3) dispute resolution, (4) energy, utilities and transport, (5) media, IT and intellectual property, (6) regulation and compliance and (7) other expertise. This categorization is adopted from the Law Society of the UK.

Industry type was also categorized into manufacturing and services industry (Najafi-Tavani et al., 2018). The researcher captured branch size by number of employees with eight categories: (1) fewer than 25 employees, (2) between 26 to 50 employees, (3) between 51 to 100 employees, (4) between 101 to 250 employees, (5) between 251 to 500 employees, (6) between 501 to 1000 employees, (7) between 1001 to 5000 employees and (8) more than 5000 employees (Cavusgil et al., 2003). The researcher also measured relationship age with four categories: (1) less than 1 year, (2) between 1 and 2 years, (3)

between 2 and 3 years and (4) more than 3 years (Fatima et al., 2018). Finally, gender and existence of in-house solicitor have been measured with male-female and yes-no categories, respectively.

4.5 Data analysis techniques

The investigator used various descriptive analyses and inferential analyses for statistical testing. First, descriptive analysis was used to evaluate missing data and data normality. Chapter five exhibits and provides the details of the mentioned analysis. As suggested by Venkatraman (1989), the researcher conducted exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) before testing the hypotheses.

Various fitness indices such as Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI), Incremental Fit Index (IFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and the Chi-square statistics have been assessed in order to evaluate the extent to which the model is fit (Hu and Bentler, 1999). For the purpose of hypothesis testing, due to the interrelationships between the constructs and the large number of control variables in the research model, the researcher followed recommendations provided by Hair et al. (2010) and adopted the Hierarchical Multiple Regression (HMR) technique.

4.6 Chapter summary

This chapter has initially explained the philosophical approach of this research. Then, the preliminary interviews and the quantitative phase of the study were explained. In addition, details of sampling, survey administration and data analysis techniques were provided.

5 CHAPTER FIVE: Data analysis and findings

5.1 Chapter overview

This chapter concentrates on the results of the data analysis. It starts by providing descriptive statistics about the sample. Then, common method bias and non-response bias are examined. For the purpose of purifying measures and examining the reliability and validity of the data, exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis have been performed. The chapter finishes by testing the developed hypotheses and examining the random selection bias.

5.2 Descriptive statistics

5.2.1 Profile of the sample

The sample of this study comprised 230 senior solicitors in the UK. The average for the job experience of the sample is 16.64 years. The respondents were also asked to indicate the number of their current clients and current cases among all of their clients. The results showed that the sample has an average of 15.23 clients and 34.68 current cases, with standard deviation of 14.48 and 104.84, respectively. After asking each respondent to consider his/her most (or the third most) important client, the results illustrated that each solicitor has handled 63.28 cases for the considered client on average with, a standard deviation of 266.67. The investigator presumes that the high values of standard deviations are mainly due to the differences in the respondents' areas of practice and the job experience. Table 5.1 shows the descriptive statistics of the control variables.

Table 5.1 Descriptive statistics

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Job position		
Partner	107	46.5
Consultant	5	2.2
Legal Director	17	7.4
Senior Associate	101	43.9
Gender		
Male	134	58.3
Female	96	41.7
Area of practice		
Business premises	20	8.7
Company and commercial	46	20.0
Dispute resolution	67	29.1
Energy, utilities and transport	14	6.1
Media, IT and intellectual property	16	7.0
Regulation and compliance	14	6.1
Other	53	23.0
Industry		
Manufacturing	37	16.1
Services	193	83.9
Client has an in-house solicitor(s)		
Yes	153	66.5
No	77	33.5
Branch size		
Fewer than 25	3	1.3
26 – 50	4	1.7
51 – 100	19	8.0
101 – 250	46	20.0
251 – 500	79	34.3
501 – 1000	74	32.0
1001 – 5000	0	0.0
More than 5000	0	0.0
Missing	5	2.2
Relationship age		
Less than 1 year	26	11.3
Between 1 and 2 years	38	16.5
Between 2 and 3 years	39	17.0
More than 3 years	127	55.2

5.2.2 Descriptive statistics for the main constructs

The descriptive findings of the main constructs are illustrated in tables 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4. After measuring the construct of emotional intelligence, respondents were asked to consider their most/third most important client. Then, thinking about that client, respondents were asked to identify the extent to which they agree/disagree with a series of statements measuring the rest of the constructs. As discussed before, responses were captured by a seven-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Table 5.2 indicates the descriptive findings of the constructs of job demands (i.e. time pressure and administrative hassles). The results demonstrate that the mean scores of the three items of time pressure range from 4.00 to 5.15. Unlike time pressure, the construct of administrative hassles has been scored below the mid-point of 4, ranging from 3.01 to 3.82.

Table 5.3 indicates the descriptive statistics of frequency of client participation, low quality of client participation and job stress. The findings illustrate that the mean scores of the items of frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation range from 4.07 to 5.62 and from 5.03 to 5.34, respectively, implying that there was a propensity among senior solicitors to score the items toward the upper end of the provided seven-point scale when scoring the items of low-quality [1] of client participation. Moreover, regarding job stress, the results show that the means of the four items range from 2.98 to 4.6.

[1] It is worth mentioning that the items of low quality of client participation were measured via reversed items.

Compatible with the researcher's expectations, as presented in Table 5.4, the results indicate that senior solicitors have high levels of autonomy in their jobs. Specifically, the mean scores of the four items measuring job autonomy vary between 5.58 and 5.90. Further, 19 items were used to measure the extent to which each respondent is emotionally intelligent and the descriptive findings exhibit that the means range from 4.34 to 5.61.

Table 5.2 Descriptive statistics for time pressure and administrative hassles

	Response Scale (%)							Scale Descriptive	
	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree		
Items	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**	**Mean**	**SD**
Time Pressure									
TP1	3.5	11.7	5.7	8.7	16.5	28.3	25.7	5.10	1.80
TP2	3.0	7.0	9.1	11.3	19.1	23.5	27.0	5.15	1.70
TP3	5.2	17.0	23.0	17.0	15.2	10.9	11.7	4.00	1.74
Administrative Hassles									
AH1	13.0	27.8	17.0	13.0	14.8	8.7	5.7	3.37	1.76
AH2	13.9	27.0	18.3	12.6	13.9	9.6	4.8	3.33	1.74
AH3	13.9	33.0	18.7	14.3	13.9	3.9	2.2	3.02	1.51
AH4	17.8	33.5	13.9	11.7	13.5	6.5	3.0	3.01	1.67
AH5	10.0	21.3	15.2	9.6	24.8	12.2	7.0	3.82	1.80

Table 5.3 Descriptive statistics for frequency of client participation, low quality of client participation and job stress

	Response Scale (%)							Scale Descriptive	
	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree		
Items	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**	**Mean**	**SD**
Frequency of Client Participation									
FP1	0.4	1.7	5.2	4.3	21.3	50.0	17.0	5.62	1.13
FP2	7.0	17.0	18.3	9.6	23.0	18.7	6.5	4.07	1.75
FP3	1.7	9.1	17.4	13.9	30.4	20.4	7.0	4.51	1.48
FP4	1.7	5.2	13.9	9.6	28.7	31.7	9.1	4.90	1.44
Low Quality of Client Participation									
QP1	1.3	4.3	10.4	4.8	25.7	38.3	15.2	5.25	1.42
QP2	1.7	4.8	13.9	6.5	26.1	35.7	11.3	5.03	1.47
QP3	0.4	2.6	6.5	9.1	27.8	40.9	12.6	5.34	1.21
QP4	0.9	3.0	9.6	7.0	30.0	39.1	10.4	5.21	1.28
Job Stress									
JS1	2.6	13.5	21.3	19.6	27.0	13.5	2.6	4.06	1.43
JS2	4.3	16.1	20.9	18.3	20.9	15.7	3.9	3.98	1.56
JS3	7.8	27.4	21.3	18.7	14.3	6.5	3.9	3.40	1.55
JS4	16.1	30.9	19.6	16.5	8.7	6.1	2.2	2.98	1.54

Table 5.4 Descriptive statistics for job autonomy and emotional intelligence

	Response Scale (%)							Scale Descriptive	
	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree		
Items	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**	**Mean**	**SD**
Job Autonomy									
JA1	0.4	0.9	4.3	4.3	27.0	40.4	22.6	5.68	1.10
JA2	0.4	2.2	3.5	4.8	23.9	42.2	23.0	5.68	1.16
JA3	0.4	2.2	4.8	7.8	24.8	36.1	23.9	5.58	1.23
JA4	0.4	0.0	3.9	3.0	20.0	43.0	29.6	5.90	1.03
Emotional Intelligence									
EI_PE01	0.9	1.3	3.0	2.2	32.2	43.9	16.5	5.61	1.06
EI_PE02	0.4	1.7	2.6	6.1	27.8	50.9	10.4	5.53	1.02
EI_PE03	1.3	6.5	15.7	25.2	34.8	15.2	1.3	4.37	1.23
EI_PE04	0.0	1.7	2.2	21.7	35.2	34.3	4.8	5.13	0.99
EI_USE01	2.2	5.2	10.9	20.4	32.6	23.5	5.2	4.67	1.34
EI_USE02	1.3	3.5	7.8	16.1	37.8	29.1	4.3	4.90	1.21
EI_USE03	0.9	3.5	17.0	14.8	33.9	23.0	7.0	4.74	1.31
EI_UND01	1.3	2.2	8.3	11.7	26.1	33.9	16.5	5.27	1.34
EI_UND02	0.4	3.0	7.4	19.1	29.6	29.6	10.9	5.07	1.25
EI_UND03	0.4	2.6	7.8	19.6	32.6	28.7	8.3	5.00	1.20
EI_UND04	0.4	3.0	14.8	43.0	23.0	13.9	1.7	4.34	1.07
EI_SELF01	1.3	5.2	17.8	13.5	28.7	26.1	7.4	4.71	1.42
EI_SELF02	1.3	4.3	12.2	9.1	27.8	33.5	11.7	5.05	1.41
EI_SELF03	0.0	2.6	7.0	10.9	30.4	42.2	7.0	5.23	1.13
EI_SELF04	0.4	4.3	5.2	8.3	29.1	37.0	15.7	5.35	1.28
EI_SOC01	0.0	2.2	7.8	18.7	44.3	22.2	4.8	4.91	1.05
EI_SOC02	0.4	1.3	9.6	21.3	40.0	24.8	2.6	4.84	1.05
EI_SOC03	0.0	3.0	4.3	14.3	37.4	35.2	5.7	5.14	1.07
EI_SOC04	0.0	0.9	3.0	9.6	24.3	48.3	13.9	5.58	1.00

5.3 Data screening

It is necessary to examine the data for any missing data, potential outlier, normality and multicollinearity prior to the data analysis (Hair et al., 2010).

5.3.1 Missing values

It is recommended by Hair et al. (2010) that, before examining any effect and relationship among constructs, the researcher should make sure that missing data does not impact on the results of the analysis. Due to the length of the questionnaire, the investigator expected to receive some incomplete questionnaires. Thus, in order to make sure that the missing values do not affect the results of the study, two steps were taken.

First, according to the recommendation by Hair et al. (2010), questionnaires can have a maximum of 10% missing data and those with more than 10% should be deleted. After observing each case, the researcher noticed that 24 questionnaires had considerable missing data. Therefore, they were not considered in the data analysis.

Second, using the Expectation Maximization algorithm, the investigator examined the extent of missing values (Dempster et al., 1977, Ruud, 1991). The results illustrated that each item had only a few missing values, which were negligible and did not pose any problems for the results. However, the researcher replaced missing data with values provided by Expectation Maximization algorithm before conducting the analysis.

5.3.2 Discovering outliers

An outlier is an extreme value which is considerably different from other values in the data and can affect the results of any multivariate analysis adversely (Hair et al., 2010). Outliers cannot be classified as either advantageous or disadvantageous. Hair et al. (2010) argued that they should be seen within the context of the analysis. Beneficial outliers can be indicative of some aspects of the population that cannot be detected in a normal analysis. On the other hand, deleterious outliers can seriously affect the results of data analysis without reflecting the characteristics of the population (O'Rourke et al., 2005, Hair et al., 2010). It has been recommended by Hair et al. (2010) that it is necessary to examine and detect any potential outlier in the data and outline the ways in which outliers affect the results of the analysis. In doing so, two steps were taken.

The first step is to identify those respondents who filled in the questionnaire carelessly by selecting one response for all the items in order to finish the survey as quickly as possible. In order to detect these low-quality questionnaires, the investigator calculated the standard deviation of the items for each case. The minimum value of the computed standard deviations was 0.64, which is above the threshold of 0.5, showing that no individual strait-lined the items.

Second, when there are more than two variables in the analysis, an objective measure is needed to examine the multidimensional position of each case (Hair et al., 2010). For this purpose, Mahalanobis D^2, which is a multidimensional evaluation of each case, was calculated. Each case's distance from the mean centre of all cases is assessed in this method. The problem of this method, however, is that it provides a single value for each case and the researcher cannot identify which variables caused the distance. The investigator calculated D^2 for each case using SPSS 23. Then, considering the degree of

freedom (i.e. the number of variables), the cumulative probabilities of a value from the χ^2 distribution that will be less than the D^2 scores were computed. Probabilities less than the conservative threshold of 0.001 are considered to be outlier. However, the minimum value of the computed probabilities was 0.00104, confirming that no outlier was detected.

5.3.3 Normality

Normality being considered as the most fundamental presumption in multivariate analysis refers to the similarity of the distribution of a variable to the normal distribution (Hair et al., 2010). If the distribution of the data is substantially different from the normal distribution, it is not possible to use t and F statistics, which are calculated in multiple regression. Normality can be examined either univariately or multivariately. However, as a multivariate normality test is sensitive and difficult to examine, the investigator followed the suggestion of Hair et al. (2010) that univariate normality for each item is adequate (Cohen et al., 2003, Schinka et al., 2003). For the purpose of testing the normality of the data, a normal probability-probability (p-p) plot was created for each variable and the results showed that none of the plots departed from normality.

5.3.4 Multicollinearity

Lack of multicollinearity is another fundamental assumption of multivariate analysis and is defined as the "*extent to which a variable can be explained by the other variables in the analysis*" (Hair et al., 2010, p. 91). As the level of multicollinearity increases, it becomes more difficult to interpret any effect in the multivariate analysis. Multicollinearity exists in the data when an independent variable has high levels of associations with a series of other independent variables (O'Rourke et al., 2005, Hair et al., 2010). In order to test the problem of collinearity, a bivariate correlation between all

the measured items of the constructs was conducted. A correlation score above the cut-off point of 0.9 is considered as a sign of collinearity (Hair et al., 2010). However, the results indicated that all the correlation scores were below the threshold. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no concern regarding the problem of collinearity in the data.

5.4 Non-response bias

Non-response bias refers to "*the bias that exists when respondents to a survey are different from those who did not respond in terms of demographic or attitudinal variables*" (Sax et al., 2003, p. 411). Non-response bias occurs when there is a significant difference between the sample and those who did not participate in the research regarding some characteristics such as demographic information. To examine the non-response bias, the researcher compared the gender and firm position of responding and non-responding solicitors by t-test analyses. The results indicated that non-response bias is not a serious issue in this study.

5.5 Reliability test

Reliability refers to the "*extent to which a variable or set of variables is consistent in what it is intended to measure*" (Hair et al., 2010, p. 2). In order to test the reliability of the constructs in this study, the researcher adopted the conventional measure of Cronbach's alpha (Nunnally, 1967). Table 5.5 illustrates the Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the constructs as well as reliability if an item is deleted.

Table 5.5 Reliability test

Construct	Item	Cronbach's alpha if item deleted	Cronbach's alpha
Time Pressure	TP1	0.668	0.802
	TP2	0.775	
	TP3	0.74	
Administrative Hassles	AH1	0.894	0.918
	AH2	0.901	
	AH3	0.9	
	AH4	0.889	
	AH5	0.91	
Frequency of Client Participation	FP1	0.809	0.829
	FP2	0.866	
	FP3	0.723	
	FP4	0.729	
Low Quality of Client Participation	QP1	0.934	0.934
	QP2	0.904	
	QP3	0.908	
	QP4	0.908	
Emotional Intelligence	EI_PE01	0.704	0.78
	EI_PE02	0.706	
	EI_PE03	0.784	
	EI_PE04	0.719	
	EI_USE01	0.559	0.75
	EI_USE02	0.605	
	EI_USE03	0.800	
	EI_UND01	0.795	0.85
	EI_UND02	0.818	
	EI_UND03	0.782	
	EI_UND04	0.824	
	EI_SELF01	0.829	0.81
	EI_SELF02	0.728	
	EI_SELF03	0.786	
	EI_SELF04	0.716	
	EI_SOC01	0.737	0.80
	EI_SOC02	0.739	
	EI_SOC03	0.680	
	EI_SOC04	0.815	
Job Autonomy	JA1	0.927	0.945
	JA2	0.92	
	JA3	0.919	
	JA4	0.943	
Job Stress	Str1	0.913	0.921
	Str2	0.889	
	Str3	0.877	
	Str4	0.909	

As exhibited in Table 5.5, the Cronbach's alpha coefficients of all the constructs are above the cut-off point of 0.7, showing that the scales used in this study are reliable. Moreover, no considerable increase is seen if any item is deleted.

5.6 Measure assessment and purification

Since the constructs of this research have been measured with multiple items and multivariate analyses need to be performed, the investigator adopted Factor Analysis techniques for item reduction purposes. Factor analysis enables the researcher to examine and analyse the complexity patterns of multidimensional relationships (Hair et al., 2010). Two item reduction strategies have been used in this study to purify the scales.

5.6.1 Item selection through EFA

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is used to detect any cross-loading item (Hair et al., 2010). An EFA was performed with all of the 43 items to examine the underlying factors. The expected factors were time pressure (TP), administrative hassles (AH), frequency of client participation (FP), low quality of client participation (QP), job autonomy (JA), emotional intelligence (EI_PE, EI_USE, EI_UND, EI-SELF, EI_SOC) and job stress (JS).

The investigator used Principal Component Analysis as the extraction method and Promax Rotation as the rotation method. Following Hair et al.'s (2010) advice, the threshold factor loading was considered as 0.5 and those items lower than 0.4 were set to be excluded from the report. Figure 5.1 displays the scree plot of the conducted EFA.

Consistent with the investigator's expectation, 11 factors were extracted which explained 74.48% of the cumulative variance in the data. The results also indicated that the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO), being a measure of sampling adequacy, was 0.833, which is above the threshold of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010). Further, the Bartlett's test of Sphericity was found to be significant (χ^2 (df = 903) = 6767.608; P-value < .001). These results show that the sample size for factor analysis was adequate and factor analysis was appropriate.

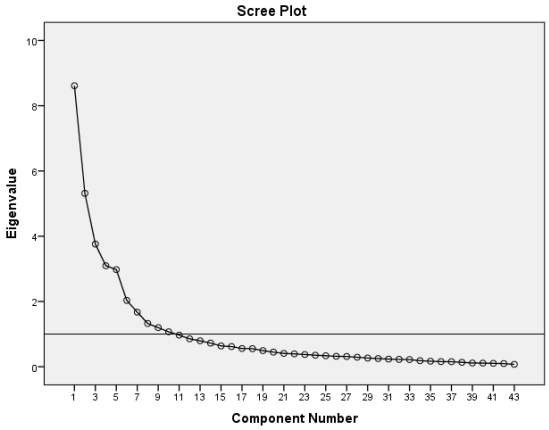


Figure 5.1 Scree plot

Table 5.6 illustrates that EI_PE03, with a loading of 0.507, has the lowest loading, which is still above the cut-off point of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010). In addition, no cross-loading occurred.

Table 5.6 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Items	Component										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
AH04	.929										
AH03	.893										
AH05	.866										
AH01	.855										
AH02	.813										
QP02		.929									
QP03		.870									
QP04		.865									
QP01		.800									
JS02			.900								
JS03			.886								
JS04			.789								
JS01			.763								
JA01				.950							
JA02				.942							
JA03				.923							
JA04				.858							

Table 5.6 (continued)

Items	Component										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
EI_UND03					.878						
EI_UND01					.855						
EI_UND04					.792						
EI_UND02					.773						
EI_SELF04						.916					
EI_SELF02						.866					
EI_SELF01						.643					
EI_SELF03						.610					
FP03							.803				
FP02							.792				
FP04							.785				
FP01							.625				
EI_SOC03								.871			
EI_SOC01								.792			
EI_SOC02								.643			
EI_SOC04								.524			
EI_PE01									.841		
EI_PE02									.763		
EI_PE04									.734		
EI_PE03									.507		

Table 5.6 (continued)

Items	Component										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
EI_USE01										.826	
EI_USE02										.796	
EI_USE03										.758	
TP01											.828
TP02											.753
TP03											.615

Note1: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Note2: Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.

Note3: Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

5.6.2 Item selection through CFA

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is commonly used to validate the research model. As emotional intelligence was a second-order construct in this study, two CFAs were conducted using the Maximum Likelihood (ML) method with a sample size of n = 230 by AMOS 24. The first CFA validates the first-order constructs: time pressure, administrative hassles, frequency of client participation, low quality of client participation, job autonomy, and job stress. The second CFA validates the second-order construct (i.e. emotional intelligence).

5.6.2.1 First-order CFA

A total of 24 items were loaded on the pre-identified factors. The results show that the number of distinct sample moments and the number of distinct parameters to be estimated were computed as 300 and 63, respectively. Therefore, the degree of freedom of the measurement model was 237 (300 – 63). These results support that the model is overidentified (Hair et al., 2010).

The results of the measurement model demonstrated that all the loading factors were statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). Various fitness indices were evaluated to examine the overall fit of the model. The results indicated a good fit of the measurement model to the data (χ^2 = 437.39; df = 237; $\frac{\chi 2}{df}$ = 1.85; Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .95; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = .06). Other fit indices include Incremental Fit Index (IFI) = .95, Normed Fit Index (NFI) = .91, Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) = .95, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) = .042. Hair et al. (2010) recommended that cut-off points of at least .9 for CFI and at most .08 for RMSEA are

acceptable. The authors also stated that SRMR values above .1 indicate a problem with fit. In addition, $\frac{\chi 2}{df}$ should be less than 3 to be considered a good fit. Overall, these results showed that the measurement model generates a satisfactory fit. Table 5.7 demonstrates the factor loadings of the measurement model. Hair et al. (2010) discussed that acceptable loading factors are (1) above the threshold of 0.5 and (2) significant. The results show that all the remaining loading factors are significant and above the threshold of 0.5.

Table 5.7 Loading factors of the first-order CFA

Constructs	Items	Item loading	t-value
Time Pressure	TP1	0.780	11.315
	TP2	0.682	9.995
	TP3	0.812	*
Administrative Hassles	AH1	0.850	14.020
	AH2	0.828	13.562
	AH3	0.846	13.925
	AH4	0.882	14.664
	AH5	0.776	*
Frequency of Client Participation	FP1	0.696	12.521
	FP2	0.539	8.806
	FP3	0.892	18.620
	FP4	0.917	*
Low Quality of Client Participation	QP1	0.811	17.175
	QP2	0.907	22.295
	QP3	0.915	22.858
	QP4	0.916	*
Job Autonomy	JA1	0.91	18.484
	JA2	0.933	19.359
	JA3	0.920	18.856
	JA4	0.841	*
Client Stress	Str1	0.798	15.138
	Str2	0.860	17.223
	Str3	0.934	19.971
	Str4	0.862	*

* Fixed item

5.6.2.2 Second-order CFA

A second-order CFA was conducted to validate emotional intelligence and its dimensions: perceived emotions (EI_PE), use of emotions (EI_USE), understanding emotions (EI_UND), self-management (EI_SELF), and social management (EI_SOC). A

total of 19 items were loaded on the pre-identified dimensions and the pre-identified dimensions were loaded on a single construct (i.e. emotional intelligence). The results show that the number of distinct sample moments and the number of distinct parameters to be estimated were computed as 171 and 43, respectively. Therefore, the degree of freedom of the measurement model was 128 (171 – 43). These results support that the model is overidentified (Hair et al., 2010).

After performing the measurement model, the investigator deleted EI_USE03 since its loading factor was below 0.5 and re-ran the model without EI_USE03. The results show that all the remaining loading factors are significant ($p < 0.01$) and above the threshold of 0.5. Various fitness indices were evaluated to examine the overall fit of the model. The results indicated a good fit of the measurement model to the data ($\chi^2 = 269.460$; df = 128; $\frac{\chi 2}{df}$ = 2.105; Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .921; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = .07). Other fit indices include Incremental Fit Index (IFI) = .92, Normed Fit Index (NFI) = .86, Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) = .90, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) = .06. Overall, the results showed that the measurement model generates a satisfactory fit. Table 5.8 demonstrates the factor loadings of the measurement model.

Table 5.8 Loading factors of the second-order CFA

Second-order construct	Dimensions	Dimension loading	t-value (dimensions)	Items	Item loading	t-value (items)
Emotional Intelligence	Perceived Emotions	.806	*	EI_PE01	.811	8.949
				EI_PE02	.831	9.034
				EI_PE03	.514	6.490
				EI_PE04	.604	*
	Use of Emotions	.521	4.822	EI_Use01	.790	7.053
				EI_Use02	.849	*
				EI_Use03	**	**
	Understanding Emotions	.636	5.592	EI_Und01	.803	10.800
				EI_Und02	.724	9.886
				EI_Und03	.825	11.018
				EI_Und04	.707	*
	Self-Management	.513	5.169	EI_Self01	.562	8.603
				EI_Self02	.841	13.521
				EI_Self03	.672	10.663
				EI_Self04	.859	*
	Social Management	.808	5.222	EI_SocM01	.727	7.301
				EI_SocM02	.754	7.428
				EI_SocM03	.836	7.728
				EI_SocM04	.522	*

* Fixed item/dimension
** Deleted item

5.7 Reliability and validity

The convergent and discriminant validity as well as the reliability of the constructs were tested. Convergent validity and discriminant validity are defined as the extent to which "*two measures of the same concept are correlated*" and the extent to which "*two conceptually similar concepts are distinct*", respectively (Hair et al., 2010, p. 124). In order to test the convergent validity of the constructs, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) scores have been examined, which reflect the extent to which items of a construct have consistency with each other (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988). The results show that AVE scores ranged between 0.545 and 0.814, supporting the convergent validity of the constructs (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988).

Composite reliability (CR) refers to the extent to which all items consistently represent and measure the same factor (Hair et al., 2010). The results show that the computed CR scores are all above the 0.7 benchmark. AVE and CR scores are presented in Table 5.9.

Table 5.9 Convergent validity and composite reliability

Construct	AVE	CR
Time Pressure	0.578	0.803
Admin Hassles	0.701	0.921
Frequency of Client Participation	0.603	0.854
Low Quality of Client Participation	0.789	0.937
Job Autonomy	0.813	0.946
Emotional Intelligence	0.545	0.956
Job Stress	0.748	0.922

Discriminant validity refers to the extent to which two similar constructs are distinct and are not highly correlated (Malhotra and Birks, 2007). To evaluate discriminant validity, the correlation values between the constructs were calculated and the results, as shown in Table 5.10, indicated that the correlation scores were significantly different from 1.0. Further to that, the square root of the AVE score of each construct pair was higher than the correlation scores between the pair (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

Table 5.10 Descriptive statistics and correlations of variables

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**
1. Time Pressure	1.00															
2. Administrative Hassles	0.33**	1.00														
3. Frequency of Client Participation	-0.04	-0.13*	1.00													
4. Low Quality of Client Participation	0.27**	0.17*	-0.57**	1.00												
5. Job Autonomy	-0.09	-0.21**	0.18**	-0.20**	1.00											
6. EI	-0.08	-0.11	0.26**	-0.18**	0.20**	1.00										
7. Job Stress	0.61**	0.37**	-0.08	0.39**	-0.22**	-0.15*	1.00									
8. Position-Partner (Dummy)	0.01	-0.03	0.03	-0.03	0.27**	-0.04	-0.06	1.00								
9. Position-Consultant (Dummy)	-0.14*	-0.04	0.01	-0.06	0.07	0.06	-0.10	-0.14*	1.00							
10. Position-Director (Dummy)	0.05	-0.05	0.03	-0.03	0.01	0.02	-0.02	-0.26**	-0.04	1.00						
11. Position-Senior Associate (Dummy)	0.01	0.07	-0.05	0.07	-0.29**	0.02	0.10	-0.83**	-0.13*	-0.25**	1.00					
12. Gender-Male (Dummy)	-0.07	0.00	-0.01	0.01	0.13*	-0.09	0.05	0.29**	0.00	-0.07	-0.25**	1.00				
13. Branch Size1 (Dummy)	0.07	0.04	-0.03	0.01	0.10	-0.01	0.05	-0.03	-0.02	-0.03	0.05	0.02	1.00			
14. Branch Size2 (Dummy)	0.03	-0.01	-0.04	0.04	0.01	0.04	-0.03	0.08	-0.02	-0.04	-0.05	-0.02	-0.02	1.00		
15. Branch Size3 (Dummy)	-0.05	0.11	0.03	-0.01	-0.01	-0.07	0.08	0.12	-0.04	-0.01	-0.11	0.06	-0.03	-0.04	1.00	
16. Branch Size4 (Dummy)	-0.06	-0.04	0.03	-0.11	0.04	0.07	-0.17*	-0.03	0.01	0.00	0.03	-0.06	-0.05	-0.06	-0.13	1.00
17. Branch Size5 (Dummy)	-0.01	0.06	0.02	0.03	-0.12	-0.06	0.02	-0.06	0.02	0.16*	-0.03	-0.06	-0.08	-0.09	-0.19**	-0.33**
18. Area-Business Premises (Dummy)	0.07	0.04	0.01	-0.02	0.02	0.08	0.01	-0.04	-0.05	0.03	0.03	-0.08	-0.04	-0.04	0.16*	0.01
19. Area-Company Commercial (Dummy)	0.05	-0.04	-0.02	0.06	-0.15*	-0.01	0.10	0.00	0.00	-0.06	0.03	0.09	-0.06	0.02	-0.05	0.13*
20. Area-Dispute Resolution (Dummy)	-0.10	0.06	-0.06	0.09	0.03	-0.01	-0.04	0.02	-0.03	-0.03	0.00	0.09	-0.07	-0.01	0.02	-0.12
21. Area-Energy and Transport (Dummy)	0.06	-0.07	-0.02	0.10	-0.12	-0.15*	0.11	0.02	-0.04	0.00	-0.01	-0.01	0.13*	0.11	-0.07	-0.03
22. Area-Media_IT_IP (Dummy)	-0.05	0.11	-0.04	-0.04	0.10	-0.01	-0.12	0.12	-0.04	0.12	-0.17**	0.02	0.12	-0.04	-0.01	-0.04
23. Area-Regulation Compliance (Dummy)	-0.05	-0.09	0.04	-0.07	0.09	-0.03	0.00	0.06	0.09	0.07	-0.12	0.03	-0.03	-0.03	0.00	-0.07
24. Industry-Manufacturing (Dummy)	0.01	-0.06	-0.06	0.03	0.10	-0.05	-0.10	0.12	0.02	0.01	-0.13	0.15*	0.05	0.12	-0.07	-0.02
25. InHouse-Yes (Dummy)	0.01	0.00	-0.10	0.03	0.03	0.00	0.05	0.03	0.04	0.02	-0.05	0.10	-0.08	0.02	-0.10	-0.15*

Table 5.10 (continued)

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**
26. Relationship Age1 (Dummy)	-0.07	-0.03	-0.21**	0.21**	-0.10	0.00	-0.06	-0.14*	0.04	-0.10	0.18**	-0.15*	-0.04	-0.05	0.07	-0.06
27. Relationship Age2 (Dummy)	0.05	0.04	0.03	-0.05	0.00	0.07	0.14*	-0.06	0.01	-0.04	0.07	0.04	-0.05	0.03	0.02	0.03
28. Relationship Age3 (Dummy)	-0.10	-0.02	-0.06	0.06	-0.11	-0.10	0.00	-0.12	-0.07	-0.04	0.16*	-0.04	-0.05	0.03	-0.03	-0.03
29. Number of Current Clients [a]	0.07	0.25**	0.16*	-0.05	0.09	0.08	0.05	0.22**	-0.06	0.01	-0.21**	0.00	-0.09	-0.06	0.07	0.05
30. Number of Current Cases [a]	0.02	0.23**	0.18**	-0.10	0.13	0.11	-0.04	0.17**	-0.07	-0.01	-0.15*	0.01	-0.06	-0.01	0.13	0.05
31. Number of Completed Cases [a]	0.08	0.08	0.31**	-0.15	0.11	0.04	-0.06	0.20*	0.08	-0.01	-0.21**	0.00	-0.04	0.05	0.10	-0.10
32. Job Experience [a]	-0.01	-0.12	0.11	-0.08	0.41**	0.02	-0.09	0.67**	0.11	0.00	-0.70**	0.19**	0.04	0.12	0.04	0.07
33. Workload Percentage [a]	0.27**	0.07	0.13*	0.14*	-0.08	0.01	0.28**	-0.20**	0.00	-0.05	0.23**	-0.10	0.12	-0.02	0.06	-0.07
Mean	4.75	3.31	4.78	5.21	5.71	5.02	3.61	0.46	0.02	0.07	0.44	0.59	0.01	0.02	0.07	0.19
Standard Deviation	1.48	1.47	1.19	1.22	1.05	0.66	1.37	0.5	0.15	0.26	0.50	0.49	0.11	0.13	0.25	0.39

	17	**18**	**19**	**20**	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25**	**26**	**27**	**28**	**29**	**30**	**31**	**32**
17. Branch Size5 (Dummy)	1.00															
18. Area-Business Premises (Dummy)	-0.01	1.00														
19. Area-Company Commercial (Dummy)	-0.04	-0.15*	1.00													
20. Area-Dispute Resolution (Dummy)	0.06	-0.20**	-0.32**	1.00												
21. Area-Energy and Transport (Dummy)	-0.02	-0.08	-0.13	-0.16*	1.00											
22. Area-Media_IT_IP (Dummy)	0.03	-0.08	-0.14*	-0.17**	-0.07	1.00										
23. Area-Regulation Compliance (Dummy)	0.10	-0.08	-0.13	-0.16*	-0.06	-0.07	1.00									
24. Industry-Manufacturing (Dummy)	-0.05	-0.13*	0.02	0.06	0.04	0.07	-0.06	1.00								
25. InHouse-Yes (Dummy)	0.04	-0.08	-0.09	0.02	-0.05	0.08	0.14*	0.01	1.00							
26. Relationship Age1 (Dummy)	0.00	-0.06	0.13*	-0.05	-0.09	-0.04	-0.03	-0.01	-0.01	1.00						
27. Relationship Age2 (Dummy)	-0.03	-0.01	0.10	-0.03	-0.01	-0.07	0.03	0.03	-0.13*	-0.16*	1.00					
28. Relationship Age3 (Dummy)	0.04	-0.06	-0.08	0.10	0.13	-0.03	-0.02	0.06	-0.10	-0.16*	-0.20**	1.00				

Table 5.10 (continued)

	17	**18**	**19**	**20**	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25**	**26**	**27**	**28**	**29**	**30**	**31**	**32**	**33**
29. Number of Current Clients [a]	0.05	0.09	-0.07	-0.01	-0.11	0.06	-0.03	-0.07	-0.09	-0.16*	0.01	-0.06	1.00				
30. Number of Current Cases [a]	0.04	0.15*	-0.20**	0.06	-0.12	0.03	0.05	-0.15*	0.00	-0.24**	-0.09	-0.05	0.58**	1.00			
31. Number of Completed Cases [a]	0.04	0.18*	-0.21**	0.11	0.01	0.00	0.08	-0.12	0.05	-0.39**	-0.32**	-0.11	0.17*	0.58**	1.00		
32. Job Experience [a]	-0.08	-0.03	-0.13*	0.04	0.07	0.11	0.08	0.11	0.02	-0.28**	-0.16*	-0.07	0.19**	0.18**	0.33**	1.00	
33. Workload Percentage [a]	-0.10	0.05	-0.09	0.14*	0.12	-0.16*	-0.08	-0.08	0.09	0.10	-0.04	-0.10	-0.23**	-0.10	0.20*	-0.12	1.00
Mean	0.32	0.09	0.20	0.29	0.06	0.07	0.06	0.16	0.67	0.11	0.16	0.17	2.39	2.79	2.55	2.61	3.29
Standard Deviation	0.47	0.28	0.40	0.45	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.37	0.47	0.32	0.37	0.37	0.83	1.05	1.54	0.69	0.71

a: natural logarithm
** $p < 0.01$
* $p < 0.05$

5.8 Common method bias

The potential detrimental effects of method bias have long been highlighted by various scholars (Campbell and Fiske, 1959, Bagozzi and Yi, 1990, Podsakoff et al., 2003, Malhotra et al., 2017). The source of Common Method Bias (CMB) originates from common method variance, which refers to "*variance that is attributable to the measurement method rather than to the construct of interest*" (Podsakoff et al., 2003, p. 879). Common Method Bias can mislead researchers as it affects the results of the analyses.

Due to the research design of this study, it is possible that the results are susceptible to CMB caused by common method variance. First, all of the scales in this study have been measured perceptually and no objective data has been obtained to measure the constructs. Second, the data was collected cross-sectionally from one key informant in each participating practice. Thus, common method variance is considered as a potential threat to bias the results of the analyses.

In order to diminish the effects of CMV, following *ex ante* procedural remedies provided by Podsakoff et al. (2003), the researcher designed the questionnaire and developed the measures according to the systematic approach. In addition, the investigator assured the respondents about the confidentiality of their responses by making the questionnaire anonymous. Using a counterbalanced order between the items of the drivers and the dependent variables, as well as conceptualizing a non-linear relationship between one of the main independent variables and the dependent variable, the researcher made it more difficult for the respondents to predict the relationships amongst the variables of interest.

Finally, the researcher asked eight senior solicitors to read the questionnaire items in order to check if there was any vagueness or lack of clarity.

Apart from the actions taken before distributing the questionnaire, using an *ex post* statistical test, the researcher evaluated whether the effect of CMB on the results is problematic. For this reason, the marker variable test was used (Malhotra et al., 2006). The researcher considered the second smallest correlation between the constructs (r = 0.01 for the correlation between time pressure and the dummy variable of having a partnership position) as the estimate of the marker variable. The following formulae were used to calculate the CMV-adjusted correlation scores and corresponding t-values based on the correlation scores (Malhotra et al., 2006). Uncorrected and CMV-adjusted correlations are shown in Table 5.11.

(1) $r_A = \frac{r_u - r_m}{1 - r_m}$

(2) $t_{\frac{\alpha}{2}, n-3} = \frac{r_A}{\sqrt{\frac{(1 - r_A^2)}{(n-3)}}}$

Where:

r_A = the adjusted correlations

r_U = the uncorrected correlations

r_M = the marker variable

n = sample size

As presented in Table 5.11, there is no difference between the adjusted correlation matrix and the initial correlation matrix regarding the statistical significance between each pair of correlations. Therefore, it can be conceivably argued that the effect of CMB in this study is not an issue.

Table 5.11 Correlations scores and CMV-correlation scores

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**
1. Time Pressure	1.00	0.32**	-0.05	0.28**	-0.10	-0.09	0.61**	0.00	-0.15*	0.04	0.00	-0.08	0.06	0.02	-0.06	-0.07
2. Administrative Hassles	0.33**	1.00	-0.14*	0.18**	-0.22**	-0.12	0.36**	-0.04	-0.05	-0.06	0.06	-0.01	0.03	-0.02	0.10	-0.05
3. Frequency of Client Participation	-0.04	-0.13*	1.00	-0.57**	0.17**	0.25**	-0.09	0.02	0.00	0.02	-0.06	-0.02	-0.04	-0.05	0.02	0.02
4. Low Quality of Client Participation	0.27**	0.17*	-0.57**	1.00	-0.19**	-0.17**	0.39**	-0.02	-0.05	-0.02	0.08	0.01	0.00	0.03	-0.02	-0.12
5. Job Autonomy	-0.09	-0.21**	0.18**	-0.20**	1.00	0.19**	-0.23**	0.26**	0.06	0.00	-0.30**	0.12	0.09	0.00	-0.02	0.03
6. EI	-0.08	-0.11	0.26**	-0.18**	0.20**	1.00	-0.16*	-0.05	0.05	0.01	0.01	-0.10	-0.02	0.03	-0.08	0.06
7. Job Stress	0.61**	0.37**	-0.08	0.38**	-0.22**	-0.15*	1.00	-0.07	-0.11	-0.03	0.09	0.04	0.04	-0.04	0.07	-0.18**
8. Position-Partner (Dummy)	0.01	-0.03	0.03	-0.03	0.27**	-0.04	-0.06	1.00	-0.15*	-0.27**	-0.85**	0.28**	-0.04	0.07	0.11	-0.04
9. Position-Consultant (Dummy)	-0.14*	-0.04	0.01	-0.06	0.07	0.06	-0.10	-0.14*	1.00	-0.05	-0.14*	-0.01	-0.03	-0.03	-0.05	0.00
10. Position-Director (Dummy)	0.05	-0.05	0.03	-0.03	0.01	0.02	-0.02	-0.26**	-0.04	1.00	-0.26**	-0.08	-0.04	-0.05	-0.02	-0.01
11. Position-Senior Associate (Dummy)	0.01	0.07	-0.05	0.07	-0.29**	0.02	0.10	-0.83**	-0.13*	-0.25**	1.00	-0.26**	0.04	-0.06	-0.12	0.02
12. Gender-Male (Dummy)	-0.07	0.00	-0.01	0.00	0.13*	-0.09	0.05	0.29**	0.00	-0.07	-0.25**	1.00	0.01	-0.03	0.05	-0.07
13. Branch Size1 (Dummy)	0.07	0.04	-0.03	0.01	0.10	-0.01	0.05	-0.03	-0.02	-0.03	0.05	0.02	1.00	-0.03	-0.04	-0.06
14. Branch Size2 (Dummy)	0.03	-0.01	-0.04	0.04	0.01	0.04	-0.03	0.08	-0.02	-0.04	-0.05	-0.02	-0.02	1.00	-0.05	-0.07
15. Branch Size3 (Dummy)	-0.05	0.11	0.03	-0.01	-0.01	-0.07	0.08	0.12	-0.04	-0.01	-0.11	0.06	-0.03	-0.04	1.00	-0.14
16. Branch Size4 (Dummy)	-0.06	-0.04	0.03	-0.11	0.04	0.07	-0.17*	-0.03	0.01	0.00	0.03	-0.06	-0.05	-0.06	-0.13	1.00
17. Branch Size5 (Dummy)	-0.01	0.06	0.02	0.03	-0.12	-0.06	0.02	-0.06	0.02	0.16*	-0.03	-0.06	-0.08	-0.09	-0.19**	-0.33**
18. Area-Business Premises (Dummy)	0.07	0.04	0.01	-0.02	0.02	0.08	0.01	-0.04	-0.05	0.03	0.03	-0.08	-0.04	-0.04	0.16*	0.01
19. Area-Company Commercial (Dummy)	0.05	-0.04	-0.02	0.06	-0.15*	-0.01	0.10	0.00	0.00	-0.06	0.03	0.09	-0.06	0.02	-0.05	0.13*
20. Area-Dispute Resolution (Dummy)	-0.10	0.06	-0.06	0.08	0.03	-0.01	-0.04	0.02	-0.03	-0.03	0.00	0.09	-0.07	-0.01	0.02	-0.12
21. Area-Energy and Transport (Dummy)	0.06	-0.07	-0.02	0.10	-0.12	-0.15*	0.11	0.02	-0.04	0.00	-0.01	-0.01	0.13*	0.11	-0.07	-0.03
22. Area-Media_IT_IP (Dummy)	-0.05	0.11	-0.04	-0.04	0.10	-0.01	-0.12	0.12	-0.04	0.12	-0.17**	0.02	0.12	-0.04	-0.01	-0.04
23. Area-Regulation Compliance (Dummy)	-0.05	-0.09	0.04	-0.07	0.09	-0.03	0.00	0.06	0.09	0.07	-0.12	0.03	-0.03	-0.03	0.00	-0.07
24. Industry-Manufacturing (Dummy)	0.01	-0.06	-0.06	0.03	0.10	-0.05	-0.10	0.12	0.02	0.01	-0.13	0.15*	0.05	0.12	-0.07	-0.02
25. InHouse-Yes (Dummy)	0.01	0.00	-0.10	0.03	0.03	0.00	0.05	0.03	0.04	0.02	-0.05	0.10	-0.08	0.02	-0.10	-0.15*

Table 5.11 (continued)

	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33
1. Time Pressure	-0.02	0.06	0.04	-0.11	0.05	-0.06	-0.06	0.00	0.00	-0.08	0.04	-0.11	0.06	0.01	0.07	-0.02	0.26**
2. Administrative Hassles	0.05	0.03	-0.05	0.05	-0.08	0.10	-0.10	-0.07	-0.01	-0.04	0.03	-0.03	0.24**	0.22**	0.07	-0.13*	0.06
3. Frequency of Client Participation	0.01	0.00	-0.03	-0.07	-0.03	-0.05	0.03	-0.07	-0.11	-0.22**	0.02	-0.07	0.15*	0.17**	0.30**	0.10	0.12
4. Low Quality of Client Participation	0.02	-0.01	0.07	0.09	0.11	-0.03	-0.06	0.04	0.04	0.22**	-0.04	0.07	-0.04	-0.09	-0.14*	-0.07	0.14*
5. Job Autonomy	-0.13*	0.01	-0.16*	0.02	-0.13*	0.09	0.08	0.09	0.02	-0.11	-0.01	-0.12	0.08	0.12	0.10	0.40**	-0.09
6. EI	-0.07	0.07	-0.02	-0.02	-0.16*	-0.02	-0.04	-0.06	-0.01	-0.01	0.06	-0.11	0.07	0.10	0.03	0.01	0.00
7. Job Stress	0.01	0.00	0.09	-0.05	0.10	-0.13	-0.01	-0.11	0.04	-0.07	0.13*	-0.01	0.04	-0.05	-0.07	-0.10	0.27**
8. Position-Partner (Dummy)	-0.07	-0.05	-0.01	0.01	0.01	0.11*	0.05	0.11	0.02	-0.15*	-0.07	-0.13*	0.21**	0.16*	0.19**	0.67**	-0.21**
9. Position-Consultant (Dummy)	0.01	-0.06	-0.01	-0.04	-0.05	-0.05	0.08	0.01	0.03	0.03	0.00	-0.08	-0.07	-0.08	0.07	0.10	-0.01
10. Position-Director (Dummy)	0.15*	0.02	-0.07	-0.04	-0.01	0.11	0.06	0.00	0.01	-0.11	-0.05	-0.05	0.00	-0.02	-0.02	-0.01	-0.06
11. Position-Senior Associate (Dummy)	-0.04	0.02	0.02	-0.01	-0.02	-0.18**	-0.13*	-0.14*	-0.06	0.17**	0.06	0.15*	-0.22**	-0.16*	-0.22**	-0.72**	0.22**
12. Gender-Male (Dummy)	-0.07	-0.09	0.08	0.08	-0.02	0.01	0.02	0.14*	0.09	-0.16*	0.03	-0.05	-0.01	0.00	-0.01	0.18**	-0.11
13. Branch Size1 (Dummy)	-0.09	-0.05	-0.07	-0.08	0.12	0.11	-0.04	0.04	-0.09	-0.05	-0.06	-0.06	-0.10	-0.07	-0.05	0.03	0.11
14. Branch Size2 (Dummy)	-0.10	-0.05	0.01	-0.02	0.10	-0.05	-0.04	0.11	0.01	-0.06	0.02	0.02	-0.07	-0.02	0.04	0.11	-0.03
15. Branch Size3 (Dummy)	-0.20**	0.15*	-0.06	0.01	-0.08	-0.02	-0.01	-0.08	-0.11	0.06	0.01	-0.04	0.06	0.12	0.09	0.03	0.05
16. Branch Size4 (Dummy)	-0.34**	0.00	0.12	-0.13*	-0.04	-0.05	-0.08	-0.03	-0.16*	-0.07	0.02	-0.04	0.04	0.04	-0.11	0.06	-0.08
17. Branch Size5 (Dummy)	1.00	-0.02	-0.05	0.05	-0.03	0.02	0.09	-0.06	0.03	-0.01	-0.04	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.03	-0.09	-0.11
18. Area-Business Premises (Dummy)	-0.01	1.00	-0.16*	-0.21**	-0.09	-0.09	-0.09	-0.14*	-0.09	-0.07	-0.02	-0.07	0.08	0.14*	0.17**	-0.04	0.04
19. Area-Company Commercial (Dummy)	-0.04	-0.15*	1.00	-0.33**	-0.14*	-0.15*	-0.14*	0.01	-0.10	0.12	0.09	-0.09	-0.08	-0.21**	-0.22**	-0.14*	-0.10
20. Area-Dispute Resolution (Dummy)	0.06	-0.20**	-0.32**	1.00	-0.17**	-0.18**	-0.17**	0.05	0.01	-0.06	-0.04	0.09	-0.02	0.05	0.10	0.03	0.13*
21. Area-Energy and Transport (Dummy)	-0.02	-0.08	-0.13	-0.16*	1.00	-0.08	-0.07	0.03	-0.06	-0.10	-0.02	0.12	-0.12	-0.13*	0.00	0.06	0.11
22. Area-Media_IT_IP (Dummy)	0.03	-0.08	-0.14*	-0.17**	-0.07	1.00	-0.08	0.06	0.07	-0.05	-0.08	-0.04	0.05	0.02	-0.01	0.10	-0.17**
23. Area-Regulation Compliance (Dummy)	0.10	-0.08	-0.13	-0.16*	-0.06	-0.07	1.00	-0.07	0.13*	-0.04	0.02	-0.03	-0.04	0.04	0.07	0.07	-0.09
24. Industry-Manufacturing (Dummy)	-0.05	-0.13*	0.02	0.06	0.04	0.07	-0.06	1.00	0.00	-0.02	0.02	0.05	-0.08	-0.16*	-0.13*	0.10	-0.09
25. InHouse-Yes (Dummy)	0.04	-0.08	-0.09	0.02	-0.05	0.08	0.14*	0.01	1.00	-0.02	-0.14*	-0.11	-0.10	-0.01	0.04	0.01	0.08

Table 5.11 (continued)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
26. Relationship Age1 (Dummy)	-0.07	-0.03	-0.21**	0.21**	-0.10	0.00	-0.06	-0.14*	0.04	-0.10	0.18**	-0.15*	-0.04	-0.05	0.07	-0.06
27. Relationship Age2 (Dummy)	0.05	0.04	0.03	-0.05	0.00	0.07	0.14*	-0.06	0.01	-0.04	0.07	0.04	-0.05	0.03	0.02	0.03
28. Relationship Age3 (Dummy)	-0.10	-0.02	-0.06	0.06	-0.11	-0.10	0.00	-0.12	-0.07	-0.04	0.16*	-0.04	-0.05	0.03	-0.03	-0.03
29. Number of Current Clients(a)	0.07	0.25**	0.16*	-0.05	0.09	0.08	0.05	0.22**	-0.06	0.01	-0.21**	0.00	-0.09	-0.06	0.07	0.05
30. Number of Current Cases(a)	0.02	0.23**	0.18**	-0.10	0.13	0.11	-0.04	0.17**	-0.07	-0.01	-0.15*	0.01	-0.06	-0.01	0.13	0.05
31. Number of Completed Cases(a)	0.08	0.08	0.31**	-0.15	0.11	0.04	-0.06	0.20*	0.08	-0.01	-0.21**	0.00	-0.04	0.05	0.10	-0.10
32. Job Experience(a)	-0.01	-0.12	0.11	-0.08	0.41**	0.02	-0.09	0.67**	0.11	0.00	-0.70**	0.19**	0.04	0.12	0.04	0.07
33. Workload Percentage(a)	0.27**	0.07	0.13*	0.13*	-0.08	0.01	0.28**	-0.20**	0.00	-0.05	0.23**	-0.10	0.12	-0.02	0.06	-0.07

	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33
26. Relationship Age1 (Dummy)	0.00	-0.06	0.13*	-0.05	-0.09	-0.04	-0.03	-0.01	-0.01	1.00	-0.17**	-0.17**	-0.17**	-0.25**	-0.40**	-0.29**	0.09
27. Relationship Age2 (Dummy)	-0.03	-0.01	0.10	-0.03	-0.01	-0.07	0.03	0.03	-0.13*	-0.16*	1.00	-0.21**	0.00	-0.10	-0.33**	-0.17**	-0.05
28. Relationship Age3 (Dummy)	0.04	-0.06	-0.08	0.10	0.13	-0.03	-0.02	0.06	-0.10	-0.16*	-0.20**	1.00	-0.07	-0.06	-0.12	-0.08	-0.11
29. Number of Current Clients(a)	0.05	0.09	-0.07	-0.01	-0.11	0.06	-0.03	-0.07	-0.09	-0.16*	0.01	-0.06	1.00	0.58**	0.16*	0.18**	-0.24**
30. Number of Current Cases(a)	0.04	0.15*	-0.20**	0.06	-0.12	0.03	0.05	-0.15*	0.00	-0.24**	-0.09	-0.05	0.58**	1.00	0.58**	0.17**	-0.11
31. Number of Completed Cases(a)	0.04	0.18*	-0.21**	0.11	0.01	0.00	0.08	-0.12	0.05	-0.39**	-0.32**	-0.11	0.17*	0.58**	1.00	0.32**	0.19**
32. Job Experience(a)	-0.08	-0.03	-0.13*	0.04	0.07	0.11	0.08	0.11	0.02	-0.28**	-0.16*	-0.07	0.19**	0.18**	0.33**	1.00	-0.13*
33. Workload Percentage(a)	-0.10	0.05	-0.09	0.14*	0.12	-0.16*	-0.08	-0.08	0.09	0.10	-0.04	-0.10	-0.23**	-0.10	0.20*	-0.12	1.00

Note: Figures below the diagonal show the correlation scores and figures above the diagonal are the adjusted-CMV correlations.

5.9 Results and hypotheses testing

A widely accepted approach to test hypotheses is to use structural equation modelling (SEM) (Hwang et al., 2010, Bagozzi and Yi, 2012). However, SEM suffers from a number of known limitations. Specifically, as the complexity of the model increases, the identification of the model may be affected. Furthermore, due to the sensitivity of the SEM technique to sample size, results may be biased, affecting the interpretations. A further problem is error variances in the data, which can affect the results of SEM (Reinartz et al., 2009, Hair et al., 2012).

Owing to the above-mentioned limitations, for the purpose of testing the hypotheses, due to the number of moderated hypotheses and control variables, Hierarchical Moderated Regression (HMR) analysis has been used (Najafi-Tavani et al., 2018). HMR helps the researcher to: (a) examine relationships between several predictors and a dependent variable, (b) analyse how predictors and interaction terms are entered into the model, and (c) test specific theoretically-based hypotheses (Petrocelli, 2003, Cohen et al., 2003).

5.9.1 Endogeneity bias and regression

Endogeneity bias occurs when a predictor correlates with the residuals in a model (Zaefarian et al., 2017). In such a situation, the computed coefficient estimates have been affected by the effects of unobserved variables having a relationship with the predictors in addition to the effect of the predictor. Thus, the computed estimates will not reflect the true values, leading to misleading conclusions and invalid inferences (Zaefarian et al., 2017, Ullah et al., 2018). Due to the nature of this research and the relationships among the constructs, it is reasonable to assume that there may be unobserved factors that can

drive the job stress of professionals. For instance, Schmitz and Ganesan (2014) demonstrated that customer complexity imposes stress on professional service providers because professionals already face diverse internal expectations from their colleagues, and customers with more complex and diverse demands create more conflict and stress (Coelho et al., 2011). Therefore, unobserved variables can create endogeneity bias, which may make the results misleading. More specifically, the predictors in this study may correlate with the error terms, causing bias.

In order to correct the problem of endogeneity, one common method is to use instrumental variables (Semadeni et al., 2014, Zaefarian et al., 2017). There are two main criteria that instrumental variables must meet. The first criterion is *relevance*, which specifies that instrumental variables must be correlated with the independent variable. The second criterion is *exogeneity*, which states that instrumental variables need to be uncorrelated with the dependent variable of the model. (Semadeni et al., 2014). Therefore, it can be argued that instrumental variables indirectly affect the dependent variable through driving the independent variable, but do not directly predict the dependent variable.

Although the literature argues that finding a valid instrumental variable is a challenge (Zaefarian et al., 2017), to deal with the problem of endogeneity in this study, the researcher attempted to obtain three potential instrumental variables. First, the investigator captured if the respondent's client has an in-house solicitor or not. The second instrumental variable measured the main communication mode (i.e. personal meeting, video meeting, telephone, email, or other modes) through which the respondent interacts with the client. The last instrumental variable reflects whether the respondent

and the client are based in the same city. Although all the instrumental variables met the exogeneity condition, a correlation test showed that they failed to meet the relevance criterion since they were not correlated with the endogenous independent variables of the model: having in-house solicitor (r_{TP} = 0.02, p > 0.1; r_{AH} = 0.00, p < 0.1; r_{FP} = -0.1, p > 0.1; r_{QP} = -0.03, p > 0.1), communication mode (r_{TP} = 0.08, p > 0.1; r_{AH} = -0.06, p < 0.1; r_{FP} = -0.12, p > 0.05; r_{QP} = 0.06, p > 0.1), and similar location (r_{TP} = 0.03, p > 0.1; r_{AH} = 0.09, p < 0.1; r_{FP} = -0.02, p > 0.1; r_{QP} = -0.04, p > 0.1). The investigator therefore followed an instrument-free approach. Although, compared to instrumental variables, an instrument-free approach, due to its limitations, is not an ideal technique to address the problem of endogeneity, it can correct the endogeneity bias to some extent when the use of instrumental variables is not possible.

The main difference between instrument-free and instrumental approaches is that, in instrument-free approaches, moderators are used as instrumental variables in order to capture the residuals of the independent variables (Poppo et al., 2016). It is noteworthy to mention that moderators are not instrumental variables because they do not meet all the criteria of being instrumental variables, namely relevance and exogeneity. This technique purifies the endogenous independent variable from potential effects of moderators, which can address the endogeneity bias to some extent (i.e. not completely). Accordingly, the investigator considered the moderators (i.e. job autonomy and emotional intelligence) as instrumental variables, because, with respect to the nature of the constructs and the relationships among them, it is likely that the endogenous independent variables are affected by the moderators, causing endogeneity bias, which can impact on the estimates and the results of this study.

Autonomous solicitors are likely to have less time pressure and administrative hassles as they have discretion to control their tasks, and it is expected that they avoid time pressure and administrative hassles as much as possible. Further, solicitors with high emotional intelligence are more likely to stimulate how their clients participate in the process of service delivery. In other words, emotionally intelligent solicitors are expected to smooth the relationship between themselves and their clients, which may lead to more and better participation from the clients. Therefore, the moderators (i.e. job autonomy and emotional intelligence) may have an impact on the independent variables (i.e. time pressure, administrative hassles, frequency of participation, and low-quality of participation).

Following a residual-based approach utilized by Kim et al. (2018) and Poppo et al. (2016), the researcher used three-stage least square (3SLS) regression to correct the above-mentioned potential endogeneity bias. It is worth mentioning that the 3SLS approach only corrects a percentage of the endogeneity problem that stems from the fact that the moderators have an impact on independent variables (Auh et al., 2014). Hence, part of the endogeneity of the independent variables remains in the data, and, as such, the results need to be interpreted with this in mind. However, this approach has been widely used in the marketing and business literature (e.g. Evanschitzky et al., 2012, Poppo et al., 2016, Najafi-Tavani et al., 2018). In the first stage, time pressure (TP) was regressed on job autonomy (JA) in order to capture the predicted values. The investigator also regressed administrative hassles (AH) on job autonomy, frequency of client participation (FP) on emotional intelligence (EI), and low quality of client participation (QP) on emotional intelligence to obtain their predicted values as well:

$$TP = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 JA + \zeta \qquad (1)$$

$$AH = \varphi_0 + \varphi_1 JA + \zeta \quad (2)$$

$$FP = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 EI + \zeta \quad (3)$$

$$QP = \delta_0 + \delta_1 EI + \zeta \quad (4)$$

The results of the regression models indicate that job autonomy affects administrative hassles negatively ($\beta = -0.21$, $p < 0.01$). Emotional intelligence also predicts frequency and low quality of client participation ($\beta = 0.26$, $p < 0.001$; $\beta = -0.18$, $p < 0.01$). The results show no support for the effect of job autonomy on time pressure ($\beta = -0.09$, $p > 0.05$). These significant effects indicate that using the 3SLS approach is a proper method to rule out any potential endogeneity effect that is caused by the moderators. In the second stage, the researcher used the following equations to compute the residuals of time pressure, administrative hassles, frequency of client participation, and low quality of client participation that are free from the direct effects of job autonomy and emotional intelligence:

$$TP_{residual} = TP - TP_{predicted} \quad (5)$$

$$AH_{residual} = AH - AH_{predicted} \quad (6)$$

$$FP_{residual} = FP - FP_{predicted} \quad (7)$$

$$QP_{residual} = QP - QP_{predicted} \quad (8)$$

The researcher then replaced the drivers (i.e. time pressure, administrative hassles, frequency of client participation, and low quality of client participation) with their computed residuals. The last stage of the 3SLS approach is to test the hypotheses by using the obtained residuals and the interaction terms. To do so, as shown in Table 5.12, I first regressed job stress on the control variables (Model 1). Then, the drivers and the moderators were added to the regression model (Model 2). Afterward, the interaction

terms were added sequentially: the interaction of TP and TP^2 with JA (Model 3); the interaction between the residuals of AH and JA (Model 4); the interaction between the residuals of FP and EI (Model 5); and the interaction between the residuals of QP and EI (Model 6). Finally, the researcher regressed job stress on all the variables (i.e. control variables, predictors, moderators and the interaction terms) and built the ultimate model (Model 7). Before computing the interaction terms, the researcher mean-centred the variables to avoid any potential collinearity. The model sets are as follows:

Model 1: Job Stress = $\beta_0 + \beta_{controls}$ (controls) + ζ

Model 2: Job Stress = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 (TP_{residual}) + \beta_2 (TP_{resirual}^2) + \beta_3 (AH_{residual}) + \beta_4 (FP_{residual}) + \beta_5 (QP_{residual}) + \beta_6$ (JA) + β_7 (EI) + $\beta_{controls}$ (controls) + ζ

Model 3: Job Stress = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 (TP_{residual}) + \beta_2 (TP_{resirual}^2) + \beta_3 (AH_{residual}) + \beta_4 (FP_{residual}) + \beta_5 (QP_{residual}) + \beta 6$ (JA) + $\beta 7$ (EI) + $\gamma_1 (TP_{residual} \times JA) + \gamma_2 (TP_{resirual}^2 \times JA) + \beta_{controls}$ (controls) + ζ

Model 4: Job Stress = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 (TP_{residual}) + \beta_2 (TP_{resirual}^2) + \beta_3 (AH_{residual}) + \beta_4 (FP_{residual}) + \beta_5 (QP_{residual}) + \beta 6$ (JA) + $\beta 7$ (EI) + $\gamma_1 (AH_{residual} \times JA) + \beta_{controls}$ (controls) + ζ

Model 5: Job Stress = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 (TP_{residual}) + \beta_2 (TP_{resirual}^2) + \beta_3 (AH_{residual}) + \beta_4 (FP_{residual}) + \beta_5 (QP_{residual}) + \beta 6$ (JA) + $\beta 7$ (EI) + $\gamma_1 (FP_{residual} \times EI) + \beta_{controls}$ (controls) + ζ

Model 6: Job Stress = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 (TP_{residual}) + \beta_2 (TP_{resirual}^2) + \beta_3 (AH_{residual}) + \beta_4 (FP_{residual}) + \beta_5 (QP_{residual}) + \beta 6$ (JA) + $\beta 7$ (EI) + $\gamma_1 (QP_{residual} \times EI) + \beta_{controls}$ (controls) + ζ

Model 7: Job Stress = Job Stress = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 (TP_{residual}) + \beta_2 (TP_{resirual}^2) + \beta_3 (AH_{residual}) + \beta_4 (FP_{residual}) + \beta_5 (QP_{residual}) + \beta 6$ (JA) + $\beta 7$ (EI) + $\gamma_1 (TP_{residual} \times JA) + \gamma_2 (TP_{resirual}^2 \times JA) + \gamma_3 (AH_{residual} \times JA) + \gamma_4 (FP_{residual} \times EI) + \gamma_5 (QP_{residual} \times EI) + \beta_{controls}$ (controls) + ζ

Where TP = time pressure, AH = administrative hassles, FP = frequency of client participation, QP = low quality of client participation, JA = job autonomy and EI = emotional intelligence.

Table 5.12 Standardized regression estimates.

	Job Stress						
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Predictors							
$TP_{residual}$		0.47** (0.07)	0.47** (0.07)	0.47** (0.07)	0.48** (0.07)	0.45** (0.07)	0.46** (0.07)
$TP_{residual}^2$		0.12† (0.04)	0.15* (0.04)	0.12 (0.04)	0.14† (0.04)	0.11 (0.04)	0.16* (0.04)
$AH_{residual}$		0.21** (0.06)	0.18* (0.06)	0.21** (0.06)	0.19** (0.06)	0.21** (0.06)	0.15* (0.06)
$FP_{residual}$		0.21* (0.09)	0.19* (0.09)	0.21* (0.10)	0.18* (0.10)	0.23** (0.10)	0.18* (0.09)
$QP_{residual}$		0.29** (0.09)	0.29** (0.08)	0.29** (0.09)	0.27** (0.09)	0.33** (0.09)	0.35** (0.09)
JA		-0.15* (0.08)	-0.09 (0.11)	-0.16* (0.09)	-0.15* (0.08)	-0.15* (0.08)	-0.08 (0.11)
EI		-0.09 (0.13)	-0.09 (0.13)	-0.08 (0.13)	-0.10 (0.13)	-0.07 (0.13)	-0.07 (0.13)
Interactions							
$TP_{residual} \times JA$			-0.14* (0.08)				-0.17* (0.06)
$TP_{residual}^2 \times JA$			-0.16† (0.03)				-0.13 (0.04)
$AH_{residual} \times JA$				-0.03 (0.06)			0.03 (0.06)
$FP_{residual} \times EI$					0.10 (0.13)		0.20** (0.14)
$QP_{residual} \times EI$						0.11 (0.11)	0.23** (0.13)
Controls							
Position-Partner (Dummy)	0.01 (0.33)	-0.02 (0.25)	-0.02 (0.24)	-0.02 (0.25)	-0.01 (0.25)	-0.03 (0.25)	-0.01 (0.24)
Position-Consultant (Dummy)	-0.11 (1.00)	0.00 (0.77)	-0.01 (0.77)	0.00 (0.79)	0.01 (0.77)	0.00 (0.77)	-0.01 (0.75)
Position-Director (Dummy)	0.01 (0.40)	-0.01 (0.30)	-0.02 (0.30)	-0.01 (0.30)	-0.01 (0.30)	-0.01 (0.30)	-0.02 (0.29)
Gender-Male (Dummy)	0.07 (0.22)	0.11† (0.17)	0.09 (0.16)	0.11† (0.17)	0.11† (0.16)	0.11† (0.16)	0.10 (0.16)
Branch Size1 (Dummy)	0.12 (0.96)	0.1 (0.72)	0.09 (0.71)	0.1 (0.72)	0.09 (0.72)	0.10 (0.72)	0.08 (0.69)
Branch Size2 (Dummy)	0.01 (0.79)	-0.04 (0.59)	-0.06 (0.59)	-0.04 (0.59)	-0.04 (0.59)	-0.03 (0.59)	-0.05 (0.58)
Branch Size3 (Dummy)	0.06 (0.40)	0.04 (0.31)	0.04 (0.30)	0.04 (0.31)	0.04 (0.31)	0.04 (0.31)	0.04 (0.29)
Branch Size4 (Dummy)	-0.14 (0.31)	-0.11 (0.23)	-0.15* (0.23)	-0.11 (0.23)	-0.11 (0.23)	-0.12† (0.23)	-0.15* (0.23)
Branch Size5 (Dummy)	0.05 (0.27)	-0.01 (0.20)	0.00 (0.20)	0.00 (0.21)	0.01 (0.20)	-0.01 (0.20)	0.00 (0.20)
Area-Business Premises (Dummy)	0.04 (0.44)	0.06 (0.33)	0.07 (0.33)	0.06 (0.33)	0.07 (0.33)	0.06 (0.33)	0.09 (0.32)
Area-Company Commercial (Dummy)	0.17 (0.32)	0.07 (0.25)	0.1 (0.25)	0.07 (0.25)	0.08 (0.25)	0.06 (0.25)	0.11 (0.24)
Area-Dispute Resolution (Dummy)	-0.08 (0.32)	-0.07 (0.24)	-0.08 (0.24)	-0.07 (0.24)	-0.06 (0.24)	-0.09 (0.24)	-0.11 (0.23)
Area-Energy and Transport (Dummy)	0.06 (0.56)	0.06 (0.43)	0.05 (0.43)	0.07 (0.43)	0.05 (0.43)	0.08 (0.43)	0.06 (0.42)
Area-Media_IT_IP (Dummy)	-0.09 (0.43)	-0.12† (0.33)	-0.12† (0.32)	-0.12† (0.33)	-0.12† (0.32)	-0.13† (0.32)	-0.13† (0.31)
Area-Regulation Compliance (Dummy)	0.11 (0.48)	0.09 (0.37)	0.09 (0.37)	0.09 (0.37)	0.11 (0.38)	0.08 (0.37)	0.14† (0.37)
Industry-Manufacturing (Dummy)	-0.10 (0.31)	-0.1 (0.24)	-0.08 (0.24)	-0.1 (0.24)	-0.10 (0.24)	-0.08 (0.24)	-0.06 (0.23)
In-House-Yes (Dummy)	0.12 (0.23)	0.15* (0.17)	0.15* (0.17)	0.14* (0.17)	0.13* (0.17)	0.15* (0.17)	0.14* (0.16)
Relationship Age1 (Dummy)	-0.07 (0.46)	-0.06 (0.35)	-0.04 (0.35)	-0.06 (0.35)	-0.05 (0.35)	-0.06 (0.35)	-0.04 (0.34)
Relationship Age2 (Dummy)	0.15 (0.37)	0.11 (0.29)	0.11 (0.28)	0.1 (0.30)	0.11 (0.28)	0.10 (0.28)	0.11 (0.29)
Relationship Age3 (Dummy)	0.02 (0.32)	0.00 (0.24)	0.01 (0.23)	0.00 (0.24)	0.01 (0.23)	-0.01 (0.23)	0.00 (0.23)
Number of Current Clients [a]	0.19* (0.16)	0.01 (0.12)	0.00 (0.12)	0.00 (0.13)	0.02 (0.12)	-0.01 (0.13)	-0.03 (0.12)
Number of Current Cases [a]	-0.08 (0.15)	-0.04 (0.12)	-0.02 (0.11)	-0.04 (0.12)	-0.06 (0.12)	-0.01 (0.12)	0.02 (0.12)
Number of Completed Cases [a]	-0.08 (0.11)	-0.16 (0.09)	-0.15 (0.09)	-0.17 (0.09)	-0.15 (0.09)	-0.19† (0.09)	-0.17† (0.08)
Job Experience [a]	-0.02 (0.24)	0.05 (0.18)	0.05 (0.18)	0.05 (0.19)	0.04 (0.18)	0.07 (0.18)	0.07 (0.18)
Workload Percentage [a]	0.28** (0.16)	0.12† (0.13)	0.11 (0.13)	0.12† (0.13)	0.12 (0.13)	0.13† (0.13)	0.11† (0.12)
Highest VIF	**2.93**	**3.19**	**3.21**	**3.21**	**3.21**	**3.28**	**3.35**
F	**1.70**	**6.01**	**6.01**	**5.78**	**5.97**	**5.97**	**6.20**
Adjusted R2	**0.10**	**0.51**	**0.53**	**0.51**	**0.52**	**0.52**	**0.56**
Effect size (Cohen's F2)	**0.11**	**1.04**	**1.13**	**1.04**	**1.08**	**1.08**	**1.27**

Note: residuals have been used for TP, AH, FP, QP in line with the residual-based 3SLS approach.
[a] Natural logarithm was used to decrease the variance.
** $p < 0.01$
* $P < 0.05$
† $p < 0.1$

The results depict that the coefficient of the base term of time pressure is positive and significant ($\beta = 0.46$, $p < 0.01$). In addition, the squared term denoting a tipping point in the relationship between time pressure and job stress is significant ($\beta = 0.16$, $p < 0.05$), meaning that H_{1a} has been accepted. However, in order to fully accept whether there is a curvilinear relationship between time pressure and job stress, two more steps should be taken (Haans et al., 2016). First, generally, the data must show that the left and the right slopes are sufficiently steep (i.e. significant) to indicate a U-shaped relationship. Considering TP_L and TP_R as the slopes at the low end and the high end, respectively, of the U-shaped relationship between time pressure and job stress, a formal examination for a U-shaped relationship is to exhibit that the slope at TP_L, which is captured as $\beta_1 + 2\beta_2 TP_L$, is negative and significant, and the slope at TP_R, which is captured as $\beta_1 + 2\beta_2 TP_R$, is positive and significant (Haans et al., 2016). However, as the investigator intends to test a right-half U-shaped relationship, the left slope needs to be insignificant in order to indicate that the left end does not exist. Using STATA 14 to test the curvilinear relationship and considering TP_L and TP_R as the left and the right slope, respectively, the results indicated that the left slope is negative and insignificant ($TP_L = -0.15$, $p > 0.1$) and the right slope is positively significant ($TP_R = 0.76$, $p < 0.00$).

Second, the turning point must be higher and lower than the lower bound interval and higher bound interval, respectively (Haans et al., 2016). The confidence interval was calculated based on Fieller's standard error (Lind and Mehlum, 2010). As the investigator mean-centred the constructs including time pressure to avoid the problem of multicollinearity, the turning point was computed as -2.71, which is located well within the confidence interval (-3.74, 2.42). With respect to the results of this three-step procedure and the proximity of the turning point with the lower bound interval, it is

reasonable to conclude that there is a right-half U-shaped relationship between time pressure and job stress.

Notwithstanding the discussed results, to support and fully confirm the curvilinear relationship and in addition to the above-mentioned test, the investigator followed an approach introduced by Laursen and Salter (2006) and created a set of dummies for different values of time pressure. In other words, the investigator estimated a model and replaced time pressure with a set a dummies, each of which reflects a range of time pressure. More specifically, the benchmark dummy (i.e. TP-Dummy2) took the value of 1, when time pressure takes a value around the tipping point (i.e. -2.81 to -2.58); 0 otherwise. Similarly, a dummy (i.e. TP-Dummy1) was created to reflect the values on the left side of the tipping point (i.e. -3.74 to -2.84) and three more dummies (i.e. TP-Dummy3, TP-Dummy4, and TP-Dummy5) were created to reflect the right side of the tipping point (i.e. -2.57 to -0.3; -0.25 to 0.92; 0.93 to 2.42, respectively). The results of this test are shown in Table 5.13. As the researcher expected, the results depict that the dummies above the benchmark are all positive (Model 2). Moreover, TP-Dummy1, which reflects the left end of time pressure, is not significant ($\beta = 0.05$, $p > 0.1$). In line with the investigator's expectations, the results also show that TP-Dummy4 and TP Dummy5, capturing the right-end of time pressure, are significant ($\beta = 0.34$, $p < 0.1$; $\beta = 0.6$, $p < 0.01$). In addition, it is revealed that there is an ascending trend in the estimates of dummies as we move from the tipping point to the right end of time pressure, which confirms the existence of a right-half U-shaped relationship between time pressure and job stress.

Table 5.13 Regression, testing the curvilinear relationship between time pressure and job stress

	Job Stress			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Predictors				
$TP_{residual}$			0.47** (0.07)	0.46** (0.07)
$TP_{residual}^2$			0.12† (0.04)	0.16* (0.04)
TP-Dummy1[a]		0.05 (0.64)		
TP-Dummy2 (Benchmark) [a]		-		
TP-Dummy3[a]		0.23 (0.50)		
TP-Dummy4[a]		0.34† (0.52)		
TP-Dummy5[a]		0.6** (0.52)		
$AH_{residual}$		0.23** (0.06)	0.21** (0.06)	0.15* (0.06)
$FP_{residual}$		0.24** (0.10)	0.21* (0.09)	0.18* (0.09)
$QP_{residual}$		0.34** (0.09)	0.29** (0.09)	0.35** (0.09)
JA		-0.14† (0.08)	-0.15* (0.08)	-0.08 (0.11)
EI		-0.11 (0.13)	-0.09 (0.13)	-0.07 (0.13)
Interactions				
$TP_{residual}$ × JA				-0.17* (0.09)
$TP_{residual}^2$ × JA				-0.13 (0.03)
$AH_{residual}$ × JA				0.03 (0.06)
$FP_{residual}$ × EI				0.20** (0.14)
$QP_{residual}$ × EI				0.23** (0.13)
Controls				
Position-Partner (Dummy)	0.01 (0.33)	-0.02 (0.25)	-0.02 (0.25)	-0.01 (0.24)
Position-Consultant (Dummy)	-0.11 (1.00)	0.03 (0.90)	0.00 (0.77)	-0.01 (0.75)
Position-Director (Dummy)	0.01 (0.40)	0.01 (0.31)	-0.01 (0.30)	-0.02 (0.29)
Gender-Male (Dummy)	0.07 (0.22)	0.1 (0.17)	0.11† (0.17)	0.10 (0.16)
Branch Size1 (Dummy)	0.11 (0.96)	0.1 (0.73)	0.1 (0.72)	0.08 (0.69)
Branch Size2 (Dummy)	0.01 (0.79)	-0.04 (0.60)	-0.04 (0.59)	-0.05 (0.58)
Branch Size3 (Dummy)	0.06 (0.40)	0.04 (0.31)	0.04 (0.31)	0.04 (0.29)
Branch Size4 (Dummy)	-0.14 (0.31)	-0.1 (0.24)	-0.11 (0.23)	-0.15* (0.23)
Branch Size5 (Dummy)	0.05 (0.27)	-0.01 (0.21)	-0.01 (0.20)	0.00 (0.20)
Area-Business Premises (Dummy)	0.04 (0.44)	0.04 (0.34)	0.06 (0.33)	0.09 (0.32)
Area-Company Commercial (Dummy)	0.17 (0.32)	0.04 (0.26)	0.07 (0.25)	0.11 (0.24)
Area-Dispute Resolution (Dummy)	-0.08 (0.32)	-0.08 (0.25)	-0.07 (0.24)	-0.11 (0.23)
Area-Energy and Transport (Dummy)	0.06 (0.56)	0.04 (0.45)	0.06 (0.43)	0.06 (0.42)
Area-Media_IT_IP (Dummy)	-0.09 (0.43)	-0.12 (0.35)	-0.12† (0.33)	-0.13† (0.31)
Area-Regulation Compliance (Dummy)	0.11 (0.48)	0.11 (0.37)	0.09 (0.37)	0.14† (0.37)
Industry-Manufacturing (Dummy)	-0.1 (0.31)	-0.07 (0.24)	-0.1 (0.24)	-0.06 (0.23)
In-House-Yes (Dummy)	0.12 (0.23)	0.13* (0.17)	0.15* (0.17)	0.14* (0.16)
Relationship Age1 (Dummy)	-0.07 (0.46)	-0.06 (0.36)	-0.06 (0.35)	-0.04 (0.34)
Relationship Age2 (Dummy)	0.15 (0.37)	0.1 (0.29)	0.11 (0.29)	0.11 (0.29)
Relationship Age3 (Dummy)	0.023 (0.32)	0 (0.24)	0.00 (0.24)	0.00 (0.23)
Number of Current Clients [aa]	0.19 (0.16)	0.01 (0.13)	0.01 (0.12)	-0.03 (0.12)
Number of Current Cases [aa]	-0.08* (0.15)	-0.08 (0.12)	-0.04 (0.12)	0.02 (0.12)
Number of Completed Cases [aa]	-0.08 (0.11)	-0.14 (0.09)	-0.16 (0.09)	-0.17† (0.08)
Job Experience [aa]	-0.02 (0.24)	0.04 (0.19)	0.05 (0.18)	0.07 (0.18)
Workload Percentage [aa]	0.28** (0.16)	0.14† (0.13)	0.12† (0.13)	0.11† (0.12)
Highest VIF	**2.93**	**9.74**	**3.19**	**3.35**
F	**1.70**	**5.38**	**6.01**	**6.20**
Adjusted R2	**0.10**	**0.50**	**0.51**	**0.56**
Effect size (Cohen's F2)	**0.11**	**1.00**	**1.04**	**1.27**

Note: residuals have been used for TP, AH, FP, QP in line with the residual-based 3SLS approach.

[a] TP-Dummy1 represents the left-end values of time pressure; TP-Dummy2 represents values around the tipping point; TP-Dummy3, TP-Dummy4, and TP-Dummy5 represent the right-end values of time pressure.

[aa] Natural logarithm was used to decrease the variance.

** $p < 0.01$

* $P < 0.05$

† $p < 0.1$

In the next step, to make sure that the U-shaped model fits the data better, using root mean square error (RMSE), the investigator compared the second-order polynomial model (i.e. U-shaped) with other alternative models (i.e. linear, exponential, and cubic). The RMSE scores for the U-shaped model, the linear model, the exponential model, and the cubic model were computed as 1.04, 1.08, 1.07, and 1.04, respectively. Consistent with the investigator's expectation, the results showed that, compared to the linear and the exponential models, the U-shaped model fits the data better.

As an additional support, a set of paired-samples t-test was conducted and the results indicated that the RMSE score of the U-shaped model is significantly better than the RMSE scores of the linear and exponential models ($t = 2.00$, $p < 0.05$; $t = 1.68$, $p < 0.1$). Furthermore, the results revealed that there is no significant difference between the RMSE score of the U-shaped model and the RMSE score of the cubic model ($t = -0.89$, $p > 0.1$). Therefore, it is more reasonable to carry on with the U-shaped model. Figure 5.2 illustrates the data points and the right-half U-shaped relationship between time pressure and job stress.

A right-half U-shaped relationship is similar to exponential relationship. However, I argue that, compared to an exponential model, a right-half U-shaped relationship is more likely to occur in the context of law firms. The growth rate in exponential models is more intense compared to that of U-shaped models. An exponential growth rate is very unlikely for job stress in senior solicitors because law firms are expected to provide social support and other resources for their solicitors if they feel that the extreme levels of stress that

their employees are perceiving significantly decreases their job performance, which alleviates the growth rate of job stress (Zacher et al., 2014).

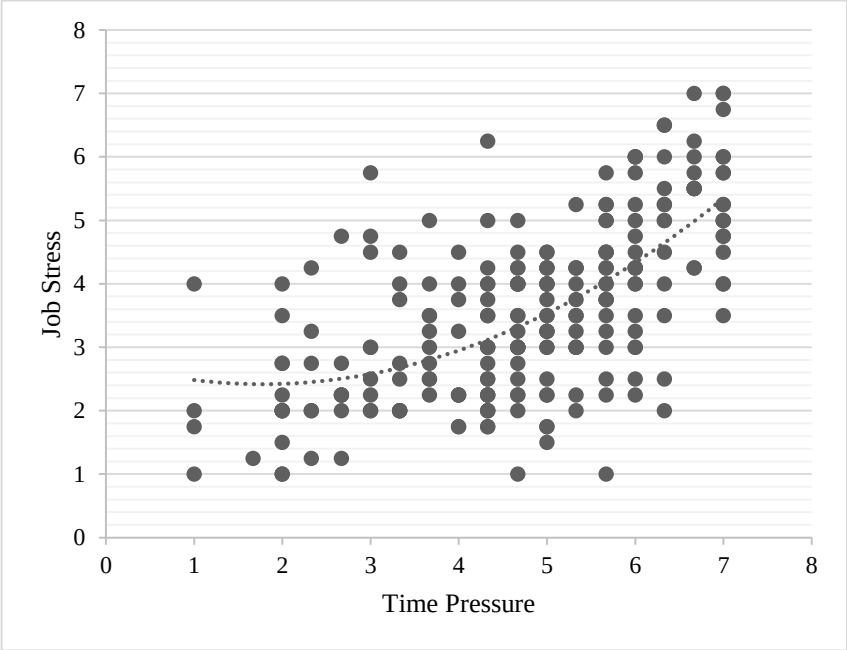


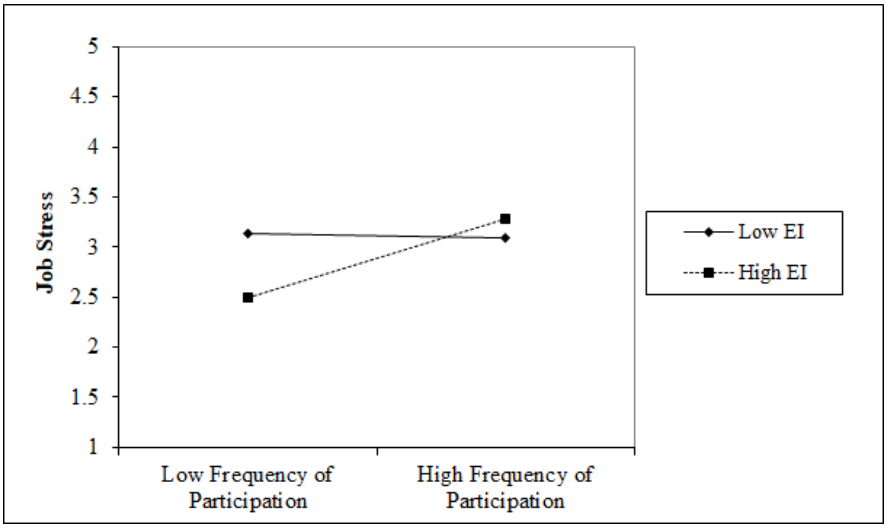
Figure 5.2 Time pressure-job stress relation

The analysis also shows that H_{1b} was accepted ($\beta = 0.15$, $p < 0.05$), implying that administrative hassles positively drive job stress. In line with the researcher's expectations, the results demonstrate that frequency and low quality of client participation positively motivate job stress ($\beta = 0.18$, $p < 0.05$; $\beta = 0.35$, $p < 0.01$), asserting that H_{2a} and H_{2b} have been accepted. Model 3 shows that job autonomy negatively moderates the curvilinear and the linear relationships between time pressure and job stress ($\beta = -0.16$, $p < 0.10$; $\beta = -0.14$, $p < 0.05$) in support of H_{3a}. Although the moderating effect of job autonomy on the linear relationship between time pressure and job stress has been supported in Model 7 ($\beta = -0.17$, $p < 0.05$), the results show that job autonomy does not

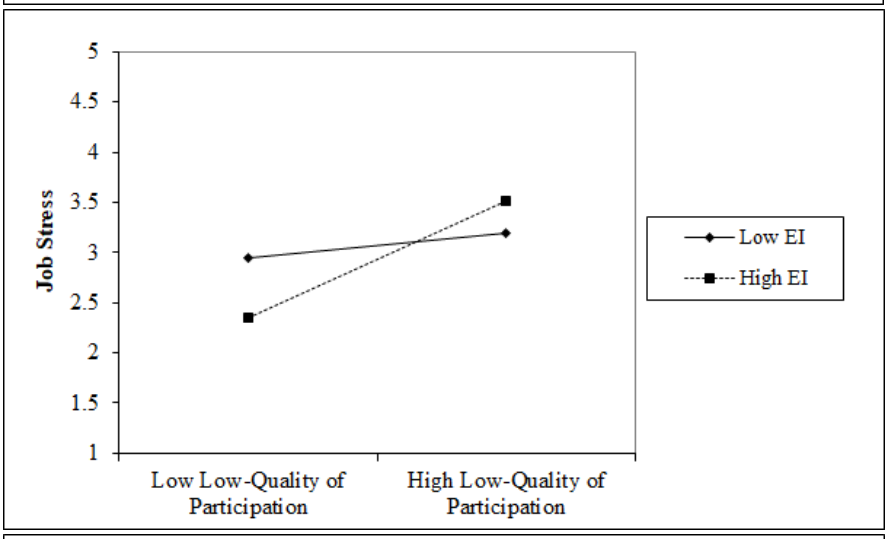
moderate the curvilinear relationship between time pressure and job stress in the final model ($\beta = -0.13$, $p > 0.05$).

In contrast to the researcher's expectations, the results of H_{3b} do not support the moderating role of job autonomy on the path between administrative hassles and job stress ($\beta = 0.03$, $p > 0.05$). Although the effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between frequency of client participation and job stress is significant, it surprisingly moderates this path *positively* ($\beta = 0.20$, $p < 0.01$). Likewise, the analysis reveals that emotional intelligence *positively* moderates the path between low quality of client participation and job stress ($\beta = 0.23$, $p < 0.01$). Table 5.12 shows the regression analysis and Figure 5.3 illustrates the significant moderation findings.

a)



b)



c)

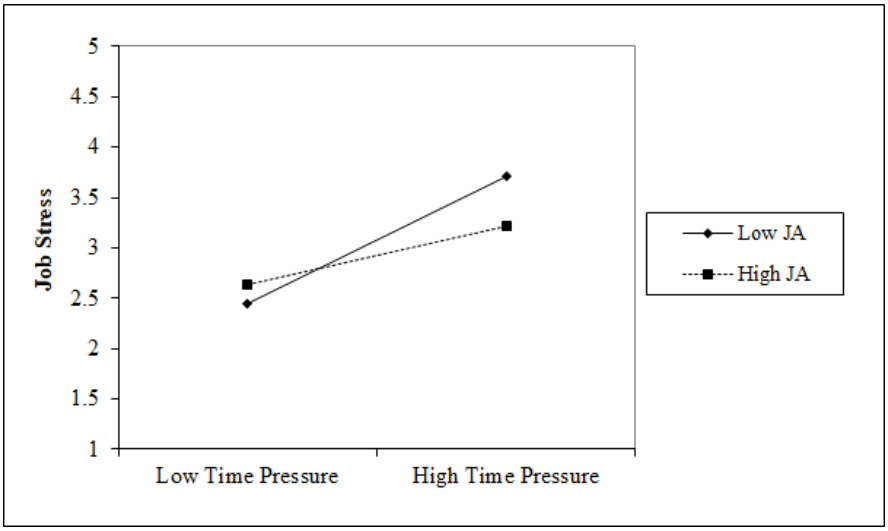


Figure 5.3 Plots of moderation findings

a) Frequency of client participation and EI with job stress. b) Low quality of client participation and EI with job stress. c) Time pressure and job autonomy with job stress

The highest variance inflation factor (VIF) score in the models is 3.35, indicating that multicollinearity is not problematic in this study. The researcher have also calculated the effect size of the regression model using Cohen's f^2 formula:

$$f^2 = \frac{R^2}{1 - R^2}$$

According to Cohen et al. (2003), an f^2 score higher than 0.35 is considered as a high effect size for a multiple regression model. The R^2 of the final model (Model 7) is 0.56; therefore, the effect size of the model is 1.27, which is above the cut-off point, indicating a good effect size for the model.

5.10 Random selection bias

Although the researcher used three-stage least square regression to correct any possible endogeneity bias, it was also examined if the results are vulnerable to the self-selection bias. In particular, frequency of client participation may not necessarily be a random variable as most solicitors choose the frequency with which they meet their clients. Therefore, it is likely that the sample is subject to random selection bias. Using Garen's (1984) approach for continuous choice variables, the researcher employed a two-stage procedure to check for the existence of self-selection bias.

The researcher obtained a correction term for time pressure in the first stage and then, in the second stage, the constructed correction term was added to the equation of job stress. First, the researcher regressed time pressure on the other drivers (i.e. administrative hassles, frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation), moderators (i.e. job autonomy and emotional intelligence), and the control variables to

obtain its predicted errors. This model predicts the level of time pressure in an employee with a given set of factors. After capturing the residuals from the previous stage, the researcher estimated the second-stage job stress equation using weighted least square procedures:

(1) $\text{Job Stress} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 (\text{AH}) + \alpha_2 (\text{FP}) + \alpha_3 (\text{QP}) + \alpha_4 (\text{JA}) + \alpha_5 (\text{EI}) + \alpha_6 (\text{TP}) + \alpha_7 (\text{TP}^2) + \rho_1\eta + \rho_2\eta \times (\text{TP}) + \rho_3\eta \times (\text{TP}^2) + \zeta$

Where α_0 is the intercept, η is the predicted error from the job stress model in the first step, and ζ is the error term. The results illustrate that the coefficient of TP and TP^2 remained positive and significant ($\alpha_6 = 0.49$, $p < 0.01$; $\alpha_7 = 0.19$, $p < 0.05$), which is consistent with the normal regression analysis. Further, the terms consisting TP residuals were not significant ($\rho_1 = 0.09$, $p = 0.59$; $\rho_2 = -0.03$, $p = 0.62$; $\rho_3 = 0.07$, $p = 0.49$).

Similar to the above-mentioned steps, the researcher constructed a correction term for administrative hassles in the first stage by regressing it on the other independent variables (i.e. time pressure, frequency of client participation, and low quality of client participation), moderators (i.e. job autonomy and emotional intelligence), and the control variables. In the second stage, using weighted least square procedures, the researcher modelled job stress as follows:

(2) $\text{Job Stress} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (\text{TP}) + \beta_2 (\text{TP}^2) + \beta_3 (\text{FP}) + \beta_4 (\text{QP}) + \beta_5 (\text{JA}) + \beta_6 (\text{EI}) + \beta_7 (\text{AH}) + \gamma_1\eta + \gamma_2\eta \times (\text{AH}) + \zeta$

Where β_0 is the intercept, η is the predicted error from administrative hassles obtained in the first stage, and ζ is the error term. The results show that the coefficient of AH remained

positive and significant (β_7 = 0.21, p < 0.01), which is consistent with the normal regression analysis. Further, the terms consisting of AH residuals were not significant (γ_1 = 0.09, p = 0.27; γ_2 = -0.11, p = 0.12).

The researcher repeated the same steps for frequency of client participation. In the first step, I regressed FP on the other independent variables (i.e. time pressure, administrative hassles, and low quality of client participation), moderators (i.e. job autonomy and emotional intelligence), and the control variables to obtain the residuals of FP. Next, I estimated job stress by using weighted least square procedures as follows:

(3) $\text{Job Stress} = \delta_0 + \delta_1 (TP) + \delta_2 (TP^2) + \delta_3 (AH) + \delta_4 (QP) + \delta_5 (JA) + \delta_6 (EI) + \delta_7 (FP) + \varphi_1\eta + \varphi_2\eta \times (FP) + \zeta$

Where δ_0 is the intercept, η is the predicted error from frequency of client participation captured in the first step, and ζ is the error term. The results revealed that the coefficient of FP remained positive and significant (δ_7 = 0.37, p < 0.01), which is consistent with the normal regression analysis. Further, the terms involving FP residuals were not significant (φ_1 = 0.09, p = 0.27; φ_2 = 0.01, p = 0.814).

The same steps were applied to low quality of client participation. In the first stage, I regressed QP on the other independent variables (i.e. time pressure, administrative hassles, and frequency of client participation), moderators (i.e. job autonomy and emotional intelligence), and the control variables to obtain the residuals of QP. Next, I estimated job stress by using weighted least square procedures as follows:

(4) Job Stress = $\kappa_0 + \kappa_1$ (TP) + κ_2 (TP^2) + κ_3 (AH) + κ_4 (FP) + κ_5 (JA) + κ_6 (EI) + κ_7 (QP) + $\omega_1\eta + \omega_2\eta \times$ (QP) + ζ

Where κ_0 is the intercept, η is the predicted error from low quality of client participation captured in the first step, and ζ is the error term. The results of this equation show that the coefficient of QP remained positive and significant ($\kappa_7 = 0.51$, $p < 0.01$), which is consistent with the normal regression analysis. Further, the terms involving QP residuals were not significant ($\omega_1 = 0.09$, $p = 0.27$; $\omega_2 = 0.12$, $p = 0.33$).

These results suggest that the relationships between the independent variables (i.e. time pressure, administrative hassles, frequency of client participation, and low quality of client participation) and the dependent variable (i.e. job stress) are not affected by unobserved variables. Thus, it can be concluded that the results of the analysis are immune from the self-selection bias source of endogeneity.

5.11 Ad hoc tests

One may argue that *quality of client participation* can be considered as a resource that contributes to better learning for solicitors, moderating the effect of frequency of client participation on job stress. High-quality of client participation is likely to decrease the complexity and the uncertainty that high-frequency of client participation imposes, because if clients provide clear and relevant information, it makes solicitors' work easier and less complicated. Therefore, using the original items of low quality of client participation (i.e. without reversing them), the investigator conducted an ad hoc test to examine this argumentation. The results show that quality of client participation does not

moderate the path between frequency of client participation and job stress ($\beta = 0.09$, $p > 0.1$), supporting the initial conceptualization of the study.

In a similar vein, the investigator examined the moderating role of quality of client participation on the effects of time pressure and administrative hassles on job stress. The results show that quality of client participation does not moderate the linear and the curvilinear relationships between time pressure and job stress ($\beta = 0.02$, $p > 0.1$; $\beta = -0.10$, $p > 0.1$). Similarly, the results reveal that the effect of administrative hassles on job stress is not moderated by quality of client participation ($\beta = 0.01$, $p > 0.1$), ruling out alternative explanations.

Moreover, it can be reasoned that emotional intelligence, as a personal characteristic, can potentially moderate the effects of time pressure and administrative hassles on job stress. A further ad hoc test was conducted to test this argument. The results showed that emotional intelligence does not moderate the linear and the curvilinear relationships between time pressure and job stress ($\beta = 0.02$, $p > 0.1$; $\beta = 0.02$, $p > 0.1$). The analysis also revealed that the effect of administrative hassles on job stress is not moderated by emotional intelligence ($\beta = 0.06$, $p > 0.1$). These results corroborate the initial conceptualization of the research model.

It can also be argued that job autonomy can moderate the effects of the aspects of client participation on job stress. A further ad hoc test was conducted to investigate if job autonomy moderates the paths between client participation and job stress. As job autonomy provides solicitors with more resources, it may be argued that autonomous

solicitors are able to use their resources to reduce the level of complexity they perceive due to frequency of client participation (Grandey et al., 2005). In addition, these resources are expected to facilitate the work of solicitors, which can be translated into weakening the effect of low-quality client participation on job stress. Similar to the previous ad hoc tests, the results demonstrate that job autonomy does not moderate the effects of frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation on job stress (β = 0.03, $p > 0.1$; β = -0.03, $p > 0.1$).

5.12 Summary of the hypotheses testing

Table 5.14 outlines a summary of the results of the hypotheses.

Table 5.14 Summary of the results of hypothesis testing

Hypothesis		Result	Description
Hypothesis 1a	Time pressure exhibits a right-half U-shaped relationship with job stress.	Accepted	-
Hypothesis 1b	Administrative hassles is positively related to job stress.	Accepted	-
Hypothesis 2a	Frequency of participation is positively related to job stress.	Accepted	-
Hypothesis 2b	Low-quality of participation is positively related to job stress.	Accepted	-
Hypothesis 3a	Job autonomy moderates the right-half U-shaped relationship between time pressure and job stress such that it becomes weaker as job autonomy increases.	Rejected	Job autonomy moderates the linear effect of time pressure on job stress.
Hypothesis 3b	Job autonomy moderates the relationship between administrative hassles and job stress such that it becomes weaker as job autonomy increases.	Rejected	-
Hypothesis 4a	Emotional intelligence moderates the effect of frequency of participation on job stress such that it becomes weaker as emotional intelligence increases.	Rejected	EI significantly moderates the effect of frequency of client participation on job stress such that it becomes ***stronger*** as EI increases.
Hypothesis 4b	Emotional intelligence moderates the effect of low-quality of participation on job stress such that it becomes weaker as emotional intelligence increases.	Rejected	EI significantly moderates the effect of low quality of client participation on job stress such that it becomes ***stronger*** as EI increases.

5.13 Chapter summary

This chapter has reported the results of the thesis. The chapter started by providing descriptive statistics and screening the data by testing the missing values, outliers, normality, multicollinearity, and non-response bias. Next, in addition to measuring the reliability of the constructs, measure purification tests using EFA and CFA were conducted. Thereafter, in order to test the convergent validity, discriminant validity and composite reliability, AVE and CR scores were computed. The results of the correlation and the CMV-correlation scores also showed no problem regarding discriminant validity and common method bias. In the next step, for the purpose of hypothesis testing, 3SLS regression was used correcting the potential endogeneity bias. Finally, a two-stage procedure was used to test if the results are vulnerable to the random-selection bias and it was indicated that the results are consistent with the results of the normal regression conducted in the hypothesis testing stage.

6 CHAPTER SIX: Discussion

6.1 Chapter overview

As the concluding section of this thesis, this chapter discusses the findings of the current study. The chapter by with providing an overview of the main findings. Thereafter, theoretical and managerial implications of the thesis will be presented. Finally, based on the limitations of the thesis, directions for future research will be discussed.

6.2 Discussion of findings and empirical implications

Drawing on the literature on services marketing and occupational health psychology, the researcher proposed a model of drivers of job stress in front-line employees of professional services firms examined in a cross-sectional study in UK law firms. Using the JD-R theory, one of the aims of this research was to explore how different job demands (i.e. challenge demands and hindrance demands) can stimulate job stress in professionals. For this purpose, time pressure and administrative hassles were considered as the challenge and hindrance demand, respectively. In addition to the job demands, the investigator examined the role of the client in the process of service delivery by testing the effects of frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation on the job stress of professional front-line employees.

The researcher also aimed to investigate the moderating effects of job autonomy, as a job resource, on the links between job demands and job stress. By capturing emotional intelligence as a further moderator, the investigator tested the buffering impact of EI, as a personal resource, on the effects of frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation on job stress. Dividing the chapter into different sub-sections, the

investigator will discuss the findings of the thesis as follows: the effects of job demands, the effects of the aspects of client participation, and the moderating effects of resources.

6.2.1 Effects of job demands

Consistent with the JD-R theory, this research posits that, regardless of being either a challenge demand or a hindrance demand, job demands cause stress in professional front-line employees (Bakker and Demerouti, 2014, Zhang et al., 2018). As previously discussed, time pressure was considered as a challenge stressor in this research and it was formulated that time pressure has a right-half U-shaped relationship with job stress in professionals.

Consistent with the literature, the findings supported this hypothesis (Thomas et al., 2011, Zacher et al., 2014). It can be argued that front-line employees who perceive the pressure of time are likely to feel that they do not have enough time to meet their deadlines, which imposes stress. In addition, employees experiencing time pressure have a higher perception of lack control over their jobs, which increases stress (Teuchmann et al., 1999). However, as discussed before, senior solicitors are able to tolerate the detrimental effects of time pressure to some extent due to their experience. Therefore, it can be argued that the relationship between time pressure and job stress consists of two parts. The first part is when the level of time pressure is low, which does not generate a significant amount of job stress in senior solicitors. This argument has been formally tested in Chapter five by a set of dummies (Laursen and Salter, 2006). The dummy reflecting the left end of the tipping point was found to be insignificant, supporting that low levels of time pressure do not generate job stress. In addition to this test, the investigator followed the

recommendation by Haans et al. (2016) and tested the left-end slope of the relationship between time pressure and job stress, and the results showed that the left-end slope is not significant, confirming the investigator's argument. The second part is when the level of time pressure increases and it works like a hindrance demand. In this situation, solicitors start to lose their tolerance and the relationship becomes ascending at an increasing rate. Thus, it can be concluded that the relation between time pressure and job stress is best characterized by a right-half U-shaped relationship. While previous studies have empirically investigated this relationship and have reported that time pressure has a linear relationship with job stress, the results of this study divulge a novel right-half U-shaped relationship between time pressure, as a challenge demand, and job stress in professional front-line employees (Widmer et al., 2012). This finding has empirical implications indicating that time pressure augments job stress at an increasing rate, since solicitors perceive stress not only because of the pressure of time and time inadequacy, but also because of the pressure of their clients and firms, as increasing time pressure means they are more likely to miss their deadlines.

In addition, based upon the JD-R theory, it was hypothesized that, the more a solicitor perceives administrative hassles, the more s/he feels job stress. The findings of the study reveal that there is a positive relationship between administrative hassles and job stress in front-line employees. Solicitors who face high levels of administrative hassles perceive less power and authority in their jobs because, due to the pre-defined procedures, administrative hassles limit their decision-making power (DeHart-Davis and Pandey, 2005, Raub, 2008). Therefore, in line with the JD-R theory, it can be inferred that, when solicitors feel that they have no power to control and manage their job demands, they will perceive more job stress (Crawford et al., 2010, Xanthopoulou et al., 2012). Despite its

potential implications, to the best of investigator's knowledge, the present research is the first empirical study that investigates the relationship between administrative hassles and job stress in the context of professional services firms. Empirically examining the consequences of administrative hassles in law firms is important as administrative hassles, compared to other hindrance demands, are more strongly perceived by senior solicitors. For example, given their superior job experience, it is very unlikely that senior solicitors will perceive much role ambiguity or role conflict in their jobs. Furthermore, in the preliminary interviews, the interviewees stressed that red tape and administrative hassles hinder them from fully concentrating on their clients, leading to more job stress.

6.2.2 Effects of client participation

Based on the services marketing literature, the investigator hypothesized that client participation can drive job stress in professional front-line employees (Hsieh and Yen, 2005, Chan et al., 2010). However, it has been argued that, in addition to the extent (i.e. frequency) of client participation, the quality aspect should be taken into account. Therefore, it was hypothesized that, in addition to the frequency of client participation that is positively related to job stress, low quality of client participation also drives job stress positively.

In line with the researcher's expectations, the results unveil that frequency and low quality of client participation positively influence job stress. Frequency of client participation has been found to have a positive relationship with job stress of front-line employees. One possible explanation is that excessive amounts of information overwhelm solicitors, which may result in more complexity and uncertainty for them (Hsieh and Yen, 2005,

Hoyer et al., 2010). Additionally, clients may express unscripted behaviours increasing task difficulties and uncertainty, leading to an increase in job stress for professionals (Chan et al., 2010). This research stands among the first to empirically test the relationship between frequency of client participation and job stress. A review of the empirical studies in the services marketing literature indicates that frequency of client participation is associated with desirable outcomes such as customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, and employee performance (Bendapudi and Leone, 2003, Chan et al., 2010, Yi et al., 2011). However, the findings unveiled that frequency of client participation can be a source of job stress for professional service providers.

Furthermore, the results indicate that, similar to frequency of client participation, low quality of client participation increases job stress. Low quality information as an input in a legal context is expected to prevent solicitors delivering low quality output because such information makes their work more complicated, which can increase their cognitive demands. In addition, if a client provides unclear and irrelevant information, this can delay the solicitor's service delivery, which may lead to more chance of failure, tension and stress for staff (Fang et al., 2008b). Testing the effects of low-quality client participation on the job stress of service providers, the present study attempts to make a novel empirical implication in the context of services marketing. Despite its importance in professional services firms, no one, as far as the investigator knows, has empirically examined the low quality of client participation, particularly as a source of job stress in professional staff.

6.2.3 Moderating effects of job autonomy

JD-R theorists state that resources can buffer the link between demands and job stress since employees furnished with resources are more able to manage the demands they face (Bakker et al., 2005, Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). Consistent with the above-mentioned argument, the researcher hypothesized that job resources moderate the relationships between the demands and job stress. Specifically, it was hypothesized that job autonomy, as a job resource, moderates the effects of time pressure and administrative hassles on job stress. Moreover, the investigator hypothesized that emotional intelligence moderates the relationship between frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation with job stress.

Although the right-half U-shaped relationship between time pressure and job stress is not moderated by job autonomy, the findings show that job autonomy negatively moderates the linear effect of time pressure on job stress; that is, in the presence of job autonomy, employees are less affected by time pressure. In other words, due to their job control, autonomous solicitors are more able to manage the pressure of time, which leads to less stress (Wang and Cheng, 2010). A further explanation is that job autonomy gives power to employees and furnishes solicitors with more resources (Grandey et al., 2005). Thus, the detrimental effect of lack of control stemming from the pressure of time will be attenuated. As the level of job autonomy increases, an employee will become more able to tolerate time pressure and thus not experience job stress. The results indicate that employees with less control over their jobs are less able to tolerate the pressure of time because they possess fewer resources and less control to cope with the demands they experience (Bakker and Demerouti, 2014). Although job autonomy has been empirically examined as a moderator in the literature (e.g. Barrick and Mount, 1993, Kim et al., 2009, Wang and Cheng, 2010), to the best of the investigator's knowledge, the moderating

effect of job autonomy on the relationship between time pressure and job stress has not been previously examined. The findings of this research have empirical implications for scholars in that job autonomy, as a job resource, serves as a buffering factor that protects employees against the detrimental effects of job demands such as time pressure.

The investigator also hypothesized that the positive relationship between administrative hassles and job stress will be weakened by job autonomy. Nevertheless, inconsistent with the researcher's expectations, the results show that job autonomy does not moderate the relationship between administrative hassles and job stress. One possible explanation would be that, although job autonomy decreases the feeling of powerlessness, struggling with administrative hassles still takes up an employee's time and energy (Wang and Cheng, 2010). Second, administrative hassles engage professionals mentally, which is expected to diminish their concentration on their main tasks, handling their clients' cases, and giving them job autonomy is not likely to lessen this mental engagement. A further explanation is that the resources that administrative hassles consume are likely to be different in nature compared to the resources that job autonomy offers. Therefore, having job autonomy does not necessarily compensate for the resources wasted on administrative hassles.

6.2.4 Moderating effects of emotional intelligence

In addition to the moderating role of the job resource (i.e. job autonomy) in this research, the moderating role of emotional intelligence, as the personal resource of the framework, has been examined. Hence, the investigator hypothesized that emotional intelligence negatively moderates the effects of frequency of client participation and low quality of

client participation on job stress. The results highlighted that emotional intelligence moderates the relationship between frequency of client participation and job stress. Although the researcher expected EI to moderate this path *negatively*, interestingly, the results show that EI moderates the link between frequency of client participation and job stress *positively*, implying that EI strengthens the impact of frequency of client participation on job stress.

One possible explanation is that emotionally intelligent individuals have more ability to perceive information compared to low-EI individuals (Ciarrochi et al., 2002). Hence, if a client provides a large amount of information, it is reasonable to argue that an emotionally intelligent employee is more likely to perceive more information and feel overwhelmed by it, which can generate more job stress for the solicitor. A second potential reason is that, due to the ability of emotionally intelligent individuals in perceiving information, it is expected that they perceive more negative information and uncertainty from the provided information and the relationship with the clients. This provides support for the idea that, in the presence of high levels of EI, solicitors perceive more uncertainty, yielding more job stress. This finding contributes to the literature on emotional intelligence by empirically testing an uninvestigated hypothesis, being the moderating role of emotional intelligence on the relationship between frequency of client participation and job stress. This finding empirically supports the literature investigating the dark side of emotional intelligence discussing that, in addition to the abilities that emotional intelligence provides to individuals, there is a dark side and some drawbacks that need to be considered (Ciarrochi et al., 2002, Matthews et al., 2006).

Contrary to the researcher's expectation and similar to the previous hypothesis, it was found that EI moderates the link between low quality of client participation and job stress *positively*. In other words, the results indicate that emotionally intelligent employees were found to be more affected by stress. Concurrent with Ciarrochi et al.'s (2002) study, the present study argues that there are at least two hypotheses, namely the insensitivity hypothesis and the confusion hypothesis, that explain the findings. First, the insensitivity hypothesis states that low-EI individuals are more successful in repressing and/or ignoring thoughts of stressors and demands (Ciarrochi et al., 2002). It is argued that less perceptive people (low-EI people) perceive less stress compared to their highly perceptive counterparts, which can deliberately be used as an effective coping strategy in dealing with stress (Simpson et al., 1995). Thus, it can be concluded that emotionally perceptive employees comprehend more stress when they experience stressors.

Second, the confusion hypothesis suggests that, although similar to high-EI employees, low-EI individuals are sensitive to stress, they just cannot work out that it is affecting them adversely (Ciarrochi et al., 2002). In other words, low-EI people become more confused regarding their feelings and perceptions. Hence, there is a possibility that they report less stress when their clients do not participate well in the process of service delivery. Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that emotionally perceptive employees have more awareness about their feelings and the stress they are experiencing, leading to higher reported stress. From an empirical perspective, this finding makes a significant contribution to the JD-R literature by empirically testing a new hypothesis, being the moderating role of emotional intelligence on the relationship between low quality of client participation and job stress. It also contributes to the emotional intelligence literature by showing that high-EI solicitors can be more susceptible to stress when they

perceive low-quality of participation from their clients, supporting previous findings (Ciarrochi et al., 2002, Matthews et al., 2006, Nagler et al., 2014).

6.3 Implications

This section outlines the theoretical and managerial implications of the thesis. First, the theoretical implications will be presented, followed by a discussion of the managerial implications.

6.3.1 Theoretical implications

The current research makes several noteworthy contributions to the literature on services marketing and occupational health psychology. First, by empirically testing the role of challenge demands in the job stress of front-line employees, this research contributes to an emerging stream of research on stress in the literature on marketing. The results of this study are in line with prior works in investigating that the hindrance demand (i.e. administrative hassles) positively drives the health-impairment process (Sonnentag et al., 2012, Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). However, unlike most of the previous works in the extant marketing literature focusing on the *degree* of stressors to illustrate the negative outcomes of job demands (Singh, 2000, Ashill et al., 2009, Yoo et al., 2014, Auh et al., 2016), this study captured different types of stressors, giving a more authentic picture of the workplace. This study emphasizes that, in addition to the hindrance demands that have been widely examined in the marketing literature (e.g. Singh, 2000, Ashill et al., 2009, Babakus et al., 2009, Petrou et al., 2019), challenge demands should be taken into account since it is the combination of challenge and hindrance demands that gives us a better understanding of stressors in the workplace. Hindrance demands involve excessive

constraints preventing personal gains and developments (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). This research contributes to the marketing and services marketing literature by investigating potential stressors in professional services firms. Most of the prior works in the marketing literature are heavily grounded on the fact that, regardless of the type of stressors, they yield negative outcomes.

Hindrance demands such as role ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload have been well-studied in the marketing literature and, in explaining the job stress of service providers, marketing scholars have posited that those facets of the job that require mental or physical effort are related to psychological costs, causing job stress (e.g. Ashill et al., 2009, Coelho et al., 2011). However, as a key implication of this study, this thesis emphasizes that the demands that service providers experience can be different in nature. In addition to the above-mentioned hindrance demands, there are challenge demands that can cost effort and, at the same time, promote personal growth and provide gains for employees (Crawford et al., 2010, Bakker and Demerouti, 2017).

Distinguishing between challenge demands and hindrance demands, this thesis contributes to the body of knowledge by examining both types of demands in a services marketing context. Consistent with the context, this research considered time pressure and administrative hassles to capture challenge and hindrance demands, respectively. Time pressure can be translated into more work and more cases, implying more monetary and non-monetary gains. However, at the same time, the pressure of time is associated with psychological and physiological costs, increasing job stress and strain in professional service providers (Crawford et al., 2010). On the other hand, it was argued that

administrative hassles are barriers that unnecessarily prevent employees from achieving their valued goals by wasting their resources, which imposes stress on service providers. The results emphasize the importance of time pressure and administrative hassles as a challenge and a hindrance stressor, respectively, in predicting the job stress of senior solicitors. This is in accord with the JD-R theory stating that different job demands initiate the health-impairment process (Demerouti et al., 2001, Crawford et al., 2010).

Time pressure serves as a job demand that increases the feeling of lack of job control, which, according to the JD-R theory, augments job stress (de Jonge et al., 2010). An employee who has inadequate time to finish his/her tasks is likely to miss some deadlines, which may put his/her position at risk since the client and the firm increase their pressure on the employee, intensifying the level of job stress. Moreover, administrative hassles, as a hindrance demand, waste employees' valuable resources such as time and cognitive ability, which causes the feeling of resource loss, leading to job stress (Pandey and Scott, 2002, Hobfoll et al., 2003). Administrative hassles also impose the feeling of powerlessness on employees, which limits the decision-making power of professional service providers, raising their job stress (DeHart-Davis and Pandey, 2005, Raub, 2008, Crawford et al., 2010).

Second, previous studies using the JD-R theory investigating front-line employees of services firms have mainly focused on job demands (e.g. workload, role ambiguity and role conflict) that staff face (e.g. Zablah et al., 2012, Miao and Evans, 2013, Auh et al., 2016). This research, however, supports previous findings in the literature and contributes additional evidence suggesting that job stress can be affected not only by job demands

but also by the presence of clients (i.e. client participation), particularly in the context of professional services firms in which clients heavily interact with service providers in the process of service delivery.

Considering client participation as a potential stressor, it was found that participation of clients during the process of service delivery can be a source of job stress for front-line employees. The results show that client participation, regardless of its different aspects, is a potential driver of job stress in professional services firms. As far as the investigator knows, this research is the first to investigate different aspects of client participation as drivers of stress in the JD-R theory. The results indicated that the presence of clients in the process of service delivery can be considered as a demand, particularly in professional services firms, since professional services are costly for clients, who endeavour to be involved in this process to make sure that the quality of the service that they receive meets their needs and expectations (Nordenflycht, 2010). The role of client participation is more remarkable in a professional services context such as law firms, in which clients are inseparable from the process of service delivery, since they need to actively participate and provide information for the solicitors as the service providers.

Supporting the propositions of the JD-R theory, the findings pinpoint the potential role of client participation as a demand in professional services firms, because too much participation from clients can be overwhelming, requiring high levels of mental effort and psychological costs (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). The findings show that frequency of client participation, as the first aspect of client participation, significantly drives job stress, because too much involvement and information provision overwhelms solicitors

and makes the service more complex (Hoyer et al., 2010). In addition, high levels of frequency of client participation can be a source of uncertainty for service providers, preventing them from delivering a high-quality service, which increases their job stress (Chan et al., 2010). This is in line with the JD-R theory, which posits that stressors impede gains and valued goals. According to this theory, every aspect of the job that needs mental/physical effort and is related to psychological/physiological costs initiates a health-impairment process such as job stress (Demerouti et al., 2001). Hence, as demonstrated by the results, the higher the degree of perceived frequency of client participation, the more solicitors become overwhelmed and consequently the more they feel stress.

What is more, while there is a large volume of published studies investigating client participation in the literature on marketing, no empirical research has been found that measures the quality aspect of client participation. This research provides additional evidence with respect to the frequency of client participation. The researcher argued that, apart from the frequency of client participation, the quality aspect of client participation is an important antecedent of job stress particularly in the context of law firms, and the investigator believe that it would be ill-conceived not to consider the quality aspect of client participation.

Similar to the effect of frequency of client participation on job stress, the results illustrated that low quality of client participation can increase the level of solicitors' stress. To the best of the investigator's knowledge, this study is the first to examine an uninvestigated aspect of client participation as a driver of stress, namely low quality of client

participation, in addition to frequency of client participation, and hence provides new insights into the literature on client participation and the JD-R theory. From this vantage point, the current research is extending the literature on client participation, first by considering the concept of client participation as a potential stressor for professional service providers, then by identifying a new aspect of client participation, namely low quality of client participation. Therefore, the present study provides important avenues for future research in services marketing. Given the fact that the literature on services marketing focuses on the effects of the degree of client participation as a driver of variables such as customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, and employee performance (see Yi et al., 2011, Eisingerich et al., 2014, Chang and Taylor, 2016), this study attempted to conceptualize client participation with regard not only to the frequency aspect, but also to the quality aspect.

Additionally, the moderation analyses for testing the mitigating effect of job autonomy provide empirical support for the buffering roles of resources in the JD-R theory (Bakker et al., 2005). The results indicated that job autonomy mitigates the detrimental effect of time pressure on job stress. This finding offers insight for scholars into how job resources such as job autonomy could weaken the effects of the sources of stress on the job stress of professional service providers. The present research suggests that studies investigating the effects of demands on health-impairment processes need to consider job resources as tools that enable employees to attenuate the deleterious effects of demands. In addition, the significant moderating role of job autonomy suggests that, when service providers are experiencing high levels of pressure, allowing discretion and autonomy can assist them to handle the stressful pressure they face. Thus, to explain job stress of service providers,

marketing scholars need to explicitly consider job resources such as job autonomy in addition to the demands.

This research also showed that emotional intelligence, as a personal resource, significantly moderates the effects of frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation on the job stress of professional service providers. However, contrary to the researcher's expectations, the analysis shows that emotional intelligence *positively* moderates the relationships between frequency and low quality of client participation and job stress. Therefore, the positive association between frequency and low quality of client participation and job stress will be strengthened when EI increases. This unexpected result contributes to the body of literature arguing that, in addition to its benefits, EI also has a dark side for individuals. For instance, Matthews et al. (2006) showed that EI does not necessarily protect individuals against job demands. This endorses the notion that, as emotionally intelligent employees have higher emotion perception skills, they perceive more negative feelings in their interactions. This finding can open new avenues for scholars to investigate the potential effects of emotional intelligence, since EI has traditionally been considered as a beneficial factor in managing and handling stressful situations. Given the fact that the literature on emotional intelligence mainly focuses on a set of capabilities that help individuals to manage their emotions, the present research stands among the few empirical studies that consider EI as a personality trait that does not necessarily enable employees to manage unpleasant situations at works (e.g. Ciarrochi et al., 2002, Matthews et al., 2006, Davis and Humphrey, 2012).

6.3.2 Managerial implications

The findings of this research have considerable managerial implications for managers of professional services firms for how they can alleviate the negative consequences of demands on their professional staff in order to prevent job stress. The findings suggest that different job demands can generate job stress in different ways. Further, although client participation is necessary in professional services firms, The findings show that it can create job stress in professional staff.

First, the findings revealed that, as challenge stressors increase, they can foist significant stress on professional staff. The right-half U-shaped effect of time pressure on job stress indicates that professional employees are able to tolerate the pressure of time to some extent. However, as this pressure increases, solicitors start to lose their tolerance and feel stress at an increasing rate. One issue that emerges from this finding is that managers of law firms need to consider that, regardless of how professional and expert their solicitors are, they perceive job stress if they experience too much time pressure. Therefore, legal directors in law firms can decrease the pressure of time by allocating more solicitors to clients. This can be helpful specifically for clients who have several parallel cases. Adding more experts and auxiliary employees to legal teams is a reasonable solution to reduce time pressure by distributing a given set of tasks to more professionals, leading to less job stress and pressure for front-line employees. In addition, if possible, managers can extend solicitors' deadlines to minimize the pressure of time and the stress that they perceive. A potential reason why time pressure generates job stress is the feeling of having inadequate time to finish the allocated tasks and the fear of missing deadlines. Hence, giving more time to solicitors who are suffering from time pressure can decrease their perceived job stress.

The analysis also shows that professionals with high levels of job autonomy and control are more able to tolerate the pressure of time. While time pressure generates the feeling of lack of control over their tasks, job autonomy gives discretion and control to employees in their jobs (Haynes, 2009, Coelho and Augusto, 2010). Furthermore, autonomous employees have more opportunities to independently manage their jobs and use their personal initiative when carrying out their work. As a result, giving autonomy to solicitors diminishes the feeling of lack of job control stemming from time pressure. An important practical implication for managers of law firms is that they should note that, whenever it is not possible to prevent imposing time pressure on their employees, they can alleviate the negative consequences of time constraints by giving their professional staff job autonomy. Autonomy helps employees to use their resources and manage the demands they are experiencing. With respect to the fact that time pressure is a very common demand in law firms (Morgan, 2014), the finding of this study indicated that giving job autonomy to solicitors is a plausible solution to decrease the negative consequences of time pressure at work.

Moreover, the results also suggest that administrative hassles generate job stress in professionals. When employees are required to complete unnecessary forms and excessive paperwork, they will perceive the feeling of powerlessness, since they will have less control over their jobs (DeHart-Davis and Pandey, 2005). Dealing with high levels of administrative hassles also engenders the feeling of resource loss in employees (Pandey and Scott, 2002). Thus, managers of professional services firms should note that, by reconsidering the workflow processes in their firms, they can decrease the level of

administrative hassles that solicitors need to carry out. Additionally, legal directors can allocate employees that specifically handle red tape, leading to less administrative hassles for professional service providers and thus yielding less stress for them.

Another important notable finding for mangers is the ways in which clients participate in the process of service delivery. The results show that different aspects of client participation in professional services can affect employees' job stress. Although participation of clients is vital in the process of service delivery in professional services firms, this research evidences that frequency of client participation and low quality of client participation have positive links with job stress of professional service providers. High levels of frequency of client participation can be translated into too much information provision by clients and communication with clients. Managers of law firms need to note that high levels of frequency of client participation can be overwhelming for solicitors, imposing stress on them. As clients of professional services tend to fully engage in the process of service delivery to make sure that they will receive acceptable service quality, managers of law firms need to reconsider the service procedures by which clients communicate with solicitors and provide information. These procedures should be designed to prevent clients from bombarding professionals with unnecessary information and communications. In addition to that, by providing training to clients, managers and front-line professional staff can impede the provision of too much information by them.

In addition to the positive effect of frequency of client participation on job stress, the results of this study showed that low quality of client participation increases job stress in professional service providers. Clients who provide unclear and irrelevant information

make the process of service delivery more complicated for solicitors as they need more time and resources to digest and process the provided information. Hence, a reasonable approach is to educate clients and to enable them to discern relevant information from irrelevant information. Moreover, apprising the client of the importance of providing clear and accurate information in a legal case is therefore advisable for managers of law firms and solicitors as well to propel their clients to provide clear and relevant information.

Further, the results demonstrate that emotional intelligence can work as a double-edged sword in professionals. The analysis shows that, while there is a significant negative correlation between emotional intelligence and job stress, in contrast to the researcher's expectations, the regression analysis indicates that emotional intelligence strengthens the positive link between frequency of client participation and job stress. In other words, emotionally intelligent employees perceive more job stress when clients provide large amounts of information in the process of service delivery. Similarly, EI moderates the positive association between low quality of client participation and job stress, positively implying that emotional intelligence strengthens this positive effect.

These unexpected results can be explained by the literature on the dark side of emotional intelligence, which illustrates that emotionally intelligent individuals perceive more negative emotions in their social communications (Ciarrochi et al., 2002, Matthews et al., 2006). However, managers need to consider the fact that emotion perception is only one aspect of emotional intelligence. Focusing more on emotion management skills may assist solicitors to manage stressful situations.

In addition, emotionally intelligent employees are more able to engender trust in their relationships with clients. With a greater focus on an emotion management set of skills, managers of professional services firms should take training on emotional intelligence into consideration. In addition, recruiter and hiring managers need to employ evaluation tools to assess prospective and potential employees' emotional intelligence, especially their emotion management skills. Further, the researcher recommend that emotion management training should take place regularly for staff, particularly those who have direct contact with clients.

6.4 Limitations and directions for future research

This study sheds new light on how different job demands and different aspects of client participation affect job stress in professional front-line employees. Nevertheless, there are a few caveats that need to be considered for future research. First, as the constructs of this research have been measured through subjective measures, this study may subject to some cognitive biases. Measuring objective data, future studies can diminish the potential cognitive biases in this research. Further, the data has been collected from only one side of the solicitor-client dyad. Obtaining independent and dependent variables from different sources can reduce biases such as the effects of consistency motifs, dispositional mood states and social desirability tendencies (Podsakoff et al., 2012).

Third, the data was collected cross-sectionally. Podsakoff et al. (2012) argue that introducing a time delay between measuring the independent variables and the dependent variables is an option for controlling method bias to some extent. Measuring the

independent variables in t_1 and the dependent variable in t_2 would provide a deeper understanding on the ways in which the job demands and client participation motivate job stress in the long run. Fourth, the researcher captured the drivers using the JD-R theory. However, other theories such as transactional theory of stress may enable us to look at the job stress of professionals from a different angle (Lazarus and Folkman, 1987). For example, it may be beneficial to investigate how lack of ability to cope with the demands at work can generate or condition job stress.

Fifth, the researcher only examined how different aspects of client participation can provoke job stress in professionals. Future studies can examine how participation of professionals' colleagues can impact employees' job stress, particularly because a client's demands are normally handled by a team of professionals in professional services firms. What is more, the researcher considered job resources and personal resources as the moderators in the model. Future studies could explore the effects of other job and personal resources, such as social support and self-efficacy, on the impact of demands on job stress. Additionally, in order to address the problem of endogeneity, the investigator used the moderators (i.e. job autonomy and emotional intelligence) as instrumental variables. This approach only addresses endogeneity bias stemming from the effects of the moderators on the independent variables, and other sources of endogeneity may still remain in the results. Therefore, future work can use instrumental variables that meet the criteria of relevance and exogeneity to fully address the problem of endogeneity.

A further future research can be examining mediating mechanisms through which demands cause burnout and job disengagement. Dealing with job stress is associated with

psychological and physiological costs increasing fatigue and demotivation, which can drain service providers' energy and cause burnout (i.e. emotional exhaustion and depersonalization) and job disengagement (Hakanen et al., 2006). Thus, future research could investigate how demands can emotionally exhaust professional service providers and increase the feeling of depersonalization toward their jobs/clients by examining the mediating role of job stress. More specifically, given the fact that the literature on the JD-R theory focuses on the outcomes of demands and resources, future studies need to investigate how different demands and stressors can cause different aspects of burnout, such as emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, and job disengagement through mediating mechanisms. Hence, further studies on mediating mechanisms could provide more in-depth insight and theoretical implications for scholars, and would also furnish practitioners with managerial implications, helping firms' decision makers and executives to protect their professional employees from job burnout and job disengagement.

6.5 Chapter summary

This chapter started by providing a summary of the findings of this research. Specifically, concurrent with the extant literature, the findings of the direct effects and the moderating effects were discussed. Additionally, theoretical and managerial implications of the thesis were delineated. Finally, the main limitations of the study were outlined and directions for future research were proposed.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethical approval

Research & Innovation Service
Level 11, Worsley Building
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UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Arash Valipour
Marketing Division
LUBS
University of Leeds
Leeds, LS2 9NL

ESSL, Environment and LUBS (AREA) Faculty Research Ethics Committee
University of Leeds

23 March 2020

Dear Arash Valipour

Title of study: **A Model of Relational Flexibility: Evidence from Professional Services Firms**
Ethics reference: **LTLUBS-138**

I am pleased to inform you that the above application for light touch ethical review has been reviewed by a delegate of the ESSL, Environment and LUBS (AREA) Faculty Research Ethics Committee and I can confirm a favourable ethical opinion as of the date of this letter. The following documentation was considered:

Document	Version	Date
LTLUBS-138 05_LightTouchEthicsForm GH.doc	2	08/09/16
LTLUBS-138 response 1.txt (response 1)	1	16/09/16

Please notify the committee if you intend to make any amendments to the information in your ethics application as submitted at date of this approval as all changes must receive ethical approval prior to implementation. The amendment form is available at http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/EthicsAmendment.

Please note: You are expected to keep a record of all your approved documentation, as well as documents such as sample consent forms, and other documents relating to the study. You will be given a two week notice period if your project is to be audited. There is a checklist listing examples of documents to be kept which is available at http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/EthicsAudits.

We welcome feedback on your experience of the ethical review process and suggestions for improvement. Please email any comments to ResearchEthics@leeds.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely

Jennifer Blaikie

Senior Research Ethics Administrator, Research & Innovation Service
On behalf of Dr Kahryn Hughes, Chair, AREA Faculty Research Ethics Committee

CC: Student's supervisor

Appendix 2: Questionnaire

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

A Survey on Employee Burnout in Law Firms

Dear Mr/Ms [Surname],

My name is Arash Valipour and I am a PhD student in Marketing at Leeds University Business School. The purpose of my study is to investigate factors impacting "**Employee Burnout**" and "**Job Stress**" in the law firms. I understand that you are very busy with your work but I would like to enlist your help and invite you to participate in this research as a professional **solicitor** who handles business and corporate cases (not personal cases). This research is funded by Leeds University Business School in the United Kingdom. Please be assured that the survey does **not ask sensitive and personal questions** and your responses will be treated in the strictest confidence and **will remain anonymous**. The results of this study are only for statistical and academic purposes and will not be used in any commercial way. Although some questions appear very similar, please answer them anyway, as this is done deliberately for statistical analysis purposes. The questionnaire will require approximately **15-20 minutes** to complete.

Once again, we are extremely grateful that you have taken the time to participate in this study. A pre-paid envelope (Freepost address) has been provided. Please use this envelope to send the completed questionnaire to us. A personalized keyring has also been provided in the envelope as a small thank you gift from us.

Please note that I (personally) found your work address from your public profile page on the web site of your firm and you were selected randomly from a huge pool of solicitors. Please be assured that your contact details will not be given to any platform, software or person. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any question regarding my research and this survey.

Many thanks in advance for your help, support and precious time.

Sincerely yours,

Arash Valipour – Doctoral Researcher and Project Coordinator

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Dr. Zhaleh Najafi Tavani, Associate Professor of Marketing, Email: Z.NajafiTavani@leeds.ac.uk

Please indicate your consent for participation here:

☐ I agree

☐ I disagree

The following questions focus on general information about you and your work.

Are you a solicitor? □ Yes □ No

Which of the following most closely matches your job title?
□ Partner □ Consultant □ Legal Director □ Senior Associate

Do you work on Business cases? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please indicate which region you work in. □ England and Wales □ Northern Ireland □ Scotland □.....

Please indicate your gender. □ Male □ Female

Please indicate approximately how long have you been working as a solicitor. …….. (years)

Please indicate approximately how long have you been working in your current firm. …….. (years)

Please indicate how long your firm has been in business.
□ 0 – 5 years □ 6 - 10 years □ 11 - 15 years □ 16 - 20 years □ More than 20 years

What is the approximate **total** number of employees that your firm has across **all** of its branches?
□ Fewer than 25 □ 26 – 50 □ 51 – 100 □ 101 – 250 □ 251 – 500 □ 501 – 1000
□ 1001 – 5000 □ More than 5000

What is the approximate total number of employees that your firm has in the branch that you are working in?
□ Fewer than 25 □ 26 – 50 □ 51 – 100 □ 101 – 250 □ 251 – 500 □ 501 – 1000
□ 1001 – 5000 □ More than 5000

Please indicate which of the following areas of practice best describe your expertise.
□ Business premises □ Company and commercial □ Dispute resolution
□ Energy, utilities and transport □ Media, IT and intellectual property □ Regulation and compliance
□ Other ……

Please indicate which city you are based in. ……..

We are interested in your actual experiences from your work on legal cases of your clients in your current firm. The term “client” in this survey refers to a firm and/or a person for whom you handle his/her case. The term “case” in this survey refers to a “legal case, issue or deal” you are working on in your firm. The term “you” refers to “you as an individual”.

Please indicate approximately how many different **clients** you are working with at the moment. ……..

Please indicate approximately how many different **cases** you are working on at the moment (i.e., across clients). ……..

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about yourself.	Strongly disagree			Neither agree nor disagree			Strongly agree
By looking at people's facial expressions, I recognize the emotions they are experiencing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I often consult my feelings when making decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have a rich vocabulary to describe my emotions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is easy for me to deal with my feelings of anger.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When someone I know is in a bad mood, I can help the person calm down and feel better quickly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am aware of the nonverbal messages other people send.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When making decisions, I listen to my feelings to see if the decision feels right.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I could easily write a lot of synonyms for emotion words like happiness or sadness.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I can handle stressful situations without getting too nervous.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I know the strategies to make or improve other people's moods.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I can tell when a person is lying to me by looking at his or her facial expression.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am a rational person and don't like to rely on my feelings to make decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have the vocabulary to describe how most emotions progress from simple to complex feelings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am able to handle most upsetting problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am good at helping others to feel better when they are feeling down or angry.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My quick impressions of what people are feeling are usually accurate.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My "feelings" vocabulary is probably better than most other persons' "feelings" vocabularies.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I know how to keep calm in difficult or stressful situations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am the type of person to whom others go when they need help with a difficult situation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

The following questions ask you to consider **one of your clients**. The remaining questions will ask about this particular client. The terms "this client", "your client" and "he/she/his/her" in the remaining questions refer to the client that you have considered.

Please consider **the most important existing business client** that you have interaction with via personal meetings, telephone, email, etc.

Please indicate the industry in which your client works in. □ Manufacturing □ Services

Does this client have an in-house lawyer? □ Yes □ No
If so, how many in-house lawyers does this client have for the cases that you are working on? ……..

Please indicate what is the most frequent mode of your communication with your client regarding his/her legal case(s)?
□ Personal Meeting □ Video Meeting □ Telephone □ Email □ Other ……

Please indicate which city (the representative of) your client is based in. ……

Please indicate approximately how long you have been working with this client.
□ Less than 1 year □ Between 1 and 2 years □ Between 2 and 3 years □ More than 3 years

Please indicate approximately how many different cases have you done for this client so far. ..……..

Please indicate approximately how much of your workload is due to this client and his/her cases. ……%

The following questions focus on the **frequency** and **quality of client participation** in the process of service delivery provided by your most important client.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements regarding your client.	Strongly disagree			Neither agree nor disagree			Strongly agree
Exchange of information takes place frequently with this client.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have frequent face-to-face meetings/communications with this client.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This client spends a lot of time sharing information about his/her needs and his/her case.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Transfer of information about this client's needs and preferences takes place frequently.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This client openly shares information with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This client provides accurate information, hence, information distortion is minimized.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This client shares relevant information about his/her cases.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This client gives me proper information.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

The following questions focus on demands that you have when working on the cases of your most important client.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements. In the cases of this client, …	Strongly disagree			Neither agree nor disagree			Strongly agree
…, I am required to work fast.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
…, I do not have enough time to do my tasks in normal working hours.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
…, I do not have time to finish my tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
…, there is often a lot of "red tape" to go through in order to complete my tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
…, I am required to complete excessive paperwork or computer work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
…, there are many overly restrictive rules and regulations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
…, I often have to complete unnecessary forms during my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
…, I often experience administrative hassles while trying to complete work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

The following questions focus on the extent to which you have control over your tasks

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements. Considering the cases of this client, …	Strongly disagree			Neither agree nor disagree			Strongly agree
…, I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
…, I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
…, I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
…, I am allowed to use personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

The following questions focus on your feelings regarding your job.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements.	Strongly disagree			Neither agree nor disagree			Strongly agree
Working on the cases of this client is extremely stressful.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Many stressful things happen to me when working on the cases of this client.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel a great deal of stress because of the cases of this client.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I almost always feel stressed because of the cases of this client.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

If you are interested in having a summary of the study's findings, please provide your email address: ……....

Thank you for participating in this research. We are very grateful.