

CLINICAL EFFICACY OF ELECTROCONVULSIVE THERAPY IN HOSPITALIZED PATIENTS WITH DEPRESSIVE EPISODE

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OBJECTIVE: This study aims to evaluate the clinical efficacy of Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) in inpatients diagnosed with unipolar or bipolar depressive episodes and to identify the demographic and clinical factors influencing treatment response.

METHODS: Data from 35 patients treated at the Ondokuz Mayıs University Psychiatry Clinic between 2020 and 2025 were retrospectively analyzed. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ondokuz Mayıs University Clinical Research Ethics Committee (Project No: 2026/8, 2026000008). Treatment efficacy was assessed using the 17-item Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HAM-D) administered before and after the ECT course. Statistical analyses included bivariate correlations followed by a multiple regression model adjusted for baseline HAM-D scores, gender, and the number of depressive episodes.

RESULTS: The mean age of the participants was 53.7 ± 13.2 years, with 62.9% being female. A statistically significant mean improvement of 9.6 ± 5.4 in HAM-D scores was observed following treatment ($p < 0.001$). Multiple regression analysis

($R^2 = 0.395$, $p = 0.020$) revealed that age was the only significant independent predictor of clinical improvement ($B = 0.209$, $t = 3.15$, $p = 0.004$). Baseline depression severity, gender, number of episodes, and length of hospital stay did not significantly impact the treatment response ($p > 0.05$).

DISCUSSION: Our findings align with the literature suggesting that older age is associated with superior ECT response. The persistence of age as an independent predictor, even when controlling for baseline HAM-D scores, suggests that biological factors or clinical characteristics unique to older populations may enhance ECT's therapeutic effects.

CONCLUSION: ECT is a highly effective intervention for reducing symptom severity in hospitalized depressive patients. The finding that older age predicts better clinical outcomes, regardless of baseline severity, underscores ECT's role as a potent and primary therapeutic option for the elderly population.

Keywords: depressive episode, electroconvulsive therapy, treatment response