

THE EFFECT OF SHIFT WORK ON EMOTION REGULATION AND LIFE SATISFACTION IN HEALTHCARE WORKERS

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BACKGROUND AND AIM: This study aimed to identify clinical, sociodemographic, and emotion regulation difficulties, life satisfaction, depression, anxiety, and stress variables in healthcare workers working in shifts, to compare these variables with those of healthcare workers working outside of shifts, and to determine the differences between at-risk populations and occupational groups.

METHODS: (Ethics Committee Approval No. 2026/2705). This study was created by collecting data from healthcare professionals working at Karabük Training and Research Hospital who agreed to participate between January 1, 2026 and January 23, 2026, through face-to-face interviews. Sociodemographic data, the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-21, the Life Satisfaction Scale, and the Emotion Regulation Difficulty Scale-Short Form were examined.

RESULTS: No significant age difference was found when comparing shift-working (n=53) and non-shift-working (n=50) healthcare workers [28 (28–48) vs 28.5 (23–56); p=0.678]. The presence of comorbidities was higher in the non-shift-working group (p=0.013), and occupational distribution showed a significant

difference between the groups (p<0.001). When scale scores were evaluated, the DDGO score was higher in shift-working employees [35 (18–80) vs 25 (16–56); p<0.001]. DASS depression, anxiety, and stress subscale scores were also found to be higher in shift-working employees (p<0.001 for each). Although the YDO score tended to be lower in the shift-working group, no statistically significant difference was found between the groups [26 (11–35) vs 28 (9–35); p=0.495].

CONCLUSIONS: When our study results were compared with literature data, we found that healthcare workers on shifts had significantly higher levels of emotion regulation difficulties, depression, anxiety, and stress, while life satisfaction tended to be lower compared to those working non-shifts; however, this difference was not statistically significant. These findings suggest that shift work may have negative effects on the mental health of healthcare workers and highlight the importance of planning preventive and supportive mental health interventions, especially for at-risk groups.

Keywords: shift work, life satisfaction, healthcare worker, emotion regulation