

The Effect of Job Stress on Life Satisfaction in Healthcare Workers¹

Sağlık Çalışanlarında İş Stresinin Yaşam Doyumuna Etkisi

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ÖZET

Bu araştırma, sağlık çalışanlarında iş stresinin yaşam doyumu üzerindeki etkisini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca sağlık çalışanlarının demografik özelliklerine göre iş stresi ve yaşam doyumu düzeylerindeki farklılıkları ortaya koymak araştırmanın alt amacıdır. Tanımlayıcı ve kesitsel bir araştırma olarak planlanan çalışmanın evrenini, Ankara ilinde yer alan tüm sağlık çalışanları oluşturmaktadır. Ancak zaman ve maliyet kısıtları nedeniyle, Ankara Gölbaşı Şehit Ahmet Özsoy Devlet Hastanesinde görev yapan 204 sağlık çalışanı bu araştırmanın örneklemini oluşturmuştur. Araştırma sonucunda sağlık çalışanlarının iş stresi seviyelerinin yüksek olduğu ve bu stresin yaşam doyumlarını olumsuz yönde etkilediği bulunmuştur. Yüksek iş stresine maruz kalan sağlık çalışanlarının yaşam doyumları düşük bulunmuştur. Ayrıca, demografik faktörlerin (yaş, cinsiyet, eğitim düzeyi) iş stresi ve yaşam doyumu arasındaki ilişkide önemli bir rol oynadığı tespit edilmiştir. Son olarak, çalışmanın genel değerlendirmesi yapılmış ve ileri araştırmalar için önerilerde bulunulmuştur. Bu çalışma, sağlık çalışanlarının iş stresiyle başa çıkma stratejilerini geliştirmek ve yaşam doyumlarını artırmak için önemli bir kaynak oluşturmayı düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler:

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effect of job stress on life satisfaction among healthcare workers. It also investigates how demographic characteristics (age, gender, and education level) influence job stress and life satisfaction levels. Designed as a descriptive and cross-sectional study, the research population includes all healthcare workers in Ankara. Due to time and cost constraints, the sample comprises 204 healthcare workers employed at Ankara Gölbaşı Şehit Ahmet Özsoy State Hospital. Results indicate that healthcare workers experience high levels of job stress, which negatively impacts their life satisfaction. Those exposed to higher job stress reported lower life satisfaction. Demographic factors significantly moderated the relationship between job stress and life satisfaction. The study concludes with recommendations for future research and aims to provide healthcare professionals with strategies to improve coping mechanisms for job stress and enhance life satisfaction.

Keywords:

*Job Stress,
Life Satisfaction,
Healthcare Workers,*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Today, the health sector has become a field full of intense workloads, constantly changing conditions and difficulties, especially for health workers. The stress that health workers experience in their profession not only affects their personal health, but also has a significant impact on their professional performance, job satisfaction and overall life satisfaction (Erşan et al., 2013).

Healthcare professionals have many different roles and responsibilities in the provision of healthcare. As doctors, nurses, pharmacists, technicians and other health workers strive to treat and care for patients, they often encounter stressors such as workload, time pressure, emotional exhaustion and occupational burnout. These stressors can affect the physical, mental and emotional health of health workers and can have a negative impact on job satisfaction and overall life satisfaction in the long term (Atasoy and Yorgun, 2013).

When examining the impact of job stress on health workers' life satisfaction, it is important to consider individual factors and the work environment. In addition to the stressors that health professionals encounter in the course of their work, factors such as working conditions, leadership style, relationships with colleagues and work support may also affect life satisfaction (Çamkerten et al., 2020). Therefore, a comprehensive approach should be taken to understand the impact of work stress on life satisfaction.

The impact of job stress on the life satisfaction of healthcare professionals is important not only for individuals and institutions, but also for the quality and effectiveness of healthcare services. It is known that satisfied and happy healthcare professionals show higher job performance and provide better care to their patients (Söyler, 2018).

Therefore, developing strategies for coping with job stress and increasing life satisfaction among healthcare professionals is crucial for both the health and well-being of employees and the quality of healthcare services. The aim of this study is to determine the impact of job stress on the life satisfaction of healthcare professionals. In this context, previous studies in the literature on job stress and life satisfaction variables of healthcare professionals were reviewed and research hypotheses were developed. Investigating the effect of job stress on the life satisfaction of healthcare workers is important both for the individual wellbeing of workers and for the overall efficiency of the sector. Healthcare professionals generally experience high levels of job stress due to heavy workloads, long working hours, the need to make decisions that affect patients' lives, and exposure to emotionally challenging situations. This job stress can negatively affect not only professional performance, but also the overall life satisfaction of employees. Understanding the relationship between job stress and life satisfaction is necessary to ensure that healthcare workers have a better quality of life. Therefore, this study may be an important step in developing strategies to manage job stress and increase life satisfaction among healthcare workers. It is believed that this study can contribute to the development of evidence-based policies and practices to protect the health and well-being of healthcare workers and improve the quality of healthcare services.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Job Stress

Stress is a multidimensional concept that refers to any situation that disrupts an individual's physical, emotional or mental balance, requires adaptation or challenges adaptation mechanisms. Resulting from the interaction of biological, psychological and environmental factors, stress can be defined as a factor that upsets an individual's equilibrium and challenges normal functioning. In this sense, stress is not only related to the perception of threat, but also to the individual's ability to cope with his or her resources (Erdoğan et al., 2024). Stress can be triggered by various factors and can be associated with situations such as significant changes, uncertainties, conflicts or unexpected events in an individual's life. These situations can disrupt an individual's normal routines or order of daily life, triggering stress reactions. Particularly in working life, factors such as workload, time pressure, competitive environment, role ambiguity and complexity of social relationships can increase work stress. Individuals develop different strategies to cope with these stressors; however, in some cases, the ability to cope effectively with stress can be challenged and the harmful effects of stress can occur (Akgemci, 2001).

The concept of job stress is an important issue for healthcare professionals and can have a serious impact on life satisfaction. Job stress can be defined as the physical, emotional and mental strain that an individual experiences in the work environment. Healthcare workers can be exposed to particularly high levels of stress due to factors

such as heavy workloads, time pressures and dealing with patient emergencies. These stressors may be associated with long and irregular working hours, high variability in decision-making authority, and complex patient care responsibilities due to the nature of their profession. In addition, the high emotional intensity experienced by healthcare professionals due to the nature of their profession may also contribute to increased stress. Therefore, improving healthcare professionals' ability to cope with job stress and understanding the impact of this stress on their life satisfaction is an important step towards improving the well-being and performance of healthcare professionals (Gökler, 2012).

2.2. Life Satisfaction

The concept of life satisfaction refers to an individual's overall satisfaction and happiness with their life. This concept is often studied and discussed in psychology, sociology and other social sciences. Life satisfaction is related to the satisfaction that individuals feel with their lives as a result of their experiences, goals and values. Life satisfaction refers to how satisfied individuals are with their lives in general. This satisfaction encompasses individuals' experiences in different areas such as physical health, emotional state, relationships, work and purpose in life. Life satisfaction is generally considered to be a subjective experience and varies according to an individual's perceptions, values and priorities (Dikmen, 1995). Research on life satisfaction shows that there are many factors that influence an individual's life satisfaction. For example, factors such as personal characteristics, social relationships, economic status, health status and cultural context can influence life satisfaction. The complexity of these factors makes it difficult to understand their effects on life satisfaction and adds variety to the research conducted on the subject (Avşaroğlu et al., 2005).

The concept of life satisfaction also has an important place in the field of positive psychology. Positive psychology takes an approach that focuses on increasing people's happiness. In this context, life satisfaction is an important criterion for promoting individual strengths, personal development and a meaningful life. This perspective of positive psychology aims to develop different strategies to increase life satisfaction (Gündoğar et al., 2007). Life satisfaction expresses how happy people are with their lives in general. This concept is linked to individuals' ability to meet their physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs. Research on life satisfaction emphasises that there are many factors that affect individuals' life satisfaction and the complexity of these factors (Demirbilek and Bozanoğlu, 2023).

Life satisfaction is a concept that expresses the overall satisfaction and happiness of individuals with their lives. It has been an important topic of research in psychology, sociology and other social sciences. Life satisfaction is related to the perceptual evaluation of individuals and reflects how satisfied individuals are with their own lives. Therefore, life satisfaction is considered to be a subjective experience based on one's own perceptions (Keser, 2005). Research on life satisfaction shows that there are various factors that influence an individual's life satisfaction. For example, factors such as personal characteristics, social relationships, economic status, health status and cultural context can influence life satisfaction. The interaction and complexity of these factors makes it difficult to understand life satisfaction and adds diversity to the research conducted in this area (Bal and Gülcan, 2014). Life satisfaction can also have a significant impact on the psychological and physiological health of individuals. High levels of life satisfaction are generally associated with better physical health, lower stress levels and healthier lifestyles. Therefore, life satisfaction is considered to be an important factor influencing the overall health and well-being of individuals (Kaba et al., 2018).

3. MATERIEL AND METHOD OF RESEARCH

A quantitative research method was used in the research. This research is a relational screening model, with a screening model to reveal the levels of job stress and life satisfaction of healthcare workers, and a relational model to reveal the relationship between job stress and life satisfaction.

3.1. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the effect of job stress on life satisfaction in healthcare workers. In addition, one of the sub-purposes of this study is to examine the levels of job stress and life satisfaction of healthcare workers according to their demographic and job characteristics. Previous studies have examined the effects of job stress on employees' life satisfaction from different perspectives. In the study conducted by Susanto et al. (2022), the relationship between job stress, job satisfaction and job performance was examined

and it was concluded that job stress negatively affects job performance. The study by Xie et al. (2021) on couriers in China examined the negative effects of job stress on job satisfaction and sleep quality and found that high job stress was associated with low job satisfaction and poor sleep quality. Similarly, a study by Van der Heijden et al. (2018) found that employees working in the healthcare sector with high workload and time pressure had low life satisfaction (Van der Heijden et al., 2018).

In addition, demographic factors and job characteristics also affect job stress and life satisfaction variables. For example, the study by Wong et al. (2019) showed that young healthcare workers are more exposed to job stress and this situation has a greater negative effect on their life satisfaction. Similarly, female healthcare workers were found to have higher levels of job stress than men and this stress negatively affected their life satisfaction (Wong et al., 2019).

The study by Melchior et al. (2007) showed that job stress triggers depression and anxiety in young working women and men. In particular, factors such as long working hours, excessive workload and uncertainty in the work environment were found to increase job stress in healthcare workers and this situation decreased their life satisfaction. In reviewing previous studies in the literature, it was found that there were studies that job stress had a significant effect on life satisfaction (Susanto et al., 2022; Xie et al., 2021; Melchior et al., 2007). Based on this, the following hypotheses were developed.

- H1: Job stress experienced by healthcare professionals has a significant negative impact on life satisfaction.
- H2: Job stress and life satisfaction of healthcare professionals differ according to their gender.
- H3: Job stress and life satisfaction levels of healthcare professionals differ according to their age.
- H4: Job stress and life satisfaction levels of healthcare professionals differ according to their marital status.
- H5: Job stress and life satisfaction of healthcare professionals differ according to their level of education.
- H6: Job stress and life satisfaction of healthcare professionals differ according to their profession.
- H7: Job stress and life satisfaction levels of healthcare professionals differ according to their professional seniority.
- H8: Job stress and life satisfaction of healthcare professionals differ according to their length of service in the institution.

3.2. Sample of the Research

The universe of this research, which aims to investigate job stress and life satisfaction among health care workers, is all health care workers in Ankara. However, since it is not possible to reach the entire universe in this research due to time and cost constraints, a convenience sampling method was used. The sample of this study consists of 204 healthcare workers working in Ankara Gölbaşı Şehit Ahmet Özsoy State Hospital, which is considered to represent the universe of healthcare workers in Ankara.

3.3. Data Collection Tool

A survey method, one of the quantitative data collection methods, was used to collect research data. The surveys used in the research were added between April 2024 and June 2024. The survey prepared by the researcher in accordance with the purpose of this research, which is to investigate the effects of job stress on life satisfaction of healthcare professionals, consists of three sections. The first section of the survey includes 7 questions to determine the demographic and work characteristics of the employees. The second section of the survey includes the 15-item "*Perceived Job Stress Scale*" developed by Cohen and Williamson (1988) and adapted to Turkish by Baltaş and Baltaş (2010) to determine the job stress of the employees. The last section of the survey includes the 5-item Life Satisfaction Scale, which was developed by Diener et al. (1985) to determine the satisfaction individuals receive from their lives.

The scale developed to obtain the research data was administered to healthcare professionals either face-to-face or as an electronic survey. The Perceived Job Stress Scale; It was developed by Cohen and Williamson (1988) to determine the job stress of employees. The scale consists of 15 items and has a single dimension. The scale responses are in a 5-point Likert structure as "*1= Never 2= Rarely 3= Sometimes 4= Often 5= Always*".

The validity and reliability of the scale in Turkish was tested by Baltaş and Baltaş (2010) and the Cronbach alpha value of the scale reliability was found to be 0.84. In this study, the Cronbach alpha value, which is the reliability value of the scale, was found to be 0.80. The Life Satisfaction Scale is a scale that aims to measure the satisfaction that individuals get from their lives. It was developed by Diener et al. in 1985. The scale, which is a 7-point Likert type, was adapted to a 5-point Likert type by Dağlı and Baysal (2016) and a validity and reliability study was conducted. In this study, the Cronbach alpha value calculated for the internal consistency of the scale was found to be 0.87.

3.4. Data Analysis

SPSS 20 package was used to analyse the data obtained from the research. Firstly, the Cronbach alpha coefficient, which is the reliability value of the scales in the research, was calculated to test the reliability of the scales. Before testing the research hypotheses, the normality assumption of the variables was tested. This was done by calculating the skewness and kurtosis values of the variables. If the skewness and kurtosis values of the variables were between ± 1.5 , it was accepted that the variables were suitable for normal distribution (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013).

Pearson correlation analysis was used for pairwise relationships between variables, regression analysis was used to test the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable, Student t-test was used for pairwise group comparisons, and ANOVA test was used to compare more than two groups. Statistical significance was assessed at the 0.01 and 0.05 levels.

3.5. Research Ethics and Findings of the Research

The ethical suitability of the research was accepted by the Ethics Committee of Cappadocia University with the decision number E-64577500-050.99-72331 dated 24.04.2024. In the findings section of the study conducted to determine job stress and life satisfaction among healthcare workers and to identify the relationships between job stress and life satisfaction, information on the socio-demographic characteristics and working conditions of healthcare workers was first presented. Then, summary information about the employees' levels of job stress and life satisfaction and information about the skewness and kurtosis values calculated for the normal distribution test of these variables were presented. The research hypotheses were then tested and the results presented. This was done by first summarising the findings on the relationships between the variables and then presenting the results on the comparison of job stress and life satisfaction levels of healthcare workers according to their socio-demographic characteristics.

The distribution of healthcare professionals participating in the study according to their socio-demographic characteristics is as follows: 79.4% (N=162 people) of the healthcare professionals participating in the study were female, while 20.6% (N=42 people) were male. The distribution of workers by age was as follows: 23% (N=47 people) were 22-29 years old, 22.1% (N=45 people) were 30-37 years old, 31.9% (N=65 people) were 38-45 years old and 23% (N=47 people) were 46 years old and over. The majority (81.4% (N=166 people)) of the workers were married, while 18.6% (N=38 people) were single. In terms of educational level, 23.5% (N=48 people) of the workers had an associate degree, 62.7% (N=128 people) had a bachelor's degree, and 13.7% (N=28 people) had a master's or doctoral degree. The professions of the health workers are as follows: 7.8% (N=16 people) are doctors, 41.7% (N=85 people) are nurses, 7.8% (N=16 people) are midwives, 25.5% (N=52 people) are health technicians and 17.2% (N=35 people) have other professions. The seniority of the employees is 26.5% (N=54 people) 1-5 years, 8.3% (N=17 people) 6-10 years, 12.3% (N=25 people) 11-15 years, 21.1% (N=43 people) 16-20 years and 31.9% (N=65 people) 21 years or more. According to the length of service in the institution, 37.3% (N=76 people) of the health professionals have 1-3 years, 20.1% (N=41 people) 4-6 years, 5.4% (N=11 people) 7-9 years, 12.3% (N=25 people) 10-12 years and 25% (N=51 people) 13 years or more.

Table 1. Summary Statistics on Job Stress and Life Satisfaction of Healthcare Workers

| | N | Min. | Maks. | Mean | Std. Dev. | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|-------------------|-----|------|-------|------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Job Stress | 204 | 1,13 | 5,00 | 2,55 | 0,53 | 0,379 | 1,658 |
| Life Satisfaction | 204 | 1,00 | 5,00 | 2,67 | 0,82 | 0,106 | -0,220 |

Table 1 It is estimated that the work stress level of the health workers included in the planning research is at the average level with ($\bar{X}=2.55$). Similarly, the standard of living of women is at the average level with ($\bar{X}=2.67$).

The values of kurtosis and skewness calculated for the purpose of testing the normal distribution are recorded between the values of ± 1.5 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013). Thus, it was understood that the variables were normally distributed and parametric tests were conducted to test the research assumptions. The results of the Pearson correlation analysis performed to determine the relationships between the variables of the study, namely job stress and life satisfaction, are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Pearson Correlation Analysis Results on the Relationships Between Job Stress and Life Satisfaction

| | 1 | 2 |
|----------------------|----------|---|
| 1. Job Stress | 1 | |
| 2. Life Satisfaction | -0,385** | 1 |

**p<0,01

In order to examine the relationships between variables, the correlation coefficient calculated close to 0 indicates a weak linear relationship between variables, while the values of the coefficient close to 1 indicate the existence of a strong relationship. In this case, the correlation coefficients are interpreted as very weak between 0 and ± 0.2 , weak between 0.2 and ± 0.4 , moderate between 0.4 and ± 0.6 , strong between 0.6 and ± 0.8 and very strong between 0.8 and ± 1 (Bayram, 2004).

Looking at Table 3, we can see that there is a negative and weakly significant relationship between job stress and life satisfaction ($r = -0.385$, $p < 0.01$). As a result, it can be said that as employees' job stress increases, their life satisfaction decreases. The results of the simple linear regression analysis conducted to examine how job stress affects life satisfaction among healthcare workers are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Regression Analysis Results on the Effect of Job Stress on Life Satisfaction

| Variables | β | t | p |
|-------------------|------------------------|--------|--------|
| Constant | | 15,979 | 0,000* |
| Job Stress | -0,385 | -5,936 | 0,000* |
| R = 0,385 | R ² = 0,149 | | |
| F(1,202) = 35,238 | P = 0,000* | | |

*p<0,01

Table 3 changes as the effect of job stress on life satisfaction changes significantly [$F(1,201) = 35.238$, $p < 0.01$]. The independent variable job stress alone explains 14.9% of the total variance in the dependent variable life satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.149$). According to the obtained care, job stress shows negative aspects on life satisfaction in health workers ($\beta = -0.385$, $p < 0.01$). Thus, the first hypothesis of the programme "*H1: Job stress experienced by health workers has a negative point significant effect on life satisfaction*" was accepted.

One of the sub-objectives of the study is to examine whether job stress and life satisfaction differ according to the socio-demographic and work characteristics of the employees. To this end, the job stress and life satisfaction scores of the healthcare professionals were first compared according to their gender. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Job Stress and Life Satisfaction Levels of Healthcare Workers According to Their Gender

| | Gender | N | Mean | Std. Dev. | t | p |
|-------------------|--------|-----|------|-----------|-------|------|
| Job Stress | Female | 162 | 2,56 | 0,48 | 0,182 | 0,86 |
| | Male | 42 | 2,54 | 0,68 | | |
| Life Saticfaction | Female | 162 | 2,67 | 0,85 | 0,043 | 0,97 |
| | Male | 42 | 2,67 | 0,73 | | |

Table 4 shows that there is no statistically significant difference in job stress and life satisfaction of healthcare workers according to their gender ($p > 0.05$). Therefore, one of the hypotheses of the research, "*H2: Job stress and life satisfaction of healthcare workers differ according to their gender*" was rejected. The results of the comparison of job stress and life satisfaction scores of healthcare workers according to their age are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Job Stress and Life Satisfaction Levels of Healthcare Workers According to Their Ages

| | Age | N | Mean | Std. Dev. | F | p | Meaning Difference |
|-------------------|------------------|-----|------|-----------|-------|-------|--------------------|
| Job Stress | 22-29 Age1 | 47 | 2,77 | 0,58 | 3,506 | 0,02* | 1-2 |
| | 30-37 Age2 | 45 | 2,49 | 0,59 | | | 1-3 |
| | 38-45 Age 3 | 65 | 2,49 | 0,44 | | | 1-4 |
| | 46 Age and plus4 | 47 | 2,49 | 0,47 | | | |
| | Total | 204 | 2,55 | 0,53 | | | |
| Life Satisfaction | 22-29 Age | 47 | 2,58 | 0,78 | 0,353 | 0,79 | |
| | 30-37 Age | 45 | 2,76 | 0,81 | | | |
| | 38-45 Age | 65 | 2,67 | 0,83 | | | |
| | 46 Age and Plus | 47 | 2,68 | 0,88 | | | |
| | Total | 204 | 2,67 | 0,82 | | | |

*p<0,05

Looking at Table 5, it can be seen that there is a statistically significant difference in the level of occupational stress among healthcare workers according to their age ($F = 3.506$; $p < 0.05$). The LSD test, one of the post-hoc tests, was used to determine the difference between the groups. According to the difference in question, the job stress of employees aged 22-29 is significantly higher than that of employees in the older age groups 30-37, 38-45 and over 46. The life satisfaction of healthcare workers according to their age does not show a statistically significant difference ($p > 0.05$). Therefore, the hypothesis of the study "*H3: Job stress and life satisfaction levels of healthcare workers differ according to their age*" was accepted for job stress and rejected for life satisfaction, so the hypothesis was partially accepted. The results of the comparison of job stress and life satisfaction scores of healthcare workers according to their marital status are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Job Stress and Life Satisfaction Levels of Healthcare Workers According to Marital Status

| | Marital Status | N | Mean | Std. Dev. | t | p |
|-------------------|----------------|-----|------|-----------|--------|------|
| Job Stress | Single | 38 | 2,68 | 0,67 | 1,681 | 0,09 |
| | Married | 166 | 2,52 | 0,49 | | |
| Life Satisfaction | Single | 38 | 2,48 | 0,87 | -1,609 | 0,11 |
| | Married | 166 | 2,72 | 0,81 | | |

Looking at Table 6, it can be seen that the levels of job stress and life satisfaction of healthcare workers do not differ statistically significantly according to their marital status ($p > 0.05$). Therefore, the research hypothesis "*H4: Job stress and life satisfaction levels of healthcare workers differ according to their marital status*" was rejected. The results of the comparison of job stress and life satisfaction scores of healthcare professionals according to their educational level are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Job Stress and Life Satisfaction Levels of Healthcare Workers According to Their Education Levels

| | Education Level | N | Mean | Std. Dev. | F | p | Meaning Difference |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----|------|-----------|-------|------|--------------------|
| Job Stress | Associate Degree1 | 48 | 2,31 | 0,51 | 7,042 | 0,00 | 1-2 |
| | Bachelor's Degree2 | 128 | 2,63 | 0,51 | | | 1-3 |
| | Master and Doctorate3 | 28 | 2,64 | 0,53 | | | |
| | Total | 204 | 2,55 | 0,53 | | | |
| Life Satisfaction | Associate Degree | 48 | 2,75 | 0,82 | 2,062 | 0,13 | |
| | Bachelor's Degree | 128 | 2,59 | 0,78 | | | |
| | Master and Doctorate | 28 | 2,91 | 0,98 | | | |
| | Total | 204 | 2,67 | 0,82 | | | |

*p<0,05

Looking at Table 7, it can be seen that there is a statistically significant difference in the level of work stress among healthcare workers according to their level of education ($F = 7.042$; $p < 0.05$). The LSD test, one of the post-hoc tests, was used to determine the difference between the groups. According to the difference in question, the job stress of associate degree graduates is significantly lower than that of undergraduate, masters and doctorate graduates. There is no statistically significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in the life satisfaction of healthcare workers according to their level of education. Therefore, the hypothesis of the study "*H5: Job stress and life satisfaction of healthcare workers differ according to their educational level*" was accepted for job stress and rejected for life satisfaction, so the hypothesis was partially accepted. The results of the comparison of job stress and life satisfaction scores of healthcare professionals according to their professions are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Job Stress and Life Satisfaction Levels of Healthcare Workers According to Their Professions

| | Job | N | Ort. | Std. Dev. | F | p | Meaning Difference |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----|------|-----------|-------|------|--------------------|
| Job Stress | Doctor1 | 16 | 2,70 | 0,48 | 4,901 | 0,00 | 2-3 |
| | Nurse2 | 85 | 2,71 | 0,53 | | | 2-4 |
| | Midwife3 | 16 | 2,38 | 0,45 | | | 2-5 |
| | Health Technician4 | 52 | 2,44 | 0,46 | | | |
| | Other5 | 35 | 2,35 | 0,56 | | | |
| | Total | 204 | 2,55 | 0,53 | | | |
| Life Satisfaction | Doctor | 16 | 2,81 | 0,64 | 1,167 | 0,33 | |
| | Nurse | 85 | 2,54 | 0,85 | | | |
| | Midwife | 16 | 2,66 | 0,74 | | | |
| | Health Technician | 52 | 2,71 | 0,77 | | | |
| | Other | 35 | 2,87 | 0,93 | | | |
| | Total | 204 | 2,67 | 0,82 | | | |

* $p < 0,05$

Looking at Table 8, we can see that there is a statistically significant difference in the level of occupational stress among health care professionals according to their profession ($F = 4.901$; $p < 0.05$). In order to determine the difference between the groups, the LSD test was used from the post-hoc tests. The results showed that nurses had higher levels of job stress compared to midwives, health technicians and other health professionals. However, there was no statistically significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in the life satisfaction of healthcare professionals according to their profession. Thus, the research hypothesis "*H6: Job stress and life satisfaction levels of healthcare professionals differ according to their professions*" was accepted for job stress and rejected for life satisfaction, so the hypothesis was partially accepted. The results of the comparison of job stress and life satisfaction scores of healthcare professionals according to their professional seniority are shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Job Stress and Life Satisfaction Levels of Healthcare Workers According to Their Professional Seniority

| | Professional Seniority | N | Ort. | Std. Dev. | F | p |
|-------------------|------------------------|-----|------|-----------|-------|------|
| Job Stress | 1-5 year | 54 | 2,64 | 0,47 | 1,758 | 0,14 |
| | 6-10 year | 17 | 2,79 | 0,81 | | |
| | 11-15 year | 25 | 2,50 | 0,53 | | |
| | 16-20 year | 43 | 2,52 | 0,51 | | |
| | 21 year and plus | 65 | 2,47 | 0,48 | | |
| | Total | 204 | 2,55 | 0,53 | | |
| Life Satisfaction | 1-5 year | 54 | 2,57 | 0,70 | 0,703 | 0,59 |
| | 6-10 year | 17 | 2,73 | 0,98 | | |
| | 11-15 year | 25 | 2,86 | 0,70 | | |
| | 16-20 year | 43 | 2,59 | 0,90 | | |
| | 21 year and plus | 65 | 2,72 | 0,86 | | |
| | Total | 204 | 2,67 | 0,82 | | |

Looking at Table 9, it can be seen that the levels of job stress and life satisfaction of healthcare professionals do not differ statistically significantly according to their professional seniority ($p>0.05$). Therefore, the hypothesis of the research "*H7: Job stress and life satisfaction levels of healthcare professionals differ according to their professional seniority*" was rejected. The results of the comparison of job stress and life satisfaction scores of healthcare professionals according to their length of service in the institution are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Job Stress and Life Satisfaction Levels of Healthcare Workers According to Their Working Period in the Institution

| Working Period in the Institution | | N | Ort. | Std. Dev. | F | p |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|-----|------|-----------|-------|------|
| Job Stress | 1-3 year | 76 | 2,54 | 0,52 | 1,890 | 0,11 |
| | 4-6 year | 41 | 2,65 | 0,47 | | |
| | 7-9 year | 11 | 2,69 | 0,39 | | |
| | 10-12 year | 25 | 2,67 | 0,69 | | |
| | 13 year and plus | 51 | 2,41 | 0,50 | | |
| | Total | 204 | 2,55 | 0,53 | | |
| Life Satisfaction | 1-3 year | 76 | 2,61 | 0,80 | 0,529 | 0,71 |
| | 4-6 year | 41 | 2,60 | 0,92 | | |
| | 7-9 year | 11 | 2,80 | 1,03 | | |
| | 10-12 year | 25 | 2,81 | 0,60 | | |
| | 13 year and plus | 51 | 2,74 | 0,83 | | |
| | Total | 204 | 2,67 | 0,82 | | |

Looking at Table 10, we can see that the levels of job stress and life satisfaction of healthcare professionals do not differ statistically significantly ($p>0.05$) according to the number of hours they work in the institution where they work. Therefore, the research hypothesis "*H8: Job stress and life satisfaction levels of healthcare professionals differ according to the number of hours they work in the institution*" was rejected.

4. CONCLUSION

In an era of intense industrialisation, rapid technological development and globalisation, employees are expected to work harder and achieve more. This situation leads to job stress among employees. Some occupations are inherently more stressful than others. Healthcare professions, which require human contact and quick decision-making skills, are among the most stressful. Being exposed to stress for too long can reduce a person's productivity and have a negative impact on their health, family and social life. Work-related stress in the health sector is a significant problem for both health professionals and organisations. Work-related stress can lead to distress, burnout and psychosomatic illnesses. As a result, it can lead to low employee life satisfaction and a deterioration in the provision of health services. In this respect, the identification and prevention of job stress among healthcare professionals is important for both employees and institutions in terms of the quality of healthcare service delivery. In this study, job stress and life satisfaction of healthcare professionals were identified. To this end, the job stress and life satisfaction of healthcare workers were compared according to their demographic and work characteristics, with the aim of making suggestions for the literature and practice. In addition, this study aimed to determine the effects of job stress on the life satisfaction of healthcare workers.

The majority of healthcare workers in the study, 79.4%, are women. The majority of healthcare workers in the study are aged between 22 and 58, with 31.9% aged between 38 and 45. 81.4% are married. While the majority of participants have a bachelor's degree (62.7%), 41.7% of the workers in the study are nurses. While 31.9% of the employees have 21 years or more of experience, 26.5% have 1-5 years of experience. The number of years in the institution is 37.3%, mostly between 1-5 years. In general, the stress level of the employees is slightly above the level that would be healthy. It cannot be said that their life satisfaction is at a very good level. In line with the main purpose of the study, it was concluded that there is a negative relationship between job stress and life satisfaction among health care workers. It was also found that healthcare workers' job stress has a negative impact on their life satisfaction. When previous studies in the literature are examined, the study conducted by Akkan (2022) supports this finding of the research and shows that job stress has a negative effect on the life satisfaction of healthcare workers. The findings obtained from this study are consistent with the findings of other studies in the literature (Xie et al., 2021; Van der Heijden et al., 2018; Susanto et al., 2022). While 41% of our sample group consists of nurses, other healthcare professionals were also included in the study. However,

the sample needs to be diversified to include a wider range of occupations in order to examine differences in job stress between occupational groups more comprehensively. It is recommended that future studies compare the levels of job stress among doctors, technicians, administrative staff and other healthcare professionals.

As a result of comparing job stress and life satisfaction of healthcare workers according to socio-demographic and job characteristics, it was found that job stress and life satisfaction did not differ statistically according to the gender of the workers. In contrast to these findings, in the study by Erşan et al. (2013), which investigated job stress and job satisfaction in healthcare workers, it was found that the job stress levels of female and male healthcare workers differed, but the job stress levels of women were found to be higher than those of men. In parallel with our research findings, there are studies in which the job stress levels of female and male healthcare workers are similar.

In the study by Muhsinoğlu (2023), which examined the job stress of employees working in a public hospital, it was found that job stress did not show a significant difference according to gender. On the other hand, in the study of Muhsinoğlu (2023), the average scores of female and male healthcare workers were higher when the job stress levels of female and male healthcare workers in our study were similar, i.e. at level E. In the study, it was found that the job stress levels of healthcare workers of different ages differed and the highest stress level was found in the youngest age group in the study, the 22-29 age group. It was later observed that the level of job stress decreased with increasing age.

In the study of Erşan et al. (2013), although no statistically significant difference was found, it was observed that job stress decreased as age increased. Similarly, Guluzade's (2019) study found that the job stress levels of the 18-24 age group were higher than those of their older counterparts. In contrast, Gökmen's (2017) study did not find such a difference. The fact that the studies were carried out at different times and in regions with different work intensities may have caused this difference. Nevertheless, the decrease in job stress with age suggests that healthcare workers are developing methods to reduce job stress during their working lives and are beginning to cope better with stress. The results of the research show that while the levels of job stress of healthcare workers differ according to their age, their life satisfaction does not.

Employees' levels of job stress and life satisfaction do not differ according to their demographic characteristics and marital status. This result is in line with the study by Akkan (2022). The perceived level of job stress among healthcare professionals also differs according to their level of education. According to this, the lowest level of stress is found among workers with an associate degree, while stress increases as the level of education increases. The reason for this situation may be due to the higher level of responsibility associated with the duties of employees with a higher level of education. On the other hand, life satisfaction does not differ according to education level. Similarly, in the study by Akkan (2022), the life satisfaction of health professionals does not differ according to their level of education. It was found that the levels of job stress of the health professionals included in the study differed according to their professions. Nurses have higher levels of job stress than midwives and health technicians. In addition, while the job stress levels of nurses and doctors are at level E, the job stress levels of midwives, health technicians and other health professionals are at level D, which is a favourable stress level in terms of productivity. The finding that nurses have higher job stress levels compared to other healthcare professionals is in line with the findings of Topuz (2006) and Erşan et al. (2013). The study found that nurses reported higher levels of job stress than other occupational groups. This can be explained by factors such as direct patient care, heavy workloads, long working hours and irregular shift patterns. It has also been noted in the literature that shift work in particular disrupts biological rhythms and negatively affects sleep quality and general well-being (Bumin, 2019). In addition, patient density and the need for constant patient contact are among the factors that increase physical and psychological burnout. Future studies can further explore the impact of these factors on individual and institutional stress management strategies.

In general, healthcare professionals are more susceptible to stress and job burnout because they are responsible for human life and their actions or inactions can have serious consequences for patients. Despite this, the reason why nurses were found to have higher levels of job stress in the study may be because the number of nurses in the study was higher than other employees. However, the life satisfaction of healthcare professionals does not differ according to their profession. Another finding was that the levels of job stress and life satisfaction of the healthcare professionals in the study did not differ according to their professional seniority and length of service in the institution. In parallel with the research findings, Akkan (2022) found that the job stress and life satisfaction of healthcare professionals with different professional seniority were similar in his study. However, unlike our findings, he reported that job stress differed according to length of service in the institution. Again differently, Guluzade (2019) found in his study that healthcare professionals with the lowest number of years of service in the institution, between 0-5 years, had lower job stress compared to employees with more years of

service. The difference in these findings from the research may be related to the sample in which the research was conducted. In light of the findings of the study, the following suggestions were made.

- Healthcare workers' job stress was found to be highly stimulating, but at a level that could affect health. It may be recommended that institutions develop training programmes for healthcare workers to manage job stress. Stress management training programmes recommended for health professionals to cope with work stress need to be designed within a specific structure in order to be implemented effectively. These programmes should include stress management techniques at the individual level (e.g. mindfulness, breathing exercises, time management) and learning practices at the institutional level (more flexible shift planning, psychosocial support services, in-service training). The effectiveness of the programmes can be measured with pre- and post-test evaluations. In addition, it is important that the training is updated regularly and based on feedback from health professionals in order to be sustainable.
- It may be recommended that healthcare workers regularly report difficult working conditions to their co-workers in order to identify stressful situations in their working environment and to receive feedback on the success of the measures taken.
- Any behaviour of patients and their relatives, where healthcare workers are in direct contact with patients, has a direct impact on workers. In order to reduce the work stress of healthcare workers, the intensive work tempo and work stress of healthcare workers can be reflected on the screen in a way that raises public awareness. The intensive and stressful working conditions of healthcare workers can be depicted in film and TV series or in social media streams.
- This study found that younger healthcare workers experience more job stress. Institutions can create environments where more experienced healthcare workers can share their methods of coping with job stress with younger healthcare workers.
- In terms of the generalisability and reliability of the research findings, it can be suggested that this research, conducted with a larger sample size, be repeated in future studies. In addition, the causes of job stress in healthcare workers can be investigated. According to the research results, it was found that the perceived level of job stress is higher among younger healthcare workers. Future research into the causes of job stress in healthcare workers should take this into account and consider that job stress may actually vary according to the individual, workload and work experience. In this respect, the content of the research can be broadened by examining the stress coping mechanisms and motivations of workers and their impact on job stress levels.

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