



Mindfulness Counseling in Stabilizing Mood Regulation in Bipolar Clients: A Case Study in an Islamic Higher Education Setting

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ABSTRACT

Purpose - This research explores the role of mindfulness counseling in reducing episodes of mania and depression in clients diagnosed with bipolar disorder within the context of Islamic higher education institutions. The study is framed within Kabat-Zinn's theory of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), which emphasizes present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance alongside the emotional regulation strategies from Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) by Marsha Linehan. These frameworks were employed to support participants in managing emotional fluctuations and building coping strategies during counseling.

Methodology - Using a multiple case study approach, three participants with a history of severe mood instability participated in eight weeks of mindfulness counseling sessions. These sessions integrated core mindfulness techniques, including body scanning, breath awareness, mindfulness meditation, and guided visualization. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observations, and participant self-reports using mood-tracking journals.

Findings - The findings indicated significant improvements across all three participants, including a marked reduction in the frequency and intensity of manic and depressive episodes. Participants demonstrated increased self-awareness, improved emotional regulation, and developed coping strategies for managing mood triggers. They reported a greater sense of control over their thought patterns and an enhanced sense of psychological resilience. This study highlights the effectiveness of mindfulness counseling as a promising adjunctive therapy for managing bipolar disorder.

Contribution - By integrating mindfulness techniques within the context of counseling, participants were equipped with practical tools that contributed to their emotional stability and long-term psychological well-being. This research supports the potential of mindfulness practices to offer valuable support for individuals with bipolar disorder, especially in the setting of Islamic higher education institutions.

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INTRODUCTION

Bipolar disorder is a complex and chronic mental health condition marked by recurrent episodes of mania and depression, which frequently cause significant distress and functional impairments in clients. It affects millions of people worldwide, posing significant challenges not only to clients but also to mental health professionals looking for effective and sustainable therapeutic interventions (Tully et al., 2020; Park et al., 2024). Although there is renewed focus on additional therapeutic methods, pharmacological treatment remains the most effective primary treatment for managing bipolar disorder (Nestsiarovich et al., 2022), such as mindfulness-based counseling, to address the emotional instability and cognitive distortions often experienced by these clients.

The unpredictable nature of bipolar disorder episodes makes it difficult for clients to maintain a balanced and stable emotional state. Manic phases are marked by heightened energy, impulsivity, and exaggerated self-esteem, while depressive phases can lead to feelings of worthlessness, energy loss, and pervasive sadness (Marzani & Price Neff, 2021). The emotional instability affects the client's quality of life, social functioning, and interpersonal relationships. Despite advances in medication and psychotherapy, most patients with bipolar disorder continue to have residual symptomatology and emotional dysregulation.

Recent studies have highlighted the limitations of overreliance on pharmacologic treatment, primarily due to side effects, drug non-compliance, and ongoing mood instability. This has prompted mental health practitioners to look for non-pharmacologic treatments that would empower clients to manage their own moods and feel a sense of inner tranquillity (Helmreich et al., 2017; Kohrt et al., 2020). Mindfulness-based counseling has been discovered to be an intriguing intervention among these interventions. Mindfulness is a psychological state of consciousness that involves maintaining one's attention in the current moment with an openness, curiosity, and non-judgmental orientation (Keng et al., 2011; Nagy & Baer, 2017). Developed from ancient Buddhist practices, mindfulness has been adapted into modern models of therapy, mainly through Jon Kabat-Zinn, who developed the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program (Crane et al., 2023). MBSR and other approaches highlight the importance of awareness of the breath, body scan, and mindfulness meditation to contain stress and emotional reactivity (Sharma & Rush, 2014). Specific techniques utilized in mindfulness counseling for bipolar disorder include: (1) Body Scanning: Asks clients to pay attention to body sensations and notice areas of tension, enhancing self-awareness and relaxation; (2) Breath Awareness: Helps regulate emotional responses by grounding clients in the present moment, reducing impulsive reactions during manic or depressive episodes; (3) Mindfulness Meditation: Trains clients to observe their thoughts and emotions without judgment, enabling them to develop a more balanced perspective on their mood fluctuations; (4) Guided Visualization: Utilized to reinforce positive mental imagery and emotional resilience, enabling clients to cope with painful emotions.

Mindfulness counseling integrates these techniques into sessions to enable individuals to become more present with their emotions, feelings, and body sensations without automatically acting on them. This exercise supports greater control of emotions and mind flexibility, as required for those with bipolar disorders. Mindfulness counseling is particularly relevant to bipolar disorder because it can potentially treat key aspects of the illness, such as emotional dysregulation, cognitive distortion, and impulsivity (Stange et al., 2011; Lovas & Schuman-Olivier, 2018). In the development of a non-judgmental awareness of thoughts and feelings, mindfulness can potentially help clients better manage the extreme mood swings of bipolar disorder. Besides, mindfulness interventions educate people to develop an attitude of acceptance for their situations, reducing the possibility of being overwhelmed by negative emotions during depressive episodes or being impulsive during manic episodes (Schuman-Olivier et al., 2020).

The present study is guided by two primary theoretical models: Kabat-Zinn's Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) (Kabat-Zinn, 2003) and Marsha Linehan's Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) (Linehan & Wilks, 2015). Kabat-Zinn's MBSR emphasizes present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance, which are at the heart of mindfulness practice (Heredia et al., 2017). Body scan and breath awareness in

MBSR enable participants to cultivate a mindful presence and be able to observe their thoughts and feelings without responding instantly. Linehan's DBT, initially developed for borderline personality disorder, was successfully adapted for the treatment of bipolar disorder clients (Azevedo et al., 2024). DBT integrates mindfulness as one of its core components, along with distress tolerance, emotion regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness (Eeles & Walker, 2022). The emphasis on emotional regulation strategies in DBT aligns well with the therapeutic goals for bipolar disorder clients, making it a valuable framework for this study.

Although research on mindfulness interventions in mental health is expanding, there remains a gap in empirical evidence specifically addressing its effectiveness in managing bipolar disorder. While previous studies have explored mindfulness in relation to mood disorders more broadly, there is limited focus on its specific impact on bipolar disorder (Carruthers et al., 2022). Previous work has predominantly dealt with mindfulness as a means to treat depression and anxiety, yet the dynamic and changeable nature of bipolar disorder is different and may require attention from specialist interventions (Maxwell & Duff, 2016). This study seeks to fill this gap by exploring how mindfulness counseling can address the distinctive emotional and cognitive needs of those with bipolar disorder, particularly in reducing mood lability and enhancing emotional control.

Several studies have looked at the application of mindfulness interventions for mood disorders, some of which have focused on bipolar disorder. For instance, a study by Stalmeier et al. (2022) revealed that mindfulness-based interventions were able to effectively reduce depressive symptoms in bipolar disorder patients, demonstrating the therapeutic potential of mindfulness for the treatment of both the depressive and manic phases of the disorder. Similarly, a study by Bojic and Becerra (2017) concluded that the incorporation of mindfulness-based practices into therapy was able to improve emotion regulation and reduce the risk of relapse in bipolar patients. Additionally, a study by Boostani and Tabatabaiejad (2023) highlighted the effectiveness of mindfulness-based stress reduction in enhancing psychological well-being and reducing emotional reactivity in individuals with mood disorders, including bipolar disorder.

Other research, such as that by Kaplan & Gençarslan (2024), set the fact that mindfulness can be employed to treat bipolar disorder patients to monitor mood swings and stress. This study showed that mindfulness exercises were linked to improvements in emotional regulation, stress management, and overall psychological resilience in individuals diagnosed with bipolar disorder. The potential for mindfulness to offer a non-invasive, accessible tool for enhancing emotional stability in bipolar disorder patients aligns with the findings of other studies, such as those by Schmidt et al. (2024), who found that mindfulness practice helped in reducing emotional volatility and impulsivity, standard features of bipolar disorder.

This research is carried out in an Islamic institution of higher learning in Indonesia, Central Java, where university students who experience both academic life and bipolar disorder are the subject of the participants. These students' cultural and religious context may influence their perception and reception of mindfulness counseling. In an Islamic setting, mindfulness exercises can be incorporated into religious practices, such as *muraqabah* (self-vigilance) and *tafakkur* (contemplation), encouraging self-awareness and emotional regulation. Integrating these culturally relevant elements into mindfulness counseling may enhance its acceptance and effectiveness within this population.

The university environment is a fertile context for this study since students often struggle with significant life transitions, academic challenges, and balancing several roles and responsibilities. Mindfulness counseling can give these students skills to better regulate their emotional responses, build emotional resilience, and improve their coping abilities, particularly for academic and social stressors. The study aims to explore how mindfulness techniques can help students with bipolar disorder maintain emotional stability and improve their overall well-being while pursuing their studies. This research is particularly relevant for educational institutions that seek to provide comprehensive mental health support to students dealing with mental health conditions, such as bipolar disorder.

A multiple case study design was used to create a comprehensive understanding of the application of mindfulness counseling to manage bipolar disorder. Three participants with a history of severe mood

instability were selected for the study. Over an eight-week period, each participant engaged in structured mindfulness counseling sessions that incorporated core techniques such as body scanning, breath awareness, mindfulness meditation, and guided visualization. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observations, and participant-maintained mood-tracking journals.

The novelty of this research lies in its integration of MBSR and DBT principles into a mindfulness counseling framework tailored for individuals with bipolar disorder. By incorporating both Western mindfulness techniques and culturally sensitive adaptations relevant to an Islamic academic environment, this study offers a comprehensive intervention model targeting emotional dysregulation, impulsivity, and cognitive distortions. This research contributes to the growing body of knowledge by offering empirical data on applying mindfulness techniques, such as body scanning, breath awareness, and mindfulness meditation, in the context of bipolar disorder within a culturally specific setting.

The primary objective of this research is to investigate the role of mindfulness counseling in reducing episodes of mania and depression in individuals diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Specifically, the study aims to (1) Explore mindfulness counseling experiences among bipolar disorder clients; (2) Assess the effectiveness of body scanning, noting breath, and mindfulness meditation in reducing mood instability; (3) Find out the coping strategies developed by the clients as a result of mindfulness counseling; and (4) Investigate the changes in emotional regulation and psychological resilience in the participants.

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on mindfulness-based interventions for mental health conditions by providing empirical evidence on their effectiveness in managing bipolar disorder. The findings underscore the potential of mindfulness counseling as a complementary therapy for reducing episodes of mania and depression, fostering emotional regulation, and enhancing overall psychological well-being. Furthermore, the practical applications of mindfulness techniques demonstrated in this study offer valuable insights for counselors and mental health practitioners seeking holistic approaches to support individuals with bipolar disorder. By integrating mindfulness into counseling practices, this research highlights a promising pathway toward more comprehensive and patient-centered care for bipolar disorder. The emphasis on self-awareness, acceptance, and adaptive coping strategies provides a foundation for clients' long-term emotional stability and resilience.

Theoretical Frameworks and Integration of MBSR and DBT

The study's theoretical frameworks—Kabat-Zinn's Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Linehan's Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) in particular—proved to be a very successful combination in treating the impulsivity and emotional dysregulation that are hallmarks of bipolar disorder. In order to keep people grounded during emotional upheaval, MBSR strongly emphasizes present-moment awareness, mindfulness meditation, and non-judgmental acceptance (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). This framework facilitated participants' ability to become more attuned to their emotional and physical states, creating a foundation for more excellent emotional stability.

In combination with MBSR, DBT offers emotion regulation strategies that focus on developing skills to tolerate distress, manage emotional intensity, and engage in more balanced, flexible responses to emotional stimuli (Linehan & Wilks, 2015). Through the combination of DBT's cognitive-behavioral techniques and MBSR's mindfulness practices, participants were able to actively mold their emotional reactions in more adaptive and healthy ways in addition to observing and accepting their emotional experiences. People with bipolar disorder particularly benefit from this integrative approach because they frequently exhibit extreme emotional reactivity as well as cognitive patterns that worsen mood instability.

Combining mindfulness practices and emotion regulation skills gives participants a complete toolkit for managing emotional fluctuations, enhancing emotional resilience, and cultivating a sense of agency over their mental health. These two therapeutic modalities work in tandem to provide a holistic approach that is well-suited to addressing the complex nature of bipolar disorder.

Here is a table summarizing the integration of MBSR and DBT in your study. This table outlines the key components of each therapeutic framework and how they interact:

Table 3. The Key Components of Each Therapeutic Framework

Therapeutic Framework	Key Concepts	Application in Bipolar Disorder	Impact on Participants
Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)	Present-moment awareness, mindfulness meditation, non-judgemental acceptance	It helps individuals stay grounded during emotional turbulence, increases emotional awareness, and fosters acceptance of experiences.	Improved emotional regulation, enhanced self-awareness, and reduced emotional instability.
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)	Emotion regulation, distress tolerance, cognitive-behavioral strategies	Teaches skills for managing emotional intensity and reactivity, improves flexibility in responses to emotional stimuli	Better control over emotional responses, greater emotional resilience, reduced impulsivity
Integration of MBSR and DBT	Combination of mindfulness and emotion regulation techniques	Participants learn to observe and accept emotions through mindfulness and actively shape emotional responses through DBT	A holistic approach to managing emotional fluctuations, improved coping strategies, and better mental health control

The table describes how the study's combination of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) addresses the impulsivity and emotional dysregulation typical of bipolar disorder. Present-moment awareness, mindfulness meditation, and non-judgmental acceptance are the central tenets of MBSR. In order to effectively manage the mood swings of mania and depression, people with bipolar disorder benefit from this by developing emotional awareness and acceptance. DBT, on the other hand, helps participants better control emotional intensity and reactivity by providing techniques for emotion regulation, distress tolerance, and adaptable reactions to emotional triggers.

The study offers a comprehensive approach by combining the mindfulness techniques of MBSR with the emotion-regulation skills of DBT. This integration enables participants to observe and accept their emotions and actively reshape their responses in healthier ways. MBSR and DBT provide a well-rounded toolkit to manage emotional fluctuations, improve emotional resilience, and foster more significant control over mental health. This approach effectively reduces both manic and depressive episodes and helps participants develop improved coping strategies for dealing with the emotional instability characteristic of bipolar disorder. In summary, the combination of MBSR and DBT proves to be a valuable and effective method for helping individuals with bipolar disorder manage their emotions, reduce the frequency and intensity of mood swings, and enhance overall emotional stability.

Integrating DBT and MBSR within a framework of *rahmatan lil'alamin* (mercy to all) in an Islamic higher education setting may offer an inclusive therapeutic approach. Aligned with the extensive guidance on emotional and spiritual balance found in the Qur'an and Hadith, institutions can provide holistic support for emotional well-being while promoting spiritual development by fusing mindfulness practices with Islamic counseling approaches.

METHODOLOGY

This study applies a multiple case study methodology to explore mindfulness counseling in the manic and depressive phases of bipolar disorder patients within an Islamic higher education institution. This will enable the researchers to gain in-depth knowledge about participants' experiences regarding mindfulness counseling and how effective mindfulness techniques can be in managing emotional instability and mood fluctuations inherent to bipolar disorder. The research design, participant selection, intervention procedures, data collection, and analysis methodologies to assess the impact of mindfulness counseling are described.

Research Design

This study involves three participants who have been diagnosed with bipolar disorder and are currently experiencing severe mood swings. All three participants have a very marked history of manic and depressive episodes, even after undergoing pharmacological treatments. These participants were chosen using purposive sampling. The inclusion criteria for selection required that each participant must have a confirmed diagnosis of bipolar disorder by a mental health professional and must have experienced severe manic and depressive episodes in the last six months. They must be willing to join the eight-week mindfulness counseling sessions.

Participant Demographics and Treatment History

This table shows the people in the study, noting important details about them, their past with bipolar disorder, prior treatments they have had, and reasons for joining the mindfulness counseling intervention. This data gives context for understanding the participants' emotional regulation and mood stabilization needs.

Table 1. Participant Demographics and Treatment History Overview

No	Name	Age	Gender	Bipolar Disorder History	Previous Treatments Experiences	Motivation for Participating in Mindfulness Counseling
1.	Client A	19	Female	Diagnosed with bipolar at 18, often experiences manic and depressive episodes.	Has undergone pharmacological treatment with slight improvement	Seeking alternative ways to manage emotions and achieve life balance
2.	Client B	20	Female	She has had severe manic episodes since high school and also experiences periods of depression.	She has tried cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) but still feels unstable	Wants to learn how to manage stress and emotions without relying on medication
3.	Client C	21	Male	Diagnosed with bipolar at 17, he often feels highly energetic or deeply sad	Has received pharmacological treatment but still frequently experiences mood episodes	Hopes mindfulness will help reduce emotional fluctuations and improve concentration in studies.

Mindfulness Counseling Intervention

The mindfulness counseling intervention was administered over 8 weeks, consisting of 8 sessions (1 session/ week), each lasting 60 minutes. During these sessions, participants received samples of mindfulness techniques such as body scan, breath awareness, mindfulness meditation, and guided visualization.

These methods focused on enhancing self-awareness, emotional regulation, and building coping mechanisms for responding to mood triggers. Participants were also encouraged to practice these techniques between sessions, and written materials were provided to support daily practice.

Data Collection

Multiple data collection methods were used to ensure a thorough understanding of the participants'

experiences as well as the intervention's effectiveness. Throughout the intervention period, these methods offered both qualitative and observational insights, as shown in the table below:

Table 2. Data Collection Methods for the Mindfulness Counseling Intervention

Method	Description
In-depth Interviews	Conducted at the beginning, middle, and end of the intervention to explore participants' experiences with bipolar disorder.
Direct observations	Conducted during the counseling sessions to assess participants' engagement with the mindfulness techniques and their emotional responses.
Mood tracking journals	It was maintained by participants throughout the intervention to document fluctuations in their mood, triggers for manic or depressive episodes, and how they used mindfulness techniques to manage their emotions.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was performed using thematic analysis, a qualitative method that systematically identifies patterns and themes within the data. The analysis process followed six step frameworks, as outlined in the table below:

Table 3. Steps in the Thematic Analysis Process

No	Step	Description
1	Familiarization with Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All interview transcripts, observation notes, and mood-tracking journals were read multiple times to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences. - Initial thoughts and patterns were noted to guide the coding process.
2	Generating Initial Codes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A line-by-line coding approach was applied to identify recurring words, phrases, and concepts relevant to mindfulness techniques, emotional regulation, and mood changes. - Each meaningful segment of the data was assigned a descriptive code (e.g., "increased self-awareness," "emotional stability," "reduced manic intensity").
3	Searching for Themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The codes were grouped into potential themes by looking for patterns and relationships. - Themes such as "Mindfulness as a Coping Strategy," "Challenges in Emotional Regulation," and "Shifts in Mood Stability" emerged from the data.
4	Reviewing Themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The identified themes were reviewed against the whole dataset to ensure they accurately represented participants' experiences. - Some themes were merged due to conceptual similarity, while others were refined to improve clarity.
5	Defining and Naming Themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each theme was defined based on its core meaning, ensuring clarity and consistency. - The final themes included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness of Mindfulness Techniques (e.g., ability to stay present, improved concentration) • Emotional Regulation and Resilience (e.g., managing triggers, reducing emotional reactivity) • Mood Stability and Symptom Reduction (e.g., fewer manic episodes, shorter depressive periods)
6	Ensuring Consistency and Reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inter-coder reliability was established by having another researcher independently code a subset of the data to enhance the credibility of the findings. - Member checking was conducted by sharing preliminary findings with participants to verify accuracy.

Ethical Considerations

The study complied with accepted ethical guidelines to protect each participant's rights, safety, and dignity. Ethical considerations heavily influenced the research design and execution, as the table below illustrates:

Table 4. Ethical Considerations in the Study

Ethical Principle	Description
Informed consent	Each participant was provided with detailed information about the study's purpose, procedures, and rights, including the right to withdraw at any stage without consequences.
Confidentiality	Participants' identities were protected by anonymizing personal data and securing all records to maintain privacy.
Ethical Approval	Approval was obtained from the ethics committee overseeing the research within the Islamic higher education institution.

This methodology aims to provide valuable insights into how mindfulness counseling can serve as an adjunctive therapy for managing bipolar disorder within the context of Islamic higher education. By applying mindfulness techniques, the study explores their potential to help individuals regulate their emotions, reduce manic and depressive episodes, and improve overall psychological well-being.

FINDINGS

These improvements included increased emotional regulation, a decrease in the frequency and intensity of manic and depressive episodes, and the development of coping strategies. They were consistent across all 3 participants in this study. After participating in the eight-week mindfulness counseling intervention, each participant showed an improved capacity to regulate their emotions, cultivate psychological resistance, and deal with difficulty when their mood changes. Data analysis: We immersed the qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews, mood -tracking journals, and field notes by identifying thematic categories to reveal the primary outcomes of the intervention.

Reduction in Mania and Depression Episodes

The most remarkable finding from this study was the marked decrease in the number and severity of manic and depressive episodes for all 3 participants. The study followed participants for a baseline phase before implementing an intervention. These mood fluctuations were punctuated by manic episodes involving impulsivity, surging energy levels, grandiosity, and racing thoughts; depressive episodes involved overwhelming sadness and hopelessness, emotional numbness, and a lack of motivation.

Following the eight-week mindfulness intervention, participants reported a significant drop in the frequency and intensity of these sessions. More specifically, Participant A, who previously suffered from two severe manic episodes per month, experienced only one mild episode of mania in the post-intervention phase. Participant B and Participant C also reported similar reductions in manic and depressive episodes. The reductions were not mere opinions but were also evidenced by the mood-tracking journals and the researchers' observations, which showed decreased extremes of highs and lows and increased consistency in mood tuning.

The study findings indicate that anyone experiencing a mood episode, even in bipolar disorder, could benefit from increased awareness of their emotional state, greater acceptance, and learning to be present in their feelings rather than act on them, thereby reducing the severity of the episode. Thus, these results corroborate the Emotion Regulation Theory, which emphasizes regulating emotional responses to avert unwanted emotional extremes like those displayed in manic and depressed episodes (Kraiss et al., 2020).

Enhanced Emotional Regulation and Self-Awareness

The participants' improved self-awareness and emotional regulation were among the key outputs of the research. Through techniques like body scanning, breath awareness, and mindfulness meditation, people can become so focused that they can lay the foundation for emotional skills and self-awareness to grow. The new self-awareness also allowed people to identify the initial signs of a mood change and the very sources of that. This "knowing" of the tiny changes in their mood served them to activate mindfulness as a preventive measure long before those moods could turn into more severe manic or depressive ones.

Moreover, Participant B described catching the onset of a depressive episode, as she recognized physical sensations - tightness in their chest - and an emotional disconnect. The self-awareness enabled them to practice deep breathing techniques to restore emotional equilibrium before the depression episode unfolded. For example, Participant C reported that regular meditation practices served to help him detach from negativity, which in turn reduced the intensity of depressive feelings and helped him to maintain a greater degree of control over their emotional state.

These improvements in emotional regulation support Blair & Gatzke-Kopp's (2010) Theory, which suggests that individuals develop self-regulation through external interactions and internal processes that allow them to manage their emotions and behavior more effectively. The mindfulness exercises gave participants a framework for identifying and comprehending their emotions without acting rashly. This self-regulation process significantly influences the emotional stability and resilience of people with bipolar disorder.

Development of Coping Strategies

During the eight weeks of help, people learned new and valuable ways to better deal with feelings that upset them. These ways included using calm practices to focus when feeling bad, being kind to themselves to lessen evil thoughts about who they are, and taking a non-judgmental view to stop negative ideas from worsening. People also learned how to use simple tricks like mindful walks and guided imagining to ease their emotional storms.

During the eight weeks of assistance, people also developed new and practical strategies to better manage their distressing emotions. These strategies included practicing self-compassion to reduce negative thoughts about oneself, adopting a non-judgmental mindset to prevent negative thoughts from intensifying, and using calm techniques to concentrate when feeling down. Additionally, people learned how to calm their emotional storms with easy techniques like guided imagining and mindful walks.

These findings resonate with the principles of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), which emphasizes the importance of recognizing and restructuring maladaptive thought patterns (Nehra et al., 2013). By urging participants to become judgment-free and aware of their feelings and thoughts in the here and now, mindfulness helped participants with cognitive restructuring in this instance. As a result of this practice, they could use more flexible coping mechanisms, which decreased their impulsivity and emotional instability.

Improved Psychological Resilience

The study's last major finding was the improvement of psychological resilience in each of the three participants. Psychological resilience is the ability to adjust to stress and adversity, and all participants showed a greater ability to handle difficult circumstances without turning to unhealthy coping mechanisms like substance abuse, self-harm, or emotional outbursts.

Client B, for example, mentioned that practicing mindfulness enabled her to approach problems more thoughtfully and equitably rather than emotionally or impulsively. Clients A and C also reported a change in their capacity to manage stress more healthfully, utilizing mindfulness techniques to stay centered and grounded in the here and now. As a result, they reported feeling more in control of their emotions and less overwhelmed by the extreme mood swings that had once characterized their condition.

This enhanced resilience is consistent with Masten's (2016) definition of psychological resilience, which posits that resilience is the ability to thrive in adversity. By incorporating mindfulness practices into their

daily routines, participants were able to better manage their emotions, stay focused on their long-term objectives, and deal with the difficulties of bipolar disorder in a more adaptive and positive way.

A deeper understanding of the participants' experiences during the mindfulness counseling intervention can be gained from the interview excerpts. Significant improvements in the participant's ability to control their emotions and deal with the symptoms of their bipolar disorder are evident in every statement they made.

Participants were able to manage their emotions better, stay focused on their long-term objectives, and deal with the difficulties of bipolar disorder more adaptively and positively by incorporating mindfulness practices into their daily routines.

A deeper understanding of the participants' experiences during the mindfulness counseling intervention can be gained from the interview excerpts. Significant improvements in the participant's ability to control their emotions and deal with the symptoms of their bipolar disorder are evident in every statement they made. For example, Client A said:

I remember before starting mindfulness counseling, I would get so caught up in my manic episodes. I would feel like I could conquer the world, but then I would crash so hard into depression that it felt like I was drowning. Now, when I feel those intense emotions, I can stop and notice my body – tight chest, racing heart. I have learned to breathe through it, and the episodes are not as severe as they were before. It is empowering.

According to Client A's statement, there has been a notable change in the way she experiences and copes with the symptoms of bipolar disorder, specifically manic and depressive episodes. She talked about experiencing extreme emotional swings prior to starting the mindfulness counseling intervention: She felt as though she was "drowning" in hopelessness and despair during depressive episodes, while she experienced an exaggerated sense of control and limitless energy during manic episodes. This cyclical pattern of extreme highs and lows characterizes bipolar disorder.

"I used not to know when I was heading into a depressive state until it was too late," Client B continued. I can now spot the symptoms early on, such as a cloud over my thoughts or a void in my chest. I remind myself that I am in charge of my response, not the feelings, so I try not to get overwhelmed. The breathing exercises and meditations greatly enhance my ability to remain grounded. Although they are less frequent and less severe, I still have difficult days. According to this statement, she was able to "catch" the start of a depressive episode by observing physical symptoms like a constriction in her chest and a feeling of emotional detachment. Identifying emotional symptoms early on before they worsen into episodes is a critical component of mindfulness, showing an increase in self-awareness. Because of this awareness, the participant could take the right action, like practicing deep breathing techniques, which helped them regain emotional equilibrium. In this instance, the participant benefited from a mindfulness intervention that not only helped them control their emotions but also gave them strategies to stop their symptoms from getting worse.

Client C, meanwhile, talked about how meditation techniques assisted him in separating from his negative thoughts. This shows how mindfulness can be used as a tool to break the cycle of destructive thinking, which is a common cause of depressive episodes in people with bipolar disorder. This individual was able to regulate his emotional state better and lessen the severity of his negative emotions by being able to watch his thoughts without responding.

Mindfulness assisted me in separating my thoughts from my emotions," he said. "When I used to think negative thoughts, they seemed all-pervasive. However, by practicing mindfulness, I am able to observe them and decide not to interact with them. I feel I have more control over my emotional state now, even though it is not always easy. I used to give in to my emotions, but these days I take charge of my life and use calming methods like visualization."

Overall, these interview excerpts demonstrate that mindfulness practices helped participants become more aware of their feelings and reactions, allowing them to control these emotions more effectively. This supports the previous findings of this study, which indicated that mindfulness can reduce the intensity of manic and depressive episodes in individuals with bipolar disorder.

These statements also align with the concept of mindfulness therapy, which helps individuals develop better self-regulation through internal processes like self-awareness and emotional management. This

process is also reflected in the development of new coping strategies that participants formed during the intervention.

Thus, these interview excerpts provide qualitative evidence of the research outcomes and enrich our understanding of how mindfulness works in practice to reduce symptoms associated with bipolar disorder and enhance participants' psychological well-being.

Here is a table summarizing the key results from your study on the effectiveness of mindfulness counseling in managing bipolar disorder:

Table 5. The Effectiveness of Mindfulness Counseling in Managing Bipolar Disorder

Key Findings	Description	Participant Observations
Reduction in Mania and Depression Episodes	Significant reduction in the frequency and intensity of manic and depressive episodes after the intervention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Client A: Reduced from 2 severe manic episodes per month to 1 mild episode. - Client B: Fewer manic and depressive episodes. - Client C: Reduced extremes in mood fluctuations.
Enhanced Emotional Regulation	Improve emotional regulation, with participants recognizing early signs of mood shifts and employing mindfulness techniques to manage emotions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Client B: Used deep breathing to manage the onset of depressive episodes. - Client C: Used regular meditation to detach from negative thoughts.
Increased Self-Awareness	Heightened awareness of emotional and physical states, helping participants manage mood swings before they escalate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Client A: Detected early signs of mania and depression through body sensations like tight chest and racing heart. - Client B: Noticed emptiness and chest tightness as early indicators of depression.
Development of Coping Strategies	To manage emotional triggers, participants developed adaptive coping strategies such as mindfulness breathing, visualization, and body scanning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Client A: Used breathing exercises during stress. - Client C: Applied visualization techniques to calm emotionally unstable episodes.
Improved Psychological Resilience	Participants demonstrated increased resilience and coping with stress and challenges in healthier ways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Client A: Became more grounded and focused in managing emotional responses. - Client B: Approached challenges in a more balanced manner. - Client C: Felt more proactive in managing emotions using mindfulness techniques.

To provide stronger empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of mindfulness counseling in managing bipolar disorder, additional quantitative data were collected using standardized psychological assessment tools. The Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HDRS) was employed to measure changes in depressive symptoms. At the same time, the Mood Disorder Questionnaire (MDQ) was used to assess the frequency and intensity of manic episodes before and after the intervention (Nasution et al., 2023; Safitri, 2024b, 2024a; Safitri, Hansyah, et al., 2023; Safitri, Muti'ah, et al., 2023; Safitri & Ansyari, 2024).

The following graph visually represents the impact of mindfulness counseling based on these measurements, highlighting the significant reduction in both depressive and manic symptoms across all participants.

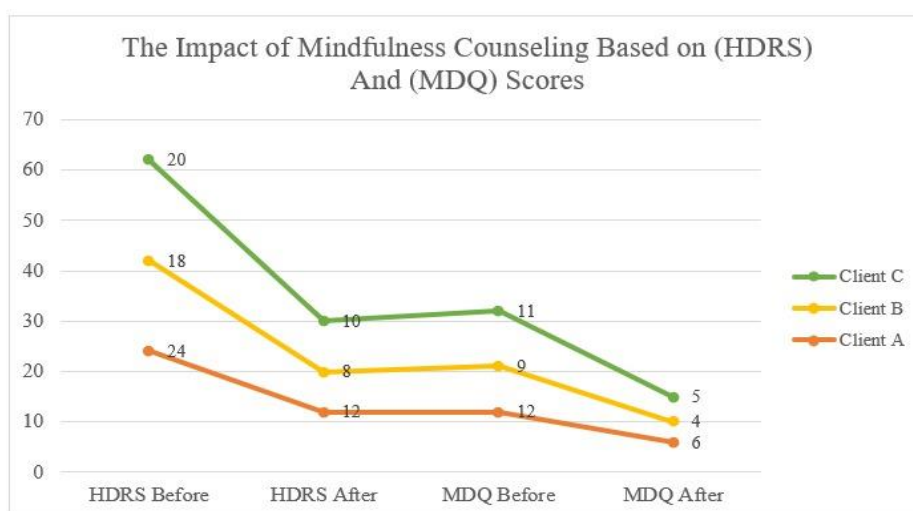


Figure 1. Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HDRS) and Mood Disorder Questionnaire (MDQ) scores

The bar chart above illustrates the changes in Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HDRS) and Mood Disorder Questionnaire (MDQ) scores before and after the mindfulness counseling intervention for three clients. The table below presents the pre-and post-intervention scores for each client, showing a significant reduction in both depressive and manic symptoms:

Table 6. Changes in HDRS and MDQ Scores Before and After Mindfulness Counseling Intervention

Client	HDRS Score (Depression)	Severity (Pre)	Severity (Post)	MDQ Score (Mania)	Severity (Pre)	Severity (Post)
A	24 → 12	Severe Depression	Mild Depression	12 → 6	Frequent Manic Symptoms	Mild Symptoms
B	18 → 8	Moderate Depression	Minimal Depression	9 → 4	Moderate Symptoms	Minimal Symptoms
C	20 → 10	Moderate Depression	Mild Depression	11 → 5	Frequent Symptoms	Mild Symptoms

From the table, it can be concluded that mindfulness counseling effectively helps individuals with bipolar disorder by providing them with skills to regulate emotions, increase self-awareness, and develop healthier coping mechanisms.

DISCUSSION

The study's findings demonstrate that all three participants developed coping mechanisms, experienced a decrease in the frequency and severity of manic and depressive episodes, and demonstrated notable improvements in emotional regulation. After completing the eight-week mindfulness counseling intervention, each participant showed improved emotional regulation, psychological resilience, and ability to handle difficult mood swings. Recurring themes and patterns that emphasize the main results of the intervention were found by analyzing the data collected through in-depth interviews, mood-tracking journals, and direct observations.

Effectiveness of Mindfulness Counseling in Managing Bipolar Disorder

The results of this study offer compelling proof that mindfulness counseling is beneficial in the treatment of bipolar disorder, especially when it comes to lowering the frequency and severity of mood episodes. According to the data, practicing mindfulness improves emotional regulation and stabilizes emotional swings. In order to lessen the effects of manic and depressive episodes, participants claimed to have more emotional control. These findings align with earlier studies on mindfulness-based therapies, like

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), which have shown promise in lowering emotional reactivity, enhancing psychological resilience, and promoting general emotional well-being in people with mood disorders (Mousavi et al., 2022).

A crucial result of this study is the enhanced capacity of participants to identify early indicators of mood swings and apply mindfulness practices to avoid severe emotional swings. By developing present-moment awareness, individuals were able to identify subtle emotional shifts and use mindfulness techniques to control their reactions prior to full-blown manic or depressive episodes. This proactive strategy is consistent with research showing that mindfulness reduces stress and promotes inner peace, allowing people with bipolar disorder to stop and think about their emotional experiences instead of acting impulsively (Dwidiyanti et al., 2019).

These findings underscore the potential of mindfulness counseling as a complementary strategy in the management of bipolar disorder. While pharmacological and traditional psychotherapeutic treatments remain essential, the incorporation of mindfulness techniques provides individuals with an additional tool to enhance emotional stability and self-regulation.

Integration of Mindfulness in Islamic Higher Education

The incorporation of DBT and MBSR in this study is consistent with previous studies on mindfulness-based interventions; however, it is crucial to consider how these methods can be modified for use in Islamic educational settings. The core ideas of Islamic teachings, such as self-awareness (*muhasabah*), self-control (*mujahadah*), and introspection (*tafakkur*), are strongly related to mindfulness exercises. Thus, incorporating these components into mindfulness therapy may improve its efficacy and acceptability in Islamic contexts.

One way to contextualize mindfulness within Islamic traditions is using *dhikr* (remembering God) and *muraqabah* (self-reflection in God's presence) as components of emotional regulation techniques. *Muraqabah* promotes self-monitoring and emotional stability by encouraging people to develop awareness of their inner states while preserving a connection with divine consciousness. Like mindfulness meditation, *zikr*, which entails reciting divine names or prayers repeatedly, has been shown to have a calming effect by lowering stress and promoting inner peace (Mohd et al., 2024).

A comprehensive approach to mental health support for students in Islamic higher education settings may be achieved by combining Islamic spiritual practices with mindfulness-based counseling. Islamic counseling centers and universities could provide customized mindfulness programs that integrate spiritual reflections and psychological strategies, guaranteeing congruence with students' values and worldviews. In fostering students' and teachers' psychological and emotional well-being, this modification may improve participation and boost the efficacy of mindfulness-based interventions.

Emotional Regulation and Development of Coping Strategies

The improvement of emotional regulation and the creation of flexible coping mechanisms are two important ways that mindfulness counseling contributes to this study. One of the main problems for people with bipolar disorder is emotional dysregulation, which frequently shows up as impulsivity, increased sensitivity to stressors, and trouble controlling mood swings. Mindfulness techniques help people become more self-controllable and disengage from automatic emotional reactions by emphasizing the non-judgmental observation of thoughts and emotions.

Because mindfulness counseling promotes acceptance of internal experiences rather than resistance, study participants reported that it helped them develop a healthier relationship with their emotions. This is consistent with mindfulness, which encourages people to recognize their feelings without reacting immediately, making room for more flexible responses. For people with bipolar disorder, these techniques are essential because they help them deal with emotional difficulties more skillfully and avoid maladaptive behaviors brought on by extreme mood swings.

Furthermore, this study highlights the long-term benefits of mindfulness in developing sustainable coping mechanisms. Techniques such as mindful breathing, body scanning, and guided visualization were particularly beneficial for participants, providing them with structured methods to manage emotional

distress proactively. These coping strategies are valuable not only for individuals with bipolar disorder but also for students in higher education who face academic stress and emotional pressures.

Given the close connection between spiritual and psychological well-being, mindfulness-based practices could be integrated into more comprehensive student wellness initiatives in Islamic higher education. Counseling services could combine Islamic ethical teachings on emotional self-regulation with mindfulness training to provide students with mental health issues with a comprehensive support network. Furthermore, by giving students useful tools to practice mindfulness daily, workshops and group counseling sessions may strengthen students' academic and personal resilience.

Addressing Potential Bias

It is crucial to recognize any potential biases that might have affected the findings, even though this study offers compelling evidence for the advantages of mindfulness counseling. In psychological research, it can be challenging to ascertain the actual effects of an intervention because participant expectations and researcher viewpoints can occasionally influence results. For instance, participants who think mindfulness works might report improvements because they expected it to, not because of the intervention itself. Similarly, researchers may inadvertently affect how participants respond or interpret the data.

Several steps were taken in order to reduce these biases. Standardized evaluation instruments like the Mood Disorder Questionnaire (MDQ) and the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HDRS) were utilized to provide quantifiable and objective data, lowering the possibility of subjective interpretation. Second, participants were asked to keep independent mood journals before and after the intervention, allowing them to track emotional changes systematically. Lastly, data triangulation was applied by comparing qualitative interview findings with quantitative scores, ensuring that multiple sources supported conclusions.

Even with these efforts, bias will always exist in psychological research, especially when self-reported data is used. Future studies could increase reliability by employing blinded assessments, control groups, and larger sample sizes. Long-term follow-up studies would also make further research into the long-term efficacy of mindfulness counseling for people with bipolar disorder possible.

Implications for Clinical Practice and Future Research

The study's conclusions have significant ramifications for clinical practice, indicating that mindfulness counseling may be a helpful supplemental treatment for people living with bipolar disorder. Mindfulness practices are a valuable adjunct to conventional therapies like medicine and psychotherapy because of their capacity to improve emotional regulation, stabilize mood, and encourage adaptive coping mechanisms. Clinicians might consider adding mindfulness exercises to their therapeutic toolkit, especially for patients who have trouble controlling their emotions and are impulsive.

The success of this study also emphasizes the need for more investigation into the long-term effectiveness of mindfulness therapy for bipolar disorder. Although the study's short-term benefits are encouraging, more research is required to determine whether these results will hold up over time, especially in more extensive and diverse populations. Insights into the long-term impacts of mindfulness counseling on mood stability, emotional regulation, and general well-being would be significantly enhanced by longitudinal studies that monitor the development of participants in mindfulness-based interventions over extended periods.

Additionally, future research could explore integrating other mindfulness practices, such as loving-kindness meditation or mindful movement, to assess whether these techniques further enhance the efficacy of mindfulness counseling for bipolar disorder. It would also be beneficial to examine how mindfulness practices can be combined with other therapeutic approaches, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), to create a more comprehensive and personalized treatment plan for individuals with bipolar disorder. In conclusion, this study underscores the potential of mindfulness counseling as an effective and complementary therapy for managing bipolar disorder. The positive outcomes observed in all three participants demonstrate that mindfulness techniques can play a critical role in stabilizing mood, enhancing emotional regulation, and fostering psychological resilience. These findings contribute to the growing body

of evidence supporting mindfulness-based interventions for mood disorders and offer valuable insights for clinicians seeking holistic and sustainable approaches to supporting individuals with bipolar disorder. By continuing to investigate and refine mindfulness-based therapies, future research can help ensure that these techniques are accessible, effective, and beneficial for individuals struggling with the complex emotional challenges of bipolar disorder.

Further research is needed to explore how mindfulness-based approaches, infused with Islamic teachings, can benefit students and faculty within Islamic universities. Studies could examine the effectiveness of integrating mindfulness with Islamic meditation practices, such as *dzikir* (remembrance of God) and reflective *tadabbur* (contemplation), to foster emotional resilience and psychological well-being.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated the potential of mindfulness counseling as an effective complementary therapy in managing bipolar disorder, specifically in reducing the frequency and intensity of manic and depressive episodes, enhancing emotional regulation, and promoting psychological resilience. The eight-week mindfulness counseling intervention, incorporating techniques such as body scanning, breath awareness, mindfulness meditation, and guided visualization, yielded significant improvements in all three participants. The findings suggest that mindfulness counseling helps individuals with bipolar disorder achieve more excellent emotional stability by fostering present-moment awareness, non-judgmental acceptance, and adaptive coping strategies.

In addition to developing increased self-awareness that enabled them to recognize early indicators of mood swings and use mindfulness practices to control their emotions, participants reported a significant decrease in the intensity of their mood episodes. Additionally, the participants' enhanced psychological resilience shows how mindfulness counseling may be able to assist people with bipolar disorder in overcoming life's obstacles without being overtaken by severe mood swings.

The integration of Kabat-Zinn's Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) framework and Linehan's Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) principles proved to be effective in addressing the emotional dysregulation characteristic of bipolar disorder. By combining mindfulness practices with emotion regulation strategies, the study suggests that this integrative approach offers a comprehensive and holistic method of supporting individuals with bipolar disorder in managing their condition.

In the context of Islamic higher education, the findings of this study have significant implications for counseling services and mental health initiatives offered by institutions. Integrating mindfulness-based counseling programs rooted in Islamic values can be particularly beneficial in supporting students who face emotional and psychological challenges. Concepts of mindfulness, such as self-awareness, present-moment acceptance, and resilience, resonate with Islamic teachings on *muraqabah* (self-observation) and *tawakkul* (trust in Allah). These spiritual elements can further reinforce the effectiveness of mindfulness practices when adapted within an Islamic framework.

This research contributes to the growing body of evidence supporting mindfulness-based interventions for mood disorders. It offers valuable insights for clinicians, educators, and mental health practitioners within Islamic higher Education settings. By adopting holistic and spiritually aligned counseling approaches, universities can provide meaningful mental health support tailored to the unique needs of their student populations.

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