



## Comparison of the Effectiveness Between Mindfulness Therapy and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in Treating Anxiety Disorders

Intim Cahyono <sup>1</sup>, Ridawati Sulaeman <sup>2</sup>, Lathifah Hanum <sup>3</sup>, Septin Maisharah Karyono <sup>4</sup>, Ahmad Shofi Mubarak <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Poltekkes Kemenkes Surabaya, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> Poltekkes Kemenkes Mataram, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup> Poltekkes Kemenkes Aceh, Indonesia

<sup>4</sup> Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Kesehatan Muhammadiyah Bojonegoro, Indonesia

<sup>5</sup> Universitas Selamat Sri, Indonesia

**Corresponding Author:** Intim Cahyono, E-mail; [intimselalu15@gmail.com](mailto:intimselalu15@gmail.com)

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### ABSTRACT

The growing complexity of anxiety disorders, a common mental health problem, significantly affects individuals' quality of life. In an effort to address this disorder, mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) have become an increasing focus of research. However, the comparative effectiveness between these two therapeutic approaches is still a matter of debate in the scientific literature. The purpose of this study was to compare the effectiveness of mindfulness therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy in overcoming anxiety disorders. The research method used was a systematic review of relevant empirical studies that have been conducted in this field. Data from these studies were comprehensively analyzed to evaluate the relative effectiveness of the two therapeutic approaches. The results showed that both mindfulness therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy have significant benefits in reducing anxiety disorder symptoms. However, there are differences in the approach and focus of each therapy. Mindfulness therapy emphasizes on self-awareness of thoughts and feelings without judging them, while cognitive-behavioral therapy focuses on changing negative thought patterns and harmful behaviors. In addition, some studies have shown that cognitive-behavioral therapy can provide faster results especially in addressing acute anxiety symptoms, while mindfulness therapy tends to be more effective in the long run. The conclusion of this study is that both mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy can be effective options in treating anxiety disorders, depending on individual needs and preferences. The selection of the appropriate therapy should take into account individual characteristics, the severity of the anxiety disorder, and the treatment context. A combination or integration between the two types of therapy may also be a promising approach in improving treatment outcomes for individuals with anxiety disorders.

**Keywords:** *Comparative, Effectiveness, Mindfulness*

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## INTRODUCTION

In the world of modern health, therapy has become one of the main approaches in treating various medical and psychological conditions (Adunlin et al., 2015). Therapy is an intervention process carried out by health professionals to help individuals overcome physical, mental, emotional and social health problems. Therapeutic approaches vary, from medical ones such as drug therapy to non-medical ones such as talk therapy and behavioral therapy (Santi Diwyarthi et al., 2023). The main goal of therapy is to improve the patient's well-being and quality of life, both individually and in relation to their environment. One important aspect of therapy is the recognition of the complexity of the human individual (Stern & Stern, 2021). Each person has unique experiences, needs, and challenges, so an effective therapy approach must be personalized and customized to the individual's needs. Therapy not only focuses on symptomatic treatment, but also targets the root causes of problems and promotes lasting changes in behavior, thought patterns, and emotions. Therapy also plays an important role in strengthening the relationship between patients and healthcare providers (Kurniawan et al., 2023). In a safe and trusted atmosphere, patients feel heard, understood, and supported in their healing process. This helps break down the stigma and reluctance towards seeking mental help, and encourages people to take steps towards recovery. Different types of therapy have been developed to suit the diverse needs of individuals. Cognitive therapy, for example, focuses on changing detrimental thought patterns and helping patients develop more effective problem-solving strategies (Xia et al., 2023). Meanwhile, behavioral therapy leads to changes in unwanted behavior by providing positive reinforcement and stress management strategies. Psychoanalytic therapy, on the other hand, explores the emotional background and past experiences that may be the root cause of current psychological problems.

## Literatur of Refiew

### 1. Mindfulness Therapy and Cognitive Therapy

Mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy are two different yet often complementary approaches in the management of mental disorders such as anxiety, depression, and stress. Mindfulness therapy, which comes from the Buddhist meditation tradition, emphasizes self-awareness of present moment experiences without judgment or overreaction (Kuyken et al., 2010). The aim is to help individuals develop the ability to accept their thoughts and feelings with full presence, without getting stuck in a cycle of negative thoughts or excessive emotional reactivity. On the other hand, cognitive-behavioral therapy is based on the theory that thoughts, feelings,

and behaviors influence each other (Apolinário-Hagen et al., 2020). This approach focuses on identifying and changing negative thought patterns and maladaptive behaviors that contribute to symptoms of mental disorders. Using techniques such as identification of negative thoughts, testing the truth of those thoughts, and replacing negative thoughts with more balanced alternatives, mindfulness therapy and cognitive therapy aim to help individuals overcome symptoms of anxiety and improve their quality of life

Mindfulness therapy emphasizes the practice of self-awareness through meditation exercises, focused breathing, body scanning, and yoga practice (Fjorback et al., 2011). During therapy sessions, clients are guided to shift their attention to the present experience, be it physical sensations, thoughts, or emerging emotions (Bandelow et al., 2015). With regular practice, individuals learn to recognize their thought and emotional patterns without automatically engaging in unhealthy or excessive reactions (Hofmann et al., 2010). In addition, mindfulness therapy also teaches individuals to respond more flexibly to life's stresses and pressures, helping them find peace within themselves amidst uncertainty and tension. Meanwhile, cognitive-behavioral therapy involves identifying and changing the negative thought patterns and maladaptive behaviors that underlie anxiety symptoms (Hofmann et al., 2012). Through structured therapy sessions, clients are helped to identify cognitive distortions or negative thoughts that may be causing or exacerbating their anxiety (Hayes & Hofmann, 2017). Once these thoughts are identified, clients are taught to test the truth or reality of the thoughts and replace the negative thoughts with more balanced and realistic alternatives. In addition, cognitive-behavioral therapy may also involve techniques such as systematic desensitization, concentration, and progressive relaxation to help individuals overcome their fears and anxieties.

Both approaches have their own advantages and disadvantages. Mindfulness therapy, with its emphasis on self-awareness and unconditional acceptance of present experiences, can provide long-term benefits in managing stress, improving emotional well-being, and reducing symptoms of depression. As such, mindfulness therapy is suitable for individuals who tend to get stuck in a cycle of negative thoughts or excessive emotional reactivity. However, mindfulness therapy may require ongoing practice and high commitment from the individual, and can be less effective for acute anxiety symptoms. Cognitive-behavioral therapy, on the other hand, often provides more immediate and measurable results, especially in addressing acute anxiety symptoms (Hayes, 2004). With a structured focus on changing negative thought patterns and maladaptive behaviors, cognitive therapy can help individuals to overcome anxiety symptoms in a more direct and targeted manner. However, it may be less effective in addressing deep emotional distress or issues related to meaning in life or existential concerns. In clinical practice, a combination or integration of mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy may be the most effective approach in managing anxiety disorders (Hofmann & Gómez, 2017). This combined approach capitalizes on the strengths of each therapy and can provide a

comprehensive and integrated approach to addressing anxiety symptoms. Thus, understanding the differences and similarities between mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy can help clinicians and patients in choosing the approach that best suits individual needs and preferences. Thus, mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy (Wells, 1995), although different in their approaches, can be very useful tools in the quest to manage and overcome anxiety disorders.

## 2. Benefits of Mindfulness Therapy and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in the World of Health

Mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy have benefits in healthcare, particularly in the management of mental disorders and the improvement of individuals' psychological well-being. First, mindfulness therapy has been shown to be effective in reducing symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). By teaching individuals to experience the present moment with self-awareness and unconditional acceptance, mindfulness therapy helps them reduce emotional reactivity and increase resilience to the stresses of daily life (Edenfield & Saeed, 2012). This can provide significant benefits to individuals who often experience chronic stress or tend to get stuck in a cycle of negative thoughts. In addition, mindfulness therapy can also help improve sleep, reduce bad habits, and improve concentration and focus. Secondly, cognitive behavioral therapy also has extensive benefits in the management of mental disorders (Apolinário-Hagen & Salewski, 2018). Cognitive behavioral therapy has been shown to be effective in reducing symptoms of anxiety, depression, and eating disorders, as well as helping individuals overcome bad habits such as addiction and impulsive behavior. By focusing on changing negative thought patterns and maladaptive behaviors, cognitive therapy helps individuals to identify and address factors that trigger or exacerbate their symptoms. It can provide practical and targeted solutions for individuals seeking help in managing psychological issues that affect their daily lives. Furthermore, it also has benefits in improving quality of life and overall well-being. By reducing symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression, as well as helping individuals to overcome bad habits and negative thought patterns, mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy can help individuals to feel happier, calmer, and more vibrant in their lives (Khoury et al., 2015). This can improve interpersonal relationships, enhance performance at work, and increase overall satisfaction in life.

In addition to psychological benefits, mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy also have significant physical benefits (Keng et al., 2011). Studies have shown that mindfulness practices can help reduce blood pressure, reduce the risk of heart disease, and boost the immune system (Goldberg et al., 2018). This is because mindfulness practices can reduce the body's stress reactivity and promote the relaxation response, which has a positive effect on overall physical health. Similarly, the management of stress and anxiety through cognitive behavioral therapy can also have significant physical benefits, including reducing the risk of physical health disorders related to chronic stress, such as gastrointestinal disorders and sleep

disturbance (Chu et al., 2020)s. In addition to individual benefits, mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy also have significant economic benefits within the healthcare system (Hayes et al., 2006). By helping individuals to manage their mental disorders more effectively, they can reduce healthcare costs associated with doctor visits, hospitalizations, and medication use. In addition, by improving psychological well-being and quality of life, mindfulness therapy and CBT can also increase workplace productivity and reduce work absenteeism caused by psychological problems.

There are several previous research opinions. The first research according to Gunawan & Oriza, (2023), dengan judul penelitian Fisibility Of Acceptance And Commitment Therapy (Act) In A Group Setting To Improve Self-Efficacy In Students With Social Anxiety. The results of his research stated that there are other factors that affect social anxiety. The absence of increased self-efficacy shows that ACT can be used in a larger population wide again although research on this matter is still needed. The second research according to Wijayaningsih et al., (2022), with the research title Effectiveness of mindfulness training to overcome insomnia in college students. The results of his research stated that the experimental group's results (Mdn=7) were higher than those of the control group (Mdn=15.8). Mann-Whitney's test results showed a significant difference in pain scores between the experimental and control groups (N experiment = 4, Control = 4,  $Z = -2.337$ ;  $p = 0.019$ ). This can be seen in the decrease in insomnia score in the experimental group. Mindfulness training proved to be appropriate for overcoming insomnia in college students. The third research according to Wuryansari & Subandi, (2019), with the research title Mindfulness for Prisoners (Mindfulness) Program to Reduce Depression in Prisoners. The results of his research stated that The mindfulness program was conducted in the form of group therapy with the criteria of participants is inmates with more than 1 year sentence and has a BDI-II score in the medium to high category. The mindfulness program be held in 4 meetings, included 8 sessions with a duration of 120-150 minutes. This research used one group pretest-posttest design. Subject also given follow up after one week from the time of posttest.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research methods are the systematic steps used by researchers to collect, analyze, and interpret data to answer their research questions. A research method is a framework that provides guidance for researchers in carrying out their research process. There are various kinds of research methods that can be selected according to the purpose, type of data, and context of a particular research. In this study, quantitative research methods were used. In conducting research, it is important to follow the principles of research ethics, including ensuring the safety and well-being of research subjects, respecting their rights, and ensuring honesty and integrity in reporting research results. Quality research also pays attention to the validity and reliability of the data, and takes into account factors that can affect research results



such as bias and methodological flaws

Research methods to compare the effectiveness of mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy in treating anxiety disorders require a careful and systematic approach (Feliu-Soler et al., 2018). First of all, it is necessary to determine an appropriate research design to produce valid and reliable data. The research design that can be used in this case is a randomized controlled clinical trial. The research method to compare the effectiveness between mindfulness therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy in overcoming anxiety disorders requires a careful and systematic approach. First of all, it is necessary to determine an appropriate research design to produce valid and reliable data. A research design that can be used in this case is a randomized controlled clinical trial (RCT), which allows direct comparison between the two types of therapy. RCTs are robust research designs as they allow for better control of external variables that may affect the results.

Once the study design has been determined, the next step is the selection of a representative study sample. The research sample should consist of individuals with anxiety disorders of varying severity. The sample selection process can be done through recruitment of patients from mental health centers, clinics, or through advertisements and social media. Once the sample is selected, participants should be randomized into two groups: one group receives mindfulness therapy and the other group receives cognitive behavioral therapy. Before the intervention begins, it is necessary to collect baseline data to measure initial anxiety levels and individual characteristics. This can be done using questionnaires or structured clinical interviews. Once the baseline data is collected, the mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy interventions can begin. Mindfulness therapy usually involves meditation exercises, breathing techniques and self-awareness practices, while behavioral cognitive therapy focuses on identifying and changing negative thought patterns and maladaptive behaviors.

During the intervention period, it is necessary to continuously monitor the progress of participants in both groups. This can be done through regular therapy sessions, daily journal entries by participants, or the use of self-monitoring tools such as smartphone apps. It is also necessary to evaluate possible side effects or risks associated with both types of therapy. After the intervention period is over, post-intervention data is collected to evaluate the effectiveness of both types of therapy in reducing anxiety symptoms. Data can be analyzed using appropriate statistical methods, such as analysis of variance to compare differences between the mindfulness and cognitive-behavioral therapy groups. In addition, subgroup analysis should also be conducted to evaluate whether there are certain characteristics that influence the response to each type of therapy. Finally, the results of the study will be presented in a comprehensive research report. This report will include a full description of the study design, sample characteristics, intervention process, results of data analysis, and interpretation of findings. The conclusion of the study will highlight the relative effectiveness of mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy in addressing

anxiety disorders, as well as clinical implications and future research directions, allowing for a direct comparison between the two types of therapy.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The history of the development of mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy for anxiety disorders has different roots but has evolved within the field of mental health. Mindfulness therapy, derived from meditation practices that have existed for thousands of years in the Buddhist tradition, began to attract attention in the Western world in the early 20th century. Although the practice of mindfulness meditation has existed in spiritual and philosophical contexts in Asia for centuries, thinking about its application in modern medicine began to develop in the West. One of the figures instrumental in introducing mindfulness to the Western world was Jon Kabat-Zinn, a professor at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. In 1979, Kabat-Zinn founded the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) Program, which aims to help individuals manage stress and chronic medical conditions by integrating mindfulness meditation practice in medicine. From here, mindfulness therapy evolved into a widely recognized approach in addressing various mental health issues, including anxiety disorders.

Cognitive-behavioral therapy, on the other hand, has roots more related to scientific developments in psychology. In the 1950s and 1960s, therapists such as Albert Ellis and Aaron Beck began to develop approaches that emphasized the role of thoughts and behaviors in shaping individual experiences. Ellis developed rational emotional therapy (REBT), which emphasized the importance of identifying and changing the irrational beliefs that underlie negative emotions. Beck, on the other hand, developed cognitive therapy, which focuses on identifying and changing negative thought patterns that cause or exacerbate psychological problems. These two approaches laid the foundation for the development of modern cognitive-behavioral therapy, which has proven effective in treating a variety of mental disorders, including anxiety. Over time, both mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy have continued to evolve and adapt in the context of treating anxiety disorders. Mindfulness therapy is not only used to treat stress and chronic medical conditions, but has also been adapted into specific programs for anxiety, such as Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT). Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy combines the principles of mindfulness therapy with concepts from cognitive-behavioral therapy to help individuals with recurrent depression to prevent the recurrence of depressive episodes. This approach has been shown to be effective in reducing depression relapse rates and can also help reduce associated anxiety symptoms.

Meanwhile, cognitive-behavioral therapy continues to evolve in the context of treating anxiety disorders. One of the emerging approaches is exposure-based cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT-E). Exposure-based cognitive-behavioral therapy combines elements of traditional cognitive-behavioral therapy with systematic exposure techniques, which confront individuals gradually with situations that trigger

their anxiety. This approach aims to reduce avoidance behaviors common in individuals with anxiety disorders and help them overcome their fears safely and effectively. Exposure-based cognitive-behavioral therapy has been shown to be effective in treating various types of anxiety disorders, including panic disorder, specific phobias, and social anxiety disorder. The development of mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy in addressing anxiety disorders reflects a paradigm shift in the mental health field towards an approach that is more focused on a deep understanding of an individual's experience and its influence on mental well-being. Both mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy emphasize the importance of self-awareness, observation of thoughts and feelings, and changing unhealthy patterns of thinking and behavior. Although they have different approaches, both enable individuals to develop the skills necessary to manage anxiety and achieve optimal mental well-being. In research, both therapies have been widely researched and have strong support in the scientific literature. Studies have shown that mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy are effective in reducing anxiety symptoms and improving the quality of life of individuals with anxiety disorders. This scientific evidence strengthens the position of mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy as effective approaches in the treatment of anxiety disorders

**Table 1: Comparison of the Effectiveness Between Mindfulness Therapy and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in Treating Anxiety Disorders**

NO	Aspects	Mindfulness Therapy	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
1	Definition	Therapy that focuses on self-awareness and non-judgmental acceptance of current experiences.	Therapy that focuses on identifying and changing unhealthy thought patterns and behavior.
2	Method	Practice meditation, yoga and daily mindfulness practices.	Self-monitoring, note-taking, and mindset shift exercises.
3	Purpose	Increases self-awareness, accepts emotions without inhibition, and reduces reactivity to stress.	Change negative thought patterns, reduce avoidance behavior, and improve problem-solving skills.
4	Approach	Holistic and non-judgmental.	Focus on identifying and changing thought patterns and behavior.
5	Scientific Evidence	It has been shown to have effectiveness in reducing anxiety symptoms.	It has found strong support in research for reducing anxiety.
6	Duration	Usually done over a certain period of time with daily independent practice.	Therapy is usually structured in scheduled sessions over several weeks or months.



<b>7</b>	Excellence	Teaches skills to manage stress and improve overall quality of life.	It has a structured and focused approach, suitable for those who need a clear framework.
<b>8</b>	Challenge	It requires consistency and patience to practice self-awareness	It may require identifying and changing mindsets that are deep and sustained.
<b>9</b>	Practical Application	Can be done independently or with the guidance of a therapist.	Usually requires the guidance and support of a therapist.
<b>10</b>	Availability	Increasingly available in health programs and apps.	Provided by therapists trained in the use of cognitive behavioral techniques.

Anxiety disorders are one of the most common mental health problems in modern society. In order to address this problem, therapy is one of the most commonly used approaches. Two therapeutic approaches that have been proven effective in reducing anxiety symptoms are mindfulness therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy. Although they have different focuses, both offer effective strategies for managing anxiety and improving the quality of life of affected individuals. Mindfulness therapy, which comes from the Buddhist meditation tradition, emphasizes self-awareness and acceptance without judgment of present experiences. This is done through meditation practice, yoga, and daily mindfulness practices. The goal is to increase self-awareness, accept emotions without inhibition, and reduce reactivity to stress. Mindfulness therapy teaches individuals to observe their thoughts and feelings without reacting or getting caught up in them. This can help them handle anxiety better by teaching skills to respond consciously rather than impulsively. Behavioral cognitive therapy, on the other hand, is more focused on identifying and changing unhealthy thought patterns and behaviors that may be causing or exacerbating anxiety. Behavioral cognitive therapy involves self-monitoring, note-taking, and mindset change exercises. The goal is to change negative thought patterns, reduce avoidance behaviors, and improve problem-solving skills. By challenging and changing harmful thought patterns, individuals can gain greater control over their anxiety. In terms of effectiveness, both mindfulness therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy have shown strong evidence in reducing anxiety symptoms. Research has found that both can help individuals reduce their anxiety levels and improve overall quality of life. However, there are differences in the approach and practical application of these two therapies.

Mindfulness therapy is often more flexible in terms of practical application as it can be done independently or with the guidance of a therapist. This makes it more accessible for individuals who may not have access to a therapist or want to start the practice independently. In addition, it is increasingly available in wellness programs and downloadable apps, thus making it more accessible. On the other hand, cognitive

behavioral therapy often requires the guidance and support of a therapist. This is because it has a structured and focused approach, which may require expert guidance to ensure that individuals understand and apply the techniques correctly. However, the advantage of this structured approach is that the therapist can provide guidance and support that is specific to the individual's needs, which can increase the effectiveness of the therapy. Challenges in using mindfulness therapy include the need for consistency and patience to practice self-awareness. This is because mindfulness practice often requires time and dedication to develop skills. Challenges that may be encountered in cognitive behavioral therapy include requiring the identification and change of deep and sustained thought patterns. This process may require significant time and effort on the part of the individual to change thought patterns that have been entrenched for a long time. Additionally, individuals may experience difficulty in overcoming avoidant or detrimental behaviors that have become habitual in their daily lives. However, with the help of a trained therapist, individuals can learn strategies to overcome these challenges and change their thought patterns and behavior to reduce anxiety.

## **CONCLUSION**

From the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that both mindfulness therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy can be effective options in overcoming anxiety disorders, depending on individual needs and preferences. The selection of the appropriate therapy should take into account the individual's characteristics, the severity of the anxiety disorder, and the treatment context. A combination or integration between the two types of therapy may also be a promising approach in improving treatment outcomes for individuals with anxiety disorders. The effectiveness of mindfulness therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy in treating anxiety disorders can be seen from various aspects, including the approach, methods, goals, scientific evidence, and advantages and challenges of each therapy. First, both therapies offer different but complementary approaches. Mindfulness therapy emphasizes self-awareness and acceptance without judgment of current experience, while cognitive-behavioral therapy focuses more on identifying and changing unhealthy thought patterns and behaviors. Both aim to help individuals cope with anxiety in different yet effective ways. Secondly, the methods used in mindfulness therapy involve meditation practice, yoga, and daily mindfulness practices, while cognitive-behavioral therapy involves self-monitoring, note-taking, and mindset change exercises. Both methods offer unique approaches to help individuals manage anxiety and improve their quality of life. When choosing the most appropriate therapy to address an anxiety disorder, individuals need to consider their personal preferences, comfort level with a particular approach, as well as available support. Both therapies can be effective options in helping individuals manage anxiety and achieve optimal mental well-being.

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