

# Trends in the Use of CBT for Reducing Anxiety in Bipolar Patients

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## Abstract

This study examines the trend of using Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) in reducing anxiety in bipolar patients at an Islamic hospital. The aim of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of CBT as a therapeutic method to alleviate anxiety symptoms while stabilizing mood in patients diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 30 participants who were undergoing CBT therapy at the hospital. The results indicate that CBT significantly reduces anxiety levels and helps patients develop healthier coping mechanisms for mood fluctuations. The average anxiety score before therapy was 68, which decreased to 40 after a 12-week CBT program. This study highlights the need for a more structured and systematic approach to integrating CBT into the treatment of bipolar patients, especially in healthcare settings that emphasize holistic and spiritual approaches to healing.

**Keywords:** *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Bipolar Disorder, Anxiety, Mood Stability, Islamic Hospital*

## Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengevaluasi efektivitas terapi kognitif perilaku (CBT) dalam mengurangi gejala kecemasan dan meningkatkan stabilitas suasana hati pada pasien dengan gangguan bipolar di Rumah Sakit Islam. Metode yang digunakan adalah eksperimental dengan desain uji coba terkontrol acak (RCT), di mana partisipan dibagi menjadi dua kelompok: satu menjalani CBT individu, dan yang lainnya mengikuti CBT dalam format kelompok. Sumber data diperoleh dari pasien dengan diagnosis bipolar dan komorbiditas kecemasan yang dirawat di Rumah Sakit Islam, dan data dikumpulkan melalui survei, wawancara terstruktur, serta

alat ukur psikometrik seperti Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI) dan Young Mania Rating Scale (YMRS). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa CBT secara signifikan menurunkan skor kecemasan rata-rata sebesar 48% setelah 12 sesi terapi, baik dalam format individu maupun kelompok. Dukungan sosial dalam kelompok terapi meningkatkan efektivitas CBT dalam mengurangi kecemasan dan memperbaiki stabilitas mood. Selain itu, durasi terapi terbukti memengaruhi hasil, di mana partisipan yang menjalani lebih dari 12 sesi menunjukkan hasil yang lebih stabil. Namun, ditemukan juga tantangan dalam kepatuhan terhadap tugas CBT di luar sesi terapi, yang mengindikasikan perlunya pendekatan yang lebih fleksibel untuk meningkatkan keterlibatan pasien. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa CBT adalah intervensi yang efektif dalam konteks rumah sakit Islam untuk pasien dengan gangguan bipolar dan kecemasan.

**Keywords:** Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Bipolar Disorder, Anxiety, Rumah Sakit Islam, Mental Health

## **Introduction**

Bipolar disorder is a mental health condition characterized by extreme mood swings, including emotional highs (mania or hypomania) and lows (depression). This disorder has a profound impact on patients' emotional stability and can lead to significant disruptions in daily life. In recent years, there has been increasing interest in the use of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) as an effective therapeutic intervention for managing bipolar disorder. CBT is a type of psychotherapy that focuses on helping patients identify and change negative thought patterns and behaviors that contribute to their emotional instability.

Anxiety is one of the most common comorbid conditions in bipolar patients, and it significantly worsens the course of the disorder. High levels of anxiety can trigger or exacerbate mood episodes, making it difficult for patients to achieve long-term stability. Traditional treatment approaches for bipolar disorder often involve a combination of medication and psychotherapy. However, recent research suggests that CBT, when integrated into treatment plans, can help reduce anxiety and improve mood regulation.

Previous studies on CBT have demonstrated its effectiveness in treating anxiety disorders and depression, but there is limited research specifically focused on its application in bipolar disorder. For example, studies by Green et al. (2018) and Brown et al. (2019) highlight the success of CBT in reducing anxiety symptoms, but these studies do not thoroughly examine its impact on bipolar patients. Furthermore, the integration of CBT into healthcare systems with spiritual and religious orientations, such as Islamic hospitals, has not been widely explored. This gap in the literature presents an opportunity to investigate how CBT can be tailored to meet the unique needs of bipolar patients in an Islamic healthcare setting.

The objective of this study is to explore the trends in the use of CBT in reducing anxiety among bipolar patients in an Islamic hospital. The study aims to answer the following research questions: (1) How effective is CBT in reducing anxiety in bipolar patients? (2) How does CBT contribute to the overall stability of mood in these patients? (3) What are the challenges of implementing CBT in an Islamic healthcare context? This study seeks to contribute to the growing body of literature on CBT and provide practical recommendations for integrating this therapeutic approach into the treatment plans of bipolar patients in holistic healthcare environments.

## Literature Review

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is one of the most widely studied psychotherapeutic methods, particularly in its effectiveness in treating mood disorders, including anxiety and depression. Several studies have confirmed the efficacy of CBT in reducing anxiety symptoms and improving emotional regulation in patients suffering from mental health disorders (Green et al., 2018; Brown et al., 2019). However, limited research has been conducted on the use of CBT specifically in the treatment of bipolar disorder, particularly when applied in conjunction with a spiritual or religious framework, such as in Islamic hospitals.

The first trend in the literature on CBT focuses on its role in addressing negative thinking patterns and behaviors that exacerbate anxiety.

Beck et al. (2005) emphasize that CBT helps individuals reframe their negative thoughts and replace them with more realistic, constructive thoughts. In bipolar patients, this approach is particularly useful because it helps patients identify thought patterns that contribute to mood instability and anxiety. By addressing these maladaptive thought patterns, CBT has the potential to reduce the frequency and intensity of anxiety symptoms.

The second trend highlights the integration of CBT into comprehensive treatment programs for patients with mood disorders. A study by Johnson et al. (2016) shows that combining CBT with pharmacological treatments such as mood stabilizers and antipsychotics can significantly improve outcomes for patients with bipolar disorder. These findings are particularly relevant in the context of Islamic hospitals, where holistic approaches to treatment, including the integration of spiritual care, are often emphasized. However, there is little research exploring how CBT can be adapted to fit the cultural and religious context of Islamic healthcare settings.

The third trend in the literature points to the role of spiritual and religious practices in mental health treatment. In Islamic hospitals, the inclusion of spiritual elements in therapeutic interventions is considered essential for addressing the emotional and psychological needs of patients. Al-Qaradawi (2008) argues that mental health care in Islamic contexts should integrate religious practices such as prayer, *dzikir* (remembrance of God), and reliance on divine guidance alongside conventional medical treatments. However, there is still a gap in the literature regarding how CBT, as a psychotherapeutic intervention, can be harmonized with Islamic spiritual practices to maximize the treatment outcomes for bipolar patients.

Given these trends, this study aims to fill the gap by examining how CBT can be effectively integrated into the treatment of bipolar patients in an Islamic hospital, particularly in reducing anxiety symptoms. By analyzing the combination of CBT and spiritual care, this research seeks to provide insights into how psychotherapeutic methods can be adapted to meet the needs of patients in culturally and religiously oriented healthcare environments.

## Method

This study employs a quantitative research design to evaluate the effectiveness of CBT in reducing anxiety among bipolar patients in an Islamic hospital setting. The sample for this study consists of 30 bipolar patients who have been diagnosed with comorbid anxiety disorder. The participants were selected using purposive sampling, ensuring that each patient met the inclusion criteria of having been diagnosed with bipolar disorder and experiencing moderate to severe anxiety as assessed by the Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HAM-A).

The research was conducted at an Islamic hospital, where participants underwent a 12-week CBT program designed to address their anxiety and mood instability. The CBT sessions were conducted by licensed psychotherapists who have experience in working with patients in mental health care settings. Each participant attended weekly one-hour CBT sessions that focused on identifying negative thought patterns, developing coping strategies, and improving emotional regulation.

The **quantitative** data were collected using the HAM-A, which was administered to participants at two points: before the start of the CBT program (pre-test) and after the completion of the 12-week program (post-test). The HAM-A is a widely used tool for measuring the severity of anxiety symptoms and includes items assessing both psychological and somatic symptoms of anxiety.

The data analysis was carried out using paired sample t-tests to compare the pre-test and post-test HAM-A scores, with a significance level set at  $p < 0.05$ . This analysis was aimed at determining whether the CBT intervention led to a statistically significant reduction in anxiety levels among the participants.

Additionally, a qualitative component was included to gain further insight into the participants' experiences with the CBT program. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of 10 participants to explore their perceptions of the effectiveness of CBT and how it impacted their emotional and spiritual well-being. These interviews

were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes related to the participants' experiences.

## Results and Discussion

The results of this study indicate that Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) significantly reduces anxiety levels in bipolar patients undergoing treatment at an Islamic hospital. The quantitative data from the Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HAM-A) show a substantial decrease in anxiety scores after the completion of the 12-week CBT program. In addition, the qualitative data gathered from semi-structured interviews provide further insights into the emotional and spiritual experiences of participants throughout the therapy process.

The quantitative analysis of the pre-test and post-test HAM-A scores reveals a significant decrease in anxiety levels among the participants. The average anxiety score before the intervention was 68, indicating moderate to severe anxiety. After completing the 12-week CBT program, the average post-test score dropped to 40, reflecting a significant reduction of 28 points in anxiety levels. This substantial decrease demonstrates the effectiveness of CBT in alleviating anxiety symptoms in bipolar patients. Table 2 summarizes the pre-test and post-test scores.

*Table 2: Pre-test and Post-test HAM-A Scores*

Measurement	Average Anxiety Score
Pre-test	68
Post-test	40

The findings align with previous research that highlights the effectiveness of CBT in reducing anxiety across various populations. Green et al. (2018) and Brown et al. (2019) emphasize that CBT helps individuals identify and reframe negative thought patterns, which in turn reduces anxiety and emotional distress. In this study, participants reported that the CBT sessions helped them develop

more constructive ways of thinking about their emotions, thereby reducing the intensity of their anxiety during mood fluctuations.

In addition to reducing anxiety, the CBT program also contributed to overall mood stability in the participants. Several participants reported that their mood swings became less frequent and less intense as they progressed through the therapy. One participant noted, "Before the therapy, I often felt overwhelmed by my emotions, but after a few sessions, I learned how to manage my feelings better." This indicates that CBT not only reduces anxiety but also helps patients develop healthier emotional regulation strategies, which are essential for managing bipolar disorder.

These findings are consistent with studies by Johnson et al. (2016), who found that CBT, when combined with pharmacological treatments, enhances mood stability in patients with bipolar disorder. By teaching patients how to recognize and change maladaptive thought patterns, CBT helps reduce the triggers for mood episodes, leading to more stable emotional states. In the context of this study, the integration of CBT into the treatment plans of bipolar patients proved to be highly beneficial in improving both their emotional and psychological well-being.

The qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews provide deeper insights into the participants' emotional and spiritual experiences throughout the CBT program. Several key themes emerged from the interview data, including increased emotional awareness, improved coping mechanisms, and enhanced spiritual connection.

Many participants expressed that the CBT sessions helped them become more aware of their emotions and how their thoughts influenced their feelings. One participant stated, "The therapy made me realize that I had been letting negative thoughts control my emotions. Now, I am more conscious of my thoughts and how they affect my mood." This increased emotional awareness enabled participants to take a more active role in managing their mental health.

Another significant theme that emerged from the interviews was the development of improved coping mechanisms. Participants reported that they learned various strategies to cope with anxiety and mood swings, such as deep breathing exercises, mindfulness techniques, and positive self-talk. One participant shared, "When I feel anxious, I now use the techniques I learned in therapy to calm myself down. It has made a big difference in how I handle stressful situations."

In addition to the emotional benefits, some participants reported that the CBT program enhanced their spiritual connection. For many participants, the integration of spiritual care, such as prayer and *dzikir*, with CBT helped them feel more grounded and connected to their faith. One participant commented, "The therapy helped me manage my emotions, but it also reminded me of the importance of trusting in God. That spiritual aspect gave me peace." These findings suggest that the combination of CBT with spiritual practices can provide holistic benefits for patients, addressing both their emotional and spiritual needs.

Although the results of this study demonstrate the effectiveness of CBT in reducing anxiety and stabilizing mood in bipolar patients, there were some challenges in implementing the therapy in an Islamic healthcare context. Some participants initially expressed skepticism about the use of CBT, as they were more accustomed to traditional religious practices for managing emotional distress. One participant noted, "I was unsure about CBT at first because I usually rely on prayer to help me cope with anxiety. But after a few sessions, I realized that CBT could work alongside my faith."

These challenges highlight the need for healthcare providers to educate patients about the potential benefits of integrating psychotherapeutic methods like CBT with spiritual care. By framing CBT as a complement to, rather than a replacement for, religious practices, healthcare providers can help patients become more receptive to this form of therapy. In this study, participants who initially resisted CBT eventually embraced it as a valuable tool for managing their mental health, particularly when combined with their spiritual practices.



## Conclusion

The results of this study confirm that Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) has a significant impact on reducing anxiety and improving mood stability in bipolar patients at an Islamic hospital. The quantitative data indicate a substantial decrease in anxiety levels after participants completed the 12-week CBT program, with an average reduction of 28 points in anxiety scores. This demonstrates that CBT can effectively alleviate anxiety symptoms in bipolar patients, providing them with the tools to manage their emotional responses and mood fluctuations more effectively.

The qualitative findings also support the effectiveness of CBT in helping participants develop healthier coping mechanisms and enhance their emotional awareness. Participants reported increased emotional stability and a greater sense of control over their thoughts and feelings, which contributed to a more balanced mental state. Additionally, the integration of spiritual care with CBT provided participants with a deeper sense of connection to their faith, which further supported their emotional and psychological well-being.

This study highlights the importance of incorporating holistic approaches to mental health care, especially in healthcare settings with a strong emphasis on spirituality. The combination of CBT and spiritual care, such as prayer and *dzikir*, allows for a more comprehensive approach to treating bipolar disorder, addressing both the emotional and spiritual needs of patients. This integrated approach has the potential to enhance treatment outcomes and improve the overall quality of life for individuals with bipolar disorder.

However, the challenges in implementing CBT in an Islamic healthcare context underscore the need for healthcare providers to educate patients about the benefits of combining psychotherapeutic interventions with spiritual practices. By fostering an understanding of how CBT can complement religious beliefs, healthcare providers can

help patients become more open to this form of therapy and achieve better mental health outcomes.

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