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Abdul Wahab, N.^a, Abdul Khaiyom, J.H.^{a b}

The Effects of Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy in Multicultural Settings: A Scoping Review
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^a Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia

^b International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia

Abstract

Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) is an experiential group intervention adapted from Buddhist meditational practice aimed at treating recurrent depression. Our scoping review explored the MBCT effectiveness in multicultural settings and whether any adaptations were made to enhance it. By using Arksey and O'Malley's framework, our review examined randomized controlled trials (RCTs) published between 2010 and 2023, focusing solely on studies from non-English speaking countries. Out of 1461 published RCT, only 15 of them met our study criteria and they were mainly from China, Denmark, Germany, Hong Kong, Iran, Netherlands, and Switzerland. Out of 15 selected RCT publications, 10 studies shown that MBCT significantly improved symptom-based measures (e.g., Beck Depression Inventory-II), one study shown little difference between MBCT compared to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), and four studies shown that comparative treatments were more effective than MBCT, in which two of them were culturally specific interventions, Traditional Yoga and Qigong. Two studies found MBCT effective when combined with Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Loving-kindness meditation. Common themes including (1) reduction in psychological distress across all studies, (2) trials used small sample sizes, and (3) the feasibility of using MBCT in multicultural settings, with cultural interventions showing greater effectiveness. MBCT interventions reported promising results when used in a multicultural setting, with a potential for culturally integrated intervention. Our results conclude an opportunity for future research to embed psycho-spirituality with MBCT. © (2025), (International Islamic University Malaysia). All rights reserved.

Author Keywords

Culture; MBCT; non-English speakers; RCT

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Correspondence Address

Abdul Khaiyom J.H.; Department of Psychology, Jalan Gombak, Malaysia; email: hanum@iiium.edu.my

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