

THE EFFECT OF MINDFULNESS ON THE INSECURITY OF STUDENTS IN THE ISLAMIC COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE PROGRAM AT UIN NORTH SUMATRA

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Abstract

Feelings of insecurity among students are characterized by a sense of insecurity, low self-esteem, and self-doubt, which can hinder academic and professional readiness. Mindfulness is viewed as one of the psychological factors that has the potential to help individuals manage negative self-evaluation in a more adaptive manner. This study aims to analyze the effect of mindfulness on feelings of insecurity among students in the Islamic Counseling and Guidance (BPI) at UIN North Sumatra. This study employs a quantitative approach with a correlational design. The sample consists of 100 BPI students from the 2022–2025 cohorts selected via purposive sampling. Data were collected using a mindfulness scale adapted from the Five-Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) based on previous research and an insecurity scale whose validity and reliability had been tested, and were then analyzed using simple linear regression with the aid of SPSS version 22. The results of the study indicate that mindfulness has a negative and significant effect on feelings of insecurity (Sig. 0.000 < 0.05) with a regression coefficient of -0.814. The coefficient of determination (R^2) value of 0.390 indicates that mindfulness contributes 39% to the variation in students' feelings of insecurity. This finding suggests that increasing mindfulness has the potential to reduce levels of insecurity and support the academic and professional readiness of BPI students.

Keywords: Mindfulness, Insecurity, Islamic Counseling Students

Abstrak

Rasa insecure pada mahasiswa ditandai dengan perasaan tidak aman, rendah diri, dan keraguan terhadap kemampuan diri yang dapat menghambat kesiapan akademik dan profesional. Mindfulness dipandang sebagai salah satu faktor psikologis yang berpotensi membantu individu dalam mengelola evaluasi diri negatif secara lebih adaptif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh mindfulness terhadap rasa insecure pada mahasiswa Bimbingan Penyuluhan Islam (BPI) UIN Sumatera Utara. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain korelasional. Sampel berjumlah 100 mahasiswa BPI angkatan 2022–2025 yang dipilih melalui teknik purposive sampling. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan skala mindfulness yang diadaptasi dari Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) melalui penelitian sebelumnya dan skala insecure yang telah diuji validitas dan reliabilitasnya, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan regresi linear sederhana dengan bantuan SPSS versi 22. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mindfulness berpengaruh negatif dan signifikan terhadap rasa insecure (Sig. 0,000 < 0,05) dengan koefisien regresi sebesar -0,814. Nilai koefisien determinasi (R^2) sebesar

0,390 menunjukkan bahwa *mindfulness* memberikan kontribusi sebesar 39% terhadap variasi rasa *insecure* mahasiswa. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa peningkatan *mindfulness* berpotensi menurunkan tingkat *insecure* serta mendukung kesiapan akademik dan profesional mahasiswa BPI.

Kata kunci: *Mindfulness, Insecure, Mahasiswa Bimbingan Penyuluhan Islam*

INTRODUCTION

College students are individuals in early adulthood, a developmental period characterized by the search for self-identity, adjustment to academic and social demands, and preparation for entering the workforce. During this phase, students face various challenges that can affect their psychological well-being. While some students are able to adapt positively, others struggle to cope with these changes, making them vulnerable to stress, anxiety, and feelings of *insecurity* (Ayu et al., 2023). These conditions make students a group that is particularly vulnerable to various psychological issues that can affect both their mental well-being and academic success.

One psychological issue that students frequently experience is a sense of *insecurity*. In psychological research, *insecurity* is understood as a form of negative self-evaluation characterized by low confidence in one's abilities, fear of social judgment, a tendency to compare oneself to others, and feelings of worthlessness (Putri et al., 2023). This condition is influenced by internal factors such as low self-confidence, fear of making mistakes, and negative perceptions of one's own abilities, as well as external factors such as academic pressure, social expectations, and increasingly high professional demands (Astutik, 2024). If it persists, feelings of *insecurity* can hinder an individual's ability to adapt, make decisions, and build healthy interpersonal relationships.

A sense of *insecurity* is a feeling of vulnerability characterized by low self-confidence (*inferiority*), anxiety, fear, and other emotions triggered by a lack of certainty regarding one's own capabilities—arising from negative thought patterns (Andariska & Fitriani, 2022). According to Beck (1976), negative self-talk can lead to anxiety and emotional distress, causing individuals to feel insecure. Furthermore, Leary (2001) explains that low *self-esteem* makes individuals more prone to feeling inferior, lacking confidence, and being sensitive to social judgment. This is also supported by Kaplan & Sadock (2015), who state that anxiety and emotional instability are associated with feelings of insecurity in individuals.

Someone who feels *insecure* typically feels rejected, isolated, anxious, pessimistic, unhappy, guilty, lacking in self-confidence, selfish, and prone to neurotic tendencies (Sabil & Karnita, 2022). This condition makes a person feel inadequate and unsure of themselves, leading to anxiety about their relationships with others. As a result, individuals may have difficulty adapting to their environment (Fadhilla & Rihardini Sundari, 2023). If this persists to an excessive degree, it has the potential to disrupt emotional stability and mental health (Nelwan et al., 2023). Therefore, "*insecure*" in this study is understood as a form of negative self-evaluation encompassing aspects of

anxiety, low self-confidence, fear of social judgment, and discomfort in social interactions.

This issue is particularly relevant for students in the Islamic Guidance and Counseling (BPI) program. As future Islamic counselors and guidance counselors, BPI students are expected to possess academic competence, interpersonal skills, communication abilities, and professional readiness to provide guidance and counseling services. However, based on the researcher's observations, many students still exhibit behaviors indicative of *insecurity*, such as hesitating to express opinions during discussions, avoiding presentations, feeling anxious during counseling practice sessions, and frequently comparing their academic abilities and communication skills with those of their peers. These conditions indicate that *insecurity* not only affects students' self-confidence but also has the potential to hinder the development of the professional competencies that prospective counselors should possess.

Academic pressure and professional demands further intensify feelings of *insecurity* among BPI students. Students must be able to balance completing academic assignments with mastering counseling skills, which require emotional readiness and the ability to build interpersonal relationships. Fear of making mistakes during counseling practice, concerns about being unable to help clients optimally, and feelings of incompetence can reinforce negative self-evaluation. If these conditions are not managed properly, feelings of *insecurity* have the potential to reduce students' academic performance, communication skills, and professional readiness as prospective counselors.

One psychological approach considered effective in helping individuals cope with these conditions is *mindfulness*. Brown & Ryan (2003) define *mindfulness* as full awareness of present-moment experiences with an accepting, non-judgmental attitude. Individuals with high levels of *mindfulness* tend to be better able to objectively accept both internal and external experiences, thereby avoiding getting trapped in negative thought patterns about themselves. In addition to enhancing *self-acceptance*, *mindfulness* also helps individuals manage their emotional responses more adaptively, thereby reducing the tendency toward excessive self-evaluation (Baer et al., 2006). Thus, *mindfulness* is expected to serve as a psychological factor that plays a role in reducing feelings of *insecurity* through increased self-awareness and better emotional regulation.

According to Baer et al. (2008), *mindfulness* consists of five aspects: *observing* (the ability to pay attention to internal and external experiences), *describing* (the ability to label inner experiences), *acting with awareness* (acting with full awareness), *non-judging of inner experience* (not judging thoughts and feelings), and *non-reactivity to inner experience* (not overreacting to inner experiences). These five dimensions enable individuals to become fully aware of their own experiences, accept thoughts and emotions without negative judgment, and respond to various situations in a more adaptive manner. These skills are considered important for BPI students because they can support the

development of self-confidence, emotional regulation skills, and readiness to fulfill their roles as prospective counselors.

Although research on *mindfulness* has been extensive, most previous studies have focused on its relationship with stress, anxiety, depression, and psychological well-being. Meanwhile, research specifically examining the influence of *mindfulness* on feelings of *insecurity*—particularly among Islamic Counseling and Guidance students as prospective counselors—remains relatively limited. Previous studies have primarily focused on anxiety, stress, or psychological well-being (Savitri & Listiyandini, 2017), as well as examined *insecurity* in the context of social media use (Syauqii, 2022) and *body image* (Putri et al., 2023). Based on this, previous researchers have not provided insight into how *mindfulness* contributes to reducing feelings of *insecurity* among students being trained as professionals in the field of Islamic counseling and guidance. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effect of *mindfulness* on feelings of *insecurity* among Islamic Counseling and Guidance students at UIN North Sumatra.

Based on this discussion, it can be assumed that there is a relationship between *mindfulness* and feelings of *insecurity*. Consequently, the hypotheses for this study are as follows: H_0 states that there is no effect of *mindfulness* on feelings of *insecurity* among students in the Islamic Counseling and Guidance program, and H_a states that there is an effect of *mindfulness* on feelings of *insecurity* among students in the Islamic Counseling and Guidance program at UIN North Sumatra.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach with a correlational research design. A quantitative approach was used to test the relationship and influence between variables through statistical analysis based on numerical data obtained from respondents (Sugiyono, 2013). In this study, a correlational design was chosen to analyze the influence of mindfulness as the independent variable on feelings of insecurity as the dependent variable among students in the Islamic Counseling and Guidance (BPI) program at UIN North Sumatra.

The study population consists of all active students in the Islamic Counseling and Guidance Study Program at UIN North Sumatra from the 2022–2025 cohorts. The study sample comprised 100 students selected using purposive sampling, a technique for determining a sample based on specific characteristics aligned with the research objectives (Machali, 2021). The respondent criteria included: (1) active students in the BPI program from the 2022–2025 cohorts, (2) willingness to participate in the study by providing *informed consent*, and (3) completion of the questionnaire in full.

Prior to data collection from the main sample, the research instrument was first pilot-tested on 50 respondents who shared similar characteristics with the study population but were not included in the main sample. The pilot test was conducted to evaluate the validity and reliability of each item in the instrument, ensuring that only items meeting psychometric criteria were used in the main study. The research instrument used a five-

point Likert scale, ranging from a score of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The mindfulness variable was measured using the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) developed by Baer et al. (2006) and adapted into Indonesian by Prabowo (2019). This instrument measures five dimensions of mindfulness: *observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-judging of inner experience, and non-reactivity to inner experience*. Of the 22 items tested, 16 valid items that met the validity criteria were identified and subsequently used in the study.

The variable of insecurity was measured using a scale based on the concept of *self-insecurity*, drawing on the instrument developed by Lestari et al. (2025). This scale measures tendencies toward negative self-evaluation characterized by low self-confidence, fear of social judgment, and doubt regarding one’s own abilities. The validity test results showed that all 10 items met the validity criteria and were therefore used in the research data collection. Item validity was analyzed using Pearson’s product-moment correlation, while the instrument’s reliability was tested using Cronbach’s alpha. The instrument was deemed reliable if it had a Cronbach’s alpha value of ≥ 0.70 . Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 22. The analysis began with an assessment of the instrument’s quality through validity and reliability tests using data from the *tryout*. Next, regression assumption tests were conducted, including tests for normality, linearity, and heteroscedasticity. Hypothesis testing was performed using simple linear regression analysis to determine the effect of mindfulness on feelings of insecurity among BPI students. Additionally, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was used to determine the extent to which the mindfulness variable contributes to explaining the variation in feelings of insecurity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the findings of the data analysis examining the effect of mindfulness on the feelings of insecurity among students of the Islamic Guidance and Counseling (Bimbingan Penyuluhan Islam/BPI) program, the results indicate that mindfulness has a negative and statistically significant effect on students' feelings of insecurity.

1. Instrument Quality Testing

a. Validity Test

The validity test was conducted to determine whether each questionnaire item accurately measured its intended construct. An item was considered valid if the significance value (Sig.) was less than 0.05 and the calculated correlation coefficient (r-calculated) exceeded the critical value of r-table.

Table 1. Validity Test Results (n = 5)

VARIABLE	INITIAL NUMBER OF ITEMS	VALID ITEMS	INVALID ITEMS	SIG.	R- TABLE	INTERPRETATION

MINDFULNESS	22	16	6	< 0.05	0.279	Valid
INSECURITY	10	10	0	< 0.05	0.279	Valid
TOTAL	32	26	6	—	—	Appropriate for Use

The validity test involved 50 respondents as the pilot sample. The critical value of r-table (0.279) was determined using the Product-Moment correlation table with $df = 48$ ($n - 2$) at a significance level of 5%. As shown in Table 1, 16 of the 22 mindfulness items met the validity criteria (Sig. < 0.05 and r-calculated > 0.279), whereas six items failed to satisfy these requirements and were therefore excluded. Meanwhile, all 10 insecurity items demonstrated acceptable validity and were retained for subsequent analyses.

b. Reliability Test

Reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha to evaluate the internal consistency of the research instrument. A coefficient greater than 0.60 indicated acceptable reliability.

Table 2. Reliability Test Results

VARIABLE	CRONBACH'S ALPHA	MINIMUM STANDARD	INTERPRETATION
MINDFULNESS	0.728	> 0.60	Reliable
INSECURITY	0.889	> 0.60	Reliable

The reliability analysis revealed that the mindfulness scale achieved a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.728, while the insecurity scale obtained 0.889. Since both coefficients exceeded the recommended minimum threshold of 0.60, both instruments were considered reliable and appropriate for data collection.

2. Classical Assumption Tests

Prior to hypothesis testing, several classical assumption tests were conducted to ensure that the regression model met the required statistical assumptions.

Table 3. Classical Assumption Test Results

TEST	INDICATOR	SIG. VALUE	CRITERION	INTERPRETATION
NORMALITY	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.200	> 0.05	Normally Distributed
LINEARITY	Linearity	0.000	< 0.05	Linear Relationship
	Deviation from Linearity	0.968	> 0.05	No Deviation from Linearity

HETEROSCEDASTICITY	Glejser Test	0.069	> 0.05	No Heteroscedasticity
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The Kolmogorov–Smirnov normality test yielded a significance value of 0.200, exceeding the threshold of 0.05, indicating that the regression residuals followed a normal distribution. The linearity test showed a significance value of 0.000 for the Linearity component and 0.968 for the Deviation from Linearity component. These findings confirm that the relationship between mindfulness and insecurity is linear without significant deviation from linearity. Furthermore, the Glejser test produced a significance value of 0.069, which is greater than 0.05, indicating that the regression model is free from heteroscedasticity. Accordingly, all classical assumptions required for simple linear regression analysis were satisfactorily fulfilled.

3. Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Table 4. Results of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis

COMPONENT	VALUE	CRITERION	INTERPRETATION
R	0.624	≥ 0.60	Strong Relationship
R²	0.390	—	39% Explained Variance
F	62.531	Sig. < 0.05	Model Fit
SIG. (F)	0.000	< 0.05	Model is Significant
B	−0.814	—	Negative Effect
T	−7.908	Sig. < 0.05	Significant
SIG. (T)	0.000	< 0.05	H ₀ Rejected

The simple linear regression analysis demonstrated that the regression model was statistically significant ($F = 62.531$, $p < .001$), indicating that the model was appropriate for explaining the relationship between mindfulness and insecurity. The regression coefficient ($B = -0.814$) and t-value (-7.908 , $p < .001$) indicate that mindfulness has a negative and statistically significant effect on students' feelings of insecurity. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted.

The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.390$) indicates that 39% of the variance in students' feelings of insecurity is explained by mindfulness, whereas the remaining 61% is attributable to other variables not included in the present study. In addition, the correlation coefficient ($R = 0.624$) suggests a strong relationship between mindfulness and insecurity.

DISCUSSION

The present study demonstrates that mindfulness has a negative and statistically significant effect on feelings of insecurity among students enrolled in the Islamic Guidance and Counseling (Bimbingan Penyuluhan Islam/BPI) program. The regression analysis yielded a significance level of 0.000 ($p < .05$) with a regression coefficient of -0.814 , indicating an inverse relationship between the two variables. In other words, higher levels of mindfulness are associated with lower levels of insecurity, whereas lower levels

of mindfulness increase students' susceptibility to negative self-evaluation, self-doubt, and concerns regarding social judgment.

These findings suggest that mindfulness functions as an important psychological mechanism that enables individuals to regulate self-evaluation in a more adaptive manner. Individuals with higher mindfulness are more capable of recognizing their thoughts, emotions, and internal experiences without becoming overly judgmental toward themselves. Conceptually, the mindfulness dimensions of non-judging of inner experience and non-reactivity to inner experience enable individuals to avoid excessive self-criticism, rumination, and persistent worries about external evaluation. Consequently, the tendency to experience feelings of insecurity is substantially reduced (Baer et al., 2008).

The findings are theoretically consistent with the conceptualization of mindfulness proposed by Kabat-Zinn (2003), who defines mindfulness as awareness that emerges through intentionally paying attention to present-moment experiences in a non-judgmental manner. Such awareness enables individuals to observe their experiences objectively rather than becoming trapped in repetitive negative thought patterns. By fostering present-centered awareness, mindfulness promotes psychological flexibility and helps individuals disengage from maladaptive cognitive processes that often contribute to emotional distress.

Similarly, Brown and Ryan (2003) argue that mindfulness facilitates disengagement from automatic and maladaptive cognitive and behavioral patterns while simultaneously enhancing self-regulation and psychological well-being. Students possessing higher levels of mindfulness are therefore better equipped to manage academic demands, interpersonal conflicts, and social pressures without developing persistent negative self-perceptions. Furthermore, Didonna (2009) emphasizes that mindfulness enables individuals to integrate various life experiences more adaptively, allowing them to respond to challenges constructively while cultivating healthier personal development and stronger psychological resilience.

The present findings are also supported by numerous empirical studies. Keng et al. (2011) concluded that mindfulness contributes to enhanced psychological well-being, reduced psychological symptoms, decreased emotional reactivity, and improved behavioral self-regulation. These competencies enable university students to cope more effectively with academic and social stressors.

Likewise, Rasmussen and Pidgeon (2011) reported that individuals with higher levels of mindfulness generally experience lower levels of social anxiety. In addition, Thompson and Waltz (2008) demonstrated that mindfulness is positively associated with unconditional self-acceptance, referring to an individual's capacity to accept oneself independently of external evaluations or social comparisons. Collectively, these studies reinforce the present findings by demonstrating that mindfulness significantly reduces feelings of insecurity, particularly among students preparing for careers as professional

counselors, who are expected to demonstrate emotional stability, self-confidence, empathy, and effective interpersonal communication skills.

Within counselor education, mindfulness also has important implications for the development of interpersonal communication competence. According to Rakhmat (2005), communication plays a fundamental role in shaping self-concept and establishing healthy interpersonal relationships. Ineffective interpersonal communication often leads individuals to feel misunderstood, socially isolated, and incapable of developing meaningful relationships with others. Such conditions may intensify feelings of insecurity, particularly when individuals perceive themselves as unable to express their thoughts and emotions effectively.

Accordingly, BPI students possessing stronger mindfulness skills are not only better able to regulate their own psychological well-being but are also more prepared to establish effective therapeutic relationships during guidance and counseling sessions. These competencies are particularly important because counseling effectiveness depends substantially upon counselors' emotional awareness, empathic understanding, and interpersonal sensitivity.

The phenomenon of insecurity among university students is frequently associated with social comparison and excessive concern regarding the judgments of others. From an Islamic perspective, this issue receives profound attention in the Qur'an. Allah سبحانه وتعالى states in Qur'an, Surah Al-Hujurat (49):13:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

This verse emphasizes that human diversity exists so that people may know and appreciate one another (*lita'ārafū*), while true honor in the sight of Allah is determined not by social status, physical appearance, or worldly achievements, but by *taqwā* (God-consciousness). This Qur'anic principle provides a strong spiritual foundation for reducing unhealthy social comparison, encouraging individuals to appreciate themselves without relying upon external validation. Consequently, Islamic teachings complement the psychological principles of mindfulness by encouraging healthier self-acceptance and reducing self-evaluations based solely on comparisons with others.

Furthermore, the Islamic concept of inner tranquility closely corresponds to mindfulness in promoting psychological well-being. Allah سبحانه وتعالى states in Qur'an, Surah Ar-Ra'd (13):28:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۚ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

This verse explains that hearts attain tranquility through the remembrance of Allah (*dhikr*). Such spiritual tranquility contributes to reducing anxiety, emotional distress, and persistent negative thoughts. Within the context of the present study, this spiritual dimension complements mindfulness by strengthening self-reflection, acceptance of life experiences, and adaptive emotional regulation. The integration of reflective awareness

with Islamic spiritual values therefore has considerable potential to help students develop healthier self-acceptance and minimize feelings of insecurity.

The regression analysis further indicates that mindfulness explains 39% of the variance in students' feelings of insecurity, while the remaining 61% is attributable to other variables not examined in this study. This finding demonstrates that although mindfulness is an important protective factor against insecurity, it is not the sole determinant. Other psychological factors—including self-esteem, social support, interpersonal experiences, attachment patterns, personality characteristics, and emotion regulation abilities—may also substantially influence the development of insecurity among university students.

These findings carry important implications for university counseling services. Strengthening mindfulness may serve as an effective preventive and developmental intervention within higher education counseling programs. Mindfulness-based interventions can assist students in cultivating greater emotional awareness, healthier self-acceptance, improved stress management, and stronger interpersonal functioning. Such interventions are particularly relevant for students enrolled in counselor education programs because future counselors are expected to demonstrate emotional maturity, psychological resilience, empathy, and effective helping skills.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that mindfulness is not only psychologically beneficial but also highly compatible with Islamic spiritual values in fostering self-awareness, self-acceptance, emotional stability, and psychological preparedness among students of Islamic Guidance and Counseling. The integration of contemporary mindfulness theory with Islamic teachings offers a comprehensive framework for promoting students' psychological well-being while simultaneously strengthening the professional competencies required of future Islamic counselors and religious advisors.

SIMPULAN

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that mindfulness has a significant negative effect on feelings of insecurity among students in the Islamic Counseling and Guidance program. This is evidenced by the results of statistical analysis, which show a significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05) with a regression coefficient of -0.814, meaning that the higher a student's level of mindfulness, the lower their level of insecurity. Conversely, students with low levels of mindfulness tend to be more prone to negative thoughts, overthinking, self-doubt, and concerns about social judgment. The coefficient of determination (R^2) value of 0.390 indicates that mindfulness accounts for 39% of the variation in students' feelings of insecurity, while 61% is influenced by other factors outside the scope of this study. Thus, mindfulness has been proven to be a key factor in helping students manage feelings of insecurity, enhance self-awareness, build self-acceptance, and support their personal development and professional readiness as prospective Islamic counselors and educators.

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