

Original Research Article

**Evaluation of Dialectical Behavioral Therapy on Egyptian Patients with
Borderline Personality Disorder: A Comparative Study**

Abstract

Background: Researchers have introduced tremendous developments in the therapy of BPD. Nonetheless, there is an urgent need for further clinical investigations regarding the role of dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) in patients with borderline personality disorder (BPD).

Aim: We conducted this study to evaluate the efficacy of DBT in Egyptian patients with BPD.

Subjects and Methods: We conducted a prospective, comparative, non-randomized, study through the period from January 2017 to June 2019; patients were recruited if they had established diagnosis of BPD according to DSM-5. Eligible patients were assigned at their convenience or according to immediate availability of treatment slot to comprehensive DBT program integrating DBT skills into skills training schedule or treatment as usual (TAU).

Results: DBT patients showed better improvement in borderline symptoms in comparison to patients receiving TAU ($P < 0.001$). Regarding the behavior aspect, the patients in DBT group started to show significant improvement in comparison to TAU

group after 16 months ($P < 0.001$). DBT patients showed better improvement of emotion regulation and mindfulness in comparison to TAU. Overall, it was found that DBT groups had lower Distress Tolerance scale (DTS) score in comparison TAU (28.35 ± 3.16 vs. 49.95 ± 2.39 , $P < 0.001$). At the end of treatment, it was found that Interpersonal Effectiveness, evaluated by (IIPP) scale, were significantly reduced in DBT group compared to TAU group ($P < 0.001$).

Conclusions: We provide further evidence about the effectiveness of DBT in the management of BPD in Egyptian patients.

Keywords: Borderline Personality Disorder; Bidirectional Behavioral Therapy; Psychometric Parameters; Effectiveness; Interventional Study

1. Introduction:

Borderline personality disorder (BPD) is the most prevalent personality disorder, with a general prevalence of up to 2% (Widiger, 2012). It generates a substantial negative impact on the person's quality of life, which is manifested by inadequate functioning, higher rates of attempted suicide, and mental and physical comorbidities (Tomko et al., 2014). The suicidal frequencies reach 10% among individuals with BPD, which is 50 times greater than the rates of the general population (Black et al., 2004; Leichsenring et al., 2011). Besides, personality disorders account for 24% of patients in primary care, and over 30% in psychiatry clinics (Twomey et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2012). Therefore, research directions aimed to establish an effective treatment modalities for BPD (Dhaliwal et al., 2020; Kramer et al., 2020).

International guidelines do not usually recommend pharmacotherapy for BPD (Hancock-Johnson et al., 2017; Lieb et al., 2004). The last decade has witnessed tremendous developments in the therapy of BPD, including dialectical behavior therapy (DBT), mentalization-based treatment (MBT), transference-focused therapy (TFP), and schema therapy (ST) (Stoffers et al., 2012). DBT is an out-patient-based modality that relies on the features of cognitive-behavioral principles; the current body of evidence demonstrated notable efficacy of DBT for management of BPD (May et al., 2016).

Nonetheless, the efficacy of DBT in developing countries, such as Egypt, has not been well characterized yet and the available literature is limited, which creates an urgent need for further clinical investigations. Therefore, we conducted this interventional study to evaluate the efficacy of DBT in Egyptian patients with BPD.

2. Subjects and Methods:

We conducted a prospective, comparative, non-randomized, study through the period from January 2017 to June 2019; patients were recruited from the inpatient and outpatient clinics of Neuropsychiatry Department and Psychiatry, Neurology and Neurosurgery Center of Tanta University Hospitals. Patients aged 18-45 years old of both genders were included if they had established diagnosis of BPD according to DSM-5 (American Psychiatric Association (APA), 2013). Patients were excluded if they refused to sign the informed consents or had schizophrenia or any other psychotic disorders. Patients with intellectual disability, traumatic brain injury, organic brain diseases, and/or other systematic and neurological diseases were excluded. The patients were recruited using a non-probability, consecutive, sampling technique. The study obtained the ethical

approval of the local ethics committee of Tanta University Hospitals prior to the enrollment of the first patient. All patients, or their first-degree relatives, signed the informed consent before their participation.

Study's Treatments

Eligible patients were assigned at their convenience or according to immediate availability of treatment slot to comprehensive DBT program integrating DBT skills into skills training schedule or treatment as usual (TAU). Patients assigned to DBT group were included in the program for one year and received once weekly individual psychotherapy session (one hour), skills training group (2 hours), and skills coaching phone calls with the primary therapist when needed. In addition, a weekly team meeting for all therapists, including the candidate and other DBT therapist, was conducted aiming at reducing therapist burnout and increasing therapist capabilities to treat these patients.

Data Collection:

The following data were collected at the baseline visit: age, sex, residence, educational level, marital status, occupation, medical and psychiatric history, neurological examination findings, classification of the personality disorder as determined by the Arabic version of the Structured Clinical Interview (SCID-II) (Hatata et al., 2003), co-morbid psychiatric disorders as determined by Arabic version of the Structured Clinical Interview DSM-IV (SCID-I) (El Missiry, 2003), and findings of psychometric assessments. All assessments were done at baseline, 4, 8, 12 and 16 months of treatment. Borderline symptoms were assessed using the borderline symptom list (BSL-23) (Bohus et al., 2009). In terms of emotion regulation, we assessed this outcome

using the Arabic version of Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS) (Abdelkarim et al., 2017) and mindfulness outcomes were assessed using the Arabic version of Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory scale (Mobasher et al., 2016). We used Distress tolerance scale (DTS) in assessment of emotional distress. Inventory of Interpersonal Problems-Short (IIPS) version was used to assess the interpersonal effectiveness (Kim & Pilkonis, 1999; Simons & Gaher, 2005). We translated and back-translated the English versions of the DTS, IIPS, and BSL-23 to the Arabic language.

Statistical analysis:

Data were analyzed using statistical package of social science (SPSS, windows version 24). All continuous quantitative data were presented in mean and standard deviation (SD). While categorical data were presented in frequencies and percentages. Chi-square or Fisher Exact tests were used to test the hypothesis of significant difference in categorical variables. While Student t-test, Mann-Whitney test, and One-Way ANOVA were used to test the hypothesis of significant difference in continuous variables. Significance of the obtained results was judged at the 5% level.

3. Results:

A total of 60 patients with BPD were recruited into either comprehensive DBT program (n= 28) or TAU group (n= 32). Twenty patients dropped out during treatment (eight patients from DBT group and 12 patients from TAU group).

Both groups were females with no substantial age difference with mean age of 23.90 ± 4.88 years (DBT group) and 24 ± 4.88 years (TAU group). Both groups were similar in terms of marital status, employment and schooling. There was no prior

background of serious medical problems in either category. In terms of Psychiatric co-morbidities, two subjects of bulimia nervosa in the DBT cohort and one case of anorexia nervosa in the TAU group and no major difference between the two categories of regards to either dimension I or cumulative amount of co-morbid problems. Five DBT participants have a co-morbid personality condition rather than BPD and five TAU participants have another personality problems (**Table 1**).

Nearly half of the patients in each group were receiving current psychotropic medications including antidepressants (AD), antipsychotics (AP), mood stabilizers (MS), benzodiazepines and one patient in DBT group was receiving non-stimulant medication for adult ADHD (Atomoxetine). There was no significant difference between the two groups regarding the use of psychotropic medications in general nor in each drug class separately.

Borderline symptoms

DBT patients showed better improvement in borderline symptoms in comparison to patients receiving TAU. In term of symptoms aspect of the borderline symptoms assessment, the DBT subjects were significantly improved after 4 months ($P < 0.001$), 6 months ($P < 0.001$), 8 months ($P < 0.001$), 12 months ($P < 0.001$), and 16 months ($P < 0.001$) compared to TAU group (**Figure 1 A**). Regarding the behavior aspect, the patients in DBT group started to show significant improvement in comparison to TAU group after 8 months ($p = 0.007$), 12 months ($P < 0.001$), and 16 months ($P < 0.001$; **Figure 1 B**).

Emotion regulation

DBT patients showed better improvement of emotion regulation in comparison to TAU as shown in the statistically significant lower means of total score of DERS (87.55 ± 8.66 vs 128.00 ± 7.24 , $P < 0.001$). Furthermore, after one treatment year, DBT group showed significantly low score in non-accept ($P < 0.001$), goals ($P < 0.001$), impulse ($P < 0.001$), aware ($P < 0.001$), strategies ($P < 0.001$), and clarity ($P < 0.001$) domains in comparison to TAU group. Similarly, during follow up after 4 months, all domains of Emotional regulation showed more significant reduction in DBT group than TAU group (**Table 2**).

Mindfulness

Total scores of mindfulness was found to be significantly increased in DBT group in comparison to TAU group at the end of treatment year (42.70 ± 2.31 vs. 25.35 ± 2.70 , $P > 0.001$), and during follow up after 4 months (43.55 ± 2.35 vs. 25.80 ± 3.03 , $P > 0.001$; **Figure 2**).

Improvement of Distress

Overall, at the end of treatment year, it was found that DBT groups reported DTS score were significantly in comparison TAU (28.35 ± 3.16 vs. 49.95 ± 2.39 , $P < 0.001$). Also, after 4 months, DTS scores in DBT groups were significantly reduced in comparison to TAU group (28.00 ± 2.79 vs. 49.20 ± 2.48 , $P < 0.001$). Furthermore, after one treatment year, DBT group showed significantly low score in Regulation ($P < 0.001$), Appraisal ($P < 0.001$), Absorption ($P < 0.001$), and Tolerance ($P < 0.001$) domains in comparison to TAU group. Similarly, during follow up after 4 months, all domains of distress tolerance scale showed more significant reduction in DBT group than TAU group (**Table 3**).

Interpersonal effectiveness

Generally, at the end of treatment year, it was found that DBT groups reported Interpersonal Effectiveness, evaluated by IIPP scale, were significantly reduced in comparison TAU (76.55 ± 9.67 vs. 133.25 ± 7.58 , $P < 0.001$). Also, after 4 months, DTS scores in DBT groups were significantly reduced in comparison to TAU group (74.65 ± 8.21 vs. 131.10 ± 6.95 , $P < 0.001$). Furthermore, after one treatment year, DBT group showed significantly low score in Interpersonal sensitivity ($P < 0.001$), Interpersonal ambivalence ($P < 0.001$), Aggression ($P < 0.001$), Need for scale approval ($P < 0.001$), and Lack of sociability ($P < 0.001$) in comparison to TAU group. Similarly, during follow up after 4 months, all domains of IIPP showed more significant reduction in DBT group than TAU group (**Table 4**).

Discussion:

The current body of evidence supports the efficacy of DBT in various psychological disorders, including BPD (May et al., 2016). However, limited data are available regarding its availability in limited-resource regions, such as Egypt. Thus, we conducted the present study in order to evaluate the effectiveness of DBT on a sample of Egyptian patients with BPD.

Poor compliance of the patients to treatment's schedule is a major concern for treating psychiatrists during the management of BPD. Thus, it is crucial to ensure that any applied modality achieves an acceptable level of compliance during treatment (Fleischhaker et al., 2011). In the present study, we demonstrated that the DBT group had lower drop-out cases in comparison to the TAU group. This is in line with the findings of initial and late trials, comparing DBT and TAU, which found a lower dropout rate in the DBT (Barnicot et al., 2016; Koons et al., 2001; Linehan et al., 1999, 2006). For example, Barnicot et al. (2016) recruited 70 patients with BPD to evaluate the efficacy of DBT; of them, 48 patients completed the full treatment duration; which was a significantly higher retention rate than the TAU group.

Researchers have tried to identify the mechanisms behind an acceptable level of treatment retention during DBT treatment; it was hypothesized that facilitated communication between the therapist and the patients, culturally-accepted aspects of the modality, and case management are among the factors that lead to better compliance to DBT treatment (Bornovalova & Daughters, 2007). Barnicot et al. (2016) reported that treatment credibility and the alliance were significantly associated with drop-out rate.

among patients receiving DBT. Another point of strength for the current study is that our results showed comparable and even better treatment retention despite of the various challenges faced by the treatment team such as the application of comprehensive DBT program in Arabic language for the first time at Tanta university, up to our knowledge; the use of Arabic version of the program potentially contributed to more adherence to treatment. We utilized the Arabic version of DBT that was previously developed by (Abdelkarim et al., 2017); in this study, 40 patients with BPD and substance abuse were recruited to a one-year treatment duration of DBT sessions utilization Arabic language, the high efficacy of DBT in this study suggested excellent validity and reliability of the Arabic version of DBT.

In the current study DBT patients showed better improvement of borderline symptoms in comparison to TAU as shown in the statistically significant lower means of both BSL subscales scores that retained its statistically significant lower values at the 4 months followup following treatment year. Notably, the DBT group in our study showed significant improvement in behavior symptoms of BPD which started from the first 4 months of treatment. Our findings are in concordance with the accumulating evidence of previous trials that demonstrated superiority of DBT, compared to other modalities, regarding the borderline symptoms (Carter et al., 2010; Priebe et al., 2012; Sachse et al., 2011); in these trials, there were marked improvements in the self-injurious behaviors, hospitalization, anger, depression, hopelessness, and suicidal ideation. In a meta-analysis of 14 clinical studies, Kliem et al (2010) demonstrated that the DBT was effective in reducing the symptomatic burden of BPD. In another systematic review by Bloom et al (Bloom et al., 2012), the effectiveness of DBT on reducing the BPD symptoms was

consistent across the eleven included studies. The improvement in self-injurious behaviors was even better in our study than the abovementioned trials, which could be explained by the long duration of treatment in our study and the inclusion of a 4-months period of follow-up. The overall results of these studies and our trial indicate that DBT is consistently superior to nonspecific comparators in reducing suicidal and self-harm behavior, health care utilization (e.g., inpatient psychiatric hospital admissions and emergency department visits) and improving treatment retention.

Besides, our results indicated that the improvement in behavior symptoms of BPD was correlated with improvement in emotion regulation and distress tolerance. Such findings are in line with previous RCTs comparing DBT to TAU; in these trials, the improvements in self-injurious behaviors and other BPD-related behaviors were significantly correlated with the improvement in the emotion regulation and distress tolerance (Koons et al., 2001; Linehan et al., 1999, 2006). Later on, some investigated the efficacy for a shorter, 6-months, course of DBT showed positive impact on BPD symptoms and positive correlation between this improvement and emotion outcomes (Carter et al., 2010; Lynch et al., 2007).

Interestingly, our study showed significant reduction in suicidal attempts and improvement in BPD symptoms in DBT group, compared to TAU group, even that the negative symptoms was higher in the DBT group at the baseline visits. This comes in line with van den Bosh et al (2003) which demonstrated greater reductions of suicidal attempts and improvement in BPD symptoms following DBT than TAU. The improvement in the BPD symptoms was more notable in patients with more severe symptoms at baseline.

The DERS is a well-validated measure for self-reporting emotional regulation among BPD patients (Carpenter & Trull, 2013). In the current study DBT patients showed better improvement of emotion regulation in comparison to TAU as shown in the statistically significant lower means of total score of DERS and its subscales that were all maintained its statistically significant lower values at the 4-month follow up following treatment year. These results are consistent with those shown by (Abdelkarim et al., 2017; Axelrod et al., 2011; Goodman et al., 2014). The Abdelkarim et al (2017) recruited Egyptian patients with BPD and allocated them to receive DBT for one year or TAU with a follow-up duration of four months; the results showed better improvement of emotion regulation in DBT group, compared to TAU, at the end of treatment and the end of follow-up. In Goodman et al (2014), the DERS was significantly improved in DBT, compared to control group, among BPD; in addition, the amygdala habituation was improved significantly in the DBT group. Likewise, Axelrod et al (2010) reported significant reduction in the DERS after 20 weeks of DBT. These previous results would confirm the efficacy of DBT as a potential transdiagnostic treatment approach for persons suffering from defective emotion regulation in general as Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), depression in elderly, and bulimia nervosa and binge eating.

Mindfulness skills are one of the components of DBT and an essential aspect of treatment for subjects with BPD. In our study, DBT patients showed better improvement of mindfulness in comparison to TAU as shown in the statistically significant higher mean of total score of FMI that retained its statistically significant lower values after 4 months follow up following treatment year. These results are consistent with those of a study on

a sample of 60 patients with BPD by (Soler et al., 2012). In this study, the DBT led to significantly better improvement in mindfulness subscales (such as delectability scores), as compared to usual psychiatric management. These findings were also in line with Perroud et al (2012) who showed that the DBT led to significant improvement in mindfulness, as assessed by the Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills (KIMS). The cumulative findings of these trials and our study confirm the usefulness of DBT in improving mindfulness and the importance of mindfulness training in patients with BPD, despite that different methods of assessment of mindfulness were used. Hölzel et al. (2011) concluded that the practice of mindfulness seems to improve emotion regulation which could result in clinical improvements in psychiatric conditions such as BPD. These findings are also consistent with research showing promising results for mindfulness-focused treatments targeting a variety of dysregulated behaviors.

Conclusion

The present study provides further evidence about the effectiveness of DBT in the management of BPD. Our results showed that the DBT was superior to conventional treatment in improving the symptoms of DBT and other psychometric parameters of the BPD patients. Thus, we recommend the implementation of DBT in the Egyptian guidelines for the management of BPD and the introduction of proper DBT skill training programs.

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UNDER PEER REVIEW

Table 1: Baseline Characteristics of the included Patients

Variables	DBT (n = 20)		TAU (n = 20)		p
	No.	%	No.	%	
Age					
Min. – Max.	17.0 – 33.0		17.0 – 33.0		^t p= 0.949
Mean ± SD.	23.90 ± 4.99		24.00 ± 4.88		
Median	24.0		24.0		
Marital Status					
Single	17	85.0	15	75.0	^{MC} p= 0.612
Married	2	10.0	3	15.0	
Divorced	1	5.0	2	10.0	
Work					
Student	8	40.0	7	35.0	^{MC} p= 0.606
Employed	9	45.0	8	40.0	
Un employed	3	15.0	5	25.0	
Education					
High School	9	45.0	10	50.0	^{MC} p= 0.601
Undergraduate	8	40.0	8	40.0	
Postgraduate	3	15.0	2	10.0	

Family history of psychiatric disorders					
Yes	8	40.0	7	35.0	$\chi^2 p =$ 0.107
No	12	60.0	13	65.0	
Family history of PBD					
Yes	7	35.0	5	25.0	$\chi^2 p =$ 0.476
No	13	65.0	15	75.0	
Co-morbid psychiatric illness					
Mood Disorders	7	35.0	6	30.0	$\chi^2 p=0.828$
Anxiety Disorders	1	0.0	3	15.0	$F^E p=0.231$
PTSD	2	10.0	4	20.0	$F^E p=0.895$
Adult ADHD	3	15.0	0	0.0	$F^E p=0.487$
Eating Disorder	1	5.0	0	5.0	$F^E P=1.000$
OCD	3	15.0	3	15.0	$F^E P=1.000$
Personality Disorder other than BPD	5	20.0	5	30.0	$\chi^2 p=0.465$
Substance abuse	2	10.0	3	15.0	$F^E p=0.762$
Total Comorbid Psychiatric Illnesses					
Min. – Max.	0.0 – 3.0		0.0 – 3.0		$MW p= 0.611$
Mean \pm SD.	0.95 \pm 0.85		1.05 \pm 0.95		
Median	1.0		1.0		
Psychiatric Hospital Admission					

No	13	65.0	15	75.0	χ^2 p=0.476
Yes	7	35.0	5	25.0	
No. of Hospital Admissions					
Min. – Max.	0.0 – 4.0		0.0 – 4.0		MW p= 0.273
Mean \pm SD.	0.65 \pm 1.05		0.70 \pm 0.37		
Median	0.0		0.0		

UNDER PEER REVIEW

Table (2): Comparison between the two studied groups according to DERS outcome at the end of treatment and after four months follow up

		DERS		
		Baseline	End of treatment year	Follow up after 4 months
NONACCEPT	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	20.05 ± 2.50	17.60 ± 2.03	17.60 ± 2.03
	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	20.20 ± 2.39	19.50 ± 2.30	19.80 ± 2.06
	^t p	0.848	<0.001*	<0.001*
Goals	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	18.60 ± 1.69	15.70 ± 1.30	15.60 ± 1.27
	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	17.95 ± 1.90	17.95 ± 1.90	18.10 ± 1.83
	^t p	0.262	<0.001*	<0.001*
Impulse	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	21.70 ± 2.17	12.65 ± 2.70	12.50 ± 2.12

	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	21.75 ± 2.17	21.50 ± 2.18	21.70 ± 2.12
	^t p	0.942	<0.001*	<0.001*
Aware	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	21.80 ± 1.15	14.70 ± 1.62	14.45 ± 1.36
	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 12)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	21.30 ± 1.49	21.15 ± 1.56	21.15 ± 1.56
	^t p	0.243	<0.001*	<0.001*
Strategies	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	28.95 ± 2.76	16.95 ± 2.43	16.30 ± 2.73
	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	29.05 ± 2.74	27.80 ± 2.74	27.15 ± 2.41
	^t p	0.909	<0.001*	<0.001*
Clarity	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	20.70 ± 1.68	9.95 ± 2.43	9.85 ± 2.30
	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)

	Mean ± SD.	20.85 ± 1.46	20.20 ± 2.11	19.90 ± 1.44
	^t p	0.786	<0.001*	0.007*
Total	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	131.80.75 ± 6.50	87.55 ± 8.66	86.30 ± 9.24
	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	131.10 ± 6.34	128.00 ± 7.24	127.80 ± 5.85
	^t p	0.732	<0.001*	<0.001*

^tp: Value for Student t-test

*: Statistically significant at $p \leq 0.05$

Table (3): Comparison between the two studied groups according to Distress Tolerance outcome at the end of treatment and after four months follow up

		DTS		
		Baseline	End of treatment year	Follow up after 4 months
Tolerance	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	11.20 ± 1.00	5.20 ± 1.36	5.10 ± 1.20
	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	11.40 ± 0.75	11.20 ± 0.83	11.00 ± 0.85
	t_p	0.481	<0.001**	<0.001**
Absorbation	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	10.95 ± 1.09	4.65 ± 0.93	4.60 ± 0.93
	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	11.10 ± 1.02	10.85 ± 0.98	10.85 ± 0.95
	t_p	0.657	<0.001**	<0.001**
Appraisal	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	19.15 ± 1.38	10.70 ± 1.03	10.50 ± 0.94

	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	19.25 ± 1.29	18.55 ± 1.87	17.90 ± 1.79
	^t p	0.815	<0.001**	<0.001**
Regulation	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	8.95 ± 1.35	7.80 ± 1.19	7.75 ± 1.11
	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 12)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	9.65 ± 1.22	9.35 ± 1.18	9.45 ± 1.14
	^t p	0.095	<0.001**	<0.001**
Total	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	50.25 ± 2.59	28.35 ± 3.16	28.00 ± 2.79
	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	51.40 ± 2.37	49.95 ± 2.39	49.20 ± 2.48
	^t p	0.151	<0.001**	<0.001**

^tp: Value for Student t-test

** : Statistically significant at $p \leq 0.01$

Table (4): Comparison between the two studied groups according to Interpersonal Effectiveness outcome at the end of treatment and after four months follow up

		IIPP		
		Baseline	End of treatment year	Follow up after 4 months
Interpersonal sensitivity	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	35.65 ± 3.58	19.35 ± 3.52	17.95±2.37
	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	35.75± 3.38	34.85 ± 2.77	34.10 ± 2.77
	t_p	0.821	<0.001*	<0.001*
Interpersonal ambivalence	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	27.85 ± 4.24	15.10 ± 2.57	14.90 ± 2.44
	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	27.95 ± 4.13	27.65 3.82	27.25 ± 3.93
	t_p	0.901	<0.001*	<0.001*
Aggression	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	22.15 ± 2.47	11.15±2.23	11.15 ± 2.23
	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	22.30 ± 2.36	22.05 ± 2.32	21.95 ± 2.13
	t_p	0.707	<0.001*	<0.001*
Need for social approval	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	26.90 ± 2.78	16.45 ± 2.13	16.15 ± 1.98
	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	27.40 ± 2.39	26.95±2.37	26.20 ± 2.28
	t_p	0.880	<0.001*	<0.001*
Lack of sociability	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	14.50 ± 2.48	22.00 ± 3.37	14.50 ± 2.48
	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	22.25 ± 3.19	21.75 ± 3.09	21.60 ± 2.83
	t_p	0.899	<0.001*	<0.001*

Total	DBT	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	134.55 ± 7.18	76.55 ± 9.67	74.65 ± 8.21
	TAU	(n = 20)	(n = 20)	(n = 20)
	Mean ± SD.	135.65 ± 6.65	133.25 ± 7.58	131.10 ± 6.95
	t_p	0.789	<0.001*	<0.001*

t_p: Value for Student t-test

**: Statistically significant at $p \leq 0.01$

UNDER PEER REVIEW

Figure 1A: Comparison between the two studied groups regarding borderline symptoms as assessed by borderline symptom list (BSL) across periods during treatment year and at 4 months follow up

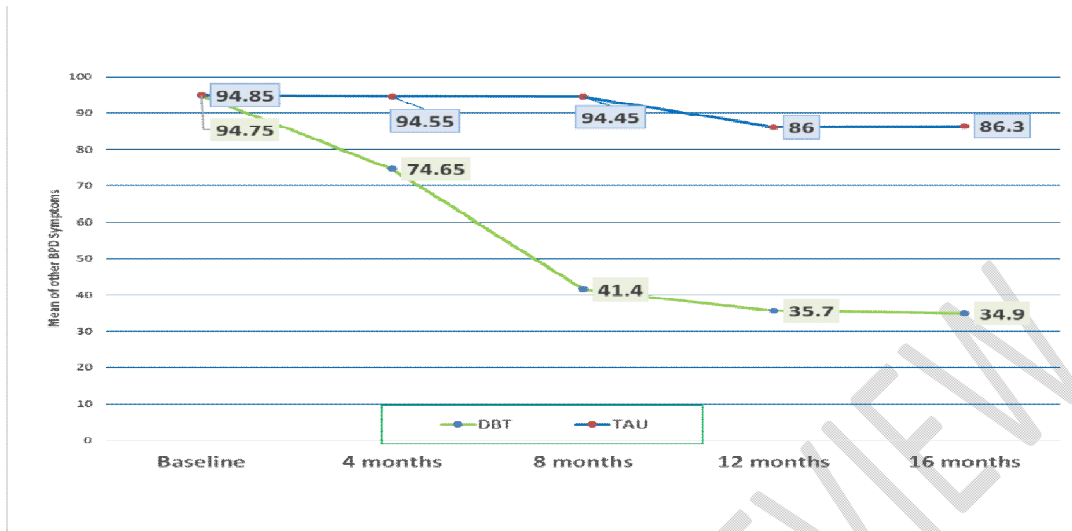


Figure 1B: Comparison between the two studied groups regarding BPD behavior symptoms subscale as assessed by borderline symptom list (BSL) across periods during treatment year and at 4 months follow up.



Figure 2: Comparison between the two studied groups regarding mindfulness as assessed by Freiburg mindfulness inventory scale at the end of treatment and after four months follow up.

