

Positive Psychology, Psychotherapy & Cognitive Behavioral Sciences

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Hypnosis, empathy & attribution

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Statement of the Problem: The proposed study has been designed to address three major deficits in knowledge regarding the impact of variations in conscious state on cognitive functioning, including a lack of information about the effects of hypnotic trance on reasoning and perception. The focus of this experiment intends to investigate the impact of hypnosis on cognition by exploring the possible effects of the hypnotic trance state on self-attribution, emotional empathy and affect.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: This is a mixed methods study, where the first portion incorporates a quantitative examination of hypnotic induction (independent variable) and its possible effects on emotional empathy, self-attribution and affect (dependent variables), followed by participant interviewing in which IPA is used to analyze the qualitative data. The initial fragment of the research has been carried out via a pilot study. Adult participants are selected for a laboratory analysis in a controlled observational setting (during the quantitative examination).

Findings: After partial completion, hypnotic trance is further expected to be associated with an increased capacity for emotional empathy and a decrease in the over-valuation of interpersonal failure as well as non-interpersonal success. Additionally, a methodical exploration of affect has been integrated due to an observed link between hypnotic trance and an apparent increase in positive affect, and a decrease in negative affect.

Conclusion & Significance: The project's main objective is to make a significant contribution to a greater theoretical, as well as practical understanding of the cognitive effects of hypnotic trance during induction (i.e. through investigating trance logic), specifically with regard to the cognitive mechanisms associated with perception and interpretation. An analysis of these possible shifts could assist with a deeper understanding of perception, which could initiate the development of novel approaches with regard to cognitive restructuring, while facilitating desired behavioural change through psychotherapy.

Biography

Ksenia Tchoubarova is presently completing her PhD studies in Psychotherapy and Counselling Studies in London (UK). She is extremely passionate about exploring the measurable effects of hypnotic trance on cognitive functioning. At the same time, she is a registered Clinical Hypnotherapist and a member of the British Society of Clinical Hypnosis, as well as, the Canadian Society of Clinical Hypnosis. Additionally, she possesses a solid professional and academic background in Business, with a graduate specialization in international relations.

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