

## Malaysian Knowledge, Belief and Attitude towards Hypnosis as a Health Intervention: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

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**Abstract :** Although hypnosis has been widely endorsed in Europe since 1950s, it was still viewed as a typically new therapy in Asia. There are very little findings regarding hypnosis in Asian countries, especially in culturally diverse countries such as Malaysia. The knowledge of the beneficial effects of hypnosis was not widespread to the public, however knowledge of the negative effects was frequently being highlighted. Therefore, the acceptance of hypnosis as a new effective health treatment can be a challenge in Malaysia. Recognising Malaysian's perception, belief and attitude towards hypnosis could increase the public awareness of hypnosis, which in turn will alter their misconception and increase acceptance of hypnosis as an effective therapy. Eight individuals (N = 8) from the general public with different background, ethnicity (Malays, Chinese and Indians) and religion (Islamic, Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, Christianity, free-thinker) and two local experienced practitioners with minimum of five years experiences (N = 2) were being interviewed to determine their views, beliefs and level of acceptance towards hypnosis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, transcribed with pseudonyms and analyzed by using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. The three emergent themes were illustrated under the captions of 'traditional vs mainstream', 'myths vs truth', and 'dissemination and public awareness'. The finding suggested that individual knowledge and personal experience primarily influenced people's level of acceptance towards hypnosis as a beneficial health treatment, rather than the diversity of cultural and religious background. Subsequent findings regarding hypnosis and the effort of promoting it will provide the society an opportunity to increase public education and health awareness. Several associations had started to advance its development by organizing conferences and setting up therapeutic centers. However, health promotion on hypnosis is yet to be conducted to raise public awareness of its beneficial effects. By requesting for hypnosis to be included as a subject in medical education and psychology curriculum and formatting it under Ministry of Health's legislation body might enhance the knowledge of hypnosis for Malaysian as one of the health intervention in the future.

**Keywords :** awareness, hypnosis, intervention, Malaysian, promotion

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