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## Hypnotherapy as a Psychological Coping Strategy amid Modern Social Uncertainty

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### Abstract

This study investigates hypnotherapy adoption as a psychological coping strategy amid modern social uncertainty. Drawing on the Stress and Coping Theory, the research examines the relationships between perceived social uncertainty, psychological coping needs, and hypnotherapy adoption, as well as the mediating role of psychological coping needs. A quantitative explanatory design was employed using a cross-sectional survey method. Data were collected through an online questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. The sample size was determined based on the guideline proposed by Hair et al. (2021), which recommends a minimum sample size of ten times the total number of indicators. With 15 indicators included in the model, the minimum required sample size was 150 respondents. To enhance statistical robustness, data were collected from 200 respondents who were familiar with hypnotherapy as a coping method. Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that perceived social uncertainty significantly influences psychological coping needs and hypnotherapy adoption. Psychological coping needs also have a significant effect on hypnotherapy adoption and fully mediate the relationship between social uncertainty and hypnotherapy adoption. These findings suggest that hypnotherapy is primarily adopted as an emotion-focused coping response to heightened uncertainty rather than as a direct reaction to external stressors. The study contributes to coping theory by positioning hypnotherapy within a psychological coping framework relevant to contemporary social conditions.

**Keywords:** perceived social uncertainty, psychological coping needs, hypnotherapy adoption, coping strategy

### 1. Introduction

Stress and psychological distress have become pervasive issues in contemporary society due to factors such as rapid social change, economic instability, and ongoing public health challenges. The *Transactional Model of Stress and Coping* by Lazarus and Folkman describes how individuals dynamically appraise and respond to stressors, choosing coping mechanisms that influence emotional outcomes. According to this model, coping strategies help individuals manage emotional distress when faced with uncontrollable stressors (e.g., uncertainty, unpredictability) (Garbóczy et al., 2021). While traditional stress management techniques (e.g., counseling, cognitive-behavioral therapy) remain essential, alternative interventions such as hypnotherapy are increasingly discussed in both clinical contexts and public

discourse. Research suggests that hypnosis and hypnotherapy have been examined in relation to perceived stress reduction, although evidence remains inconclusive due to variability in research quality (Fisch et al., 2017).

Hypnotherapy has been applied in diverse quantitative studies across different populations with reported effects on stress, anxiety, and psychological well-being. For instance, experimental studies have shown that structured hypnotherapy interventions contributed to reductions in stress among adolescents and adult populations in specific communities. One quantitative study among adolescents in Garut City demonstrated a statistically significant reduction in stress levels after hypnotherapy intervention (Lina humaeroh & Annisa, 2025). Additionally, quasi-experimental designs have been used to evaluate hypnotherapy's effectiveness on stress reduction



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in various settings, such as among nursing students facing thesis-related stress, which showed significant reduction post-intervention. (Rizkan H. Djafar et al., 2021) These studies illustrate that hypnotherapy is already being practiced and evaluated as a psychological intervention in real populations.

Despite these practical applications, a critical gap remains in understanding *why* individuals choose hypnotherapy as a coping mechanism in uncertain social environments. Most existing research focuses on hypnotherapy's effectiveness in reducing symptoms such as stress, anxiety, or pain without conceptualizing hypnotherapy within a coping framework tied to perceptions of social uncertainty and control. There is limited quantitative evidence explaining how social uncertainty and psychological coping needs predict the adoption of hypnotherapy, leaving a theoretical gap in coping behavior research. Empirical studies provide evidence of hypnotherapy's effects on stress-related outcomes. For example, a quantitative experiment in Garut City found that hypnotherapy effectively reduced stress levels among adolescents ( $p < 0.001$ ) (Lina humaeroh & Annisa, 2025). Another quasi-experimental study with nursing students reported significant stress reduction after hypnotherapy ( $p < 0.05$ ) (Rizkan H. Djafar et al., 2021). These findings support the *potential utility* of hypnotherapy in stress management, but they do not explain the *psychological processes* such as perceived loss of control or uncertainty that may motivate individuals to choose hypnotherapy as a coping strategy.

The theoretical foundation for this research is rooted in Lazarus and Folkman's Stress and Coping Theory, which posits that individuals engage in cognitive appraisal of stressors followed by coping responses aimed at managing emotional or problem-related demands. Emotion-focused coping, one of the key categories in this theory, is relevant because it comprises coping behaviors that regulate emotional distress rather than directly solving the stressor itself (Garbóczy et al., 2021). This theory suggests that perceived social uncertainty can shape psychological needs for emotional regulation and control factors that may influence the selection of coping strategies such as hypnotherapy.

Studies on hypnotherapy in quantitative settings show varied applications. Stress reduction among adolescents through hypnotherapy (Lina humaeroh & Annisa, 2025). Stress alleviation in nursing students facing academic pressure (Rizkan H. Djafar et al., 2021). Hipnoterapi for anxiety and depression in clinical populations, though with mixed statistical (Sugiyono et al., 2021). Hypnotherapy's effects on physiological outcomes (e.g., pain management) in clinical studies (Ramadhan et al., 2024). Literature reviews highlight hypnotherapy's potential but also methodological weaknesses in existing research (Fisch et al., 2017). Despite these contributions, there is a lack of *integrated quantitative models* linking perceived social uncertainty with the psychological choice of hypnotherapy as a coping strategy. The gap is not merely about whether hypnotherapy *works*, but about *understanding the psychological mechanism* that drives individuals toward it under conditions of uncertainty. To date, existing studies on hypnotherapy have primarily focused on its therapeutic outcomes

or clinical effectiveness, while overlooking the psychological mechanisms that explain why individuals choose hypnotherapy under conditions of social uncertainty. Specifically, no prior empirical study has examined hypnotherapy adoption using a mediating variable that captures psychological coping needs, thereby leaving a critical gap in understanding the underlying coping process.

Given the pervasive nature of stress and uncertainty in modern social contexts, it is critical to empirically investigate psychological coping choices beyond symptom reduction. This research addresses an urgent gap by framing hypnotherapy within a coping framework that integrates *perceived social uncertainty*, *psychological need for control*, and *coping strategy selection*. The study's outcomes are expected to contribute to psychological coping theory by extending coping research to alternative interventions. Practically, findings can inform clinicians, counselors, and mental health policymakers about the contextual motivations behind hypnotherapy adoption, improving clinical communication and therapeutic decision-making.

Therefore, this study aims to quantitatively examine the role of hypnotherapy as a psychological coping strategy amid modern social uncertainty by analyzing the relationship between perceived social uncertainty, psychological coping needs, and the adoption of hypnotherapy.

## 2. Research Elaborations

Contemporary society is increasingly characterized by rapid social change, economic instability, technological disruption, and heightened psychological pressure. These conditions have intensified individual experiences of stress, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and uncertainty, particularly in urban and professional contexts. Previous studies consistently indicate that prolonged exposure to social uncertainty undermines psychological well-being and reduces individuals' capacity to cope effectively with daily stressors ((Mospan, 2023); (Vousoura et al., 2022)).

Within this context, coping strategies play a critical role in maintaining mental health. Psychological coping refers to cognitive and behavioral efforts used by individuals to manage internal and external stressors perceived as overwhelming or threatening (Palma et al., 2022).. Recent literature highlights the growing need for adaptive coping mechanisms that not only alleviate symptoms but also enhance emotional regulation and psychological resilience (Li & Song, 2024). Traditional coping approaches, such as problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies, may be insufficient when individuals face chronic and ambiguous stressors arising from modern social uncertainty.

Hypnotherapy has emerged as a complementary psychological intervention that shows promise in addressing stress-related psychological disturbances. Prior research suggests that hypnotherapy facilitates deep relaxation, heightened self-awareness, and cognitive restructuring, enabling individuals to reframe negative perceptions and regulate emotional responses more effectively (Chen et al., 2017). Unlike conventional



therapeutic approaches, hypnotherapy directly engages the subconscious mind, which is closely linked to emotional processing and stress responses.

Empirical evidence supports the effectiveness of hypnotherapy in reducing anxiety, psychological distress, and stress-related symptoms. Studies indicate that hypnotherapeutic interventions can improve emotional stability, enhance coping capacity, and foster a greater sense of control amid uncertainty (Fisch et al., 2017). Furthermore, recent findings suggest that hypnotherapy contributes to psychological resilience by strengthening individuals' internal coping resources, which are essential in navigating complex social environments (Hamzah et al., 2022).

Despite these promising findings, the application of hypnotherapy as a structured coping strategy in the context of modern social uncertainty remains underexplored in empirical research. Most existing studies focus on clinical or medical settings, with limited attention to broader social and psychological stressors faced by the general population (ahahypnotherapy, 2025). This gap underscores the importance of examining hypnotherapy not merely as a therapeutic tool, but as a proactive psychological coping strategy that can be integrated into stress management frameworks (ahahypnotherapy, 2025).

Therefore, this study elaborates on the role of hypnotherapy as a psychological coping strategy by investigating its relationship with stress reduction, emotional regulation, and psychological well-being amid modern social uncertainty. By grounding the analysis in established coping theory and contemporary hypnotherapy literature, this research aims to contribute to the growing discourse on innovative psychological interventions that support mental health resilience in uncertain social conditions.

Despite its demonstrated potential for anxiety and stress reduction, there is limited research explicitly positioning hypnotherapy as a coping choice driven by social uncertainty and intolerance to uncertainty. Most studies focus on hypnotherapy efficacy rather than examining motivational pathways such as why individuals choose hypnotherapy when faced with ambiguous or stressful environments. Therefore, integrating hypnotherapy into coping theory requires bridging the gap between:

1. environmental uncertainty,
2. psychological motivation for coping, and
3. the selection of hypnotherapy as an emotional regulation strategy.

Understanding hypnotherapy within this conceptual framework would deepen insights into coping decisions under uncertainty and inform both psychological theory and clinical practice. Based on the theoretical framework of stress and coping and supported by prior empirical studies, this research formulates several hypotheses to examine the relationships between perceived social uncertainty, psychological coping needs, and the adoption of hypnotherapy as a coping strategy. Hypotheses H1: Perceived social uncertainty has a positive and significant effect on psychological coping needs. H2: Psychological coping needs have a positive and significant effect

on the adoption of hypnotherapy as a coping strategy. H3: Perceived social uncertainty has a positive and significant effect on the adoption of hypnotherapy as a coping strategy. H4: Psychological coping needs mediate the relationship between perceived social uncertainty and the adoption of hypnotherapy as a coping strategy.

This section presents the theoretical framework that underpins the relationships among the key variables examined in this study. The framework is developed based on established theories and empirical findings from previous studies. It provides a conceptual foundation for formulating the research hypotheses and guiding the empirical analysis.

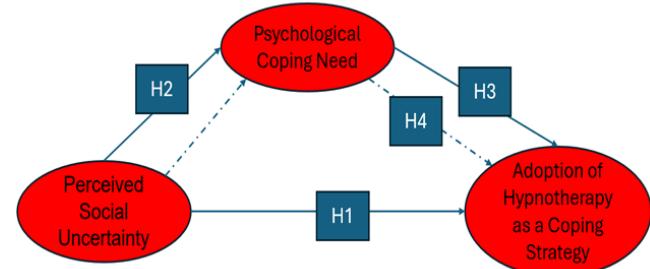


Figure 2. Theoretical framework

### 3. Results or Finding

This study employs a quantitative explanatory research design to examine the relationships between perceived social uncertainty (X), psychological coping needs (M), and hypnotherapy adoption as a coping strategy (Y). A cross-sectional survey approach was used to collect primary data at a single point in time in order to test the proposed hypotheses and evaluate both direct and indirect effects within the research framework (Sugiyono, 2022). The population comprises individuals who are familiar with or have experience with hypnotherapy, and purposive sampling was applied with criteria that respondents are aged 18 years or older and have awareness of hypnotherapy as a stress or emotional coping method. Following the guideline for PLS-SEM proposed by (Hair et al., 2021), the minimum sample size was calculated using the ten-times rule based on the total number of indicators. With 15 indicators across all constructs, the minimum required sample size was 150 respondents. Data were collected using an online self-administered questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Perceived Social Uncertainty was measured across economic, social, political, global, and future dimensions adapted from (Lucas Casanova et al., 2021) and (Eible & Fisak, 2025). Psychological Coping Needs were assessed using indicators of problem-focused coping, emotional regulation, adaptive thinking, persistence, and support-seeking based on ((Chesney et al., 2006); (Rosyad et al., 2025); (Tran et al., 2022)). Hypnotherapy Adoption was measured through intention, attitude, behavioral intention, comfort, and recommendation adapted from ((Valentine et al., 2019); (Gunawan et al., 2021); (Ardian, 2022); (Yang & Hsieh, 2025); (Silalahi et al., 2023)). All measurement items were adapted from validated



literature and reviewed to ensure clarity and content validity prior to distribution.

### 3.1 Measurement Model (Outer Model)

#### 3.1.1 Outer Loading

The results show that all indicators exhibit outer loading values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating that each indicator adequately represents its respective construct.

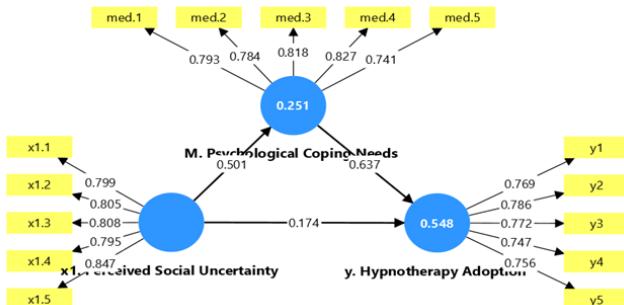


Figure 3.1 Outer Loading Diagrams

Source: Data Processing

Table 3.1 Outer Loading

	M. Psychological Coping Needs	x1. Perceived Social Uncertainty	y. Hypnotherapy Adoption
M.1	0.264		
M.2	0.249		
M.3	0.253		
M.4	0.257		
M.5	0.237		
x1.1		0.216	
x1.2		0.262	
x1.3		0.257	
x1.4		0.213	
x1.5		0.283	
y1			0.237
y2			0.259
y3			0.283
y4			0.266
y5			0.261

Source: Data Processing

The results show that all indicators have positive values, indicating that each item contributes to its respective construct. The indicators of Psychological Coping Needs, Perceived Social Uncertainty, and Hypnotherapy Adoption display relatively consistent values, suggesting a balanced measurement structure. Overall, these

findings confirm that all indicators adequately represent their latent constructs and are suitable for further analysis.

#### 3.1.2 Construct Validity and Reliability

Construct validity and reliability were assessed to ensure that the measurement model accurately and consistently captures the latent constructs examined in this study.

Table 3.1.2 Construct Validity and Reliability

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
M. Psychological Coping Needs	0.852	0.854	0.895	0.629
x1. Perceived Social Uncertainty	0.870	0.877	0.906	0.658
y. Hypnotherapy Adoption	0.824	0.825	0.877	0.587

Source: Data Processing

The results indicate that all constructs demonstrate strong internal consistency and convergent validity. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values for Psychological Coping Needs, Perceived Social Uncertainty, and Hypnotherapy Adoption all exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming satisfactory reliability. In addition, the AVE values for all constructs are above 0.50, indicating that each construct explains more than half of the variance of its indicators. Therefore, construct validity and reliability are adequately established.

#### 3.1.3 Discriminant Validity

The evaluation of discriminant validity was conducted to confirm that the constructs are conceptually and statistically distinct from one another.

Table 3.1.3 Discriminant Validity

M. Psychological Coping Needs	x1. Perceived Social Uncertainty	y. Hypnotherapy Adoption
	0.578	

M. Psychological Coping Needs

x1. Perceived Social Uncertainty 0.578



Uncertainty

y.		
Hypnotherapy Adoption	0.861	0.571

#### Source: Data Processing

The HTMT results indicate that all values are below the recommended threshold of 0.90, confirming adequate discriminant validity. The HTMT value between Psychological Coping Needs and Perceived Social Uncertainty is 0.578, indicating a clear distinction between the two constructs. Similarly, the HTMT values between Hypnotherapy Adoption and Psychological Coping Needs (0.861) as well as between Hypnotherapy Adoption and Perceived Social Uncertainty (0.571) remain within acceptable limits. Therefore, all constructs are empirically distinct and discriminant validity is established.

### 3.2 Structural Model (Inner Model)

#### 3.2.1 F-square

The effect size ( $f^2$ ) was examined to assess the magnitude of the influence of each exogenous construct on the endogenous constructs in the structural model.

Table 3.2.1 F-square

M.	x1.	y.
Psychologica	Perceived	Hypnotherap
l Coping	Social	y Adoption
M.		
Psychological		
Coping Needs		0.672
x1. Perceived		
Social	0.336	0.050
Uncertainty		
y.		
Hypnotherap		
y Adoption		

#### Source: Data Processing

The  $f^2$  results indicate that Psychological Coping Needs have a large effect on Hypnotherapy Adoption ( $f^2 = 0.672$ ). Perceived Social Uncertainty shows a medium effect on Psychological Coping Needs ( $f^2 = 0.336$ ) and a small effect on Hypnotherapy Adoption ( $f^2 = 0.050$ ). These findings suggest that Psychological Coping Needs play a dominant role in explaining Hypnotherapy Adoption, while Perceived Social Uncertainty has a weaker direct influence.

#### 3.2.2 R-Square

The coefficient of determination (R-square) is used to evaluate the explanatory power of the structural model by indicating the

proportion of variance in the endogenous constructs that can be explained by the exogenous variables.

Table 3.2.2 R-Square

	R-square	R-square adjusted
M. Psychological Coping Needs	0.251	0.247
y. Hypnotherapy Adoption	0.548	0.543

#### Source: Data Processing

The R-square ( $R^2$ ) value for Psychological Coping Needs is 0.251 (adjusted  $R^2 = 0.247$ ), indicating that 25.1% of its variance is explained by the exogenous variables in the model, which reflects a weak to moderate explanatory power. Meanwhile, Hypnotherapy Adoption shows an R-square value of 0.548 (adjusted  $R^2 = 0.543$ ), meaning that 54.8% of its variance is explained by the model, indicating a moderate to strong explanatory power. The small difference between  $R^2$  and adjusted  $R^2$  suggests good model stability.

### 3.3 Hypothesis testing

#### 3.3.1 Direct hypothesis testing

The results of direct hypothesis testing are reported to assess the significance of the proposed direct relationships.

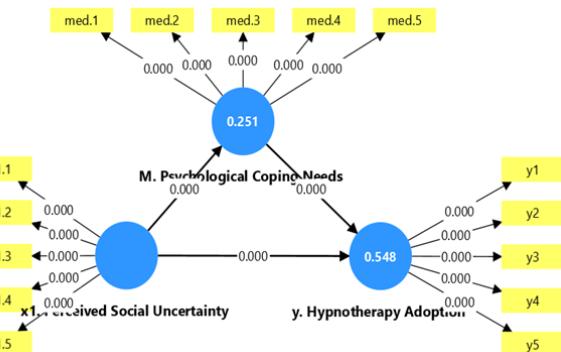


Figure 3.3 Path Coefficients Diagram

#### Source: Data Processing

Table 3.3.1 Direct hypothesis testing

	Origin al sampl e (O)	Samp le mean (M)	Standar d deviatio n (STDE V)	T statistics ( O/STDE V )	P values
M. Psychologi cal Coping Needs -> y. Hypnothera py Adoption	0.637	0.643	0.075	8.522	0.000

M.  
Psychologi  
cal Coping  
Needs -> y.  
Hypnothera  
py Adoption



x1.					
Perceived					
Social					
Uncertainty	0.501	0.499	0.071	7.103	0.00
-> M.				0	
Psychological Coping					
Needs					
x1.					
Perceived					
Social					
Uncertainty	0.174	0.175	0.042	4.130	0.00
-> y.				0	
Hypnotherapy					
py					
Adoption					

#### Source: Data Processing

The results indicate that Psychological Coping Needs have a positive and significant effect on Hypnotherapy Adoption ( $\beta = 0.637$ ,  $t = 8.522$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), suggesting that higher coping needs significantly increase the likelihood of adopting hypnotherapy. Furthermore, Perceived Social Uncertainty positively and significantly influences Psychological Coping Needs ( $\beta = 0.501$ ,  $t = 7.103$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that greater social uncertainty intensifies individuals' psychological coping needs. Additionally, Perceived Social Uncertainty also has a positive and significant direct effect on Hypnotherapy Adoption ( $\beta = 0.174$ ,  $t = 4.130$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). These findings confirm that all proposed direct hypotheses are supported.

#### 3.3.2 Indirect effect hypothesis testing

This section presents the results of indirect effect hypothesis testing to examine the mediating role of the intervening variable in the research model. The analysis was conducted using a bootstrapping procedure to assess the significance of the indirect relationships.

The results indicate whether the proposed mediation hypotheses are supported.

Table 3.3.2 Indirect effect hypothesis testing

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDE V)	T statistics ( O/STDE V )	P values
x1.					
Perceived					
Social					
Uncertainty	0.319	0.320	0.055	5.761	0.00
-> M.				0	
Psychological Coping					
Needs					

Needs -> y.  
Hypnotherapy Adoption

#### Source: Data Processing

The indirect effect of Perceived Social Uncertainty on Hypnotherapy Adoption through Psychological Coping Needs is positive and statistically significant ( $\beta = 0.319$ ,  $t = 5.761$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This result indicates that Psychological Coping Needs significantly mediate the relationship between perceived social uncertainty and hypnotherapy adoption.

#### Discussions

The findings of this study reinforce the core argument of stress and coping theory that social uncertainty functions as a salient psychological stressor shaping individuals' internal coping processes. Consistent with Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, perceived social uncertainty appears to intensify individuals' appraisal of environmental demands as uncontrollable, thereby increasing the psychological need for emotional regulation and internal control. This result aligns with prior studies emphasizing that uncertainty and unpredictability in social contexts elevate psychological strain and coping motivation, particularly when individuals perceive limited ability to influence external conditions. Previous research on uncertainty intolerance and stress responses similarly highlights that ambiguity in social and future-oriented situations stimulates adaptive psychological efforts aimed at restoring emotional balance.

Furthermore, the results support the conceptualization of psychological coping needs as a key mechanism that translates social stressors into specific coping choices. This finding is in line with earlier empirical studies indicating that when individuals experience heightened emotional demands, they are more likely to seek coping strategies that emphasize internal regulation rather than direct problem-solving. Prior research has shown that coping needs related to emotional control, self-efficacy, and adaptive thinking play a central role in shaping responses to uncertainty and stress. Within this framework, psychological coping needs function as an internal driver that motivates individuals to explore alternative or complementary coping strategies when conventional methods are perceived as insufficient or inaccessible.

Finally, positioning hypnotherapy as an emotion-focused coping strategy provides an important theoretical contribution to the existing literature. Previous studies have largely examined hypnotherapy from an outcome-oriented perspective, focusing on its effectiveness in reducing stress, anxiety, or emotional distress. The present findings extend this literature by demonstrating that hypnotherapy adoption can be understood as a psychologically motivated coping choice arising from heightened uncertainty and unmet coping needs. This interpretation is consistent with emotion-focused coping theory, which suggests that individuals under uncontrollable stressors gravitate toward interventions that facilitate relaxation, emotional regulation, and perceived control.



By integrating hypnotherapy into a stress-and-coping framework, this study bridges a critical gap in prior research and highlights hypnotherapy not merely as a therapeutic tool, but as a meaningful coping response to modern social uncertainty.

#### 4. Conclusions

This study demonstrates that perceived social uncertainty plays a meaningful role in shaping individuals' psychological coping processes and their subsequent adoption of hypnotherapy as a coping strategy. The findings confirm that social uncertainty intensifies psychological coping needs, which in turn encourages individuals to seek coping mechanisms focused on emotional regulation and internal control. Hypnotherapy emerges as a relevant coping choice within this context, supporting the view that individuals facing uncertain and uncontrollable social conditions are more likely to adopt emotion-focused coping strategies rather than problem-focused solutions.

Furthermore, the mediating role of psychological coping needs highlights the underlying psychological mechanism through which social uncertainty influences hypnotherapy adoption. This result extends the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping by empirically positioning hypnotherapy as a form of emotion-focused coping driven by heightened psychological needs under uncertainty. The study contributes theoretically by shifting the focus from hypnotherapy's effectiveness toward understanding the motivational and coping processes behind its adoption. Practically, these findings offer insights for mental health practitioners and policymakers to better contextualize hypnotherapy as a complementary coping intervention in modern societies characterized by persistent uncertainty.

The findings have important theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, this study enriches coping research by positioning hypnotherapy within an established psychological coping framework, highlighting the role of internal coping needs as a key mechanism linking social uncertainty to coping behavior. Practically, the results provide insights for mental health practitioners, counselors, and policymakers by emphasizing that hypnotherapy adoption is driven by psychological needs rather than mere trends or stigma. Understanding these motivations can support more effective communication, intervention design, and integration of hypnotherapy as a complementary coping option in mental health services, particularly in societies facing persistent uncertainty.

#### Suggestions

Future research is encouraged to expand this model by incorporating additional psychological variables such as trust in alternative therapies, perceived stigma, or individual differences in intolerance of uncertainty. Longitudinal or experimental designs could also be employed to better capture changes in coping behavior over time and to strengthen causal inference. Moreover, future studies may explore different cultural or demographic contexts to enhance the generalizability of findings and to better understand how social uncertainty influences coping strategy selection across diverse populations.

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