

INPLASY PROTOCOL

To cite: Holmes et al. Juror Decision-Making Concerning Defendants with Mental Health Conditions – A Systematic Review of Experimental Studies. Inplasy protocol 202340038. doi: 10.37766/inplasy2023.4.0038

Received: 12 April 2023

Published: 12 April 2023

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Support: N/A.

Review Stage at time of this submission: Preliminary searches.

Conflicts of interest:
None declared.

Juror Decision-Making Concerning Defendants with Mental Health Conditions – A Systematic Review of Experimental Studies

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Review question / Objective: 1. What is known about the nature, characteristics and quality of existing experimental research using a mock-jury/trial simulation method in which the mental health of the defendant is considered? 2. What information is more or less important or relevant to the professional decision-making about defendants with mental health problems in a criminal trial?

Patient, Participant, or population: Anybody over the age of 18 years who has participated in an experimental, mock-juror decision-making study in which the fictional defendant has a mental health condition or diagnosis will be included in the review. Participants of decision-making studies younger than 18 years of age will not be included in this review.

INPLASY registration number: This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 12 April 2023 and was last updated on 03 March 2024 (registration number INPLASY202340038).

INTRODUCTION

Review question / Objective: 1. What is known about the nature, characteristics and quality of existing experimental research using a mock jury or trial simulation method in which the mental health of the defendant is considered?

2. What information is most important or relevant to decision-making about defendants with mental health problems in a criminal trial?

Condition being studied: Decision-making in experimental studies which have used a mock juror or jury/trial simulation methodology.

METHODS

Search strategy: PsycINFO, PsyArticle, MEDLINE, Web of Science, Scopus, ScienceDirect and CINAHL will be searched by the primary author.

Search terms: (mock OR simulat* OR hypothetical) N2 (juror OR jury OR juries OR judicial OR trial) AND mental* OR "defendant mental*" OR "forensic mental*" OR "offender mental*" OR diagnos* OR schizo* OR "personality disorder" OR BPD OR psycho* OR depress* OR bipolar OR "mood disorder" OR anxiety* OR PTSD OR trauma* OR mania

OR manic OR psych* AND experiment* OR scenario OR vignette OR stud* OR expos* OR "between?group" OR random* AND decision* OR "decision?making" OR judgement* OR verdict* OR perception* OR perceive* OR attitude* OR attribut* OR responsib* OR bias* OR evaluat* OR outcome*

The search will include all relevant studies published between 2010 and 2023.

Participant or population: Anybody over the age of 18 years who has participated in an experimental, mock-juror decision-making study in which the fictional defendant has a mental health condition or diagnosis will be included in the review. Participants of decision-making studies younger than 18 years of age will not be included in this review.

Intervention: Experimental studies which have simulated a jury or used a mock-jury design to investigate decision-making in which the fictional defendant has a mental health condition or diagnosis will be included in this review.

Comparator: Some studies may include control or comparison groups, such as comparing participants allocated into different groups e.g. where the fictional defendant has or does not have a mental health condition, or where different mental health diagnoses are compared.

Study designs to be included: Any study design which collects quantitative data will be included in this review.

Eligibility criteria:

Inclusion criteria:

1. Published, peer-reviewed journal articles reporting empirical research investigating:
 - Decision-making relevant to the legal process, e.g. the determination of guilt, sentencing outcomes etc
 - Experimental studies involving a manipulation between different groups, or where different participants have been exposed to different types written/video material/information or other portrayal of a fictional defendant accused of committing a criminal offence.
 - The fictional defendant is over the age of 18 years.
 - Information provided about the fictional defendant's mental health condition, as relevant to the defendant's criminal case.
2. Studies written in English.
3. Studies collecting and reporting primary quantitative data.
4. Studies involving sample of participant over the age of 18 years.
5. Studies published between 2010 and 2023.

Exclusion criteria:

1. Unpublished journal articles, dissertations or theses not subject to peer-review, books, book chapters, eBooks, magazines, reviews, letters, newspapers, website, blogs, abstract only or where full-text not available.
2. Studies not written/available in English.
3. Studies including qualitative data only.
4. Studies involving participants under the age of 18 years.
5. Studies in which the fictional defendant is under the age of 18.
6. Studies in which the fictional defendant does not have a mental health condition, or has a diagnosis of autism, intellectual or learning disability, brain injury or other neurological or neurodevelopment condition.

Information sources: Any academic article or empirical research (including published and unpublished articles, dissertations or theses).

Main outcome(s): The purpose of this review is to understand what the measured outcomes are of existing research in which there has been an experimental manipulation in a jury decision-making task. This could include outcomes such as guilt, juror verdicts, juror stigma, juror attitudes or sentencing.

Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis:

All eligible studies included in the final review will be quality assessed using the Appraisal Tool for Cross-Sectional studies (AXIS tool) for quantitative research. This consists of 20 questions to critically appraise cross-sectional/observational research studies. The AXIS tool looks at the presence or absence of each quality area, meaning a score out of 20 could be reported, depending on how many of the 20 criteria were met.

Strategy of data synthesis: Data to be extracted:

- Study title
- Author
- Date of publication
- Country of origin
- Research question/aim/objective
- Study design
- Experimental manipulation of interest
- Participant recruitment method
- Participant sample characteristics (age, gender, total sample size, sample composition etc)
- Methodology
- Was a vignette used? If so, type of vignette/scenario used (e.g. video/written/length of vignette/focus of the manipulation/whether based on a real criminal case etc)
- Were measures used? If so, which measures were used?
- Defendant mental health condition/diagnoses included
- Outcomes and how these were measured (e.g. guilt/verdicts/sentencing/stigma/attitudes etc)
- Quality appraisal (strengths/limitations)

The findings of the studies included within this review will be presented in a data extraction table and could be grouped based on participant characteristics, methodological characteristics or outcomes.

A narrative synthesis will be used to describe the findings of the studies to address the research questions.

Subgroup analysis: This depends on the data available on initial extraction. Further subgroups of interest could include the

presence or characteristics of the vignettes used.

Sensitivity analysis: N/A.

Language restriction: Studies written/available in English only.

Country(ies) involved: England.

Other relevant information: This is a methodological review of existing experimental studies, which to the authors' knowledge, has not already been subject to systematic review.

Keywords: Mock Juries; Mock Juror; Jury simulation; Juror Decision-making; Mental Health; Mental Illness; Mental Disorder; Psychiatric Diagnosis; Defendant; Criminal Behaviour.

Dissemination plans: This review will be submitted as part of Author 1's Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (ClinPsyD) and submitted for publication to a journal on completion.

Contributions of each author:

Author 1 - Harriet Holmes - Author 1 is the primary author who will conduct the search and write up the systematic review as part of their Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (ClinPsyD) training programme at the University of East Anglia (UEA).
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Author 2 - Peter Beazley - Author 2 is the supervisor for the project, contributing in an advisory capacity.
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