

# INPLASY

## Longitudinal Analyses of Mental Health in Autistic Individuals: A Systematic Review

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### ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

**Support** - National Institute on Aging (R01-AG080599).

**Review Stage at time of this submission** - Completed but not published.

**Conflicts of interest** - None declared.

**INPLASY registration number:** INPLASY2024100068

**Amendments** - This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 16 October 2024 and was last updated on 16 October 2024.

### INTRODUCTION

**Review question / Objective** The aims of the systematic review are to: 1) evaluate how non-trajectory analyses inform our knowledge of individual and contextual predictors of later symptoms of anxiety and depression and 2) evaluate how trajectory analyses inform our knowledge of individual and contextual predictors of change of anxiety and depression symptoms in autistic individuals within longitudinal studies.

**Condition being studied** Symptoms of anxiety and depression in autistic individuals.

### METHODS

**Search strategy** PubMed

((("autis\*" [Title/Abstract] OR "asperger\*" [Title/Abstract] OR "asd" [Title/Abstract] OR "PDD-NOS" [Title/Abstract] OR "autism spectrum disorder" [MeSH Terms])))

Psych info  
(tiab(autis\*) OR tiab(asperger\*) OR tiab(asd) OR tiab(PDD-NOS) OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT.EXPLODE("Autism Spectrum Disorders"))

AND  
(tiab(longitudinal) OR tiab(long-term) OR tiab(change) OR tiab(trajector\*))

AND  
(tiab(anxiety) OR tiab(depress\*) OR tiab("maladaptive behaviors") OR (MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Anxiety") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT.EXPLODE("Anxiety"))) OR (MAINSUBJECT.EXACT.EXPLODE("Affective Disorders") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Affective Disorders")) OR (MAINSUBJECT.EXACT.EXPLODE("Depression (Emotion)") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Depression (Emotion)")))

AND

((("longitudinal"[Title/Abstract] OR "long-term"[Title/Abstract] OR "change"[Title/Abstract] OR "trajector\*"[Title/Abstract])))

AND

((("depress\*"[Title/Abstract] OR "anxiety"[Title/Abstract] OR "mood disorders"[MeSH Terms] OR "Anxiety"[MeSH Terms] OR "Depression"[MeSH Terms] OR "maladaptive behaviors"[Title/Abstract])))

**Participant or population** Autistic individuals.

**Intervention** N/A.

**Comparator** N/A.

**Study designs to be included** Longitudinal designs.

#### Eligibility criteria

- Be equal to or longer than a three-year follow-up between the first and final time point
- Be a prospective study
- Have a sample size larger than 50 participants
- Include participants with a confirmed professional diagnosis (use of observational measures, interviews or evidence of a medical diagnosis given by a professional) of ASD, autism, Asperger's syndrome, or pervasive developmental disorder – not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS)
- Include measures of symptoms of anxiety or depression as the outcome
- Include behavioral or environmental (e.g., sociodemographic and contextual) predictors.

**Information sources** PubMed. PsychInfo and hand search.

**Main outcome(s)** Symptoms of anxiety and depression.

**Data management** Zotero and google docs.

**Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis** N/A.

**Strategy of data synthesis** Studies will be analyzed based on the outcome being assessed (i.e., anxiety or depression) and whether the methods used to analyze the data were trajectory or non-trajectory.

**Subgroup analysis** Trajectory compared to non-trajectory comparisons in anxiety and depression outcomes.

**Sensitivity analysis** N/A.

**Language restriction** English only.

**Country(ies) involved** United States.

**Other relevant information** The following exclusion criteria were considered and applied—the study could not:

- Be a treatment study
- Only include prenatal or genetic data as predictors.

**Keywords** autism, anxiety, depression, longitudinal, trajectory, non-trajectory.

**Dissemination plans** We plan to submit this systematic review for publication to a special issue in Brain Sciences.

#### Contributions of each author

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