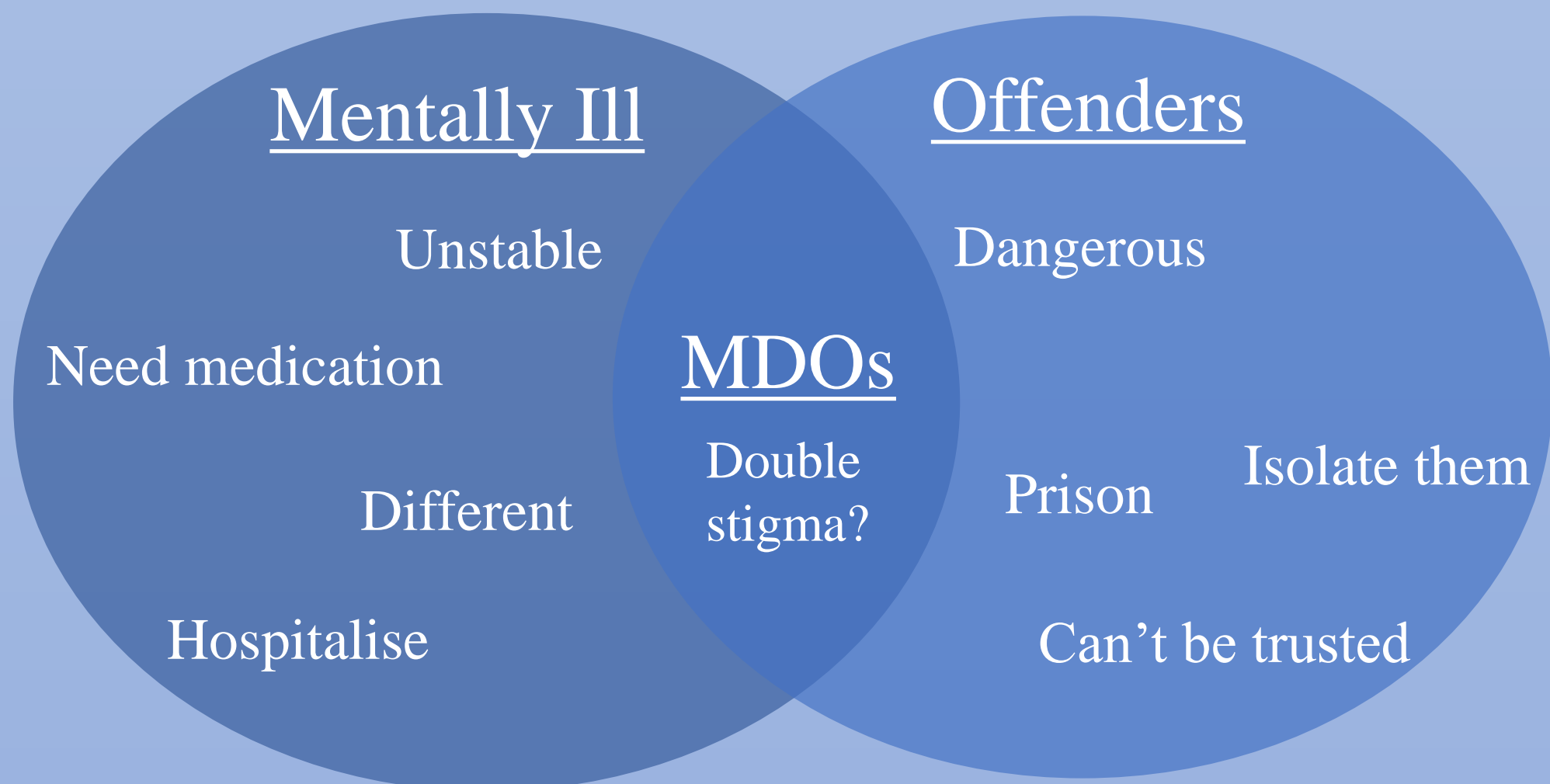# Public perceptions of Mentally Disordered Offenders

Using the newly developed: Public Attitudes towards Offenders with Mental Illness scale (PATOMI)

Samantha Walkden PhD Researcher School of Psychology
Supervised by Dr M Rogerson & Dr D Kola-Palmer

Mentally Ill

Unstable

Need medication

Different

Hospitalise

Offenders

Dangerous

MDOs
Double stigma?

Prison   Isolate them

Can't be trusted

Background
- Minimal research has considered public's attitudes towards offenders with mental illness- gap in the literature
- Mentally disordered offender (MDO)- an individual whose mental health issues contribute to their criminality (Spruin, 2012).
- Glendinning & O'Keefe (2013) developed Police & Community Attitudes towards Offenders with Mental Illness scale (PACAMI-O)
- Issues with previous testing of PACAMI-O- inappropriate method used (extraction & rotation)

Study 1- Establishing a valid tool

Research aims
- Identify if PACAMI-O is a valid tool- can improvements be made?
- Obtain adequate sample to conduct Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) with appropriate extraction & rotation method

Methodology
- 504 ppts read vignette, completed demographics & PACAMI-O
- Principle Axis Factoring- extraction
- Direct Oblimin- oblique rotation
- Remove coefficients loading <.3
- Remove items with shared loading (Osbourne, 2014)

Findings
- An EFA revealed a 4 factor solution for public attitudes towards offenders with mental illness (a= .89)
- Evidence to suggest 12 items in the PACAMI-O did not contribute

Exploratory Factor Analysis (% explained variance)			
Location of mental health services	Mental health spending	Attitudes towards psychiatric facilities	Community acceptance
28.29%	35.83%	41.73%	47.41%

Practical implications
- 28 items (valid) were retained- new tool 'The public attitudes towards offenders with mental illness scale' (PATOMI).
- Can be used across a general public sample & is more concise

Study 2- Confirming the PATOMI scale

Confirmatory Factor Analysis
- 646 participants read vignette and completed PATOMI
- CFA- Maximum likelihood
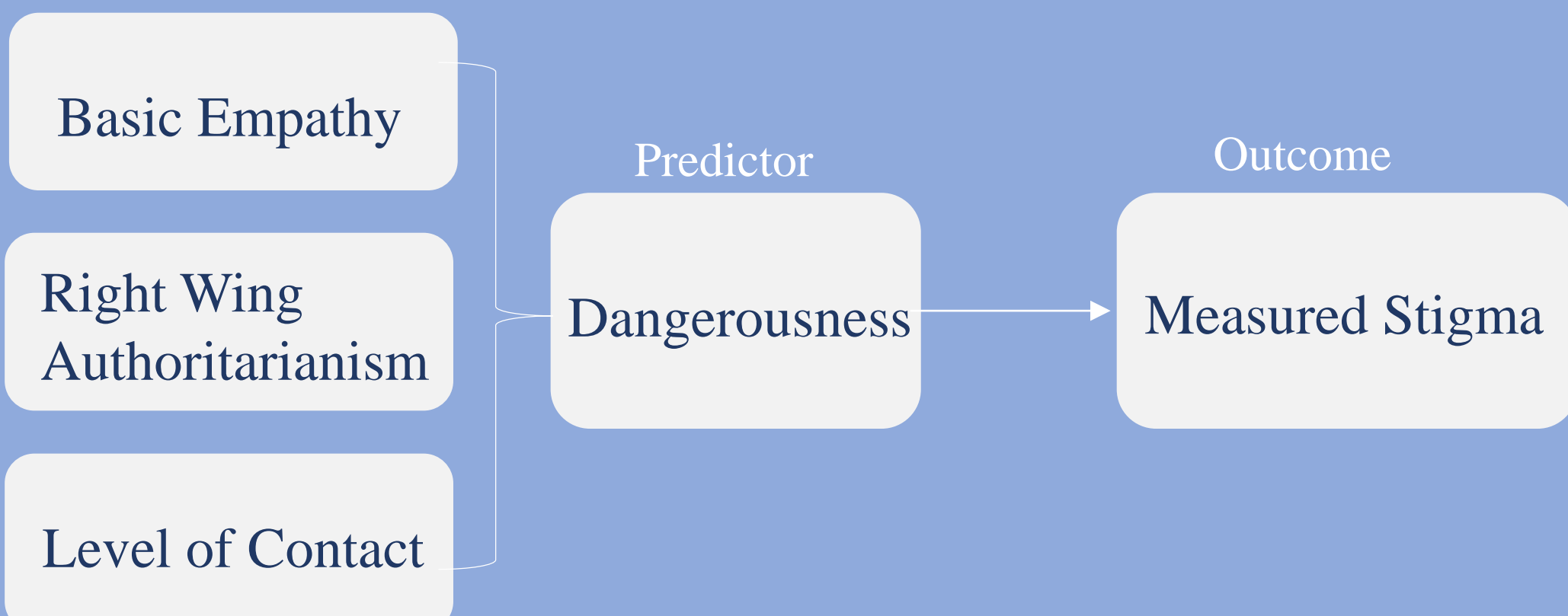- 4 Factor solution confirmed- model was an adequate fit

	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA
Desired value	above .90	<.08	.05-1
Result	.84	.07	.07

Study 3- Factors that influence perceptions

Aims
- Investigate factors that influence perceptions (Level of Contact, Basic Empathy, Right Wing Authoritarianism)
- 'Severity' of schizophrenia manipulated

Methodology
- 396 ppts completed LoC, BES & RWA scales
- Read 1 of the 3 vignettes featuring Harry
- Then completed PATOMI (instead of 'offenders with mental illness' the items state 'Harry')

Predictor Controls

Basic Empathy

Right Wing Authoritarianism

Level of Contact

Predictor
Dangerousness

Outcome
Measured Stigma

Analysis - Regression
- Hierarchical multiple- Step 1 controlling for BES, RWA & LoC
- Step 2 considering offender dangerousness (vignette) as a predictor of stigma (PATOMI score) – analysis ongoing

Why does this research matter?
- Developed a new valid scale to measure public perceptions
- Understand & work towards reducing stigma
- Give the public a realistic & reasonable perception of risk
- Encourage reintegration = support recovery, reduce recidivism
- Promote community acceptance

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References
Angermeyer & Matschinger, (2003) The stigma of mental illness: effects of labelling on public attitudes towards individuals with mental disorder. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*, 108, 304-309; Glendinning, A.L. & O'Keefe, C. (2015). Attitudes towards offenders with mental health problems scale. *The Journal of Mental Health Training, Education and Practice*, 10(2), 73-84; Osbourne, J.W. (2014). *Best practices in Exploratory Factor Analysis*. Research Gate; Spruin, E. (2012). The criminal experience of mentally disordered offenders. *PhD thesis: University of Huddersfield*