



Violence and Schizophrenia Association: Mental Health Stigmatization

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Introduction

- **PDS:** People Diagnosed with schizophrenia
- **Schizophrenia:** a word with Greek origins. It translates as “splitting of the mind” [schizein (σχίζειν, "to split") and phren (φρεν-, "mind")]
- **Stigma:** an insidious social force that has been linked to many social groups as well as several health conditions such a harmful and as schizophrenia.
- Schizophrenia is a mental disorder usually mischaracterized as a disorder that is identified with violent behavior.
- Current media attention to violent behavior among PDS augments media followers’ perception that violence is inherent to schizophrenia.
- The impulse to investigate this phenomenon derives from the hypothesis that the PDS is expected to be violent and commit violent acts that would endanger public safety and wellbeing.
- **Is schizophrenia really associated with violence in public opinion?**

Hypothesis

- Students would associate violence and when the victim of a vague crime scenario was diagnosed with schizophrenia.

Method

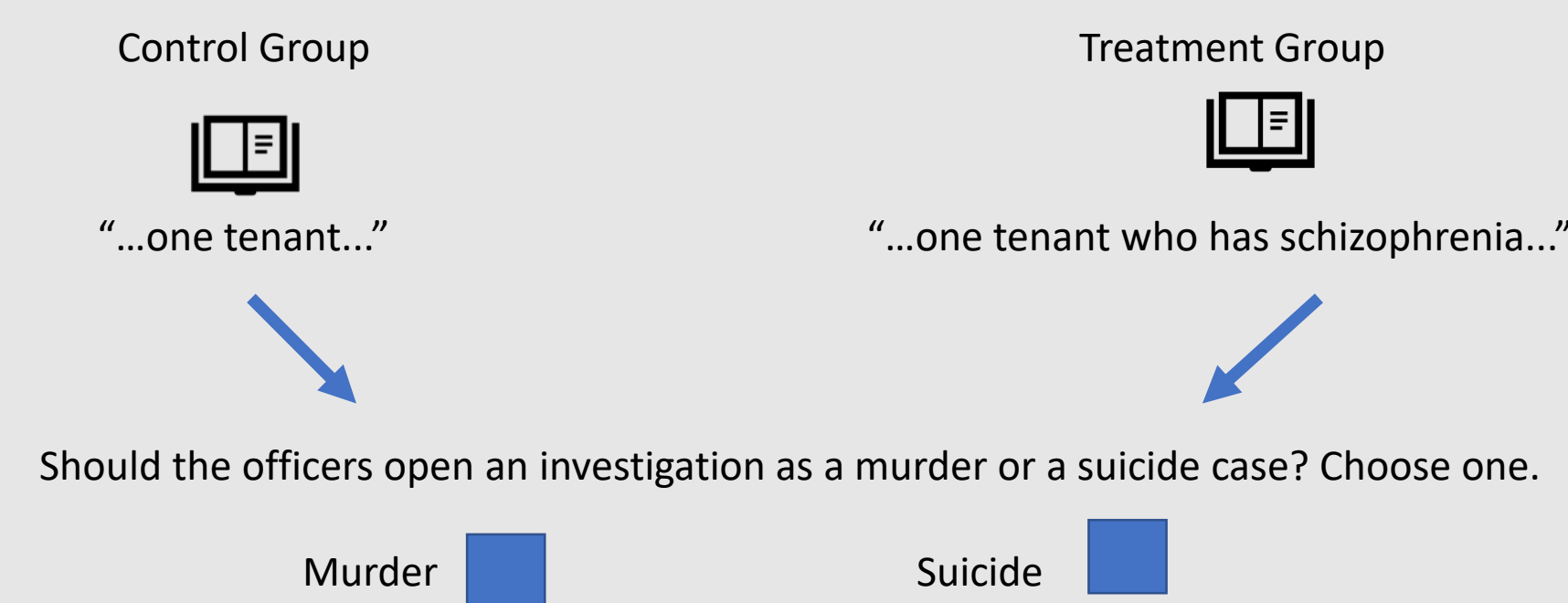
Participants:

- 194 York University students
- Treatment group (n=97) $M_{age} = 20.39$ years, $SD = 3.25$
- Control group (n=97) $M_{age} = 21.29$ years, $SD = 4.67$
- 6 A gender, 61 Males, 117 Females

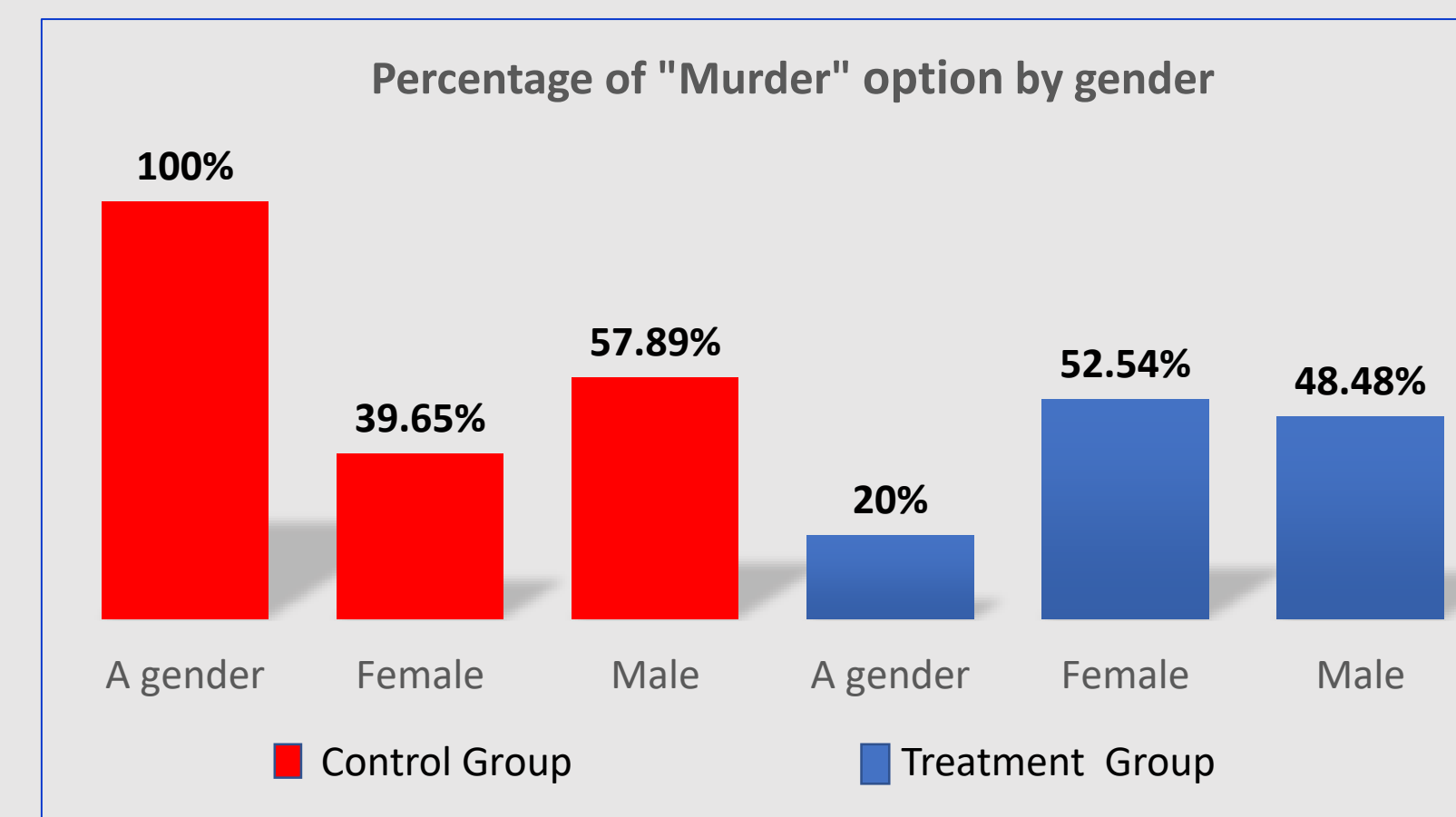
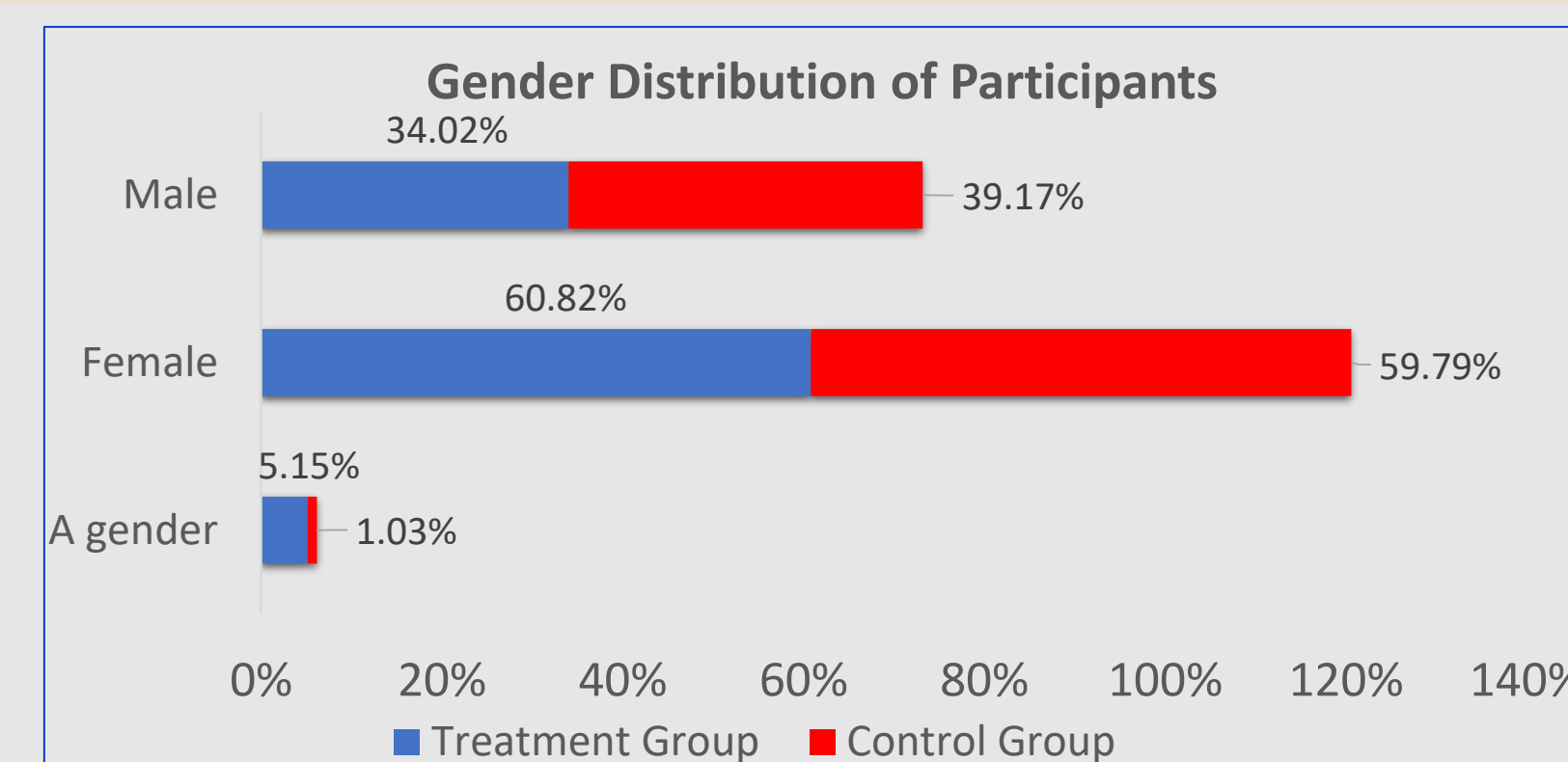
Materials:

- Vague crime scene scenario: 2 versions
- Questionnaire

Procedure



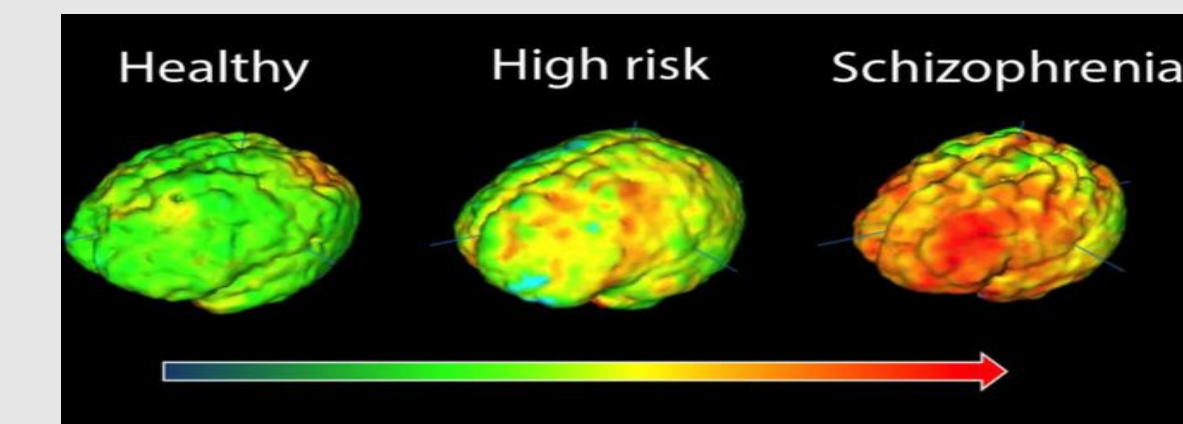
Results



• $\chi^2 (1, N = 194) = 0.021, p > .05$

Discussion

- 18.56% of the participants were psychology major students (n=36).
- 9.28% of the participants were other health related majors who have a fair amount of knowledge about mental disorders.
- Participants level of knowledge and education may have affected their choices in the questionnaires, and not represent the opinions of the “average Joe”.
- Multicultural environment of York University may have had a high effect on eliminating the biases towards people with mental and physical disabilities.
- Current research results are not consistent with other major studies conducted.
- Further studies with a more generalized participant pool suggested to replicate results.
- Further studies on health majors versus other majors’ biases towards PDS as well as how gender differences affect the results.



Bibliography

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