



Alberta Gambling Research Institute 25th Annual Conference

Poster Presentations

Friday, May 1, 2026

3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

Kinross Centre, Room KC 303

Listed alphabetically by presenter last name (in bold)

1. Immigration, Acculturation and Help-Seeking Among Canadians Who Gamble

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Canada's demographic diversity has drawn attention to immigration-related factors and acculturative processes that shape mental health correlates. This is particularly relevant for gambling behaviour and related help-seeking, which have yet to be explored in a cross-national context. Using the Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI) and the Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA), we analyzed heritage and mainstream acculturative dimensions in relation to gambling outcomes and help-seeking. Our study used the fourth wave of a longitudinal gambling study. At baseline, 6,175 Canadian adults who had gambled at least once a week or on two different platforms over the past 12 months were recruited, and 2,544 participants completed Wave 4. Initial differences across immigration status were identified in logistic regressions but did not hold after sociodemographic controls. Acculturation was not significantly associated with the dependent variables of interest, while younger age and identifying as a man were. Specific self-reported ethnicities were also associated to higher probability of problem-gambling and help-seeking, after controlling for severity. Exploratory analyses suggested lower odds of problem gambling with higher mainstream acculturation only among non-White participants. Thus, intervention efforts may be more appropriate when focused on severity and sociodemographic barriers to help-seeking.

2. Developing a Framework to Evaluate the LRGG: Lessons Learned From the Evaluation of Other public Health Guidelines (PHGs)

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Background: The LRGGs are a set of evidence-based guidelines for people who want to reduce their risk of gambling-related harms. Although the LRGGs are “used” (e.g., endorsed, integrated, etc.) by organizations both within and beyond the gambling sector, evidence of their impact is limited, and it remains unclear how to best assess their effectiveness. This project aimed to develop an outcome framework to help organizations assess the impact of using the LRGGs in their practice. **Method:** The project has three main components: (1) a scoping review of PHG evaluations, (2) surveys (N = 52) and follow-up interviews (N = 15) with organizations to explore use of the LRGGs, and (3) the development of an outcome framework based on findings from previous components. **Results:** Component 1 identified a range of sociodemographic and psychological factors that impact the implementation of PHGs on the individual level. While some studies were designed with behavioural change theories in mind, many were atheoretical. Component 2 findings indicate that most organizations use the LRGGs in communication materials. Some organizations reported more integrated uses, such as incorporating the LRGGs into programming or staff training. Key barriers to further integration included limited staff capacity and resources, challenges aligning the LRGGs with specific service mandates, and concerns about the relevance of income-based limits for certain populations. **Implications:** These findings will inform the development of an outcome framework to support organizations that have implemented the LRGGs by providing outcomes that can be assessed based on organizational activities.

3. Testing the Factor Structure of the Gambling Related Cognition Scale Using Structural Equation Modeling (ESEM)

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The Gambling-Related Cognitions Scale (GRCS; Raylu & Oei, 2004) is a widely used questionnaire for assessing trait-level gambling distortions. The scale comprises 5 subscales, 3 pertaining to classic gambling distortions (the illusion of control, interpretive bias, and predictive control that would include the gambler's fallacy). Prior work on the psychometrics of the GRCS has used confirmatory factor analysis, which imposes unrealistic constraints on the factor solution. By permitting small cross-loadings, Exploratory Structural Equation Modeling (ESEM) offers a stronger test of the theoretical structure. We administered the GRCS to 866 adults via Prolific and tested five pre-registered (https://osf.io/j8chw/overview?view_only=e1fe1bff2b6649199bc3026c84ee5038) factor structures using ESEM. The five-factor model ($\chi^2(136) = 483.707, p = <.001, CFI = .994, RMSEA = .054, SRMR = .01$) outperformed both a unidimensional model and a three-factor model that collapsed the 3 distortions subscales. Similar fit was found when comparing first-order and higher-order models. Although model fit indices support the original five-factor structure, non-linear SEM reliability estimates show low reliability for all subscales, suggesting that they may not reflect coherent latent constructs. Furthermore, item-level analyses show low primary loadings and substantial cross-loadings across the 3 distortions subscales. We recommend further scale development to refine measures of gambling-related cognitions.

4. Structural Characteristics of Cryptocasinos Accessible to Canadians

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Past research has linked problem gambling severity to both engaging in online gambling and trading volatile assets, including cryptocurrencies. Cryptocasinos, which enable gambling using cryptocurrencies specifically, are becoming a growing concern for harm reduction policy. Despite their considerable online presence, research has yet to examine the availability of, or harm prevention features within cryptocasino websites accessible to Canadians. We addressed this gap with an observational study scanning the Canadian cryptocasino environment. Publicly available website data were systematically scraped to identify and catalog website features and any safer-gambling tools that were present (e.g., deposit and loss limits, self-exclusion options, reality checks, session reminders, or responsible gambling resources). Content analysis of these websites assessed the scope, visibility, accessibility, and comprehensiveness of these features. We hypothesized that the majority of cryptocasinos accessible to Canadians would offer limited or inconsistent safer-gambling provisions, potentially exacerbating harm among vulnerable populations. By mapping the current landscape, this research sheds light on the state of crypto-based online gambling in Canada, highlighting potential regulatory shortcomings, and informing evidence-based policy development. These findings thus provide needed context to improve policy, enhance player protections, and promote harm reduction in this growing area.

5. Care Trajectory of Individuals Experiencing Problematic Gambling: A Qualitative Study of Health Professionals' Insights in Quebec (Canada) – Preliminary Results

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Background and Aims: In Quebec (Canada), the specialized helpline Gambling: Help and Referral (GHR) serves as the first point of contact for many individuals experiencing problematic gambling. In 2024, most contacts (73%) resulted in referrals to other services. However, little is known about the care trajectories of problematic gamblers following first contact with a gambling helpline and the experience of health professionals (HPs) working in those services. This study aims to understand the experiences of HPs working within GHR and referred services, and to explore their perspectives on health and social care trajectories. **Methods:** This descriptive qualitative study involves focus groups (n = 5) with HPs working within GHR and referred services. Open-ended questions explore HPs' roles and challenges, their observations of care trajectories, and their perspectives on ideal care trajectories for individuals experiencing problematic gambling. Discussions are recorded and transcribed for thematic analysis with NVivo software. Results Focus groups are underway and will be completed during winter 2026. Preliminary results will be presented at the 2026 AGRI conference. **Discussion and Conclusions:** To our knowledge, this is the first study to explore HPs' perspectives on the care trajectories of individuals contacting GHR. The qualitative design will help us understand HPs' observations, which is essential for improving services for this population. We believe this study will inform actionable recommendations to enhance the health and social services experience for this population.

6. Can Informed Decision-Making Tools Impact Gambling Future Spend Intentions?

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Prior research indicates that gambling consumers have limited awareness for their gambling expenditure and report uncertainty regarding setting appropriate deposit limits. The present study examines whether decision-making about future gambling expenditure changes following engagement with two informed decision-making tools. This experimental study investigates the impact of two decision-making support tools, 'Bet Well' and 'Self Wise', on intended gambling expenditure for the following month among Australian regular gambling consumers. Participants are randomly allocated to one of three conditions: (1) Bet Well, (2) Self Wise, or (3) a combined Bet Well and Self Wise condition. Participants report their intended gambling expenditure before and after engaging with their assigned tool(s). Bet Well is designed to increase awareness of gambling expenditure by providing personalised summaries of gambling activity derived from activity statements from Australian gambling operators. The tool also includes psychoeducational quiz and an interactive spending challenge that prompts users to estimate past expenditure using comparisons with alternative activities or items (e.g., tickets to a sporting event). Together, these components aim to support more informed decisions about future gambling expenditure. Self Wise employs a self-distancing approach to promote wiser reasoning by encouraging users to adopt a third-person perspective. Participants evaluate personal values based on their alignment with a future ideal self, with the aim of guiding future gambling expenditure decisions in accordance with this ideal self-concept. Preliminary findings from the experiment will be presented at the conference. This research has implications for the development of tools designed to support informed gambling decision-making.

7. Acceptability and Perceived Usefulness: A Digital Tool to Assist Gambling Consumers to Make Informed Decisions: Bet Well

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Gambling consumers show poor recall of their gambling expenditure and report engaging with multiple online wagering sites, making it challenging to monitor their gambling spend. To support greater gambling awareness and informed decision-making, we co-designed an online tool, Bet Well, with regular online gambling consumers. Bet Well allows users to share multiple activity statements to create an overall summary of their spend and see personalised data to increase awareness of alternate use of funds. Users can also complete a psychoeducational quiz designed to correct erroneous understanding of wagering and indicate sustainable betting behaviours. Bet Well was designed to be positive, empowering, personalised and non-judgmental. In an exploratory study, we investigated the acceptability and perceived usefulness of Bet Well in a sample of Australian online gambling consumers (n=140). Participants explored the Bet Well website and provided qualitative and quantitative feedback on the tool via a survey. The findings revealed moderate to high acceptability and perceived usefulness in the sample. Higher acceptability and perceived usefulness were reported among participants with higher gambling severity and higher financial wellbeing. These findings provide preliminary support for Bet Well's acceptability and perceived usefulness from the consumer perspective. Insights from this study are informing ongoing refinements to the tool, with the next iteration of the website currently under development. Future research will test the next iteration prior to an effectiveness evaluation and implementation.

8. Gambling Participation and Behaviors Among University Students: Findings From a Campus-Wide Survey

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Gambling opportunities in the United States have recently expanded, driven by the growth of online platforms and the legalization of sports gambling (Winters & Derevensky, 2019). These changes have increased access to gambling among college students, a population considered at elevated risk for gambling-related harm (Tracy & Brown, 2023). Despite this, less is known about the current prevalence and patterns of gambling behaviors within campus communities. The present study reports findings from a cross-sectional survey of students at the University of New Mexico examining gambling participation and associated behaviors. Students (N = 2,129) completed an anonymous online survey assessing recent gambling involvement, types of gambling engaged in, and behavioral indicators related to gambling risk and harm. Preliminary results indicate that 29.4% of students reported gambling in the past few months, with 7.2% of the sample gambling monthly or more. The most frequently endorsed gambling activities were casino betting, lottery, and slot play. Sports gambling was reported by 6.6% of the full sample and 19.0% of students who gambled. Although overall gambling prevalence was modest, these findings highlight meaningful variation in gambling engagement across modalities and underscore the importance of campus-specific data for informing targeted prevention and harm-reduction efforts.

9. To Gain a Competitive Edge? Examining Gaming Motives as Predictors of Risky Lootbox Use

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Background: Lootboxes (in-game virtual containers with random rewards) are linked to transitions to gambling and problem gambling severity. Yet, motivations underpinning problematic lootbox use remain poorly understood. We investigated gaming motives (e.g., competition, mastery, escapism) that may predict risky lootbox use. Methods: 565 gamers (18+) who purchased lootboxes completed a survey battery. The Gaming Motivation Inventory assessed motivations across six broad factors (mastery, immersion/escapism, competition, stimulation, social, habit/boredom) and their subfactors. The Risky Lootbox Index assessed problematic risky lootbox use. Hierarchical regression examined broader motivational factors as predictors of risky engagement. Results: Problematic lootbox use correlated with gambling severity ($r = .36, p < .001$). Gaming motivations predicted lootbox engagement ($R^2 = .13, p < .001$). Competition emerged as the strongest broad factor ($\beta = .27, p = .002$), followed by habit/boredom ($\beta = .12, p = .007$). No other motivational domains were significantly associated with risky lootbox use. Within competition, status-seeking was the strongest subfactor ($\beta = .23, p < .001$), followed by competitive drive ($\beta = .14, p = .011$). Conclusion: Competition, particularly status-seeking, was associated with riskier lootbox use. Consistent with evidence linking competition motives to problem gambling, competition-driven motives may be a shared risk factor in predicting risky lootbox use and problem gambling.

10. Developing Youth-Focused Clinical Practice Guidelines for Problem Gambling in Canada

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Background: Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPGs) are essential for ensuring consistent, evidence-based, high-quality care. Currently, no CPGs for problem gambling have been developed for the Canadian context, and existing CPGs from other jurisdictions do not address individuals under 18. Meanwhile, problem gambling is increasingly recognized as an emerging public health concern among adolescents and young adults in Canada and around the world. Approach: This project will develop and disseminate the world's first evidence-based, youth-focused CPGs for the early identification, screening, assessment, and treatment of problem gambling in Canada. Using a rigorous, collaborative, and community-driven methodology, the guideline development process will engage healthcare professionals, youth, subject matter experts, and people with lived and living experience of gambling harm. Dissemination will include peer-reviewed publication, media outreach, and tailored knowledge translation products for clinicians and youth-serving interest holders. Implications: This initiative will strengthen the capacity of Canada's youth mental health system to identify, screen, and treat problem gambling. By improving access to evidence-based practices, it is expected to support better mental health outcomes for young people and adults across Canada and advance the international evidence base. This poster will summarize progress to date, including key project milestones and governance groups.

11. Solitary Versus Social Sports Bettors: How do They Differ on Risk Factors and Gambling Outcomes?

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Sports bettors are now increasingly betting alone, which may increase their risk for gambling-related harms. Although previous work has highlighted the negative impact of solitary gambling, there is a lack of studies that have specifically examined this in sports betting. The present study compared solitary versus social sports bettors on a range of demographic and psychological variables. Our sample included 920 sports bettors from Ontario, of which 850 (92.4%) reported betting with others 0-50% of the time (i.e., solitary group), and 70 (7.6%) reported betting with others 60-100% of the time (i.e., social group). Solitary sports bettors were more likely to be male compared to social sports bettors ($p < 0.001$), but groups did not differ on any other demographic variables. In terms of psychological factors, solitary bettors reported higher depression ($p = 0.040$), lower social motives ($p = 0.009$), and higher financial motives ($p = 0.038$), when compared to social bettors. Finally, solitary sports bettors reported higher sports betting frequency ($p < 0.001$) and higher gambling severity ($p = 0.033$), but groups did not differ on money spent, nor gambling-related harms. In conclusion, our findings illustrate the high proportion of individuals reporting solitary betting, and how betting alone is associated with increased depression and gambling severity.

12. Simultaneous Drinking While Sports Betting – Who Engages in it and How Does it Impact Behaviour?

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Individuals who engage in sports betting often do so while drinking, yet studies on this topic are scarce. In this study, we examined the demographic and psychological predictors of simultaneous alcohol use, and whether drinking increases gambling harms for sports bettors. We examined four groups of sports bettors living in Ontario: those reporting (1) no alcohol use ($n = 70$), concurrent use ($n = 429$), (3) sometimes-simultaneous alcohol use ($n = 211$), and (4) always/almost always simultaneous alcohol use ($n = 198$). Participants completed measures of demographic characteristics, sports gambling-related variables, alcohol problems, gambling problems, and emotion dysregulation. Results showed that any simultaneous alcohol use was associated with younger age and diverse gender identities compared to concurrent and no alcohol use. Bisexuality was specifically associated with always simultaneously drinking alcohol. Always simultaneously drinking alcohol was also associated with higher alcohol and gambling problems compared to sometimes simultaneously drinking alcohol, despite the sometimes-simultaneous drinking group reporting higher sports betting frequency. Simultaneous alcohol use was also linked to higher betting frequency and spending more money on bets. In conclusion, demographic and psychological correlates of simultaneous drinking were generally consistent with the literature, apart from the group that always simultaneously drank alcohol reporting lower sports gambling frequency, but increased alcohol and gambling problems. These results suggest that even when sports betting frequency is relatively low, simultaneously drinking alcohol may exponentially increase gambling-related harms.

13. Profiles of Masculinity and Gambling Risk Among Emerging Adult Men: A Latent Profile Analysis

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Patterns of conformity to traditional masculine norms have been linked to differences in psychological distress, depression, and suicide risk, particularly when examined using person-centered approaches. Emerging adulthood is marked by heightened risk-taking, and gambling is a socially embedded activity among young men. Masculine socialization emphasizing risk-taking and competitiveness may shape gambling involvement and responses to responsible gambling (RG) strategies, yet little is known about how distinct masculinity profiles relate to gambling-related outcomes. The present study uses latent profile analysis to examine whether distinct profiles of masculinity can be identified among emerging adult men who gamble, and whether these profiles differ in gambling-related behaviors and outcomes. Participants (N.= 593) were emerging adult men who reported previous month gambling. The sample demonstrated meaningful variability across masculinity dimensions and gambling-related outcomes. Masculinity profiles are identified using subscales of the Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory. Gambling behaviors, problem gambling severity, and RG strategy use are examined as auxiliary outcomes. It is hypothesized that profiles characterized by higher endorsement of masculine norms will exhibit greater gambling involvement, higher problem gambling severity, and lower engagement in RG strategies. Findings aim to inform more tailored and culturally responsive gambling prevention and intervention efforts for young men.

14. Extracting the Effects of Mere Presence From Player Interactions in Competitive Games

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The effects of mere presence in games are difficult to isolate due to confounds between the presence of other human agents and the necessity for interactive decision-making. In the present study, we attempt to separate the effects of presence and interactivity using a within-participants design. First, we manipulate mere presence by having participants play with either a computer or a human opponent (researcher), ensuring that the behaviour of both computer and human opponents was identical in the long-run. Second, we manipulate interactivity by having participants either play against each other directly (producing interdependent outcomes) or against a computerized third-party (producing independent outcomes). We hypothesize that response times in the interdependent human presence condition will be the slowest, as playing against a human opponent requires effortful suppression of exploitable responses. We predict that reaction times in the independent human presence condition will be intermediate, with interdependent and independent computer presence condition yielding the fastest reaction time. We will also confirm whether the speed of reaction times correlate with more or less successful decision-making, such as the degree to which participants are able to express unexploitability. These data should clarify how social dynamics influence decision-making in risky contexts.

15. The Relationship Between Cardiac Interoception and Problem Gambling Severity

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In gambling, psychological theory has traditionally emphasized arousal as a key source of reinforcement. However, the exact role of arousal in (excessive) gambling, remains unclear, and past work has focused on physiological signals (e.g. heart rate change) without considering , interoceptive processes, i.e. the perception and interpretation of these signals. Interoceptive processes are implicated in various forms of mental illness, such as panic disorder or addictions. An ongoing study (current N = 70), is testing experienced gamblers on a computerized slot machine task, monitoring outcome-related heartrate deceleration and electrodermal activity (EDA) alongside trial by trial ratings of perceived arousal. Participants also complete a cardiac interoception task in which they have to tap a key each time they feel their heartbeat. On the slot machine task, winning outcomes elicit higher EDA and subjective arousal compared to losses. We assess the coupling of the physiological and subjective measures, but current analyses provide no evidence that PGSI scores influence this relationship. However, higher PGSI was associated with increased arousal only among individuals with high interoceptive accuracy. Our preliminary data suggests that interoceptive processes might be affected as a function of gambling risk. Future research could hold potential for new treatment avenues including interoceptive training.

16. False Alarms: ‘Near-losses’ in Dice Rolls Predict Erroneous Perception of Subsequent Losses

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In contrast to binary distinctions between outcomes such as wins and losses, more fine-grained distinctions include the representation of goal proximity such as being near or far to desired or undesired outcomes. Despite semantic inconsistencies in near-win and near-loss literature, we offer a resolution where we define a near-loss as an actual positive outcome described in reference to a negative counterfactual. We leverage the commercial ‘push-your-luck’ game Can’t Stop (Sackson, 1980) as a playful paradigm to study the behavioural consequences of near-losses compared to full-wins, and, playing against opponents who are either cautious or reckless. Each turn, players are given the option to either continue rolling dice (but risk losing their progress) or stop (thereby saving their progress). Our data showed that participants produced more stop behaviour against the cautious opponent relative to the reckless opponent only when the previous outcome was a near-loss. Opponent imitation is discussed in reference to its potential automaticity and social contingencies, whereas stopping behaviour is considered as a possibly erroneous perception of the interdependence between dice throws. Accordingly, the interpretation of near-loss as a predictor of subsequent losses highlight a potential to offset detrimental behavioural patterns associated with problem gambling.

17. Work or Wait? A Cross-Species Test of What Makes Uncertainty Engaging

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Slot machines deliver rewards unpredictably—a feature linked to persistent gambling. But what exactly keeps the rewards engaging: the random number of spins or the variable delay between rewards? To test this, we used an animal gambling model in which rats chose between a random ratio reward schedule (RR; like a slot machine) and a fixed-ratio reward schedule (FR; like piecewise work). We quantified RR preference by measuring how often animals chose RR over an FR option that became progressively less effortful. We contrasted this with a parallel test in which rats chose between fixed vs variable delays, matched to the ratio-task timing. Rats showed a robust preference for RR even when FR became substantially easier, whereas they showed minimal bias towards variable delays. To replicate these findings in humans, college aged participants chose between two concurrently available slot machines, one RR and the other FR. Two studies (N1=45 and N2=101 participants) failed to show a consistent RR bias either in choice behavior or a game experience questionnaire; however, small gender-specific biases were observed. By identifying whether ratio variability or delay variability better predicts persistent choice, this work helps clarify structural features that sustain gambling and highlights targets for mitigation.

18. A Family Study of Social Cognition in Gambling Disorder

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Background: People with a gambling disorder (GD) display specific patterns of impairments in executive functioning. Social cognition, such as the development of theory of mind, can be impaired in addictive disorders. Studies on social cognition and GD are lacking, and the familial versus disorder-specific effects remain unexamined. The current family study compares people with GD, their first-degree biological relatives, and community controls on two measures of social cognition. Methods: People with GD (n = 39), their first-degree relatives (n = 19), and community controls (n = 50) completed two measures of social cognition: the Movies for the Assessment of Social Cognition (MASC) task and the Interpersonal Perception Task-15 (IPT-15). Results: Significant group differences were found on the kinship scale of the IPT-15, with lower scores in the GD group and their relatives compared to controls. Conclusion: Future research should investigate social cognitive functioning in GD given these findings, and their relationship with the familial vulnerability for GD.

19. Validation of the Gambling Problem Recognition Scale

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Gambling is a common recreational activity legally available in most jurisdictions worldwide. While many gamble non-problematically, over 3% of Canadian adults experience symptoms of problem gambling. Nevertheless, treatment seeking is rare and often limited to those with more severe problems. A frequently cited barrier to treatment is low problem recognition, or a limited perception of one's gambling as problematic. The Gambling Problem Recognition Scale (GPRS) is a four-item measure that assesses perceptions of harm, impaired control, over-involvement, and future risk in gambling. This study aims to validate the GPRS and is part of a broader project on the antecedents and consequences of problem recognition. Secondary data were obtained from a recent Canadian online panel survey study (n.= 964). Confirmatory factor analysis was used to evaluate the factor structure of the GPRS. Correlational analyses were used to evaluate convergent and divergent validity with theoretically related constructs, such as problem severity, gambling involvement, and gambling-related harm. Finally, a series of nested logistic regression were used to evaluate the effect of GPRS scores on treatment-seeking above and beyond other common indicators, such as gambling involvement and problem severity.

20. Rural Communities Seek Community-Driven Education and Support in Reducing Gambling Related Harm

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Individuals living in rural communities, including Appalachia, are at risk for gambling harm due to intersecting problem gambling risk factors (e.g., lower income and education; Hash et al., 2023). However, our knowledge of the unique harms and barriers to support in this population is limited (Tolchard, 2015). Individuals living in rural Appalachian Ohio (N=400) will complete a mixed method, community-engaged survey by March 2026. Preliminary qualitative data (N=155; Mean Age=33 years (SD=11), 73% Men, 83% White, 16% Hispanic, 53% from most rural [nonmetro, not adjacent to a metro] counties) suggests a perceived need to reduce access to underage and lottery-based gambling, increase community education about risks, and increase community-driven support and alternative activities. Preliminary multiple regression analyses show that higher gambling literacy scores (per the Positive Play Scale; Standardized $\theta=0.19-0.33$), self-reported problems with gambling (Standardized $\theta=0.12-0.28$), and perceived knowledge (Standardized $\theta=0.28-0.68$) and helpfulness (Standardized $\theta=0.17-0.29$) of 17 gambling harm reduction strategies (e.g., self-exclusion, keeping a gambling diary, etc.) were most consistently related to the increased use of each strategy, after controlling for harms experienced, gambling approval, and key demographics ($R^2=0.24-0.67$, $p \leq .001$). Results highlight deficits in education and support to reduce gambling harms in rural communities and suggest community-driven solutions.

21. Assessing an Educational Intervention on Sports Betting Among Young Adults

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Background: Rates of sports betting have substantially increased in Canada. Given the risks associated with sports betting, particularly among young adults, there is a need for prevention programs that promote risk awareness. In response, the YMCA's Youth Gambling Awareness Program developed the workshop Sports.Betting; Separating.Skill.from.Illusion.of.Control. This study examined the effectiveness of the workshop. Method: While data collection was ongoing, 21 undergraduate students in Canada participated in a 60-minute workshop and completed self-report measures before and after. Paired-samples t-tests examined changes in gambling misconceptions, risk awareness, recall of low-risk gambling guidelines, and likelihood of using harm reduction strategies. Results: Participants had a mean age of 20.76 years (SD.= 5.45) and were predominantly women (90.5%). Gambling misconceptions decreased (d. = 1.06), while risk awareness increased (d.= 1.10). Recall of low-risk gambling guidelines improved (d.= 1.01), along with knowledge of available gambling services (d.= 1.49) and likelihood of using harm reduction strategies (d.= 0.86). Participants reported high satisfaction with the content and knowledge gained from the workshop. Conclusion: Preliminary findings suggest this workshop may effectively improve sports betting knowledge, risk awareness, and safer gambling intentions among young adults.

22. Poor Compliance with Loot Box Probability Disclosure and Warning Regulations in Taiwan

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Loot boxes are in-game purchases where players spend real-world money on randomised items. Loot boxes have been linked to problem gambling. Probability disclosure is a regulatory approach which mandates informing players of the probabilities of obtaining items from loot boxes. Multiple Jurisdictions have implemented this regulation, yet compliance remains unsatisfactory. Taiwan is the second jurisdiction to require probability disclosure, imposing the disclosure of the probability of obtaining each item as a percentage. Additionally, companies must display warnings that there is no guarantee when purchasing loot boxes. No other jurisdiction has imposed similar requirements. The 100 highest-grossing Taiwan iPhone games on 07/09/2025 were surveyed to determine whether they contained loot boxes, and if so, whether they disclosed probabilities and displayed warnings as required. 93 of the 100 games contained loot boxes, in which 36.6% disclosed probabilities for all loot boxes. Of games with disclosures: 24.7% disclosed individual item-based probabilities as percentage, and 23.7% displayed warnings. The prevalence of loot boxes in Taiwan is high. However, most games failed to disclose percentage-based or individual item-based probabilities. Most games failed to provide warnings, even though they stated they would do so in their terms and conditions. Efforts to improve the enforcement are needed.

23. Raising the Stakes: Early-Life Stress and Probabilistic Reward Choice in Rats

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Abstract: Random ratio (RR) reinforcement schedules—central to slot machine payout structures—produce higher response rates than fixed-ratio (FR) schedules with equivalent reward rates. Despite this well-established effect, few studies have directly examined choice between RR and FR schedules. The present study assessed 48 male and female rats on a schedule preference task designed to isolate attraction to probabilistic reinforcement. An RR schedule was held constant while the response requirement of an FR alternative was progressively reduced across blocks, making the FR option increasingly favorable. Continued preference for RR under these conditions may reflect risk-prone decision making. Schedule preference was examined in two groups of animals: one exposed to early-life stress and a control group. Based on human literature linking early-life adversity to increased addiction risk, we hypothesized that early-life stress would be associated with a more persistent preference for RR. All rats showed a robust initial RR preference. Preliminary analyses revealed a group-level effect of early-life stress on increased overall RR preference across blocks, indicating sustained attraction to probabilistic reinforcement despite increasingly favorable deterministic alternatives. These findings support the use of this task as a rodent model for studying how early-life stress alters decision-making under reward uncertainty.

24. Endorsement of Gambling Fallacies Among Youth and Young Adults: A Scoping Review

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Introduction: Gambling fallacies refer to a set of erroneous cognitions or beliefs about the nature of gambling and the mechanisms underlying gambling outcomes. Although endorsement of such fallacies is common among members of the adult general population, it also tends to increase as a function of gambling severity. Despite a growing body of research in this area, the literature remains fragmented, and relatively little work has examined the endorsement of gambling fallacies among youth, who may be uniquely vulnerable to the potential harms of gambling. Objectives: This scoping literature review presents existing peer-reviewed and grey literature that examines the endorsement of one or more gambling fallacies among youth, identifies strengths, gaps and limitations in existing research, and outlines directions for future study. Methods: Six databases were searched for studies that investigated the endorsement of one or more gambling fallacies among youth. Synthesis: Preliminary synthesis suggests that endorsement of gambling fallacies among youth has been examined across a limited and heterogeneous body of literature, with variability in conceptualization and measurement. Several methodological and population-level gaps were identified. Conclusion: These findings underscore the need for greater conceptual clarity and informed research to better understand the nature and impact of gambling fallacies among youth, and their implications for harm prevention concerning problematic gambling.

25. Predictors of Risky Gambling Among Young Adult Online Gamblers in Canada

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Background: Online gambling is becoming increasingly popular and accessible. Notably, younger populations are more likely to gamble online and experience gambling-related harms. Objective: The aim of this study was to examine predictors of moderate-risk-to-problem gambling in a sample of young adult online gamblers. Methods: A sample of 396 Canadian young adults aged 19 to 34 years who had engaged in any online gambling in the past 12 months was recruited using the online crowdsourcing platforms Cloud Research Connect and Prolific. Measures of participants' sociodemographic background, types of games played, number of websites/apps played on, gambling motives, endorsement of gambling fallacies, and engagement in responsible gambling behaviours were entered into a binary logistic regression model. Results: Male gender, playing on a wider variety of gambling websites/apps, coping and financial motives, and following a smaller number of lower-risk gambling guidelines predicted moderate-risk-to-problem gambling behaviour (compared to non-problem and low-risk gambling behaviour). Conclusion: These findings contribute to generating an evidence-based understanding of factors associated with elevated gambling risk which could inform the development of harm-reduction strategies targeted toward young Canadians who gamble online.

26. People Risk More When Playing Against a Computer Than Against Each Other in a Competitive Game

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With the rapidly increasing prevalence of online gambling and electronic gambling machines (EGMs/VLTs), understanding how computer interactions, relative to human interactions, may influence risk-taking may be valuable in treating modern gambling addictions and influencing gambling policy. We aimed to identify differences in risk-taking behaviour when playing a simple competitive game against both human and computer opponents in a within-participants design. We hypothesized that people would take more risks against computer opponents to compensate for boredom in a less fun experience. Using 'Dice Decision', a zero-sum competitive game paradigm developed by Dyson (2024), we measured participant risk-taking by tracking the value of the dice they chose in each trial, which corresponded to the magnitude of points they could win or lose. The results of this study show evidence for the hypothesis that people select riskier choices on average while playing against computer opponents, but fun did not mediate this relationship. Future studies should test other theoretical mediators between human-computer interaction and increased risk-taking, such as mere-presence effects, and conduct related studies that reflect naturalistic gambling behaviours.

27. The Effect of Workplace Stressors on Gambling Frequency, as Buffered by Neighborhood Cohesion

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Considering the continuing proliferation of gambling and betting in the Canadian context, it is crucial to explore the social contexts shaping these practices. Applying the stress process model, this paper examines the relationship between workplace stressor events and gambling frequency, as buffered by perceptions of neighborhood cohesion. As a sociological perspective on stress, the stress process model emphasizes the ways in which individuals' contexts and resources can mitigate the impacts of stressors on well-being, relevant in examining gambling as a coping mechanism in substitution of social supports. Using data from the Quinte Longitudinal Study of Gambling, this research employs a fixed effects model to account for time invariant factors, such as socioeconomic backgrounds, in order to isolate the association between workplace stress, neighborhood cohesion, and gambling. We predict that workplace stressors correspond with greater frequencies of gambling as an outcome; As consistent with the stress process model, however, we predict that this relationship will be negatively moderated by measures of neighborhood cohesion, acting as a social resource in buffering the impacts of stress. This research will also engage with previous scholarship on gambling as a social phenomenon, particularly its role as a coping mechanism or tool of escapism in response to a lack of individual, community, and societal resources. This research can advance understandings of the contexts motivating practices of gambling, further scholarship on the stress process model through application to a novel field and provide depth to policy discussions regarding the mitigation of gambling harms.

28. Event-Related Potentials to Outcome Valence are Modulated by the Decision to Explore or Exploit

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Maintaining a balance between exploitation and exploration (ie, explore-exploit dilemma) is the key to optimizing decisions in uncertain environments. While the number of trials is known to modulate the explore-exploit dilemma, little is known about the effects of response availability. We investigated how exploitation (selecting the option with the highest reward expectancy), informative exploration (selecting less sampled options), and random exploration (decision noise) would be modulated during 4- and 6-response versions of the same game while measuring electroencephalogram (EEG) activity. At the behavioural level, exploitation increased post-win and as response availability decreased, random exploration increased post-loss and as response availability increased. Informative exploration was not modulated by either outcome valence or response availability. At the neurophysiological level, we observed larger amplitudes for feedback-related negativity (FRN) and P3 when participants explored and exploited, respectively. These results suggest that 1) increased response availability (eg, more slot machines) promotes random exploration while discouraging exploitation, and 2) event-related potentials in response to outcome valence are modulated by our prior decision to explore or exploit. Specifically, the latter requires future study on whether problem gamblers, known for reward hypersensitivity, exhibit different explorative decision-making in terms of response availability.

29. Perceptions of Gambling-Like Elements in Gaming Among Canadians Who Open Loot Boxes

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Specific features of video games (e.g., loot boxes) are increasingly resembling traditional gambling, reflecting a growing convergence of gaming and gambling. However, user perspectives and interpretations of these in-game gambling-like features have not been fully explored. Content analysis was used to code interviews with Canadian gamers (N=29). We examined gamers collective perspectives on the similarities and differences between loot boxes and gambling. Results showed that 55.2% of participants (n=17) identified loot boxes to be the same as traditional gambling, (e.g., virtual equivalent, exactly gambling). Additionally, 75.9% of participants (n=22) expressed loot box engagement as a gambling-like activity, such as having similar structure and functionality to slot machines including randomized reward mechanics (10.3%, n=3). Participants also expressed experiencing similar emotions to gambling when opening loot boxes, for example, “the thrill” of opening a loot box and disappointment when a desired item was not obtained (13.8%, n=4). Regarding differences, 34.5% of participants (n=10) highlighted that loot boxes had guaranteed rewards. Other differences included increased accessibility (17.2%, n=5), and reduced regulation (20.7%, n=6). Findings suggest that gamers have nuanced experiences and varying perceptions of loot boxes. Overall, a majority of participants perceived loot boxes as a more accessible and non-regulated form of gambling.

30. The Gambling Embodied Sensations Scale (GESS): Development, Validation, and Behavioural Correlates

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Despite the theoretical importance of physiological signals in gambling, the experience and awareness of bodily sensations—such as changes in heart rate or breathing—is rarely considered in gambling research, and no state-level tool exists for assessing these sensations in gambling settings. Across two studies, we developed and validated the Gambling Embodied Sensations Scale (GESS), a brief measure assessing bodily sensations following an online slot-machine task. In Study 1, an exploratory factor analysis supported a unidimensional structure with strong internal consistency ($\omega = .89$). Study 2 replicated this structure in a confirmatory factor analysis ($\omega = .69$). Convergent and discriminant validity were evaluated via correlations with the Multidimensional Assessment of Interoceptive Awareness (MAIA-2). GESS scores showed positive associations with Emotional Awareness ($r = .23, p < .001$), Noticing ($r = .16, p = .001$), and Body Listening ($r = .12, p = .011$), as well as negative correlations with Not-Worrying ($r = -.21, p < .001$) and Not-Distracting ($r = -.17, p < .001$). GESS scores also correlated with problem gambling severity (PGSI; $r = .24, p < .001$). Behaviourally, higher GESS scores predicted longer post-reinforcement pauses following wins in a linear mixed-effects model, and larger bet sizes in a cumulative link mixed-effects model. These findings show that embodied sensations during gambling are measurable, psychometrically reliable, linked to interoceptive traits and gambling harm severity, and predictive of slot-machine behaviour. The GESS offers a state-level tool for examining how bodily awareness shapes action pacing and risk-taking and can be used to test how structural features across gambling products amplify or dampen these embodied responses.

31. Sports Betting: A Longitudinal Examination of the Single-Event Sports Betting (SESB) and Sports Bettors

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As was the case in North America more generally, the Summer of 2021 ushered in changes in Canadian legislation that allowed for single-event sports betting (SESB). With this change, the rapid expansion of legal single-event sports betting opportunities ensued across provinces. In conjunction, concern regarding the possibility of subsequent increases in gambling problems rose, as did the question as to whom would take up sports betting engagement. As such, the present study evaluates changes in gambling behaviours and problematic gambling among sports bettors using a longitudinal design with a national cohort of Canadian gamblers ($n = 1851$). Specifically, we examined fluctuations in sports betting and also the psychosocial factors that predicted engagement in sports betting after the introduction of SESB. The results indicate a significant increase in sports betting engagement ($\sim 3\%$) immediately following the institution of SESB, followed by the return to pre-SESB levels of engagement ($\sim 7\%$) 6-months later. Nonetheless, problem gambling scores during the period following SESB were significantly higher among those who engaged in sports betting ($M = 2.78, SD = 4.20$) compared to those who did not ($M = .78, SD = 2.12$). Furthermore, being male, and greater engagement with tobacco and cannabis products, and social media use and sports betting 6-months before SESB significantly predicted sports betting engagement after the allowance of SESB. Public policy and harm-minimization strategies in the evolving Canadian sports gambling market will be discussed.

32. The Desirability of AI-Based Interventions Among Online Gamblers

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Online gambling is associated with elevated risks of gambling-related harm due to continuous access, fast play, and design features that encourage sustained engagement (Gainsbury, 2015). To mitigate risks, operators in several jurisdictions analyze behavioural data using artificial intelligence (AI) systems to identify individuals at risk (Marionneau et al., 2025), yet little is known about gamblers' preferences for such systems. Adult online gamblers (n.= 630) from Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States completed a preregistered vignette-based experiment. Participants evaluated 20 among 400 randomized scenarios in which an online gambling platform is described responding to signs of consumer risk. Vignettes systematically varied the prediction source (AI system vs. human employee), certainty of the risk estimate (0–100%), intervention voluntariness (requested vs. required), and intervention type. Intervention options spanned information provision, limit-setting, self-tests, self-exclusion, and human contact. After each vignette, participants rated perceived effectiveness, appropriateness, and personal desirability. By integrating public health approaches to gambling harm with emerging concerns around AI-driven duty-of-care systems, this study centres gamblers' perspectives to identify interventions they find acceptable and desirable. These insights can inform the development of predictive harm-reduction tools that balance efficacy, autonomy, and user trust, supporting safer gambling environments across jurisdictions.

33. Physical Blind Boxes' Compliance With Information Disclosure Requirements: Exploring the Gambling-Like Nature of Blind Box Consumption in the Chinese Regulatory Context

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Blind boxes are gambling-like physical products with hidden randomized contents, featuring gamified pre-unboxing interactions: shaking and squeezing (sensory cues used by consumers to infer hidden contents). These characteristics have been linked to repetitive, hard-to-control purchasing and gambling-like engagement, placing blind boxes on the spectrum of problematic buying. In Mainland China, 2023 Guidelines on Rules for Blind Box Business Operation mandate prominent probabilities disclosure, age restrictions and other details. This study empirically assesses how Chinese blind box packaging aligns with these regulatory requirements and how pre-unboxing practices may sustain repeated purchases. Using convenience sampling with purposive elements, 50 popular, IP-based, and emerging brand blind boxes were examined. Coding focused on probability disclosure completeness and accuracy, visual prominence, age restriction presentation, and shakability and squeezability. Preliminary results show 46 boxes included probability disclosures, but only 16 were complete and accurate; most disclosures were poorly prominent. Excluding 4 non-interactive badges and 1 transparent "clear box", 15 of 45 valid samples were shakable; 5 had squeezable outer packaging and 17 squeezable inner packaging. These pre-unboxing features shape consumer anticipation and may help to maintain gambling-like engagement, complementing regulatory compliance as core research foci for understanding blind boxes as a potential risk of gambling.

34. Associations Between Sports Bettor Characteristics, Gambling Play, and Responsible Gambling Behaviors Compared to Canadian Casino Patrons

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There is limited research on the comparison of online sports bettors and EGM players. Specifically, the use of limit setting strategies and their impact on gambling behaviors between sports bettors and EGM players. The proposed research will examine the extent to which responsible gambling and harm minimization measures impact behaviour employed by sports bettors and EGM players alike. The title of my proposed research is “Association Between Sports Bettor Characteristics, Gambling Play, and Responsible Gambling Behaviors Compared to Canadian Casino Patrons”. Two main objectives of this research are to a) examine the interactions between demographic, health, gambling play, problem gambling severity, and behaviour on the impact of RG/HM policies, and b) compare sports bettors and EGM players on the impact of RG/HM policies. My proposed research will use data from an online survey managed by the Alberta Gambling Research Institute (AGRI), commissioned by the Canadian Center for Substance Abuse, to compare sports bettors and EGM (Electronic Gambling Machine) players' utilization of responsible gambling/harm minimization (RG/HM) measures and their impact on limit setting behaviors. Our ethics application is currently being reviewed by the ethics committee at the University of Alberta.

35. Measuring Gambling Harm Over Time: A Life Course Perspective

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Gambling behavior and the related harm are shaped by the interaction of intrapersonal characteristics (e.g., mental health conditions, cognitive beliefs), and environmental and socioeconomic factors such as exposure to trauma and financial insecurity. These influences are rarely examined in combination, and even less frequently through a life-course perspective that captures how risks, vulnerabilities and harms accumulate and change over a person's life. The presentation reports on findings from a mixed-methods study evaluating and applying the Life History Calendar (LHC), a novel retrospective data collection tool designed to enhance recall of key life events with potential applications in gambling research and treatment settings. A user-friendly version of the LHC was developed, evaluated, and refined using interviews ($n \approx 30$) with current gambling consumers and individuals with lived experience of gambling-related harm. Subsequently, surveys incorporating the LHC were administered across two samples: treatment-seeking individuals recruited through a gambling treatment provider ($n \approx 100$) and a community sample ($n \approx 1200$). The presentation will report on preliminary findings from the interviews, alongside findings from the surveys analysed using cross-lag panel models and dynamic structural equation modelling. Findings will demonstrate the value of a life-course approach for understanding causal relationships between different factors often studied in isolation, with implications for identifying early intervention and harm reduction through its use as both a retrospective research tool for examining gambling-related harm and a clinical tool to support personalised treatment planning.

36. Recovery and Relapse in Gambling Treatment: The Role of Mental Health

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Gambling treatment outcomes vary widely and are influenced by co-morbid mental health conditions. Despite this, few longitudinal studies have systematically assessed the temporal relationship between gambling problems and co-occurring mental health conditions in treatment-seeking populations. This presentation reports findings from a survey conducted amongst treatment-seeking individuals recruited through an Australian gambling treatment provider. Participants completed a baseline survey and follow-up surveys at 3-, 6- and 12-months following their first gambling treatment session. Measures assessed gambling harm severity, mental health status and gambling-related cognitions. Preliminary analyses (baseline n=129) indicate substantial improvements six months post-gambling treatment initiation. Specifically, there were marked reductions in symptoms of anxiety, depression and stress (DASS-21, 60-80% reduction), gambling harm severity (NODS-GD; 67% reduction), and distorted gambling-related beliefs and cognitions (GBQ; 70% reduction). Ongoing analysis will apply regression modelling and temporal network analysis to further examine the interconnection and contributory influence of mental health conditions on treatment outcomes, including relapse and treatment drop-out. Findings will inform the timing of mental health and gambling interventions, identify points at which stepped-care approaches may be most effective, and provide evidence to support treatment guidelines that incorporate routine mental health screening, targeted support, and strategies to increase engagement in gambling treatment services.

37. Who is Most Vulnerable to Sports Betting Advertisements?

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Background: Past research has suggested increased sports betting advertisement exposure can impact sports betting behaviour. However, little is known regarding who may be more at risk when exposed to these advertisements. This study aims to address this gap in the literature by examining the impact of factors such as age problem gambling, alcohol use, and impulsivity on the association between sports betting advertisement exposure and sports betting behaviour. Methods: The sample consisted of 1,704 sports bettors from Ontario and Alberta with an average age of 39 years. Participants were assessed on general demographics, gambling behaviour, substance use, and psychological characteristics. PROCESS Macro for SPSS was used to conduct moderation analyses. Results: Results showed a weak, positive association between sports betting advertisement exposure and sports betting behaviour ($r = .28$). Problem gambling presented as a significant moderator ($p = 0.008$), in contrast to age, alcohol use, and impulsivity showing non-significant moderation effects ($ps > .07$). Conclusions: Results suggest increased problem gambling may moderate the relationship between sports betting advertisement exposure and sports betting behaviour. Implications: This study begins to address current gaps in research through investigating potential vulnerable populations in relation to sports betting advertisement exposure.

38. Differences in HEXACO Personality Traits and Financial Behaviour: Trading, Investing, and Cryptocurrency Ownership

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The link between investment and trading behaviours, personality, and cryptocurrency ownership is unclear. The HEXACO model offers a psychometrically robust framework for identifying six broad personality traits previously linked with gambling and financial risk. Previous research has found a relationship between Honesty-Humility, a dimension of the HEXACO model, and risky financial behaviours including problem gambling (PG). In the present study, a global sample of 68083 online participants completed self-reports assessing financial behaviours and HEXACO traits. Independent t-tests indicated that trading (a form of financial speculation) and investing behaviours were differentially associated with personality traits. Honesty-Humility was more strongly related to trading ($d = .289, p < .001$) over investing ($d = .009, p = .369$), corresponding to previous studies on HEXACO traits and gambling. Phi correlations indicated that both trading ($\phi = .283, p < .001$) and investing ($\phi = .191, p < .001$) were significantly positively associated with cryptocurrency ownership; however, a stronger association was observed between trading and cryptocurrency ownership. These findings further enhance our understanding of individual differences associated with financial risk-taking and engagement with emerging financial technologies, potentially informing targeted prevention strategies for risky financial behaviours.

39. Beyond Gambling: Assessing the Conceptual Fit of DSM-5 Gambling Disorder Criteria for Pathological Trading in the Capital Market Through Legal Distinction

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A growing body of interdisciplinary research draws parallels between excessive trading and gambling, and many empirical studies rely on the DSM-5 Gambling Disorder criteria to identify “problem traders.” This paper questions the conceptual validity of that approach. It asks whether diagnostic tools developed for a legally stigmatized activity such as gambling can be meaningfully applied to speculative trading, which is legally sanctioned, socially normalized, and economically incentivized. Using doctrinal legal analysis, the paper examines each DSM-5 Gambling Disorder criterion through the legal distinction between gambling and speculation. It argues that several criteria do not translate coherently into the trading context once the legal and normative structure of capital markets is taken seriously. Behaviors such as frequent market monitoring or repeated engagement may signal pathology in gambling, yet constitute rational and expected conduct in regulated trading. Likewise, criteria grounded in concealment or deception lose force where speculative trading lacks comparable social stigma. The paper demonstrates how legal framing shapes what is recognized as pathological behavior and calls for context-sensitive assessment frameworks for problematic trading that reflect the distinctive legal environment of capital markets.

40. The Language of Sports Betting Advertisements: An Exploratory Study

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While a significant body of research has focused on language's influence on consumer decision making, there is little research that examines how language used in advertisements affects consumption of potentially harmful or addictive products. Moreso, the utilization of influencers and celebrities to deliver the advertising message, gambling promotion, in these contexts is similarly underexplored. In this research, I examine consumer perceptions of gambling advertising as it relates to the people and language used to persuade. Utilizing a grounded theory, semi-structured interview approach, I qualitatively explore consumer perceptions and experiences of sports betting advertising, focusing on the kinds of advertising they find most persuasive and memorable. Questions will emphasize the phrases, words, and people within the advertisements. This qualitative work informs an experiment manipulating different kinds of language. Consensus language ("Everybody drinks Pepsi!") use and influencer presence are manipulated in an experiment to further examine if a compounding persuasion effect exists when both consensus language and influencers are present.

41. Online Sports Betting Motivations Among Postsecondary Student-Athletes in Alberta

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Sports betting has become increasingly visible and accessible within Canadian sport and campus environments. Postsecondary student-athletes may be particularly vulnerable to gambling-related harm due to performance pressures, peer influence, sensation-seeking tendencies, and financial stress. Sports betting further differs from other forms of gambling by incorporating sport-specific knowledge and real-time decision-making, which may heighten perceived control and risk-taking for student-athletes. However, empirical data on sports betting experiences among Canadian postsecondary student-athletes remain limited. This cross-sectional, mixed-methods study examines sports betting behaviours, motivations for engagement, and awareness of institutional and provincial sports betting policies among postsecondary student-athletes in Alberta. The study further explores associations between betting motivations, betting severity, and indicators of psychological well-being. Data collection is ongoing. It is anticipated that motivations related to enhancement, financial gain, and coping motives will be associated with greater betting severity and psychological distress, and that distinct subgroups of student-athletes will be identified based on patterns of betting behaviour and motivation. Preliminary findings will be analyzed using a combination of descriptive and multivariable analytic approaches. These results may help inform education, targeted interventions, and policy initiatives aimed at supporting student-athlete well-being in Alberta.

42. Who's Playing and Who's Paying? Gender Differences in Sports Betting

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Sports betting is one of the fastest-growing forms of gambling in Canada. Despite growing evidence that women are engaging in sports betting more frequently, limited research has directly examined gender differences in sports betting behaviours. Therefore, the present study explored sports betting habits and psychosocial correlates among men and women sports bettors in Canada. Participants (N = 1,566) were adults recruited through the AGRI National Project who reported engaging in sports betting. Chi-squared analyses indicated that men engaged in most forms of sports betting more frequently than women, although in-play betting rates were similar across genders. Men and women also reported comparable rates of betting on sports they personally participated in and betting with others. Regarding psychosocial correlates, men were more likely to report alcohol and cannabis use, and more frequently endorsed excessive exercise and compulsive sexual behaviour. In contrast, women sports bettors were more likely to report overeating and shopping behaviours, and endorsed anxiety and depressive symptoms at higher rates than men. These findings suggest that men and women differ in both sports betting engagement patterns and co-occurring behavioural and psychological vulnerabilities, underscoring the importance of gender-informed assessment, prevention, and intervention strategies in the Canadian sports betting context.

43. A Spatial Analysis of Crime Around the Grand Villa Casino in Edmonton

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Introduction: This study investigated the spatial effects of a downtown casino on the distribution of violent and nonviolent crime in Edmonton, Alberta. While casinos generate economic benefits, they also raise significant public concern regarding potential negative social externalities, specifically increased criminal activity. **Method:** Using crime incident data from 2023 to 2024, we employed negative binomial regression models to handle overdispersed count data. The analysis utilized both continuous distance measures and concentric buffer zones to examine crime density relative to the Grand Villa Casino, while controlling for socio-economic variables and the built environment. **Results:** The findings consistently revealed a distance decay effect for both crime types, yet with distinct spatial dynamics. For violent crime, a robust direct relationship was identified, showing a significant and pronounced drop-off in incidents beyond 1200 meters. In contrast, nonviolent crime exhibited a more nuanced, spatially diffused pattern without a sharp drop-off in the outer buffer zones. **Discussion and Conclusion:** These results suggest the casino creates a concentrated "hot zone" for violent offenses but draws offenders into a wider general vicinity for opportunistic nonviolent crimes. This research provides a valuable micro-level analysis to assist policymakers in developing spatially-informed safety strategies.

44. Identifying Promising Practices for Gambling Credit Card Bans: Comparing Evaluations in Great Britain and Australia

<p>Sasha Stark</p> <p>Kristin Beaton Chisomo Mchaina Clara Sankey</p> <p>Greo Evidence Insights</p> <p>sasha@greo.ca</p>	<p>Research shows that gambling with borrowed money is associated with greater financial harm among people who gamble. Credit card bans are an emerging regulatory tool being used by jurisdictions to help prevent people from gambling with money they do not have and limit the gambling-related harms they experience. Understanding the effectiveness of regulatory changes, like the implementation of credit card bans, is challenging. Formal evaluations of regulatory changes are not often performed. Further, there are usually confounding factors occurring within a jurisdiction during implementation and few chances to compare regulatory changes across jurisdictions. There is currently a unique opportunity to examine the effectiveness of credit card bans, as evaluations have recently been conducted in two jurisdictions. In July 2024, the National Centre for Social Research published a mixed-methods, theory-based evaluation of the first complete ban on the use of credit cards for online and land-based gambling, implemented in Great Britain in April 2020. In December 2025, e61 Institute published an evaluation of the extension of the credit card ban from land-based gambling to online gambling that was implemented in Australia in June 2024, drawing primarily on aggregated transaction data. This presentation will consider the regulatory contexts, methodological approaches, and findings of these two evaluations, identifying areas of convergence and divergence. Focus will be placed on outlining the evidence on the effectiveness of credit card bans as well as identifying promising practices and key considerations for the implementation and subsequent evaluation of credit card bans.</p>
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45. Exposure to Sports Betting Advertisements in Ontario and Alberta: Are There Provincial Differences?

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Exposure to sports betting advertisements has grown exponentially in Canada, in parallel with legislative changes. Differences in online gambling policies exist between provinces (i.e., licensed market with private, for profit operators permitted in Ontario versus a state monopoly in Alberta). Adults who reported betting on sports in the past 3-months in Ontario (n=1208) and Alberta (n=496) were surveyed to compare the frequency of exposure to sports betting advertisements and identify if this exposure was linked to sports betting behaviors. There were no differences in self-reported exposure to sports betting and live odds advertisements between Ontarians and Albertans. Ontarians were more likely to report viewing brand awareness, financial inducements, and responsible gambling advertisements. Exposure to different types of sports betting advertisements were each positively correlated with the frequency of sports betting. This relationship was not moderated by province of residence. Despite key legal differences in the sports betting markets in Ontario and Alberta, residents of both provinces reported exposure to a similar amount of advertisements overall and live odds advertisements specifically. Importantly, exposure to sports betting advertisements is associated with sports betting, suggesting that advertisements may impact sports betting behavior across provinces.

46. What's a Clinician to do? The Influence of Clinical Strategies in Motivational Interviewing for Problem Gambling

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A single motivational interview (MI) has been shown to benefit gamblers seeking self-help. Preliminary analyses of 66 MI sessions from a gambling intervention trial were presented at AGRI 2025. This research quantified client change-related language (e.g., perceived reasons and ability to change) and found that women who spoke more about reducing their gambling during MI (change talk), and men who spoke more about continuing their gambling (sustain talk), reduced their gambling severity at 3-month follow-up. Past research has speculated that facilitator use of MI techniques may moderate the participants' change talk during the interview. To investigate this, we analyzed all the MIs from the same trial (N.= 66) in more depth by coding for the frequency of MI techniques (e.g., open questions, affirmations, reflections). It is hypothesized that facilitator language will mediate the relationship between expressed client ambivalence (change talk/sustain talk) and 3-month follow-up data. These analyses are ongoing, and their results will be presented. This project will offer insight on the mechanisms of change in MI, which in turn will bolster clinicians' ability to elicit, reflect, and affirm the specific types of change-related language that are most predictive of behaviour change.

47. Foraging Performance Predicted by Trait Impulsivity Over Problem Gambling and Risk-Taking

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Psychological tasks based on foraging behaviour have been used to examine decision-making and strategy formation in unpredictable environments that emulate the natural world. People who gamble may approach gambling using the same strategies. We recruited people who gamble from the community (n = 150) in a two-site study run between UBC Vancouver and McGill. Performance was measured on a sequential patchy-foraging task that involved harvesting apples in an orchard. We compared deviations from optimal harvesting across two conditions with different costs of switching tree. Problem gambling severity was assessed using the PGSI, as well as trait impulsivity (UPPS-P) and risk-taking (DOSPERT). Our results indicated that problem gambling and risk-taking were not robustly associated with foraging measures, but high impulsivity predicted low foraging performance ($r = -0.176$, $p < 0.05$). Although our specific hypothesis for gambling involvement (PGSI) was not supported, foraging strategies are related to impulsivity as a dispositional trait for addictions more broadly.

48. Not Just a Man's Game: How do Women's Professional Sports Bettors Differ From Those Who Bbet Only on Men's Professional Sports?

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This study compared profiles of sports bettors who do (n.= 624) and do not bet on women's professional sports (n.= 860) in Canada. Online questionnaires assessed demographics (e.g., age, education level), psychological characteristics (e.g., emotion dysregulation, impulsivity), and gambling-related variables (e.g., gambling motives). Relative to participants who did not bet on women's professional sports, those who did were significantly younger and more likely to identify as a person of colour, have a postgraduate degree, be married or separated, and have children under 18 years of age living in their household. Gender did not significantly differ between groups. Those who bet on women's professional sports endorsed significantly greater emotional lability, positive urgency, anxiety, stress, and problematic cannabis use relative to those who did not. Moreover, those who bet on women's professional sports reported significantly greater problem gambling severity, gambling-related harms, and gambling for financial, coping, enhancement, and social motives. Findings suggest that sports bettors who bet on women's professional sports differ systematically from those who do not, particularly in psychological functioning and gambling-related risk. These bettors may be more highly engaged overall in a range of sports betting activities relative to those who bet exclusively on men's professional sports.

49. Incomplete Compliance: Loot Box Prevalence, Probability Disclosure, and Compu Gacha Policy in Japanese Mobile Games

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Loot boxes in video games have long been a concern for guardians and regulators due to their potential connections with gambling addiction, particularly among teenagers. They are random virtual items prevalent in video games, where players can spend real money or in-game currency to obtain. As the main gaming market, Japan's regulators have been focusing on loot box regulations since early 2012, when compu.gacha—an extension of loot boxes, was banned. It requires players to collect a complete set of items obtainable only through loot boxes to receive an extremely rare reward. Since then, the Japanese gaming industry has begun to adopt self-regulation. This research conducted a cross sectional study of the 100 top-grossing video games in the Japanese Apple App Store to examine prevalence, transparency (probability disclosures) of loot boxes, age verification, and the presence of compu.gacha. One hour of gameplay was recorded for each game, with videos and screenshots kept for coding and data analysis. Among 91 games with loot boxes, 90.1% provided probability disclosures for at least one loot box, but only 41.8% disclosed probabilities for all loot boxes within one hour of gameplay. Additionally, compu.gacha-like mechanics were found in 5 games due to the characteristic of requiring players to repetitively open more loot boxes. Our findings indicate that although most games disclose the probabilities to some extent, it is still not satisfactory for the complete disclosure of all loot boxes and more sophisticated regulations are needed in the Japanese gaming market.

50. Same Game, Different Goals: Playing to Win, to Enjoy, or to Build Skill Shapes Gambling-Like Decisions in GreyJack

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Gambling is often pursued for “winning”, “fun”, or “skill-building”, yet these goals may recruit different decision and risk profiles. Using a simplified Blackjack paradigm (GreyJack; target sum 13 with a small deck), 82 participants completed four 25-trial blocks with instructions: Max Points (MP), Max Enjoyment (ME), Max Skill (MS; advised “hit at 8 or less, stand at 9 or more”), and No Goal (NG). Key findings were (1) in NG, the first five trials had longer betting RTs, smaller bets, and lower standing thresholds than the last five, indicating a rapid transition from exploratory to more consistent play. (2) Comparing MP and ME showed that under MP, participants bet more slowly and with smaller stakes than under ME, indicating greater cautiousness for performance-focused goals. (3) Under MS, standing thresholds shifted toward the advised value, and hit RTs correlated negatively with confidence, consistent with efficient use of a risk-avoidant strategy that reduced busts but did not clearly improve final points. (4) Across all goals, post-win trials showed longer betting and hit RTs and slightly lower standing thresholds than post-loss trials, suggesting greater deliberation after wins. Together, these results show that goals systematically redistribute decision and behavioural patterns in gambling-like play.

51. The Effects of Mental Fatigue on Risk-Taking in a Crash Gambling Task

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Risk-taking propensity is associated with gambling frequency and gambling disorders. Mental fatigue (MF), which can arise during daily activities or prolonged gambling, could impair self-regulation and increase risk decision-making. However, few studies have examined MF's effects on risk-taking. We examined the influence of MF on risk-taking behaviour using a modified version of the Balloon Analog Risk Task (BART), which resembles crash-style gambling games. We predicted that MF would be associated with greater risk-taking. Undergraduates (N.= 81) completed a measure of risk aversion and attended two sessions in a randomized, counterbalanced, between-subjects design with four condition-order groups. MF was induced using a 12-minute incongruent Stroop task; the control condition watched a neutral documentary. Following the manipulation, participants completed 25 BART trials. Mental fatigue was greater following the Stroop task compared to the documentary, $F(3, 77) = 17.62, p < .001$ (Session 1), and $F(3, 77) = 11.57, p < .001$ (Session 2). A significant main effect of time indicated that risk/performance scores increased from Session 1 to Session 2 across all groups, $F(1, 77) = 125.46, p < .001, \eta^2 = .62$. No significant effects were found for condition, $F(3, 77) = 1.13, p = .344$, or the condition \times time interaction, $F(3, 77) = 1.20, p = .317$. Risk aversion was not a significant covariate. Findings suggest acute mental fatigue may not increase risk-taking propensity in a gambling-analog task. Future studies may benefit from testing MF effects in more ecologically valid gambling environments or extended play.