

Problem Gambling and Family Violence: A Life Course Analysis



INTRODUCTION

The proposed research aims to explore the relationship between problem gambling and family violence in the UK.

Recent research has unearthed evidence to suggest that one of the most common impacts of problem gambling is that of relationship dysfunction, which is often characterised by financial difficulties, psychological issues and family conflict (Dowling et al. 2009).

Whilst intimate partners and spouses are most commonly affected by an individual's problem gambling, there is evidence to suggest that problem gambling impacts extended family members such as parents and children. These individuals are often emotionally and financially affected (Hodgins et al. 2007). In turn, available research indicates that problem gambling constitutes a specific risk factor for family violence.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Aim

- To explore the relationship between problem gambling and family violence in the UK.

Objectives

1. To identify the prevalence of problem gambling and family violence across gambling self-help and treatment samples;
2. To examine risk factors for comorbid problem gambling and family violence;
3. To explore the nature, trajectory and impact of the problem gambling-family violence relationship;
4. To use the findings to help shape best practice relating to the education, prevention and treatment of gambling related harm, and to inform further research in this area.

METHOD

The methodological approach will comprise of four principal stages:

1. Consultation and development of measurement tools culminating in a pilot study.



2. Participant Screening.



3. Life History Narrative Interviews.



4. Analysis and dissemination of results.

RATIONALE

Available research evidence clearly indicates that we are only just beginning to understand the relationship between gambling and family violence (Suomi et al., 2013; Dowling et al., 2014; Keen et al., 2015). To date, there is a small body of international research that has explored the relationship between IPV and problem gambling, whilst only one study has examined the relationship between family violence and problem gambling. Thus, the problem gambling-family violence nexus should be considered a significant research priority, in the context of increasing prevalence of and accessibility to gambling, and given that available evidence indicates that problem gambling can have a significant impact on families, partners, parents, siblings, children and other intimates. In response, this study offers the first UK specific research examining problem gambling and family violence.

OUTPUTS AND VALUE

Potential outputs and value of the proposed study include:

- It is the first UK examination of the relationship between problem gambling and family violence across individuals' life course.
- Seeks to advance knowledge regarding the prevalence of problem gambling and family violence across a range of service users.
- May help us better understand gambling-related harm, comorbidity, and effective treatment provision.
- Aims to offer practical recommendations to various stakeholders within the area of problem gambling research, policy making, and treatment and intervention services.
- To identify potentially new intervention opportunities for service users; both problem gamblers and family members.

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