

# Gambling addiction literature review



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

# Literatu re Review

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### 2. 1 Introduction

This chapter covers a review of past literatures pertaining to the topic under study. As an opening, it brings in the limelight the backbone of gambling. Several definitions about gambling and the rationale behind are put forward as described by several authors. Following this, the different types of gambling activities adopted by the university students are highlighted; namely poker, sports wagering and lotteries for example. Furthermore, gamblers response towards the gambling activities and their problems are reviewed and contrasted.

### 2. 2 What is gambling?

Gambling is the wagering of money or something of material value (stakes) on an event with an uncertain outcome with the primary intent of winning additional money or goods. Three key elements in gambling are: Consideration, Chance and Prize (I. N. Rose, 2013).

McGill university review refers gambling as any game or activity in which you may risk money or a valuable object in order to win money.

The elements present in gambling are firstly that one needs to realize that by gambling, something valuable is being put at risk, secondly the outcome

of the game is determined by chance and finally once a bet is made it is irreversible.

## 2. 3 History of gambling:

Gambling is one of mankind's oldest doings as indicated by writings and equipments found in tombs and other places. The foundation of gambling is considered to be divinatory by emitting marked sticks and other objects and inferring the upshot, man sought the understanding of future and the aims of gods.

Anthropologists have also pointed to the fact that gambling is more rampant in societies where there is an extensive belief in gods and spirits whose compassion may be sought. With the advent of legal gambling houses in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, mathematicians came to a decision to take a serious awareness in games of randomizing equipment, such as dice and cards, out of which grew the field of probability theory.

Organised approved sports betting dates back to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century where there was a swing in the official stance towards gambling, from considering it to a sin to considering it to a vice and a human weakness and lastly to seeing it as a mostly harmless and even entertaining activity.

By the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century approximately four out of five people in western nations gambled at least every week.

## 2. 4 Who is a gambler?

A person who wagers money on the outcome of games or sporting events can be categorized as a gambler. Gamblers can visit gambling houses, or through any other facility, to place their bets and hope for a win. There are three common types of gambler the social gambler, the professional gambler and the problem gambler. The professional gamblers are the rarest form of gambler and do not depend on luck but much more of games of skills to make an earning. They have full control over the money, time and energy they are spending on the game. The social gambler considers gambling to be a recreational activity and they maintain control of their betting, the energy and the time they spend on the game. They consider their betting to be a price to be paid for entertainment. Problem gambler involves the continuous involvement in gambling despite negative consequences and this can lead to other health and social problems.

## 2. 5 Gambling across the globe

### 2. 5. 1 Gambling age

The gambling age across the globe varies greatly. In some countries and areas gambling is proscribed altogether, in others gambling is only authorized for foreigners. In some areas, everyone is allowed to play but the betting age requirement is not the same for citizens as for foreigners. An example of such a country is Portugal where foreigners are allowed to venture in all casinos at the age of 18, while citizens need to be 21 or 25 depending on the gaming house.

The most familiar gambling age across the sphere is 18 years and more than 50% of western countries have this gambling age. There are nonetheless

abundance of examples of countries that have a superior limit, such as Greece and Germany. Germany is a good model of how thorny the question of gambling age really is as Germany, just like in the USA, has different ages in different states within the nation. Most German states require you to be 18 years old, but some have placed the age constraint at 21 years instead.

Generally speaking, one can see a trend of countries and states lowering the gambling age from the once dominating gambling age of 21 year to just 18 years. This trend has been going for quite some time and across large parts of the world.

## 2. 5. 2 Top of the world

Certain countries are, as a whole, hot on gambling. Measured in terms of loss per capita of adults, the two top nations containing the maximum loss stand head and shoulders above the world. Those two infamous gambling Mecca's are Australia and Singapore (American Gaming Association, 2006).

The top five countries as to gambling losses per capita of the adult population comprise: Australia, Singapore, Ireland, Canada and Finland. The average net yearly per adult expenditure on gambling for these nations runs from \$1, 275 down to \$540 (American Gaming Association, 2006).

## 2. 6 Gambling in Mauritius:

It was recently declared that the Council of Ministers in Mauritius endorsed the resolution that bookmakers operating out of the Champ de Mars racecourse are now permitted to work only on Fridays and Saturdays. Till now they were allowed to take bets upon publication of the official program

of races on Thursdays. The *raison d'être* set for this decision is that it will smooth the progress of condensing the influence of gambling on the Mauritians.

Gambling has become part of the foundation of the Mauritian society over the years. This takes account of casino gambling, online gambling, horse race betting and the “*loterie verte*”. Although horse racing is still a popular betting sport, the Lotto, since its preface on the 7th of November 2009 as the new national lottery, has exceeded it in standing. We just have to pay attention to the radio for a few minutes or take a glimpse at the billboards when driving on the public road to get to know about the jackpot for the coming draw. There are more than 500 counters across the island in supermarkets, petrol pumps, and shops facilitating customers to play the Lotto. Around 12 scratch cards have also been pioneered giving people the prospect of winning instant money. When people primarily used to place their hard-earned money on horses, now they are being ensnared into wasting it on the Lotto. A considerable number of people are already conquered by the “*jackpot fever*”, spending more than usual when the jackpot gets bigger.

## 2. 7 Types of gambling:

Gambling is a vast world which comprises of many branches from which people try their luck in the hope to make more money or just for the thrill of the game. In Mauritius you can easily find casinos, gaming houses (which is smaller than a casino but offers the same service for middle class players)

and shops where you gamble. Some of the available forms of gambling present on the island are:

2. 7. 1 The lottery. The ‘lottery verte’ and the Lotto are the most common and most profitable types of gambling for the government in Mauritius. The ‘Lottery verte’ is a monthly lottery where you have to buy the tickets at a retailer, which can be found everywhere, and you just have to wait for the end of the month to check your results and see if you have won. The prices of the tickets are Rs10 each and you are eligible to win prices ranging from Rs 100000 to Rs 10 million. On the other hand you have the Lotto which settled itself in Mauritius more recently and now it’s the new craze for Mauritian. The idea is that you have to select 6 numbers out of 40 (each number can be selected only once) and then you just have to go to any supermarkets or retailer to validate your 6 numbers. Each ticket cost Rs20 and you can play as much ticket you want. The lottotech, the company which runs the lotto, makes a public draw, on air, on the national channel every Saturday. The lotto is a lottery where you have a cumulative jackpot, that is if no one wins the jackpot this week then the other week they will add this to a new jackpot thus every time you have the chance of winning a bigger one if you lose, and this jackpot starts at Rs5 million and can go up to Rs70 million (biggest jackpot won till now).

2. 7. 2 Horse racing. Horse racing is anchored in our society for ages and it forms part nowadays in our cultural and historical heritage. It was introduced in Mauritius by the English before the independence and it is still going strong. In the beginning horse racing was more for fame and social status than for making money and gambling. Latter to make the horse industry run

and thrive, the board introduced betting on the horse racing and this was also a good opportunity for government to get tax money. Horse racing is a huge event in Mauritius, every Saturday and on some special occasions on Sundays we have horse racing at the Champ de Mars which is the race tracks found in the capital Port Louis. Nowadays in every rural and urban area you can find bookmakers who will take your bets on the horses as from Friday and on racing days you have a huge crowd who converge to the Champ de Mars for the fun and in the hope of making money.

2. 7. 3 Casino. A casino is a facility which accommodates certain types of gambling activities such as slot machines, poker, blackjack, big or small, van lak, dice and roulette for example. Casinos are situated at strategic areas to lure more and more clients, such strategic areas might be near hotels, touristic attractions, or even a city or town which is well frequented by many people. In Mauritius you have many casinos or gaming houses, which are smaller casinos but still well frequented by the people, found in the urban areas such as Rose-Hill, Vacoas, Port-Louis and some touristic places such as Grand Baie. Most games played have mathematically-determined odds that ensure the house has at all times an overall advantage over the players. This can be expressed more precisely by the notion of expected value, which is uniformly negative (from the player's perspective). This advantage is called the house edge. This is why there is an adage "the house always wins" for the casinos. In Mauritius nowadays we can witness more and more casinos being offered a patent and opening their doors to the public. The government knows that this is a prolific market and if they can make gambling accessible to more tourists and people it will surely be an



advantage to them since the casinos have to pay a huge tax and money to get their patent. We can see that several tournaments are being organized in Mauritius, such as the World Poker Tour National Mauritius, which lures people from all over Africa and the Indian Ocean to come to Mauritius just to play poker. The hotels now when they are advertising the island they also advertise casinos to get more tourists, a new clientele and a really good strategy that differs from other hotels as they are targeting more and more high class ‘ gambling tourists’ and which is a very profitable market.

2. 7. 4 Scratch cards. This is the new craze among the Mauritian people. Scratch cards are simple and easily available across the whole island. The rule is simple just buy one and you have to scratch the opaque surface which concealed the information, if you get the required symbols you win, and the most attractive part of it is the opportunity to win instantly as compared to lottery where you have to wait for the draw and the prices at which they are sold and the prizes that you can get from it. Cards can range from Rs20 to Rs100 and prizes may vary from Rs200 000 to Rs1 million. The scratch cards are supervised by the Lottotech the same company which manage the Lotto in Mauritius.

2. 7. 5 Online gambling. Easy, availability, and affordable are the words usually associated with online gambling. Easy to log in on some betting sites, no account needs to be created and no fees to be paid. Availability because of the fact that it is all over the internet, you do not have to look far to find online gambling sites. Banner ads and pop-ups can be found on mostly every site which has a high level of traffic by people. It is affordable since some sites just let you bet for free and if you win then you have to cash in to be

able to play, some allows you to choose how many you want to bet and give you live odds according to what is happening which cannot be found elsewhere. Online gambling targets most of the time teenagers, this is a strategy called 'grooming' whereby they make the teenagers feel acquainted with the attractiveness of the game so that when he becomes older he will still be a potential income earner and a player.

## 2. 8 Gambling among university students

Gambling is omnipresent among university students as demonstrated through researches. The vast majority of students gamble without experiencing ill effects, yet almost 8% of university students may build up a gambling problem (Derevensky, J. L., & Gupta, R. (2007). Gambling was once an acceptable form of entertainment on campuses but with the new laws, it is now forbidden to participate in any kind of gambling activities, but still it can be found everywhere. However, the warning signs of developing a gambling problem are not brought forward, as is seen with other potentially addictive behaviors, such as drug use and alcohol consumption. With the swell in gambling venues, social recognition of gambling, and access to extensive and inexpensive means of gambling, it is not astounding that studies have found high rates of gambling linked adverse problems among college students.

## 2. 9 Problem gambling

Problem gambling or ludomania is an urge to continuously gamble despite harmful negative consequences or a desire to stop. The prevalence of problem gambling has been evaluated at 7. 8% among university students

which is considerably high than the roughly 5% rate found among the general population (Blinn, Pike, Worthy, Jonkman, 2006). Students facing problem gambling illustrate many signs including isolating behavior, lowered academic performance, poor impulse control and displaying extreme overconfidence, and participating in other high risk behaviors such as bringing on alcohol, tobacco and marijuana use and risky sexual behavior (LaBrie, etal, 2003), (Goodie, A. S, 2005). Environmental factors also contribute to problem gambling. The surroundings of a student are a key factor in determining whether he is prone to problem gambling. If the students live in an area where gambling opportunities and social normative beliefs that are supportive of gambling activities are available, this increases the likelihood of gambling participation and of development of a gambling problem. Staffs that are conscious of environmental conditions that may contribute to problem gambling can develop policies to help these students (Wehner, M. 2007).

## 2. 9. 1 Gambling Addiction and Problem Gambling

Whether you wage on scratch cards, sports, poker, roulette, or slots, in a casino or online, problem gambling can sprain relationships, impede with work, and escort to fiscal cataclysm. You may even do things you never contemplate you would, like stealing money to gamble or reimburse your debts. You may believe you can't stop but, with the right help, you can triumph over a gambling problem or compulsion and reclaim control of your life. The first step is recognizing and acknowledging the problem. Gambling dependence is occasionally referred to as the "hidden illness" because there are no apparent substantial signs or symptoms like there are in drug or

alcohol addiction. Problem gamblers on average refute or minimize the problem. They also go to great lengths to bury their gambling habits. For example, problem gamblers regularly depart from their loved ones, sneak around, and lie about where they've been and what they've been up to (Jeanne Segal, Ph. D., Melinda Smith, M. A., and Lawrence Robinson, 2013).