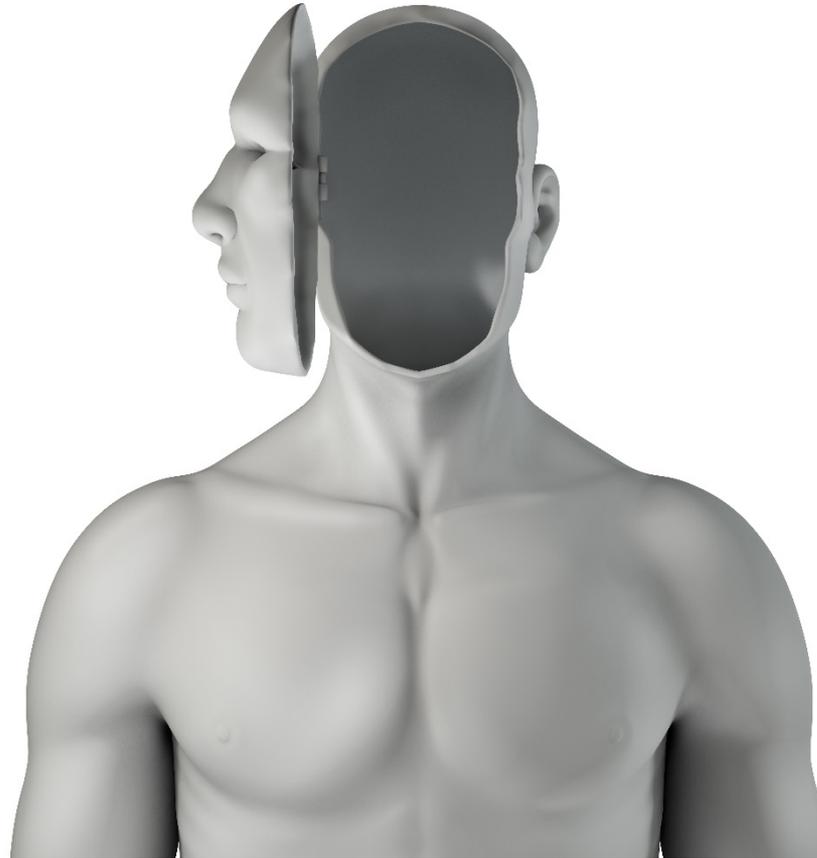


Gambling, Leisure and Pleasure: Exploring Psychosocial Need Satisfaction in Gambling



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[background]

Why explore gambling and pleasure?

...a cynical view

...a cynical view



Why explore gambling and pleasure?

...our view

...our view

1. Vast majority of studies have focused on the negative impacts of excessive gambling (Cotte, 1997; Griffiths, 2009; Petry, 2005; Shaffer & Martin, 2011; Whelan, Steenbergh, & Meyers, 2007).
1. Without a complete picture it is likely that our overall understanding of gambling is limited
1. Pleasure may be helpful for understanding gambling motivations
2. There may be implications for:
 1. Business (e.g., marketing, player protection, product development);
 2. Policy and regulation (taking more informed decisions)
 3. Clinical work (e.g., prevention, control versus abstinence and treatment);

Why explore gambling and pleasure?

...some views from Mike Daube on pleasure and health promotion

- On gambling (at Nags in 2014)...source:

<https://gamblingacrossborders.wordpress.com/tag/mike-daube/>

- “researchers who accept funding from the gambling industry are ‘knowingly contributing to that industry’s political strategy’.”

- On pleasure and health promotion (Daube, 1999)

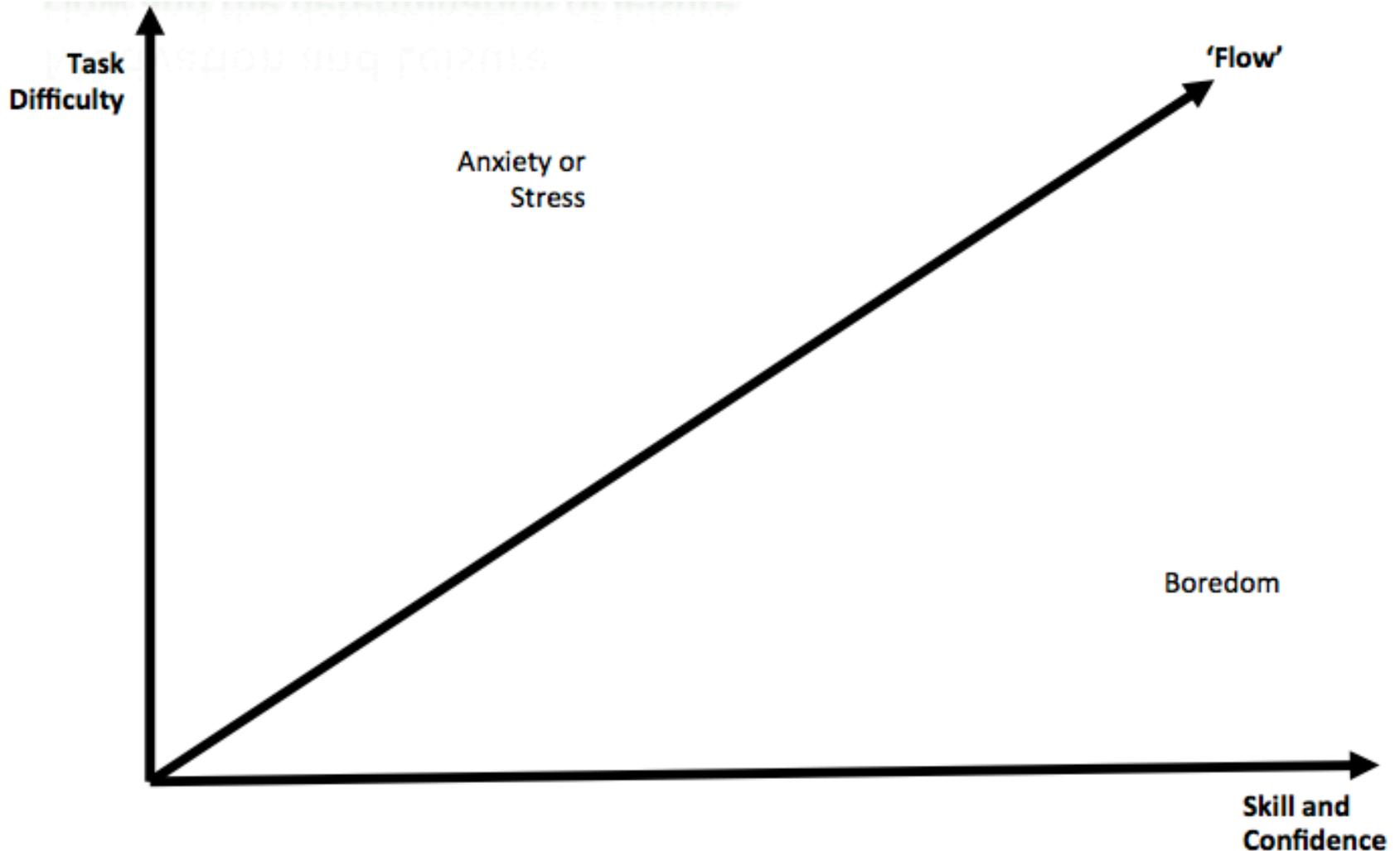
He makes three points on the potential usefulness of considering pleasure in the promotion of health in relation to alcohol:

1. *“...we will do much better promoting sensible drinking behaviour, by explicitly giving permission – albeit with the necessary care and caution- for what we know to be beneficial, than by simply exhorting the avoidance of excess.”* (P.46)
2. That there is a responsibility to make community aware of the benefits of modest alcohol consumption and *“it is vital for public health community and beverage alcohol industry to work together so that the information is properly presented, presented to the appropriate communities, and presented so that it neither engenders automatic cynicism about the motivation of the messenger nor undermines efforts to reduce abuse of the product.”*(p.47).
3. Argues that *“Promoting pleasure can and should be commensurate with promoting health”* (P.47) by moving to a more positive public health approach.

Leisure motivations and psychosocial benefits

...flow, mastery and narrowed attention (e.g., Csikszentmihalyi 1988; Csikszentmihalyi & Kleiber, 1991; Deci & Ryan, 2002; Hills, Argyle & Reeves, 2000)

(Csikszentmihalyi 1988; Csikszentmihalyi & Kleiber, 1991; Deci & Ryan, 2002; Hills, Argyle & Reeves, 2000)



Leisure motivations and psychosocial benefits

...affirming desired identity (Haggard and Williams, 1991, Knopf, 1987, Swann, 1987, Schlenker (1984)



Leisure motivations and psychosocial benefits

...social motives

(Iwasaki and Mannel, 2000)



Leisure motivations and psychosocial benefits

...regulating stress, arousal and/or emotion

(Coleman and Iso-Ahola, 1993; Hammitt, 1980; Hutchinson, Bland & Kleiber, 2008; Mannell, Zuzanek & Larson, 1988; More & Payne, 1980)



Gambling and Satisfying Financial Needs

The curious case of money and gambling motivation.....



1. Earning income and playing for the chance to win money are not the same
2. Money is usually necessary to satisfy other drives
3. Money permits extended or enhanced participation
4. Money is sometimes the metric for measuring progress or success
5. For a minority, it can be a driver among PGs (especially within-session)



[our study]

Study Objectives

....

....

1. Explore whether psychosocial benefits may be derived from gambling participation
2. Assess the domains in which individuals reported deriving various kinds of psychosocial benefits in relation to gambling participation
3. Examine any such psychosocial benefits in relation to player preferences and player characteristics.

Method (1)

...procedure

...procedure

1. E-mail inviting participation in a survey designed to “*explore and understand the motivations among customers engaging in internet gambling and the potential leisure benefits that they may derive*”;
2. Incentive was provided – all who completed the survey would be entered into a draw to win one of two iPads;
1. Ethical clearance was given by IRB services
2. 40,000 Unibet customers were randomly selected to receive the e-mail; (10,000 UK, 15,000 Swedish and 15,000 Dutch residents).
3. Those receiving the e-mail were ‘active players’ (*active in the last 30 days preceding the survey*);
4. Participants not responding to the first e-mail were sent one further ‘reminder’ e-mail two weeks later
5. After eliminating 121 surveys with duplicate IP addresses and Unibet account numbers – left with 1,541 completed surveys.

Method (2)

...sample characteristics

...sample characteristics

		Our Sample	Unibet
Male		90.40%	82.90%
Age	Mean	39.3	30.9
	SD	13.2	11.1
Country	Sweden	51.30%	9.70%
	Netherlands	20.10%	13.60%
	UK	13.60%	3.80%
Income €	<€10k	12.20%	N/A
	€10-30k	21.80%	N/A
	€31-50k	22.40%	N/A
	€51-70k	14.40%	N/A
	>€71k	15%	N/A
	declined	13.80%	N/A
Employment	Unemployed	9.30%	N/A
	Part-time	11.60%	N/A
	Full-time	60.60%	N/A
	FT Student	8.20%	N/A
	Retired	6.70%	N/A

Method (3)

...Measures

1. Gambling Involvement and Preferences

- a. eleven different forms of gambling in the past 12 months (online or offline making it 22 options in total).
- b. The type of gambling participants spent the most time on,
- c. frequency, net expenditure, duration of sessions and
- d. the number of online sites used in the 12 months.

2. Gambling Motivation

3. Health and Well-being

- a. rate levels of both happiness and stress over the preceding 12 months
- b. a binary response option (yes, no) asking people whether in the past 12 months they had:
 - i. *“any serious problems with depression, anxiety, alcohol or drugs or other mental health problems”* and whether they had
 - ii. *“any physical disability or chronic health problem that limits the amount or kind of activity you can do at home, work or school”*

4. Demographic Variables

Method (4)

...Measures

5. Psychosocial need satisfactions

- a. *“How important is gambling to you as a recreational activity”.*
- b. *“Do you get any leisure benefits from your gambling?”* (yes, no).
- c. Participants reporting ‘yes’ were then provided with **a list of 26 beneficial psychosocial experiences** that might potentially be derived from gambling
- d. The items comprising this list were **derived from a comprehensive review** of the gambling and leisure activity literature; main theories of human motivation and the Recreation Experience Preference Scale (Driver, 1983)
- e. An open-ended ‘other’ option, permitted participants to identify any other benefits not already list in the items provided.

The median time taken to complete the survey was 7.1 minutes, and the average time was 17.6 minutes.



[findings]

Table 2. Gambling-Related Benefits Derived from Participating in Gambling

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral or Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree	
3.4	4.4	10.5	57.9	23.8	It gives me excitement.
7.0	11.8	21.7	50.6	8.9	It allows me to take risks that I enjoy.
4.8	10.5	25.7	45.9	13.0	It helps me develop my gambling/betting skills and abilities.
5.3	14.6	21.4	45.9	12.8	It allows me to test my abilities.
4.7	11.8	25.0	47.6	10.9	It gives me a sense of accomplishment.
8.5	11.8	22.2	48.3	9.3	It allows me to relax.
6.4	15.3	23.2	41.6	13.6	It gives me intellectual stimulation
10.6	11.2	24.2	40.4	13.5	It allows me to test my luck
5.6	15.0	30.3	41.2	7.9	It causes me to learn new things.
9.5	18.9	22.3	36.0	13.3	It allows me to compete with others.
11.3	14.7	29.1	35.7	9.1	It gives me the freedom to make my own choices.
9.6	17.0	29.9	34.7	8.8	It allows me to compete with the 'system'.
7.4	18.6	30.5	34.5	8.9	It improves my general decision-making and/or problem solving skills
11.2	14.6	31.7	33.6	8.9	It alleviates my boredom.
14.3	20.4	24.6	32.8	7.9	It allows me to release some stress.
14.1	18.7	34.1	27.3	5.9	It gives me a sense of control.
8.7	22.7	35.7	26.4	6.5	It improves my self-esteem.
14.8	21.7	32.9	25.5	5.0	It allows me to demonstrate courage
25.9	28.1	21.9	20.1	4.0	It allows me to escape from problems in my daily life.
22.4	26.2	29.7	18.8	2.9	It allows me to socialize with people I know (friends/family).
14.9	29.6	33.1	17.3	5.3	It allows me to create an image of myself that I like.
23.5	28.3	27.4	17.3	3.5	It allows me to socialize and/or meet new people.
19.3	25.4	36.0	16.0	3.4	It allows me to be extravagant or frivolous
27.4	27.3	29.6	11.9	3.8	It gives me the freedom to be someone else.
24.8	30.6	29.7	12.1	2.7	It allows me to get away from people.
19.5	32.3	34.7	10.4	3.1	It allows me to create an image of myself that is appealing to other people.

Results (2)

...benefits

55% of Ps reported that they derived some form of gambling-related benefit, and 45.7% indicated that it was somewhat or very important to them as a leisure activity.

	Regression Coefficients (<i>B</i>)	Wald Statistic	Odds Ratio
Sweden	.89**	26.1	2.4
Netherlands	-1.01**	21.6	.37
Frequency of Gambling	-.27**	37.2	.76
Level of Happiness	-.12**	9.3	.89
Level of Education	-.12*	6.3	.89
Physical Disability or Chronic Health Problem	.47*	4.9	1.6
CONSTANT	1.17*	4.6	

Logistic Regression: Fifteen predictor variables were used:

1. gender;
2. age;
3. marital status;
4. level of education;
5. employment status;
6. household income;
7. country;
8. level of stress;
9. level of happiness;
10. presence of depression, anxiety, or drugs;
11. having a physical disability or chronic health problem;
12. length of time gambling;
13. self-reported frequency of gambling;
14. self-reported expenditure on gambling; and
15. form of gambling they reported to spend the most time on

Table 4. Principle Component Loadings for Gambling-Related Benefits

Statement	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	Component 5	Component 6
It helps me develop my gambling/betting skills and abilities.	.772					
It causes me to learn new things.	.768					
It gives me intellectual stimulation	.736					
It allows me to test my abilities.	.711					
It improves my general decision-making and/or problem solving skills	.684					
It allows me to compete with others.	.565					
It allows me to compete with the 'system'.	.388					
It gives me a sense of control.	.692					
It allows me to be extravagant or frivolous	.651					
It gives me the freedom to make my own choices.	.646					
It gives me the freedom to be someone else.	.644					
It allows me to demonstrate courage	.607					
It allows me to get away from people.	.514					
It allows me to release some stress.	.810					
It allows me to escape from problems in my daily life.	.738					
It allows me to relax.	.732					
It alleviates my boredom.	.522					
It allows me to create an image of myself that I like.						.743
It improves my self-esteem.						.709
It allows me to create an image of myself that is appealing to other people.						.691
It gives me a sense of accomplishment.						.658
It gives me excitement.						.766
It allows me to take risks that I enjoy.						.709
It allows me to test my luck						.620
It allows me to socialize with people I know (friends/family).						.855
It allows me to socialize and/or meet new people.						.817

CHALLENGE AND MASTERY

.442

AUTONOMY

.420

RELAXATION AND ESCAPE

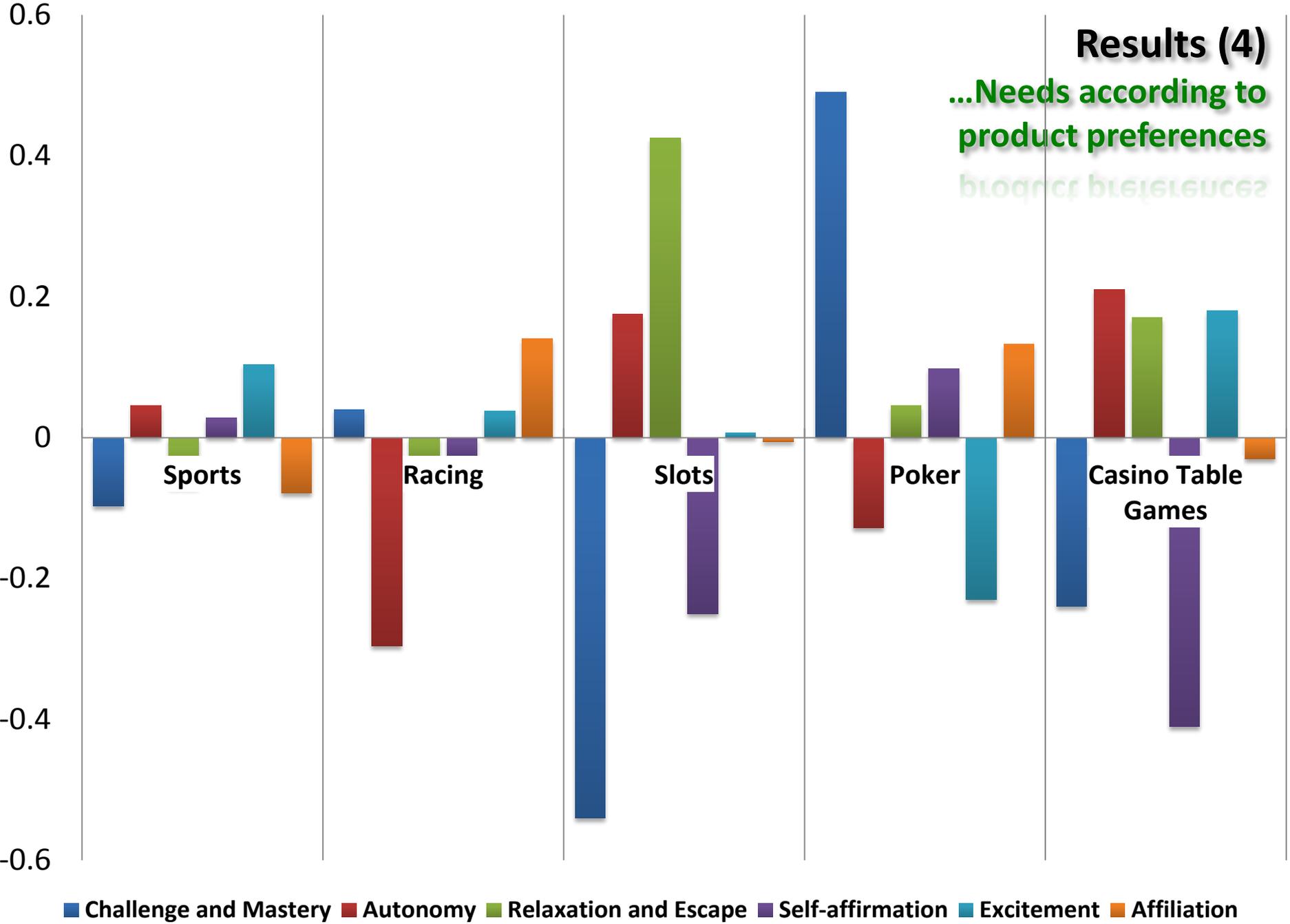
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SELF-AFFIRMATION

EXCITEMENT

AFFILIATION

Mean Factor Scores



Results (4)

...Needs according to product preferences

blogs, business

■ Challenge and Mastery ■ Autonomy ■ Relaxation and Escape ■ Self-affirmation ■ Excitement ■ Affiliation

Results (5)

...health-related variables

1. Being happier and not having a physical disability or chronic health problem were significant health-related predictor variables of deriving gambling-related benefits (see logistic regression results in Table 3).
2. If had a problem with anxiety, depression alcohol or drugs in last 12 months significantly more likely to report needs being satisfied are escape or self-affirmation.
1. No significant differences in levels of stress were observed according to dominant gambling preference ($F = .68, 11, 1463, p = .76$).
2. However, those with a dominant preference for poker or sports betting reported higher levels of happiness than those with a dominant preference for slots ($F = 2.6, 4, 648, p = 11, 1463, p = .003$).
1. Type of need satisfaction was not related to happiness score with the exception of 'Relaxation and Escape'



[discussion]

Initial implications and considerations...

...initial support for gambling being a legitimate form of leisure

1. Forrest (2013, p.25): “*gambling benefits very many people, each by a little, and hurts a rather smaller number of people, but each by a lot*”. **This represents an important first step in understanding the potential psychosocial mechanisms that may underpin such ‘minor benefits’.**
2. PCA established 6 principle components including ‘Challenge and Mastery’, ‘Autonomy’, ‘Relaxation’, ‘Self-affirmation’, ‘Excitement’ and ‘Affiliation’ and these were noted to correspond to some existing motivational theories of gambling participation which have identified:
 1. Social motivations (Binde, 2013; Cassidy, 2012; Lloyd et al., 2009; [Sheeran, & Orbell, 1999](#); Wardle et al., 2010);
 2. Excitement (Binde, 2013; [Jacobs, 1986](#); Lloyd et al., 2009; [McCormick et al, 1987](#); Neighbors et al.,2002; Platz & Millar 2001; Wardle et al., 2010)
 3. Skill development or enhancement (Binde, 2013; Wardle et al., 2010) and
 4. Relaxation and escape (Binde, 2013; Dow-Schull, 2002; Fang & Mowen, 2009; Lloyd et al., 2009; Wardle et al., 2010)

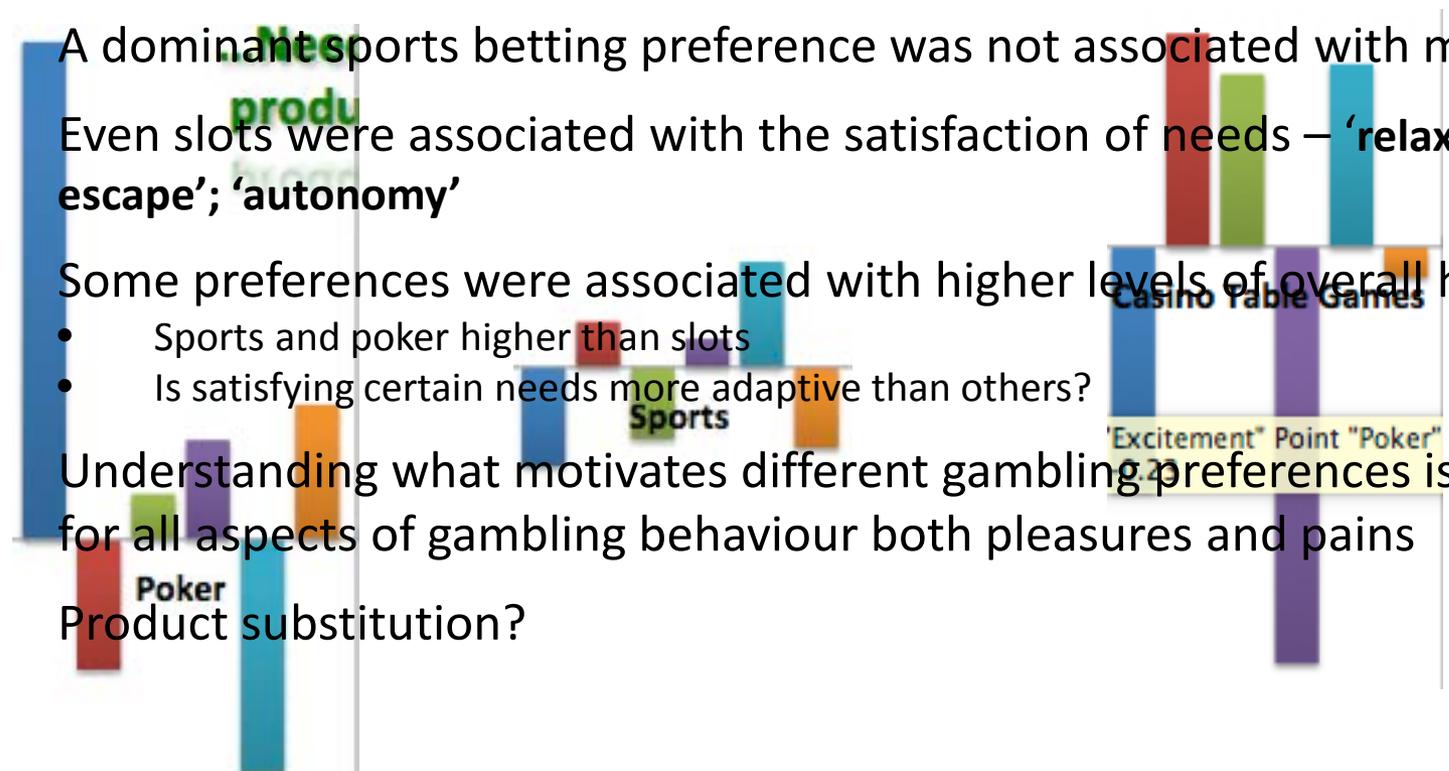
...as key motivators for gambling behaviour.

Initial implications and considerations...

...initial support for 'not all gambling created equal' is interesting

3. Most links between dominant gambling preference and need satisfactions seem coherent and make intuitive sense, for example:
 - **Poker** – mastery, affiliation
 - **Sports betting and casino table games** – excitement
 - **'Self-affirmation'** – less need satisfaction – predictable?

4. A dominant sports betting preference was not associated with mastery
5. Even slots were associated with the satisfaction of needs – **'relaxation and escape'; 'autonomy'**
6. Some preferences were associated with higher levels of overall happiness
 - Sports and poker higher than slots
 - Is satisfying certain needs more adaptive than others?
7. Understanding what motivates different gambling preferences is essential for all aspects of gambling behaviour both pleasures and pains
8. Product substitution?



Initial implications and considerations...

...some findings are novel and less straightforward to explain

1. It is interesting that given the vast majority of gamblers participate in the activity without experiencing harm, only slightly more than half of the participants in this study reported deriving benefits from their gambling:
 - a. Importance of financial components?
 - b. Addictive processes?
 - c. How would sports fans respond?

2. An unexpected finding was the significance of country of residence in predicting the experience of gambling-related benefits – Dutch residents more likely to report benefits.

Limitations...

...and next steps

...and next steps

1. Examine relationship with problem gambling
2. There are conceptual challenges to untangle – ‘benefits’ ‘motivations’, ‘desires’, ‘need satisfactions’, and ‘pleasure’
 - Critically whether outcomes construed as ‘benefits’ are adaptive or maladaptive;
3. Measurement issues and future research –
 - Metric for need satisfaction should be improved; extent to which needs were satisfied measured but not their importance;
 - More robust measures for health correlates;
 - Given differences between different gambling types – should examine in isolation
4. Data from only one operator (Unibet)
5. Other considerations for future research include:
 - Replicate principal components using a different sample
 - Compare to another non-gambling leisure activity
 - Examine differences across media

Acknowledgments and disclosures

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1. Co-investigator >

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2. Funding and access to participants >

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Unibet, Malta

Questions and comments...?

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...On industry funding

Recommendation: REJECT

- This paper is a survey of 1,541 internet gamblers in three countries asking them their gambling involvement, motivation, benefits and health and well-being. The survey was financed by an internet gambling company.
- There are two major reasons for the reject recommendation.
 1. **The first reason is the commercial interest that may be involved in the publication of results. The sponsoring company certainly has the rights to use the results to advertise its products. Publication in JOGS will further add the chop of approval on the advertising of gambling benefits.**
 1. **The second reason is the implication on works by other gambling researchers. Gambling literature has discussed responsible gambling, harm reduction model, and gambling problem prevention measures. Results of this survey threaten to negate such efforts and point to embracement of gambling as a means toward psychosocial benefits and health and wellbeing.**