

Cultural diversity and gambling: Exploring the impact of culture and migration on gambling in Australia



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Multicultural Australia

- 25% (6 million) of Australians born overseas
- 43% have at least one overseas-born parent
- Over 300 different ancestries
- Over 200 languages spoken



Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011

What do we know?

- **70% of adult Australians gamble**
 - Higher proportion from CALD communities?
 - Certain cultural groups more likely to gamble due to social norms
- **~2% develop gambling problems**
 - Higher proportion from CALD communities?

(Productivity Commission, 2010; Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority, 1997; Raylu and Oei, 2004); Volberg, 1996; Abbot & Volberg, 1996)

What else do we know?

- **Gambling is legal in Australia and part of the culture**
 - May be very different to country of origin
- **Migration to Australia can be traumatic, isolating, exciting...**
 - People from CALD communities may be particularly vulnerable to gambling problems

(Ohtsuka & Ohtsuka, 2010)

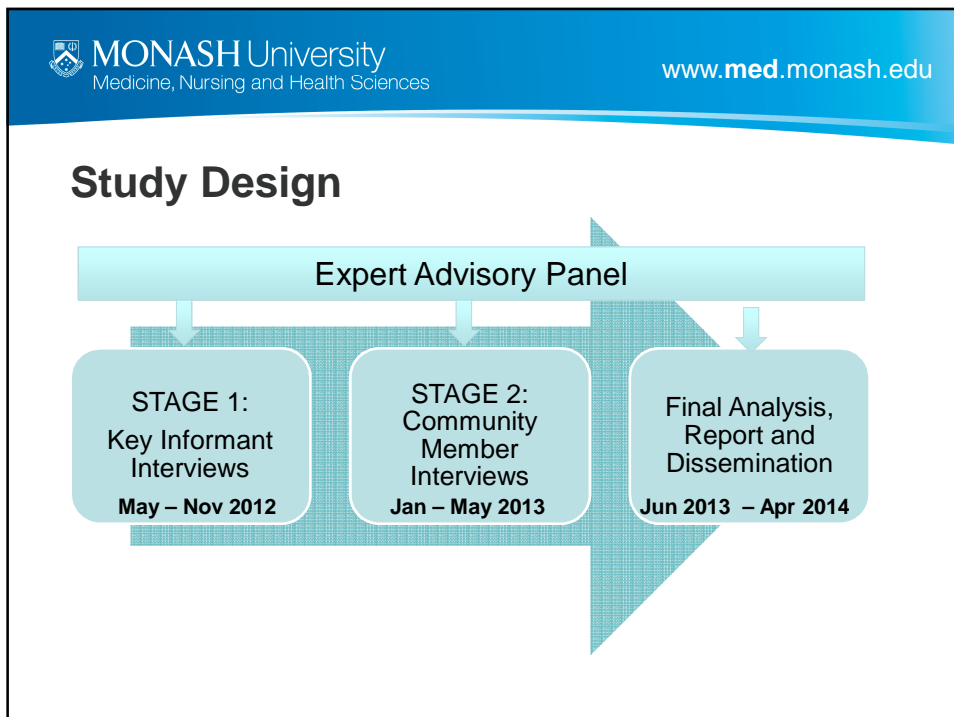
Project Aims

1. To explore the cultural meanings, norms and practices that pervade gambling experiences in people from CALD communities who have migrated to Australia.
2. To provide a context to identify how diverse cultural experiences and perspectives may determine and influence the attitudes, barriers and facilitators to seeking assistance and access to services.
3. To identify the challenges faced by service providers to assist people with gambling problems from CALD communities.

This project will inform the development of more culturally appropriate gambling-related policy, strategies and services for people from CALD backgrounds.



Migration of Tamil and Chinese speaking people to Victoria, Australia



Methods (Stage 1)

- **Purposive sampling**
- **Snowball recruitment**
- **Semi-structured interviews**
 - Up to 60 mins, convenient location
- **Interview summaries and transcription**
- **Thematic analysis**

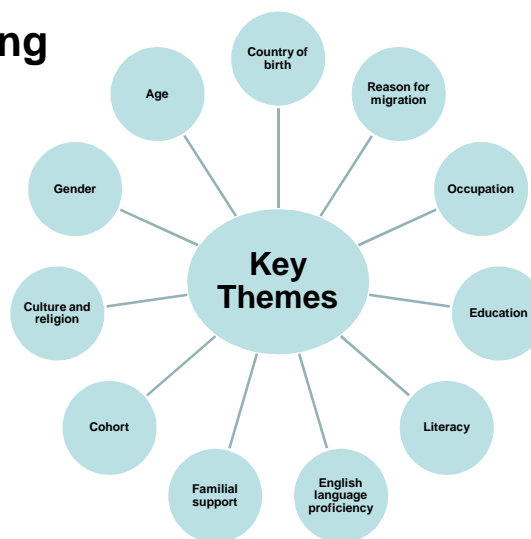
Interview schedule

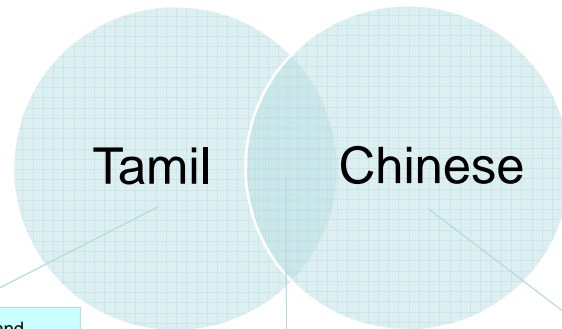
- 1. Cultural meanings, norms and practices of gambling**
- 2. Impact of migration**
- 3. Factors influencing access to services**

Key Informant Characteristics

- **16 participants**
 - 12 female, 4 male
 - 24 - 72 years old
 - 12 born outside of Australia
 - 13 spoke at least one language other than English
 - 2 Tamil; 6 Chinese; 8 General CALD
 - 9 in sector for more than 10 years
 - 9 in organisations which provide service delivery
 - Predominantly located in Eastern and Southern Melbourne Metropolitan Region

Considering Context





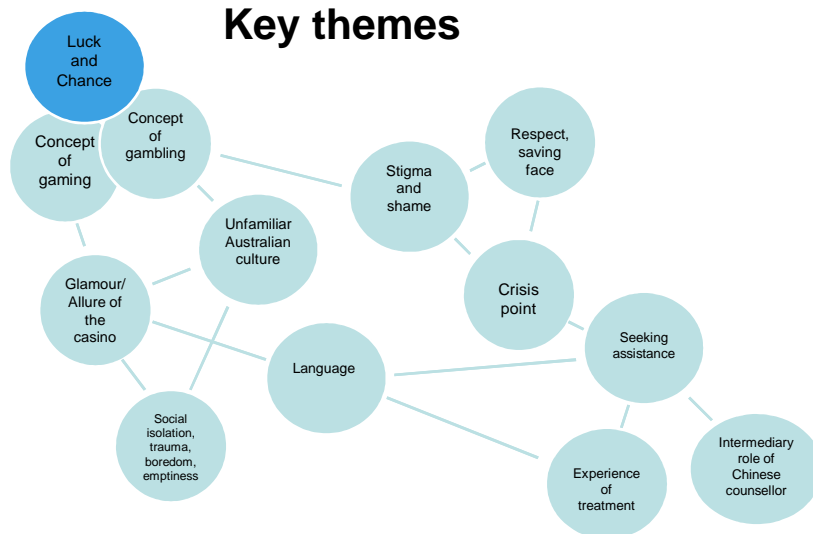
"Sri Lankan and Tamils are very conservative people. Really, not many people gamble... So if you're gambling, smoking and drinking in our culture it's bad things." (KI13, Tamil)

- Conservative
- Save face
- Family oriented

"..gambling is a part of their (Chinese) life... gambling culture is in the blood..." (KI01, Chinese)



Key themes



Luck and Chance

"Luck means, you know, when you are going on the road you pick up some good things...I can't say gambling is a luck, it's a chance."
(K103, Tamil)

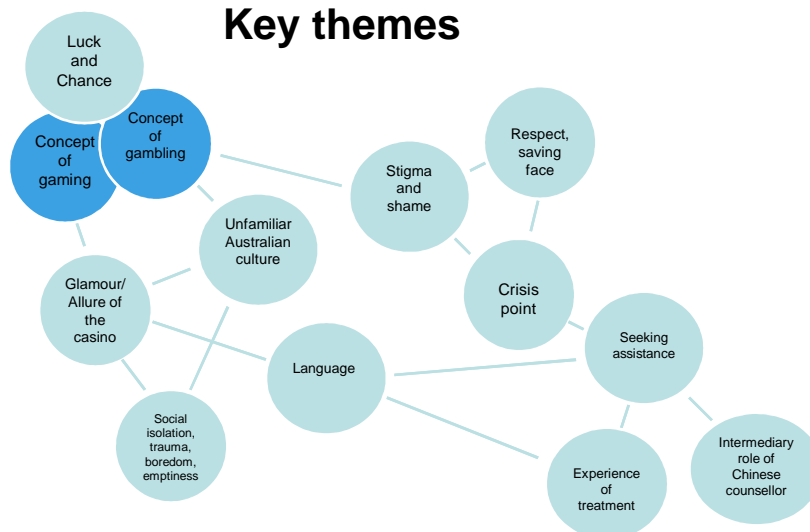


"He'll go to a casino once in a while just to 'test the luck'... it's kind of connected to God, but not really, because Chinese people don't really believe in God...(it) connects back to the fact that the **ancestors** are looking after them."
(K109, Chinese)

"...they're using that (...) mindset, and they're using a bit of tradition... they go and pray that their numbers will come up. They literally go and spend money, and pray that they will win a fortune..."
(K104, Chinese)



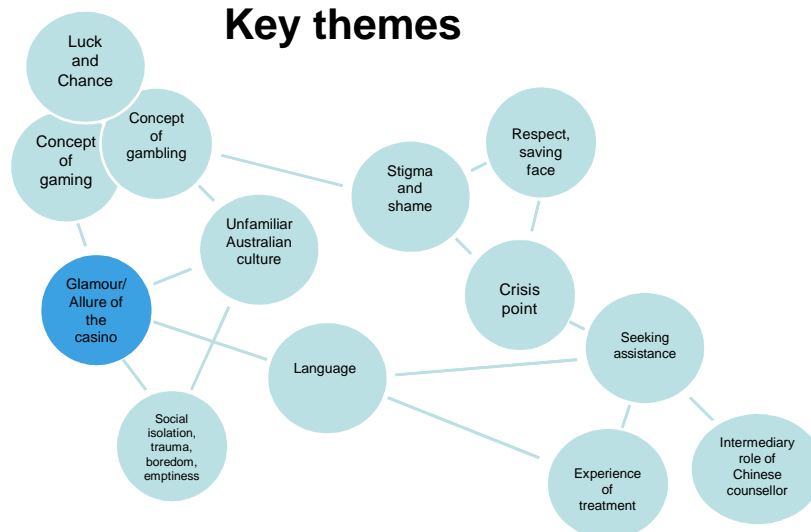
Key themes



Gaming versus Gambling

“...if you gamble once in a while, it’s not seen as gambling, it’s just a game...I think when they see problem gambling, that’s when they see it as gambling, when they’re addicted.”(KI09, Chinese)

Key themes



Casino - Glamour and Allure

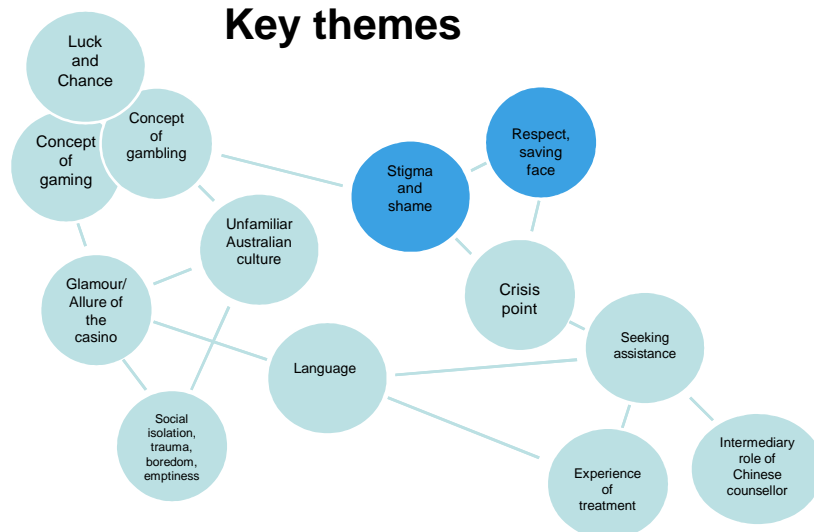
“And the Casino it looks like **entertainment** city, a lot of good **food**... Sometimes their promotion is very successful especially in the Chinese New Year they had a lot of activities there.” (K107, Chinese)



“..**free lunch, free transport** and if you are going first time they are giving **five dollars**.” (K103, Tamil)

It's **familiar**. There are communities, and people from different communities, who associate, for example, casinos as being really **glamorous** places to visit. It's **safe**, you don't need a lot of English language skills to participate in gambling, so it's a social activity, and for some communities, it's part of their culture.” (K102, General)

Key themes





Saving face and stigma = don't seek help

"It is kept very **secret**, and there's a lot of **shame** around it, so the disclosure becomes very problematic, and it's very difficult for services to pick up on it, and to address it."
(K102, General)

"...even though you know there are these people who have (...) gambling problems, you still can't get the first-hand information and it's so hard to get other people to tell that person to seek help...it's actually really annoying because you know — you know they're there, you want to do something about it but you can't... Because if you do, they'll probably run." (K109, Chinese)

"..we had a man and the wife he (sic) was assaulted – it's a typical example how gambling - but no-one knows about this. **No-one will tell you**. Even if you go and tell them the wife will not tell what the husband is doing. That is our culture..... Now suppose if my wife goes against me, she would not be **respected** by the – by our relations. It's like more or less she'll be **excommunicated** from our society."
(K103, Tamil)



Lessons to inform next stage

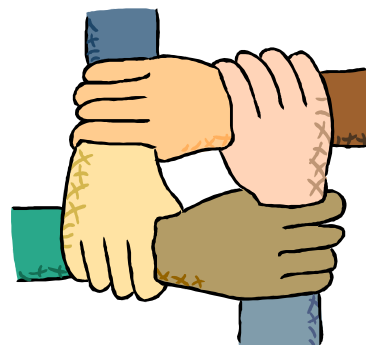
- **Process**
 - Caution with terminology (e.g. gambling)
 - Individual vs group interviews
 - Key community groups/members
 - Incentives (e.g. for students)

Lessons to inform next stage

- **Content**
 - Interplay of control and luck
 - Protective cultural norms and social support

Thanks!

- **Key Informants**
- **Expert Advisory Panel**
- **Department of Justice**





Key Questions

- **How does the experience of migration to Australia impact upon attitudes to gambling, gambling participation and behaviour?**
- **How do people talk about their past (pre-migration) and present (post-migration) gambling participation?**
- **What are individual motivations and reasons for gambling?**
- **What is the role of gambling activities and how does gambling affect relationships with community, family and friends?**