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**Problem Gambling in  
Chinese American Adolescents:  
Characteristics and Risk Factors**

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# Adolescent Problem Gambling

- 2 to 4 times higher than adults (Gupta & Derevensky, 1998a; Jacobs, 2000; Shaffer & Hall, 2001).
- 3 to 6% problem gambling prevalence rate (Shaffer & Hall, 2001).
- About 60 to 80% of adolescents gambled at least once each year (Volberg et al., 2010; Welte, et al., 2008)
- Adult pathological gamblers started gambling at a younger age (Shaffer & Hall, 1996).

# Risk Factors (Derevensky, & Gupta, 2008; Shead, Derevensky, & Gupta, 2010).

- Male
- Exposed to gambling at an earlier age
- Impulsive and sensation-seeking personality
- Substance abuse
- Poor academic performance
- Parents and friends who gamble
- Emotional disturbance
- Living in a gambling-permissive culture
- Ethnic minority status,

# Ethnicity and Problem Gambling

- Stinchfield (2000) found that ethnic minority high school students gambled more than Caucasian students.
- Volberg et al. (2010) suggested that individuals born outside the country where they lived were at higher risk for problem gambling.
- Welte and colleagues (2004) found that some ethnic groups, e.g., African-Americans, Hispanic, and Asians, were at higher risk for problem gambling.

# Substance Use and Videogame Playing

- Association between substance use and problem gambling. (Dickson et al., 2008; Shead et al., 2010)
- Impulsivity is a predictor for risky gambling behavior (Moreyra, Ibáñez, Liebowitz, Sáiz-Ruiz, & Blanco, 2002)
- Adolescent problem and pathological gamblers had significantly higher level of sensation seeking (Gutpa, Derevensky, Ellenbogen, 2006)
- The association between videogame playing and gambling is not conclusive.

# Problem gambling among Asian adolescents

- Higher prevalence rates of problem gambling than the general populations, with 7.8 % for Asian Americans compared to 5.6 % for Caucasians (Westphal, et al., 2000).
- 12% pathological gambling in a study in Birmingham, England (Griffiths, 2000). 42 % bought scratch-cards.

# The Present Study

- Examine the severity of problem gambling among Chinese American adolescents.
- Identify behavioral and psychosocial variables that are associated with gambling by Chinese American adolescents.



# Participants

- 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grades
- Ages 13 to 19
- N= 192
- Male (n=97) & Female (n=93)
- San Francisco Public Schools

# Measures

- South Oaks Gambling Screen-Revised for Adolescents (SOGS-RA; Winters et al., 1993), with Cronbach Alpha, 0.80 in this study.
- Demographic questionnaire.
- Questions on substance use, videogame playing. Having a parent who gambles, emotional distress, and GPA.

# Prevalence of Problem Gambling

- SOGS-RA (Scored 4 or more) = 10.92%
- Higher than the rates of 2% to 6 % in national studies (Volberg et al., 2010; Welte et al., 2008).

# Gambling Behavior

- Life Time Gambling 66%
- Past 12 Month Gambling 62%
- 8% Sport Betting
- 12% Internet Gambling
- Other Preferred Games (Playing cards, raffle tickets, betting money on pool, golf, arcade game)

# Gender & Age

- Literature suggests that gender and age are associated with problem gambling.

In this study...

- Male endorsed significantly more SOGS-RA items than female ( $p < .001$ )
- 90% of students who scored 4 or higher on the SOGS-RA are males.
- The relationship between gambling at an early age and problem gambling in later adolescence was not confirmed in this study.

# Substance Use & Videogame Playing

- Substance use and videogame playing are considered risk factors for problem gambling for both adolescent and adult populations (Johansson et al., 2009; Snead et al., 2010).
- In this study, after controlling demographic variables of gender and age, both substance use and videogame playing contributed significant variance to problem gambling ( $p < .05$ ).

# Reasons for Gambling

## Top three Reasons Rated by Problem Gamblers

- Win Money
  - Entertainment
  - Excitement
- 
- Interestingly, more males than females reported they gambled for socializing.

# Family Variables

- Literature suggests the relationship between adolescent problem gambling and parent who gambles.
- Such relationship was not confirmed in this study.
- Learned gambling from
  - Father (19%)
  - Mother (13%)
  - Friends (63%)
  - Relatives (32%)



# Summary and Conclusion

- Chinese American youth is at risk for problem gambling.
- Culture may play an important role in development and maintenance of problem gambling.
- Dispelled the myth of model minority for Chinese/Asian American students.
- Gender but not age started gambling is a risk factor.
- Parent parenting as a risk factor was not confirmed.

# Summary and Conclusion (cont'd)

- Learned gambling activities from friends.
- Substance use and videogame playing are moderate strong risk factors for problem gambling.

# Limitations of the study

- Sample size was small to determine the problem gambling prevalence of problem gambling.
- Sample was from San Francisco only. External validity of the study is limited.
- Many other risk factors are not explored in the study.
- The study can be replicated with more standardized measures and extended to larger sample and broader Asian American adolescent populations.

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