

Pathways development of Problem Gamblers and Implications for Treatment Concerns

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Introduction

Blaszczynski and Nower (2002) presented pathways model of problem and pathological gambling

1. Behaviorally-conditioned
2. Emotionally vulnerable
3. Antisocial-impulsive

Validation on the model has been promising:

- ♦ Woods and Griffiths (2007) — most pathological gamblers in the study are emotionally vulnerable gamblers. They mainly gambled to escape.





Introduction

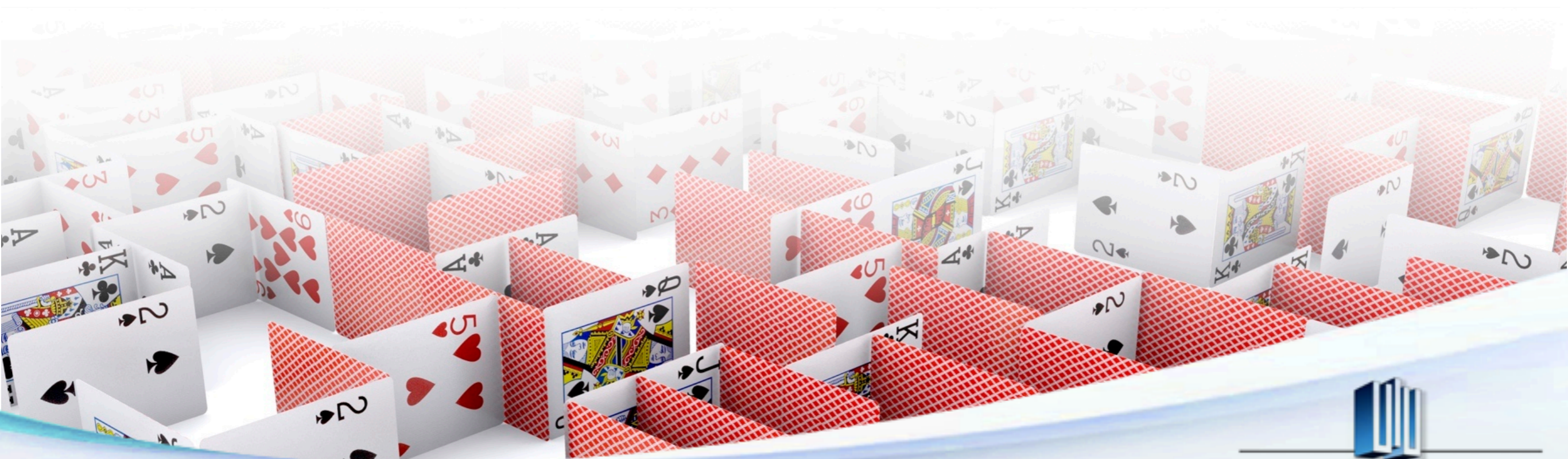
- ♦ The majority of the available literature in Hong Kong focused more on the prevalence of the problem gambling (e.g. Fong & Ozorio, 2005; The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, 2002 ; The University of Hong Kong, 2005), the personality of the gamblers (e.g.Chan & Ohtsuka, 2010; Chan & Ohtsuka, 2011; Cheng, 2006; Lam, 2005).
- ♦ Also, researchers have placed much emphasis on how gambling impacted the gamblers' spouses (Leung, Wong, Lau & Yeung, 2010). Some investigations emphasized on cultural issues such as superstitions of gambling (Ohtsuka & Chan, 2010) and gambling movies and culture (Chan & Ohtsuka, 2010). However, qualitative studies on the pathways development of gamblers have been very few.





Rationale for the Current Study

- ♦ To date, there has been little qualitative research on the psychology of pathways development of problem gamblers and recreational gamblers in Hong Kong. Thus, the present study sought to fill in this research gap. More specifically, this study intended to explore the personality development of these gamblers.





Hypotheses

- ♦ The pathways development of problem gamblers share similar developmental milestones and characteristics
- ♦ Behavioral-conditioned gamblers are the most common type of problem gamblers





Theoretical Framework

- ♦ Blaszczynski and Nower (2002). In this model, all pathological gamblers can be classified into three groups namely: behaviorally controlled gamblers, emotionally vulnerable gamblers and antisocial/impulsivist-gamblers. Chan and Ohtsuka (2010) found that most gamblers in their study were classified as antisocial-impulsive gamblers.
- ♦ Their findings contrast with Wood and Griffiths' UK study (2007) in which the majority of the pathological gamblers were emotionally vulnerable gamblers. UK gamblers mainly gambled to escape from the problems of daily living.





Purposes of the Present Study

- ♦ To understand pathways development of behavioral and pathological gamblers from similar occupational nature
- ♦ To investigate how the work environment can contribute to one's development of gambling behavior
- ♦ Recreational gambling, by definition, refers to the type of gambling that does not negatively influence a person's areas of life functioning





Definition of Pathological Gambling

- ♦ A progressive disorder characterized by a continuous or periodic loss of control over gambling; a preoccupation with gambling and with obtaining money with which to gamble; irrational thinking; and a continuation of the behavior despite adverse consequences."
(Richard Rosenthal, *Psychiatric Annals*, February 1992)





Definition of Recreational Gambling


- ♦ Gamblers set a limited period of time and an acceptable dollar loss in advance, stick to it and gamble for entertainment.
- ♦ The person does not lose control of their behavior. There are no negative consequences for the person in terms of lost time or lost finances.
- ♦ Typically gambling occurs with friends or colleagues and lasts for a limited period of time, with predetermined acceptable losses.





Methods:

Participants

- $N = 23$, 20 men, 3 woman, age: 20-50 years.
 - Mean age of 23 participants = 39
 - Most of them were laborers, working in shift duties
 - All participants achieved less than a secondary education
- 





Recreational gamblers

| Participants No | Gender | Age group | Marital Status | Works | Year of Gambling | Highest money involved |
|-----------------|--------|-----------|----------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| PG-C | M | 30+ | Single | clerk | 40+ | 30K |
| PG-D | F | 30+ | Single | director | 30+ | 40K |
| PG-E | M | 30+ | Single | property management | 30+ | — |
| PG-K | F | 30+ | Single | chef | 40+ | 15K |
| PG-M | F | 20+ | Single | cargo operator | 30+ | — |
| PG-P | F | 20+ | Single | cosmetologist | 20+ | 20K |
| PG-S | F | 30+ | Single | cargo operator | 30+ | 20K |
| PG-T | F | 30+ | Single | Sale | 30+ | 15K |



Pathological gamblers

| Participants No | Gender | Age group | Marital Status | Works | Year of Gambling | Highest money involved |
|-----------------|--------|-----------|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------------|
| PG-A | M | 50+ | Married | fuel worker | 28 | — |
| PG-G | M | 47 | Divorced | Unknown | 28 | — |
| PG-H | F | 33 | Single | Cargo operator | 15 | 17K |
| PG-I | M | 43 | Divorced | own Business | 47 | 40k |
| PG-J | M | 39 | Single | own Business | 10 | 40K |
| PG-L | M | 80 | Married | Cargo operator | 68 | 17K |
| PG-N | M | 70 | Married | Cargo operator | 55 | 17K |
| PG-Q | M | 56 | Married | Cargo operator | 26 | 18K |
| PG-R | M | 55 | Married | Cargo operator | 43 | 20K |
| PG-F | M | 40 | Married | Supervisors | 27 | 30k |



Method

This study administered PGSI (Problem Gambling Severity Index, Ferris & Wynne, 2001), a questionnaire based on the DSM-IV TR on problem gambling, BDI (Beck Depressive Inventory) to all participants.

PGSI

- ▶ A score of 8 or above implies problem gambling with negative impact/consequences and possible loss of control (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2011).

DSM-IV TR

- ▶ 5 of the characteristics listed in the DSM criteria implies Pathological gambling (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2011).





Method

- ◆ All participants were interviewed on semi-structured questionnaires which covered their developmental history, gambling habits, career development, and lifestyle habits.





Method

The study follow Hycner's explication process (Hycner, 1999) There are five steps in the process.

Detailed Thematic Analysis

- ♦ The interviews records were transcribed into notes. All together, there were over 140 pages of transcribed notes. Hycner's data analysis was followed:
 1. Bracketing and phenomenological reduction
 2. Delineating units of meaning
 3. Clustering of units of meaning
 4. Summarizing each interview, validating it and changing it according to the situation
 5. Extracting and developing general and unique themes and making a composite summary





Results

◆ Motivation at gambling

- ◆ Almost all say feel good to got money from gambling,
- ◆ Gambling like just a kind of entertainment, personal habits
- ◆ The main differences between the pathological gamblers and recreational gamblers are:
 - ▶ The personal control of time, money in gambling
 - ▶ They have other fun activities.
 - ▶ They maintained good moral judgment on gambling
 - ▶ Leading a responsible lifestyle





Results

- ▶ Total number of participants = 23
- ▶ 14 participants could be diagnosed as pathological gamblers. (12 of 14 could be diagnosed as behaviorally conditional problem gamblers, 2 of 14 could be diagnosed as anti-social gambler.)
- ▶ 9 of total participants could be diagnosed as recreational gamblers.
- ▶ None can be considered as emotionally vulnerable gamblers





Trajectory of gambling development

Proximity Pathways development of problem gambling

- ♦ Most of the behaviorally-conditioned gamblers gambled almost every day but most of them played different types of gambling.

Pathways development of recreational gambling

- ♦ Recreational gamblers said that gambling provided them social interaction, fun and mutual support, hobbies and interests, They can quit and stop any time and have other habits.
- ♦ An inverse relationship between age and wager



Trajectory of gambling development

Proximity to gambling and early social gambling leads to later involvement in gambling

- All problem gamblers started to gamble at young age.
- Most began when they were at 8 or 9 years old
- They usually played with their neighbors
- Majority learned from the family members
- Horse racing learned from friends/classmates/colleague
- They usually had early win when they were very young
- Decline to admit the problems of gambling and assume these were controllable.





Trajectory of gambling development



Learned from family members

young age

Early big win



**Early win
Gambling
friends &
colleague**



Gamble more

**Problem
gambling**



Trajectory of similar occupation development



Learned from family members

young age

**Early win;
have fun &
excitement**

Gambling friends & classmate



Lower education achievement (low than F.5 certification)



For these men, occupational choice helped in their development of gambling

- physical work:
lack of challenge
lack of critical thinking
- on shift:
Lack social interaction
social isolation



Behaviorally-conditional problem gambling



- strong relationship with colleagues:
- gambling as the only social activity



Discussion

Behaviorally-conditional problem gambling

control their financial limits

responsible work and lifestyle

Lack challenges and excitement at work

main hobbies & entertainment

Easy accessibility

family/ or gambling friends

Early wins

Problem gambling

Anti-social gambling

The lack of moral judgment

Irresponsible lifestyle

gambling

Lack of personal control



Discussion

- ▶ Pathological gambling begins with recreational gambling with family/friends, offer environment for gambling.
- ▶ The significant factors for pathological gambling are being male, an early access to gambling, and more importantly, the work environment that lacks challenges and stimulation.
- ▶ Gambling offer critical thinking opportunity for enhance self-esteem,
- ▶ Gambling becomes an attachment for these individuals.



Thank You

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