

GAMBLING IN THE DIGITAL AGE: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON THE PHENOMENON OF ONLINE GAMBLING

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Abstract

The development of digital technology has brought significant changes in various aspects of life, including the gambling industry. The phenomenon of online gambling has become a global concern due to its accessibility and potential impact. The research method used was literature review. The results of the review showed that online gambling has unique characteristics that distinguish it from conventional gambling, including accessibility, anonymity, and a wider variety of games. Research also revealed an increased risk of addiction and mental health problems related to online gambling. Therefore, a comprehensive and collaborative approach involving various stakeholders is needed to address the complexity of online gambling problems in the digital era.

Keywords: online gambling, digital era.

Introduction

The rapid development of information and communication technology in recent decades has changed various aspects of human life, including the way people interact, work and even gamble. The phenomenon of online gambling emerged as a consequence of this digital revolution, bringing gambling activities that were previously confined to physical locations into a wider and more accessible virtual realm. (Zhang, 2023).

Online gambling has become a fast-growing global industry, with the market value estimated at billions of dollars annually. The ease of access, anonymity and wide selection of games offered by online gambling platforms have attracted many people, including those who may not have previously engaged in conventional gambling activities. (Leslie & McGrath, 2023).

Online gambling refers to various forms of gambling conducted over the internet, using electronic devices such as computers, smartphones, or tablets. It encompasses a wide array of games and bets, including online poker, virtual casinos, sports betting, bingo, and digital lotteries, where players place real money bets in the hope of winning prizes or financial benefits. Online gambling platforms offer various electronic payment methods, and often interactive features that allow players to

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participate in games in real-time from anywhere in the world, as long as they have an internet connection. This phenomenon has changed the traditional gambling landscape, bringing new challenges in terms of regulation, consumer protection, and socio-economic impact (Shi et al., 2021).

However, behind this significant growth, online gambling also brings a range of new issues and challenges, including: Increased risk of addiction, Child and youth involvement, Fraud and cybercrime, Regulatory challenges, and Socio-economic impact. (Bedford, 2024).

Online gambling has a significant impact on both the individual and society at large. On a personal level, online gambling can cause serious addiction, result in huge financial losses, and damage personal and professional relationships. Addicted players often experience intense stress, depression and anxiety, which can lead to more serious mental health problems. In addition, dependence on online gambling can result in neglect of work and family responsibilities, and encourage criminal behavior such as theft or fraud to fund gambling habits. (Catania & Griffiths, 2021).

On a broader scale, online gambling impacts the social and economic fabric of society. The industry can be a significant source of tax revenue for governments, but it also creates an economic burden through the cost of health care and social services to deal with problems associated with gambling addiction. Online gambling can also increase the risk of money laundering and other criminal activities, which require strict oversight and regulation. (Griffiths, 2020). In addition, the normalization of gambling through online platforms may change societal attitudes towards gambling, potentially increasing acceptance of risky behaviors and reducing the social stigma previously associated with gambling, which may impact society's values and norms as a whole. (Egerer & Marionneau, 2023).

Given the complexity and wide-ranging impact of the online gambling phenomenon, it is important to conduct a systematic review of the existing literature to comprehensively understand the various aspects of this issue.

Research Methods

In this study, researchers used the literature method. The literature method, also known as a literature review, is a systematic research approach to collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing information from various literature sources relevant to a particular research topic. (Wekke, 2020); (Syafri & Erlina, 2018); (Alaslan, 2022).

Results and Discussion

Online Gambling Development Trends

Online gambling, or online gambling, refers to various forms of gambling activities conducted over the internet using electronic devices such as computers, smartphones, or tablets. It covers a wide array of games and betting types, including

virtual casinos, online poker, sports betting, digital lotteries, and online bingo, where players can place bets and potentially win money or other prizes. Online gambling platforms are generally operated by specialized companies that provide user-friendly interfaces, secure digital payment systems, and a variety of gaming options that can be accessed from anywhere in the world with an internet connection. (Machado et al., 2021). While offering great convenience and accessibility, online gambling also raises a variety of regulatory, ethical, and public health concerns, particularly with regard to potential addiction and financial exploitation (Brown & Hickman, 2020). (Brown & Hickman, 2020).

Online gambling encompasses various types of games and betting activities that can be accessed via the internet. Some of the most common types of online gambling include: online casinos, which offer digitized versions of traditional casino games such as slots, roulette, blackjack, and baccarat; online poker, where players can participate in tournaments or real money games against other players from around the world; online sports betting, which allows users to place bets on a variety of sporting and e-sports events; online bingo, offering the traditional bingo experience in a digital format; online lotteries, where players can purchase lottery tickets and participate in sweepstakes through a digital platform; and exchange betting, which allows users to bet against each other instead of against the bookie. (Shaw & Williams, 2023). In addition, there are also newer forms of online gambling such as fantasy sports betting and betting on the outcome of non-sporting events such as politics or entertainment. Each of these types of online gambling has different rules, mechanics, and levels of risk, attracting different types of players with diverse preferences and strategies (Brazeau, 2020).

The development of online gambling in recent years has shown significant and dynamic trends. One of the main trends is the increased use of mobile technology, with more and more gambling platforms optimizing their services for mobile devices. This allows users to access gambling games anytime and anywhere, increasing accessibility and convenience. In addition, the integration of virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies is starting to change the online gambling landscape, offering a more immersive and interactive experience. Cryptocurrencies are also increasingly being adopted as a payment method, offering higher anonymity and security for users (Juanda et al., 2023).

Another prominent trend is the increased focus on responsible gambling and stricter regulation. Many countries are beginning to implement more comprehensive laws to regulate the industry, with an emphasis on consumer protection and addiction prevention. (Wimmer & Philander, 2023). Meanwhile, developments in artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning have enabled online gambling operators to provide users with a more personalized and predictive experience, as well as improved detection of fraud and suspicious activity. The phenomenon of e-sports betting also continues to grow rapidly, reflecting the growing popularity of professional video game

competitions. All of these trends indicate that the online gambling industry continues to evolve, adopting new technologies and adapting to the changing consumer preferences and regulatory landscape. (Chagas et al., 2021).

Factors Affecting Participation in Online Gambling

Participation in online gambling is influenced by a variety of complex interrelated factors. One of the main factors is the accessibility and convenience offered by online gambling platforms. The ease of access through mobile devices and computers, as well as the ability to play anytime and anywhere, makes online gambling more attractive than traditional gambling. (Choi, 2023). In addition, the wide selection of games and betting options available online offers greater variety, appealing to different types of players with varying preferences.

Psychological factors also play an important role in online gambling participation. The thrill of excitement, adrenaline and the potential for big wins can be a strong draw for many people. For some individuals, online gambling may be seen as a form of entertainment or an escape from the stress of everyday life. However, these psychological factors can also contribute to the development of addictive behaviors, especially for those who are prone to addiction (Wardle & Zendle, 2021).

Social and cultural factors also influence the level of participation in online gambling. In some societies, gambling may be considered an acceptable or even encouraged social activity, while in others there may be a strong stigma against gambling. Media and advertising also play a role in shaping public perceptions of online gambling, often portraying it as a glamorous and lucrative activity. Peer and family influence can also be important factors in both encouraging and discouraging participation in online gambling. (Louderback et al., 2020).

Finally, economic and regulatory factors have a significant impact on online gambling participation. Difficult economic conditions may encourage some people to look for quick ways to earn money through gambling. On the other hand, strict regulation and effective law enforcement can reduce access to and participation in illegal online gambling. A clear legal framework and strong consumer protection can influence public trust in legitimate online gambling platforms. (Mykhailov & Savina, 2023). In addition, technological innovations such as the use of cryptocurrencies and blockchain technology in online gambling transactions can affect participation rates by offering higher anonymity and security for users.

Online Gambling Prevention and Handling Efforts

Preventing and handling online gambling requires a comprehensive approach involving various parties, including the government, educational institutions, community organizations, and families. One important step is through strict regulation and law enforcement. Governments need to enact clear and strict laws regarding online

gambling, including severe sanctions for illegal operators and methods to block access to online gambling sites. In addition, international cooperation is needed to address the cross-border nature of online gambling, including information exchange and joint law enforcement operations. (Lopez-Gonzalez et al., 2021).

Public education and awareness are also key components in prevention efforts. Educational programs targeted at different age groups, especially adolescents and young adults, can help increase understanding of the risks of online gambling. Public awareness campaigns through mass media and social media can highlight the dangers of gambling addiction and provide information on available help resources. Schools and universities can also play an important role by incorporating material about the dangers of online gambling into their curriculum. (Konietzny & Caruana, 2021).

The development and promotion of support services for individuals affected by online gambling is essential. These include help hotlines, counseling services, and rehabilitation programs specifically designed to address gambling addiction. Cognitive-behavioral therapy approaches have been shown to be effective in treating gambling addiction. Additionally, support groups such as Gamblers Anonymous can provide valuable peer support. It is also important to provide support for affected families, as they are often indirect victims of gambling behavior. (Håkansson, 2020).

Finally, collaboration with the technology and banking industries can help in prevention and response efforts. Technology companies can develop and implement tools to detect and restrict access to online gambling sites, especially for minors. Financial institutions can play a role in identifying and reporting suspicious transactions related to online gambling. (Kairouz et al., 2023). In addition, the development of technologies for self-exclusion and self-limitation can help individuals seeking to control their gambling behavior. With this multi-faceted approach, efforts to prevent and address online gambling can be more effective in reducing its negative impact on society. (Junaedi, 2024).

With that, efforts to prevent and handle online gambling require a holistic approach that involves various aspects and stakeholders. These range from strict regulation and law enforcement, public education and awareness, provision of support and rehabilitation services, to collaboration with the technology and banking industries. All these elements must work in synergy to create an environment that is not conducive to the development of online gambling, while providing effective assistance to those who are already entangled in this problem. With strong commitment from all parties and proper implementation of strategies, we can hope to reduce the negative impact of online gambling and protect the public, especially vulnerable groups such as teenagers and young adults, from the dangers of gambling addiction.

Conclusion

The development of information and communication technology has brought about significant changes in the gambling industry. Online gambling has become a rapidly growing global phenomenon, offering easier access and a wide variety of gambling games that can be accessed anytime and anywhere through digital devices. Research shows that online gambling has higher potential risks than conventional gambling, including increased risk of addiction, financial problems, and negative psychological impact on players.

Thus, the importance of a multidisciplinary approach in addressing online gambling problems. Collaboration between policy makers, researchers, mental health service providers, and the technology industry is needed to develop effective prevention and intervention strategies. Stricter regulation, increased public awareness, and the development of tools to help players control their gambling behavior are some of the key recommendations that emerge from this review.

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