

5 GAMBLING MOTIVATIONS

5.1 Background

Many gambling harm minimisation educational initiatives focus on engendering realistic beliefs about the chance of winning/losing money. Although such an approach may be helpful, it has also been recognised that a diverse range of gambling motivations may play a role in problematic gambling (Binde 2013). Findings reported from recent problem gambling prevalence studies conducted in the United Kingdom (Canale, Vieno, Griffiths, Rubaltelli & Santinello 2015), Canada (Schellenberg, McGrath & Dechant 2016), and Tasmania (Francis, Dowling, Jackson, Christensen & Wardle 2014) indicate that people take part in gambling for emotional, social, and financial reasons. Such findings provide insights into the reason for gambling in the face of successive losses and indicate how educational initiatives may be tailored to reduce the risk of problematic gambling. Nonetheless, this is still an emerging area of research and the relationship between specific types of gambling motivation and gambling behaviour is not well understood.

The 2015 Gambling Prevalence and Wellbeing Survey included a measure of gambling motivation (Gambling Outcomes Expectancies Scale; GOES; Flack & Morris 2015) to assess emotional, social, and financial gambling motivations. Unlike measures employed in other problem gambling prevalence studies, the GOES questions are framed in terms of the anticipated outcomes of gambling rather than directly asking how often a person gambles for a specific reason. This addresses concerns regarding the questions being relevant to gamblers across the spectrum of involvement and it is also possible to consider the role motivations play in relation to gambling frequency, as well as problem gambling (Sundqvist, Jonsson & Wennberg 2016). The GOES has been employed in general community surveys and demonstrated the ability to differentiate between five related but different types of gambling motivation, and predict both gambling frequency and problem gambling severity (Flack & Morris 2015, 2016). The five types of gambling outcome expectancies (a measure of gambling motivations) reflect the degree to which gambling is viewed and valued as a social occasion (social), an opportunity to win money (money), as a way to experience excitement (excitement), to relax (escape), and to increase a sense of importance (ego).

5.1.1 Chapter contents

This chapter contains information on:

- the percentage of gamblers who scored high for each of the five types of the gambling motivations, and
- the percentage of gamblers who scored high for each of the five types of the gambling motivations by age, gender, and remoteness.

5.2 Chapter highlights

- The most commonly endorsed gambling motivation was the social facet of motivation (23.9%), followed by excitement (17.3%), money (15.3%), escape (5.7%), and ego (2.6%).
- Gamblers' motivations did not differ significantly across regions.
- A higher percentage of men endorsed the gambling motivations of social, excitement, and money significantly more than women did.
- Only the social gambling motivation showed a significant negative association with age, with endorsement decreasing with age. However, the excitement motivation also showed a similar, but non-significant negative association with age.

5.3 Gambling Motivations

The GOES includes 18 items designed to assess five distinct, but related aspects of gambling motivations (social, money, excitement, escape, and ego enhancement). Respondents who reported gambling at least once a year on one or more activities completed the GOES. The items were endorsed on a 5-point Likert type scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Scores from items that relate to their respective type of motivation were averaged to create the different domains of gambling motivation. An average score of more than three on specific type of gambling motivation suggests an overall positive view towards gambling on the given motivation. Presented in Figure 30 is the proportion of gamblers who favourably endorsed each of the five different facets of gambling motivation. More participants positively rated the social aspects of gambling than the remaining gambling motivations. The excitement and money gambling motivations were the next most frequently endorsed. In contrast, the level of agreement with the statements that reflect the escape and ego enhancement dimensions of gambling motivation were endorsed by less than 6% of gamblers.

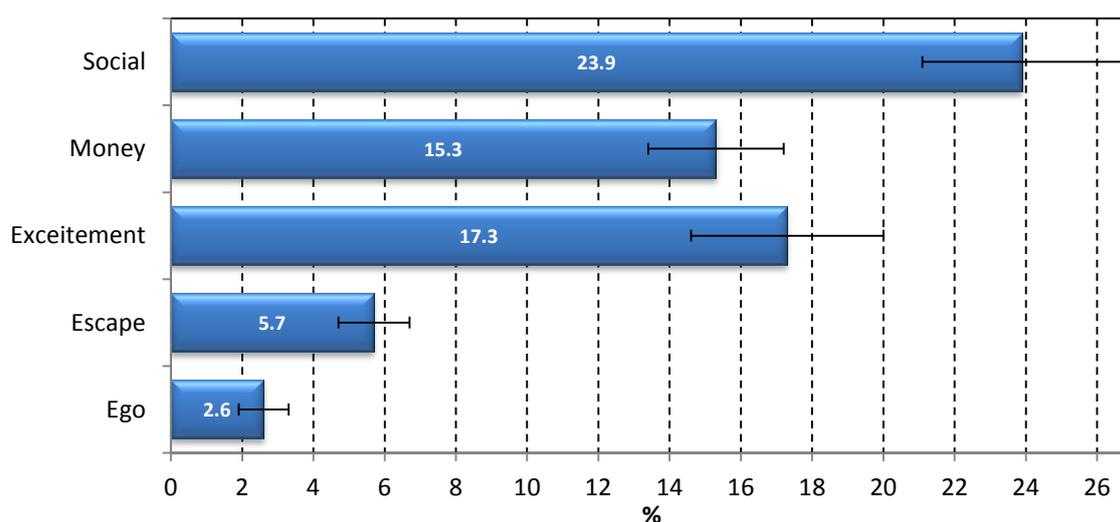


Figure 30: Gamblers positive endorsement of types of gambling motivations, NT adult gamblers

5.3.1 Gambling motivations by age, sex and region

There was no significant association between any of the five gambling motivations and the region where the gambler lived. Figure 31 shows the percentage positive endorsement of the five types of motivation to gamble by gender. Men endorsed social (29.3% cf. 17.9%), money (20.5% cf. 9.5%) and excitement (22.8% cf. 11.2%) motivations significantly more than women did.

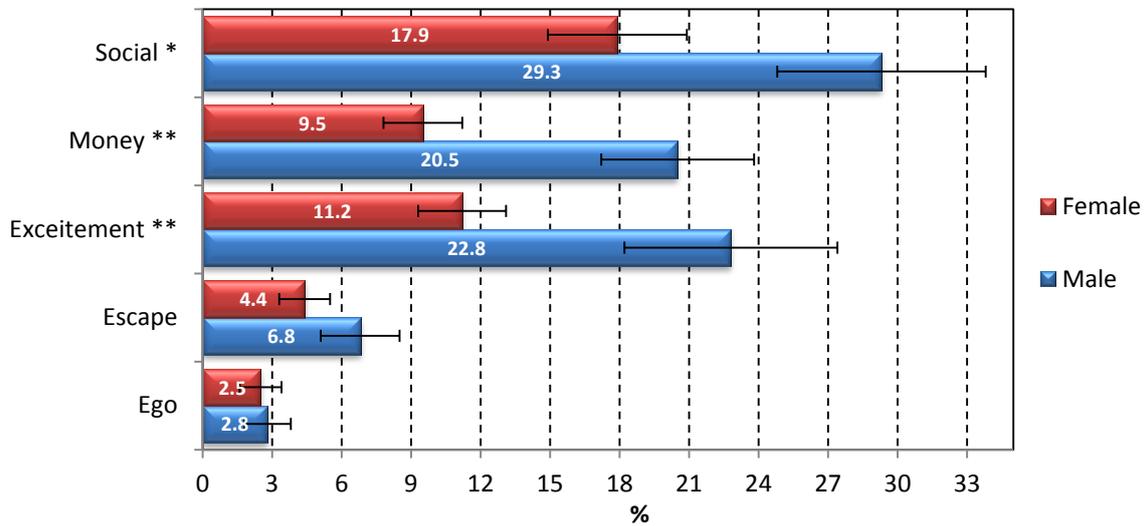


Figure 31: Five types of gambling motivation by gender, NT adult gamblers

Significant difference between men and women in gambling motivation: *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

High endorsement of the social motivation was the only one of the five types of motivations to gamble that was significantly associated with age, with endorsement decreasing with age (Figure 32). The excitement motivation showed a similar trend, though this association was not significant.

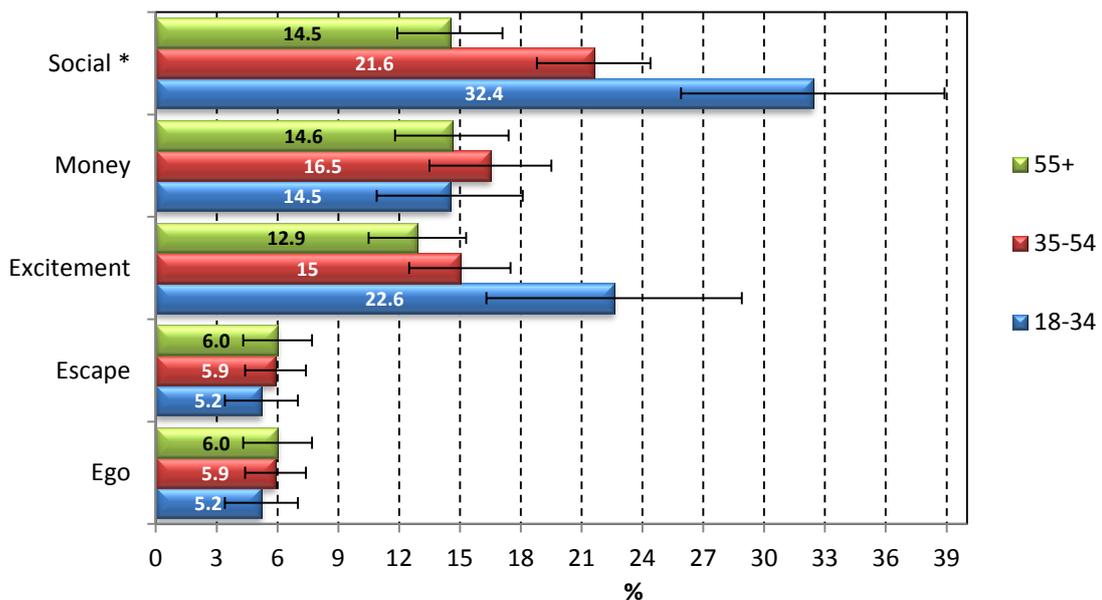


Figure 32: Five types of gambling motivation by age, NT adult gamblers

Significant association between age and gambling motivation: *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

