


# Fun, Money, and Feeling Down: Examining the Associations between Motivations and Problem Gambling among Men and Women in a Sample of Older Adults

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**Abstract** The increasing popularity of gambling as a leisure activity among older adults (+ 55) coupled with the rapid aging of the population makes it increasingly important to understand what divides problem and non-problem gambling for this age group. This study investigated the association of different types of motivations to visit a gambling venue with problem gambling. Using a sample of 2103 older adults collected at 7 gambling venues in Southern Ontario, principal component analysis was completed to identify groupings of motivations dividing them into three

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types: entertainment, emotions, and money. These types were then incorporated into a series of logistic regressions predicting problem gambling. The study found that motivations related to money and emotion were associated with higher odds of problem gambling while motivations related to entertainment were related to lower odds of problem gambling. An interaction effect with gender indicated that the association between emotion motivations and problem gambling was significantly stronger among males. Motivations to visit a gambling venue may be useful in identifying those who are at greater risk of harm. The findings of this study also suggest that typical associations of emotionally motivated gambling with women may distract from the association of emotionally motivated with gambling-related harm among men.

**Keywords** Gambling · Problem gambling · Older adults · Generation · Attitudes · Baby boomers

## Gambling among Older Adults

While rates of gambling participation are typically lower among older adults compared to other age cohorts, those aged 55 and older have become increasingly involved in gambling as a leisure activity (McCready et al. 2008). Estimating changes in problem gambling rates among older adults is difficult due to variation in methodologies across studies. For example, a recent meta-analysis found that 25 studies estimating problem gambling among older adults used 6 different problem gambling screening tools identifying 5 different indicators of gambling-related problems in 6 different countries making comparisons across studies difficult (Subramaniam et al. 2015). The concern that rates of problem gambling are on the rise among older adults (McCready et al. 2008, 2010) is borne out by McKay (2005) who point out that gambling helplines have reported a sharp increase in calls from older adults between 1975 and 1998. Data from the Connecticut Council on problem gambling also shows that the proportion of helpline calls made by older adults increased from 5 to 11% between 2004 and 2005 (CCPG 2011 as cited by Alberghetti and Collins (2015)). This is particularly concerning considering that older adults have been shown to be more reluctant to deal with gambling-related problems compared to younger cohorts (Bjelde et al. 2008).

Problem gambling is a significant concern among older adults because features commonly associated with the transition to older adulthood may expose them to greater gambling-related harm. For example, constrained financial resources (Levens et al. 2005), declining health (CAMH 2004; Kerber et al. 2008) including chronic conditions (Hong et al. 2009), and increased social isolation (Erickson et al. 2005; Pietrzak and Petry 2006) have been associated with problem gambling among older adults. The movement of the baby boom generation into older adulthood makes this cohort an increasingly large portion of the North American population. For example, according to Statistics Canada, Canada has the fastest aging population in the G7, with older adults projected to represent between 22.2 and 23.6% of the Canadian population by 2030 (Statscan 2014a, b). This means that any threat to the mental health and financial stability of older adults will become of greater importance to North American society.

## Gambling among Men and Women

Rates of gambling participation and problem gambling are consistently higher among men than women (Holdsworth et al. 2012). Explanations for these higher rates among men include increased tendency towards risky behaviors (Miller and Currie 2008; Byrnes et al. 1999),

higher rates of impulse control disorders (Ibáñez et al. 2003), and higher rates of co-morbid substance abuse (Ferentzy et al. 2013; Maccallum and Blaszczynski 2002; Welte et al. 2004). Given the higher prevalence of problem gambling and its relationship to other risky behaviors, men are overrepresented in clinical research on problem gambling (Crisp et al. 2000). Other studies suggest that gambling is an activity that is closely tied to ideals of masculinity which excludes women in many of its practices and places (Cassidy 2014). For men, gambling may reflect a way to engage in masculine ideals of risk taking and self-reliance (Walker et al. 2005). The focus of earlier studies on men's experiences of gambling left a gap in our knowledge of women's gambling behavior. Chiefly, problem gambling prevention and treatment programs have come to focus on the experiences of men with relatively little attention paid to gambling among women (Scannell et al. 2000; Toneatto and Wang 2009). As a result, popular treatment programs such as Gamblers' Anonymous tend to provide therapies designed for men and tend to be male dominated (Kim et al. 2015) despite findings that women are significantly more likely to seek treatment than men (Valdivia-Salas et al. 2014).

As noted in a review of the gambling literature by Holdsworth et al. (2012), gender analysis in research on problem gambling continues to be a subject that needs more attention in academic research. This is especially of concern when differences in rates of gambling participation and problem gambling between men and women are becoming smaller (Brown and Coventry 1997; Holdsworth et al. 2012; Volberg 2003). Additionally, problem gambling tends to develop later in life among women in comparison to men and has been shown to progress at a faster rate (González-Ortega et al. 2012; Toneatto and Wang 2009). This makes the question of gender differences in problem gambling especially relevant to older adults.

## Importance of Gambling Motivation

One aspect of gambling that differs between men and women are the motivations that drive gambling participation. In particular, research has shown that, while men are more likely to endorse motivations for purposes of excitement or "pleasure-seeking", women are more likely to endorse motivations for purposes of emotional stress avoidance (Ellenbogen et al. 2007; Sacco et al. 2011; Schull 2002; The Productivity Commission 2010). For example, Schull's (2002) interviews with 30 female problem gamblers showed that gambling was used as a way to cope with the stresses of their everyday lives. For women, such stresses may include higher rates of co-morbid psychiatric disorders (Thomas and Moore 2001) and conflicting expectations of gender roles associated with work and the family (van der Maas 2016).

Identifying motivations is useful when trying to understand why people become involved with gambling and to what extent they may be harmed by their involvement. Research has shown that some motivations are linked to greater gambling participation. Chantal et al. (1995) observed that those who gambled in order to have fun and expressed having a sense of choice in their gambling showed higher gambling involvement in a sample of horse racing bettors. Similarly, Wardle et al. (2011) found that gambling for social reasons was associated with less frequent gambling participation in comparison to motivations related to enhancement, recreation, coping, or money.

Gaining a better understanding of the motivations that drive gambling behavior can be useful in identifying people who might be at risk of developing problem gambling. Gambling to escape from negative emotional states is a commonly endorsed motivation that has been linked to higher risk of problem gambling (Blaszczynski and McConaghy 1989; Taber et al.

1987; Wood and Griffiths 2007). For example, Stewart et al. (2008) in their study on gambling and alcohol use showed that gambling related to coping with psychological distress was positively associated with problem gambling and suggested that subtyping people based on their motivations to gamble could be beneficial in identifying participants prone to problem gambling. Motivations to gamble have also been linked to cognitive correlates of problem. In a study of problem-gambler poker players, Mitrovic and Brown (2009) found strong correlations between non-self-determined motivations (those related to external and introjected regulation), problem gambling, and faulty beliefs and alexithymia or being unable to describe one's emotional state, which has also been shown to increase with age (Mattila et al. 2006).

Understanding motivations can also be important to identify patterns of gambling behaviors that are associated with lower odds of gambling. Wood and Griffiths (2015) found that gambling for purposes of leisure was associated with “positive players,” gambling participants who were at low risk of problem gambling. Their study also found that the endorsement of leisure as the primary motivation for gambling was associated with a willingness to adopt responsible gambling strategies. Identifying motivations for gambling can be useful to responsible gambling strategies. Given the association of certain motivations with problem gambling, motivations may be an effective target in preventing and identifying problem gambling (Neighbors et al. 2002). Alternatively, the association of other motivations, such as gambling for entertainment and social purposes, with gambling as a form of low-risk leisure may make them a useful target for future responsible gambling strategies (Wood and Griffiths 2015).

## Motivations among Older Adults

While the connection between motivations to gamble and problem gambling have been well established in the gambling literature among youth and younger adults, there is a lack of research on this theme among older adults (Stansbury et al. 2015; Stewart and Zack 2008). Munro et al. (2003) found that motivations to gamble associated with earning money and relieving feelings of anxiety and loneliness were associated with problem gambling among older adults. In contrast, an investigation by Clarke and Clarkson (2009) found that seeking stimulation was a motivation to gamble among older adults and was associated with significantly increased odds of problem gambling. However, with relatively little research on the subject, it is imperative to explore further the connection between motivation and problem gambling among older adults. In particular, a lack of information on how these motivations vary across gender is of interest considering the current trend of reductions in gender differences in gambling behaviors (Holdsworth et al. 2012).

## Study Purpose

The primary aim of this study is to examine the relationship between people's motivations to visit a casino with the probability of problem gambling among a sample of older adults (+ 55). We also examined whether men and women differed with respect to motivations to visits a casino and if these motivations are differentially associated with problem gambling by gender.

## Methods

### Data Collection

Respondents were recruited through cluster sampling procedures from 7 gambling locations in Southwestern and Central Ontario gathering approximately 300 respondents from each location. Sampling occurred from July 29 to September 16, 2013. Respondents were approached at random while entering or exiting the gambling venue and screened for eligibility: age 55+, permanent residence in Ontario, and fluency in English. Stratified random sampling was used in order to ensure representativeness of gambling venue patrons in terms of age and sex. Trained interviewers intercepted casino patrons entering and exiting the gambling venue at regular intervals. Participants were excluded from participating if they belonged to the strata that had previously been filled. Space for onsite survey administration was arranged through consultation with the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG). These venues included one casino and 6 racinos (horse tracks with additional gaming opportunities).

Surveys were completed in private on a tablet computer with the assistance of a trained interviewer. Surveys took between 15 and 45 min to complete and participants were given a \$10 dollar gift card for their participation. Respondents (4345) were intercepted on site. Of the initial intercepts, 1468 (34%) refused to participate, and 774 (18%) did not meet the eligibility requirements or were turned away when sample strata were filled. In total, 2103 surveys were completed resulting in an overall response rate of 66%.

### Measures

The dependent variable was problem gambling status as indicated by a score of 8 or higher on the Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI) (Ferris and Wynne 2001). Respondents self-identified their gender as either male or female and none refused to answer. Marital status was coded as widowed versus all other marital statuses. This division was chosen because a greater proportion of women were expected to be widowed which could confound any observed gender-related observations. Age was grouped into five categories (55–59, 60–64, 65–69, 70–74, 75, and over). Retirement marks a significant life change common among older adults that may have important implications for gambling behavior (Munro et al. 2003). For this study, employment status distinguishes between those who were retired and all other employment categories (reference group). Lower educational attainment has also been associated with problem gambling (Wiebe et al. 2001). Education was identified as dichotomous, reflecting high school or less than high school versus some post-secondary education. Some recent research shows that first-generation immigrants have lower rates of problem gambling compared to native born and second- and third-generation immigrants (Wilson et al. 2015). Place of birth separates those who were born in Canada and those who were foreign-born.

Motivation was measured using the following question: “What are the main reasons why you go to casinos or slot locations?” Respondents were given a list of potential reasons and asked to check all that applied. The possible motivations are listed in Table 2.

## Analysis

We conducted separate analyses for men and women examining the intercorrelations of motivations to visit a gambling venue. Principal component analysis (PCA) with a varimax rotation was used to group the motivations. Further factor analyses of the motivation index (e.g., confirmatory factor analysis) were deemed inappropriate as the battery of questions does not represent a scale measuring a common central concept (see Streiner 2003 for further discussion). Internal consistency was measured by ordinal alpha using polychoric correlations due to the binary nature of the motivation variables. Correlations between motivation groupings were performed using Spearman rank correlations. Problem gambling status and demographic characteristics were examined by gender through chi-squared tests for independence. Logistic regressions were performed with problem gambling ( $PGSI \geq 8$ ) as the dependent variable and we tested for interactions between gender and types of motivations. All analyses are weighted to account for sampling design including survey location using information on casino patronage provided by the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) ver. 21.0 (IBM 2012) and the R Language and Environment for Statistical Computing (R Core Team 2015) were used for statistical analysis.

## Results

Table 1 shows socio-demographic characteristics for the sample stratified by gender. There was no significant gender difference in problem gambling in this sample. A significantly greater proportion of women in the sample were widowed relative to men (22.1 versus 10.0%, respectively). There was also significant variation across gender by age group such that more men had acquired post-secondary education. Fewer women

**Table 1** Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample by sex ( $n = 2103$ )

	Female (1101)	Male (1002)	
Problem gambling (8 + PGSI)			
Yes	76 (7.3%)	74 (7.7%)	ns
Marital Status			
Single/married/divorced/separated	811 (77.9%)	860 (90.0%)	***
Widowed	230 (22.1%)	96 (10.0%)	
Age range			
55–59 years	178 (17.1%)	131 (13.7%)	**
60–64 years	197 (18.9%)	157 (16.4%)	
65–69 years	203 (19.5%)	167 (17.5%)	
70–74 years	183 (17.5%)	179 (18.7%)	
75 and over	280 (26.9%)	322 (33.7%)	
Highest level of education			
High school or Less	638 (61.3%)	534 (55.8%)	*
Post-Secondary	403 (38.7%)	422 (44.2%)	
Employment status			
Employed/homemaker/disabled/other	329 (31.6%)	235 (24.6%)	**
Retired	712 (68.4%)	720 (75.4%)	
Place of birth			
Outside of Canada	500 (48.0%)	441 (46.2%)	ns

Comparisons made by Pearson  $\chi^2$  \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

than men were retired (68.4 versus 75.4%, respectively). There was no significant difference in place of birth according to gender.

For the PCA, two motivations were removed before extraction. Visiting the gambling venue to drink alcohol was removed due to low endorsement among both genders (0.7% overall), and visiting the gambling venue because one is addicted to gambling was removed due to possible collinearity with problem gambling status in the later regression analyses. Eigenvalues of 1 or greater. We used varimax rotation in order to simplify the inter-item correlations of the motivations. The PCA revealed three motivational groupings (eigenvalues  $\geq 1$ ) with respect to visiting a gambling venue: entertainment ( $\alpha = 0.83$ ), money ( $\alpha = 0.67$ ), and negative emotions ( $\alpha = 0.73$ ). Table 2 describes the factor loadings of each motivation after varimax rotation. All loading of less than 0.3 have been suppressed in the table. In those cases where a motivation loads similarly on more than one grouping and the difference in loading is less than 0.1, the motivation was placed in the group that was more theoretically justifiable. For example, gambling to deal with feelings of loneliness loaded similarly on both the entertainment and emotions group with a difference of 0.091. Since loneliness was considered to be a negative emotional state, it was placed with the emotions motivation group. The correlations between motivation groupings were as follows: entertainment and money = 0.221, money and emotions = 0.206, and entertainment and emotions = 0.361. All three correlations were significant at the  $p < 0.01$  level.

Table 3 describes the frequency with which men and women endorsed each motivation for visiting the casino/other slot locations. Seeking excitement was the most common motivation followed by wanting to socialize and avoiding boredom. The least common motivations for both men and women were drinking alcohol, paying off debt, and being addicted to gambling. There were significant gender differences in endorsement for the majority of the motivations. Women were significantly more likely than men to report going to the gambling venue for excitement, to socialize with others, and to enjoy musical entertainment. Men were more likely to endorse going to the gambling venue because they were bored or they wanted to access cheap food and drinks.

Table 4 describes the results of logistic regression analysis examining the associations between socio-demographic characteristics and motivations to visit a gambling venue and the probability of problem gambling. In model 1, the two oldest age categories showed

**Table 2** Component loadings for motivation groupings using varimax rotation

	Entertainment	Emotions	Money
Excitement	<i>0.376</i>		
Money			<i>0.66</i>
Socialize	<i>0.663</i>		
Watch other gamble	<i>0.584</i>		
Musical entertainment	<i>0.487</i>		<i>0.394</i>
Feel about self	<i>0.554</i>	0.403	
Escape worries		<i>0.727</i>	
Helps anxiety/depression		<i>0.742</i>	
Boredom		<i>0.483</i>	
Cheap food/drinks			<i>0.58</i>
Safe location	<i>0.622</i>		
Loneliness	<i>0.476</i>	<i>0.385</i>	
Money to pay debt		<i>0.503</i>	<i>0.507</i>

Loadings of less than 0.3 have been suppressed; italics indicate belonging to column grouping



**Table 3** Distribution of motivations to go to a casino or other slot locations by gender

Motivations	Female	Male	Motivation	
	Count (%)	Count (%)	Cluster	
Excitement	892 (82.6%)	758(76.6%)	Entertainment	***
To socialize	462 (42.8%)	348(35.2%)	Entertainment	**
Watch other gamble	111(10.3%)	134(13.5%)	Entertainment	
Musical entertainment	215(19.9%)	177(17.9%)	Entertainment	*
Safe location	299(27.7%)	271(27.4%)	Entertainment	
Boredom	381(35.3%)	409(41.4%)	Entertainment	*
Feel better about self	142(13.1%)	128(12.9%)	Entertainment	
To win money	417 (38.6%)	378(38.2%)	Money	
Cheap food/drinks	139(12.9%)	147(14.9%)	Money	*
Money to pay debt	41(3.8%)	32(3.2%)	Money	
Escape worries	162(15.0%)	135(13.7%)	Emotions	
Helps Anxiety/depression	76(7.0%)	56(5.7%)	Emotions	
Loneliness	160(14.8%)	121(12.2%)	Emotions	
Alcohol	4(0.4%)	11(1.1%)	NA	
Addicted to gambling	21(1.9%)	38(3.8%)	NA	

\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

significantly lower odds of problem gambling compared to the youngest age category (55–54). Those who were widowed had significantly higher odds of problem gambling relative to those who were not widowed. Retirees had lower odds of problem gambling. Being foreign-born was associated with higher odds of problem gambling. Education was not associated with problem gambling. The three types of motivations were significantly associated with problem gambling in model 1. Both the emotions motivations and the money motivations were

**Table 4** Logistic regression of motivation factors predicting odds of problem gambling

Categories	Model 1		Model 2 (Interactions)	
	OR (CIs)	<i>p</i>	OR (CIs)	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	0.08 (0.05, 0.14)	***	0.09 (0.05, 0.16)	***
Male	1.34 (0.93, 1.95)	ns	1.04 (0.53, 2.05)	ns
Motivations				
Emotions	2.14 (1.70, 2.70)	***	1.54 (1.14, 2.05)	**
Entertainment	0.70 (0.61, 0.79)	***	0.68 (0.57, 0.80)	***
Money	2.12 (1.70, 2.66)	***	2.54 (1.84, 3.54)	***
Age (ref = 50–55 years)				
60–64 years	0.58 (0.33, 1.02)	ns	0.62(0.34,1.09)	ns
65–69 years	0.95 (0.54, 1.66)	ns	0.99(0.56,1.75)	ns
70–74 years	0.28 (0.12, 0.59)	**	0.26 (0.12, 0.57)	**
75 and over	0.35 ( 0.18, 0.68)	**	0.36 (0.18, 0.69)	**
Widowed	1.82 (1.07, 3.03)	*	2.00 (1.18, 3.34)	**
Post-secondary education	0.83 (0.57, 1.22)	ns	0.81 (0.55, 1.19)	ns
Retired	0.51 (0.33, 0.80)	**	0.52 (0.33, 0.82)	**
Born outside Canada	2.81 (1.93, 4.15)	***	2.88 (1.96, 4.27)	***
Interactions				
Male*Emotions			2.17 (1.38, 3.44)	***
Male*Entertainment			0.99 (0.76, 1.29)	ns
Male*Money			0.74 (0.47, 1.17)	ns

\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

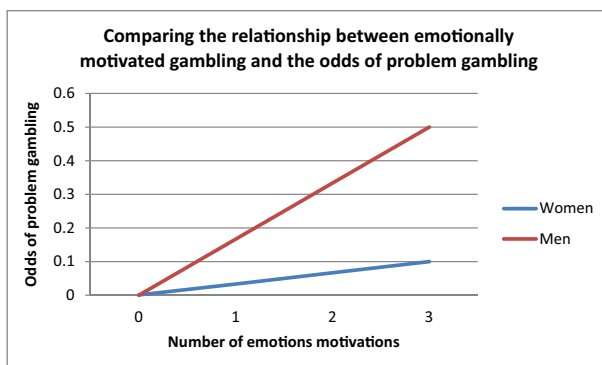


associated with higher odds of problem gambling and the entertainment group was associated with lower odds of problem gambling.

Three interaction terms were added in model 2 to examine the gender-based differences in problem gambling among the motivation groupings. There were no gender differences in problem gambling status for entertainment or money motivation groupings. For men, emotional motivations for visiting a casino put them at over two times greater risk of problem gambling. This interaction term is visually illustrated in Fig. 1 and shows that for men, a greater number of emotional gambling motivations predicted significantly higher odds of problem gambling in comparison to women.

## Discussion

This study investigated the association of motivations to visit a casino to problem gambling among older adults. Women, relative to men, were more likely to visit a casino for entertainment, musical entertainment, and socializing. Men were more likely to do so out of boredom and for cheap food/drinks. Similar to Lee et al. (2007), our findings suggested that older adults who visited a casino to escape negative emotions or to deal with money issues were more likely to report problem gambling; older adults motivated to visit a casino for entertainment were less likely to report gambling problems. Visiting the gambling venue for purposes of entertainment was negatively associated with problem gambling, and visiting the gambling venue to cope with negative emotional states and for motivations related to money were positively associated with problem gambling. The finding that visiting a gambling venue for entertainment purposes is associated with lower odds of problem gambling suggests that there are patterns of older adult casino patron behaviors that are less likely to result in harm. Determining the direction of this relationship is difficult with the current cross-sectional design. It may be the case that experiencing financial strain or negative emotions may be caused by over-involvement in gambling rather than problem gambling being caused by these types of motivations to visit a gambling venue. Several researchers suggest that there are benefits that gambling participation can offer older adults (Desai et al. 2004; Sobel 2001). As found in a meta-analysis by Tse et al. (2012), possible positive aspects of gambling for older adults include enhanced problem-solving skills, great socialization, and higher self-esteem. Others such as Hope and Havir (2002) suggest that assumptions of increased harm among older adults are the result of cultural constructions of older adults as needing sedate activity, isolated from the rest of society.



**Fig. 1** Comparing the relationship between emotionally motivated gambling and the odds of problem gambling

The findings of this study also point to gender differences in motivations to visit a gambling venue and problem gambling. A potentially impactful finding of this study relates to differences observed between men and women in the motivations to gamble and their relationships with problem gambling. Differences were also observed in the rates at which men and women endorsed different motivations for visiting gambling venues. A common trend in gambling research is to associate motivations related to excitement and sensation seeking with men (Walker et al. 2005) and motivations related to dealing with or escaping from negative emotional states with women (Baumeister 1991; Hing and Breen 2001). However, our findings show that motivations associated with entertainment were significantly more popular among women, dealing with boredom was more commonly endorsed among men, and no significant differences were observed between the popularity of motivations related to escape worries, to help with feelings of anxiety or depression, or out of loneliness. Further, the finding that emotionally motivated gambling was more closely related to problem gambling among men in comparison to women suggests that the common association of gambling and emotional regulation with women may distract from the treatment and prevention needs of men. For example, Baxter et al. (2016) in their analysis of gender differences in stigma as a barrier to seeking treatment found that among men, having to admit that gambling was related to coping with negative emotional states resulted in greater felt stigma which in turn affects help-seeking. Their study also found that financial difficulties as a result of gambling affected both men and women.

An unexpected finding was the similarity in problem gambling rates among men and women in the study. Across many research settings, it has been shown that men typically experience problem gambling at a significantly higher rate than women (see Holdsworth et al. 2012 for review). However, our sample showed no significant difference in the rate of problem gambling between men and women. The rate of problem gambling is also quite high at 7.5% compared to those found in the general population of older adults which in Ontario has been estimated at approximately 0.2% (Wiebe et al. 2004). Drawing the sample from casinos and other gambling venues means that the current sample has a high number of regular gamblers. As such, the results may be more reflective of older adult casino patrons for whom gambling is a regular leisure activity rather than older adults as a whole. However, the lack of gender differences in problem gambling rates may be an important point of distinction between older adults and younger cohorts. Greater research exploring this finding is needed as it may indicate differences in the experience of older age that place women at greater vulnerability of problem gambling specifically, or poor mental health more generally.

## Limitations

There are several limitations to the current study. First, due to the cross-sectional nature of the data used, it is not possible to establish causal ordering of the relationship between motivations and risk of problem gambling. While motivations to gamble are often understood to precede actual gambling involvement, it is possible that these motivations to gamble have been learned through gambling involvement. For example, gambling in order to make money could be the result of a participant chasing losses that they accrued through earlier gambling participation.

A second limitation of the current study is that it involves only gambling venue patrons. This means that the current findings are not representative of the general older adult population

but reflects more those older adults who participate in gambling more regularly. However, the high proportion of regular gamblers in the sample resulted in a rate of problem gambling that is much higher than those found in the general population, making it possible to investigate relationships with problem gambling that might not be possible in a more representative sample.

Another limitation is the scope of the motivation questionnaire that was included in the study. While other motivation batteries such as the Gambling Motives Questionnaire focus on motivations to gamble more generally, the questions in this study reflect motivations to visit a gambling venue. This means that the findings of this study reflect motivations for visiting a casino or racino and not forms of gambling that are not available at these locations.

## Conclusion

The findings of the current study have important implications for how problem gambling among older adult casino patrons is addressed. First, the identification that motivations related to money and negative emotions were associated with greater odds of problem gambling can be useful in identifying those more vulnerable to problem gambling at earlier stages in a person's gambling career. The identification of the negative association of the entertainment motivations with problem gambling also supports the claim that gambling can be social activity with relatively low risk of developing problems for those visiting the casino for entertainment. Providing positive and social leisure options to an age cohort that sees large increases in leisure time and decreases in leisure options while providing revenues for local and provincial governments is a potentially positive aspect of gambling. Responsible gambling provision should involve discouraging gambling participation among those potential patrons who are more vulnerable to gambling and detecting potential problem gambling earlier in order to provide treatment at its earliest possible stages. The findings of this paper can contribute to both of these goals by flagging possible problem motivations at the point of entering the gambling venue.

In terms of gender-specific findings, the discovery that emotionally motivated gambling venue visitation was more closely associated with problem gambling among men, that entertainment motivated gambling venue visitation was more common among women, and that there were no gender differences in the rate of problem gambling challenge conventional understandings of gender and gambling. More research is needed on the subject to explore whether these trends indicate differences in the gambling behaviors of older adults in comparison to younger cohorts or whether these trends are an indication of reduced gender differences in gambling as a whole (Volberg 2003). In either case, this study suggests that previous assumptions about the gendered nature of gambling require reconsideration when applied to older adults.

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## Compliance with Ethical Standards

**Conflict of Interest** The authors declare no conflict of interest in the publishing to this research.

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