

MANAGEMENT OF GAMBLING ADDICTION AMONG YOUTHS: A PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION

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Abstract

The aim of the study was on management of gambling addiction among youths: A psycho-educational intervention. The study adopted descriptive research design. The population of the study was 1000 gamblers gotten from 20 gambling shops in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu state. Simple random sampling was adopted for the study where 30 gamblers were selected from each gambling outlet, making a total of 600 respondents selected for the study. The instrument for data collection was Behavioural Modification Strategies Questionnaire (BMIQ) and Cognitive Restructuring Interventions Questionnaire (CRIQ) both designed by the researcher. These items were validated through selection of 10 gamblers for the face validity through trial testing for the instrument. Data obtained were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer research question while chi-square was used to test the hypotheses. The cut-off point considered as agree for the respondents was 2.50 or above which was considered positive while a mean score below 2.50 was considered negative. The findings revealed that behaviour modification which are exposure to new line of trade; exposure to new friends; engaging in learning new tasks; participating in life changing activities; exposure to educational game playing and participating in awareness against gambling and cognitive restructuring interventions which are Pictorial representation of negative effects of gambling; Frequent emphasis on negativity of gambling; Making affirmative words rejecting gambling; Listening to encouraging tapes; Family show of acceptance and love; Making public renouncement of gambling and Reciting positive words denouncing gambling could manage gambling addiction among youths. The study recommended among others that government should create more information and communication technology related jobs to the youths to keep their minds off gambling.

Keywords: management, gambling addiction, behavioural modification, cognitive restructuring, psycho-education

Introduction

Addictive gambling has become a phenomenon among youths, especially in developing nations, Nigeria not excluded in the act. Consequently, suicidal tendencies, mental disorder and violent behaviours are of increase among youths. Gambling according to Williams (2017) has to do with staking money or something of material value on an event having an uncertain outcome in the hope of winning additional money and or material goods. The money to be won is packaged under the gambling game such as sports, betting, carsino, porka and lotteries. The type of gambling among the youth depends on the joy derivable by the gambler. Gemma, Corti, Miriam and Joseph (2016) identified various types of gambling to include: lottery, casino, promotional competitions, sports betting, betting of animals, online/internet gambling and ludo. Most often, gamblers

engage in more than two type of gambling which sometimes result to addiction. Gambling addiction is the measure of the excessive time used in gambling. Gambling addict displays a pattern of behavioural addiction where he or she ignores social, relational and occupational responsibilities and becomes preoccupied with the gambling (Wurtzburg, 2012). According to the author, a person may manifest a gambling addiction for a period of time and then gain some control over his/her behaviour, only to relapse and begin the cycle yet again.

The negative effects of addictive gambling attract a widespread concern among stakeholders in the society. The effects include bankruptcy, job loss, broken home, the use and abuse of substances, depression and addiction (Charles, 2020). Kahura (2018) had earlier observed that suicide, debt, dropping out of university and poor academic performance are some of the negative effects of gambling among youths. In addition, Latvala, Lintonen and Konu(2019) observed that individual suffering from gambling disorder loss time from school or work, get into severe debt and legal problems, experience relationship problem, psychological distress and physical health problems.

Gambling games however, expose the young adult to various risk factors such as living in high derivative neighbourhood, membership of particular religious group, lack of formal education, unemployed (Max, 2017). Despite the risk factors involved in gambling, gambling has become a global practice. Globally, the incident of gambling has become worrisome. This is because statistically, in United States of America (USA), between 0.42% and 4% of the population are addicted to gambling (Black & Shaw, 2019). In India, 7.1% are problem gamblers, 27.9% of high school students have gambled (Jaisoorya etal, 2017). Furthermore, Geopoll (2017) observed that 54% youths in Africa engaged in gambling. Justifying Geopoll, Aguocha (2019) stated that 57.2% Nigerian secondary school students gambled while 42% Ghanaian youths gambled, depending on the type of gambling.

Gambling addiction according to American Psychiatric Association (1994) belongs to the type of mental illness called impulse control disorder which is manifested with the following features: very strong memory to gamble; always increasing the amount of betting to win money; regularly failed to stop or reduce gambling; became restless and irritability when trying to stop and gamble to resolve financial problems or arousal from the winning feelings. Indeed, gambling addiction is a compulsive behaviour, where someone is addicted to keep betting and bidding despite the negative consequences he or she suffered in the past (Gainbury, 2015). However, Bischof e tal (2015) stated that the social consequences of gambling abuse include decreased productivity, social welfare costs resulting from absence from work, loss of jobs, early retirement, increase in mortality resulting from suicidal tendencies occurring at advanced stages of gambling addiction. Sometimes, it leads to elevated distress and social isolation. American Psychiatric Association (2013) observed that preoccupation with gambling chasing losses, unsuccessful attempt to control gambling and financial difficulties due to gambling are some of the symptoms of gambling disorder.

Behavioural modification is the techniques used to increase or decrease a particular type of behaviour or reaction. Behavioural modification is based on the notion that behaviour can be learned or unlearned (Vijayalakshmi, 2019). To effectively modify behaviour, the methods of behavioural modification must be taken into consideration. Such methods include positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, punishment,

flooding, systematic desensitization, aversion therapy and extinction. To achieve positive reinforcement, variety of processes should be employed such as providing compliments, approval, encouragement and affirmation. Behavioural modification focuses on using a principle of learning and cognition to understand and change people's behaviour basically from negative behaviour to positive one. The goal of behaviour modification is to reduce or eliminate undesirable behaviour and teach or increase acceptable behaviour (Padlyalpattani, 2018).

Behavioural modification intervention according to Vijayalakshmi(2019) has been used to modify a wide variety of social and affective behaviour such as attention deficits, impulsivity anger, depression, noncompliance, attributions, motivation, social skills, and meta-cognition as well as academic deficits in reading, written expression handwriting, math, and spelling. Psychologists who engage in behaviour modification normally employ different scientific methods for people with maladaptive behaviour. Some of these different scientific methods include: engagement in constant research; establishment of the target behaviour to be acquired; development of treatment programmes; utilization of the treatment package and evaluation of the treatment programme (Adomeh, 2005). Consequently, behaviour modification sets a goal for itself and takes definite step towards achieving its set objectives.

Gambling addiction is a compulsive behaviour where someone is addicted to keep betting and bidding despite the negative consequences he or she suffered in the past (Gainsbury, 2015). Gambling addiction belongs to the type of mental illness called impulse control disorder. Patients at least have five of the following features: have a very strong memory to gamble; always increasing the amount of betting to win money; regularly failed to stop or reduce gambling, became restless and irritability when trying to stop and gamble to resolve financial problems or arousal from the winning feelings. According to Nowak and Aloe (2014), gambling addiction especially online gain more risks compared to other gambling habits. Statistically, internet gambling is the fastest growing mode of gambling and is changing the way that gamblers engage in gambling. It has been observed that the online global gambling market was valued at £6.1 billion in 2013, with expected annual growth of 10.1% in 2018(Global gaming Report, 2018). This has continuously cause gambling addiction. Gambling addiction is caused by a complex interaction between trait impulsivity personality and environmental conditions with cognition and effective variable. Individuals with high impulsivity personality is predicted to be more interested in instant rewards more than rewards require time to get it before they started gambling(Ismail & Hamid, 2021).

Psycho- education is an evidence-based therapeutic intervention for patients and their loved ones that provide information and support to better understand and cope with illness (Xia, Merinder& Belgam war, 2011). Psycho-education is most often associated with serious mental illness, including dementia, schizophrenia, clinical depression, anxiety disorders and autism (Tay, Seow, Xiao, Lee, Chiu & Chan, 2016). Psycho-education is a form of education that is specifically offered to individuals who are suffering from any one of several distinct mental health conditions impairing their ability to lead their lives. Psycho-education aimed at giving both the individuals who suffer from psychological conditions and their families a stronger base of knowledge for knowing on ways to cope and thrive in spite of the condition. It is usually refers to the imparting of knowledge about mental illness to a patient and his or her family. It is often informal and includes

discussions of etiology, natural history, and treatments as well as ways to maintain health such as being alert to early signs of deterioration, enhancing medication compliance and avoiding substances (Cohen, Glynn, Murray-Swank, Barrio, Fischer & Mccutcheon, 2008).

Cognitive restructuring is a strategy to recognize negative, inaccurate thoughts and replace them with alternative ones that are more realistic and helpful. Cognitive restructuring may involve several steps: write down the situation, list negative thoughts, identify cognitive distortions or errors that may underlie each thought, challenge each thought and generate rational response (Traeger, 2013). Cognitive restructuring may be helpful to an individual's that have chronic illness to manage how the illness affects their perceptions or themselves, relationship and their future. Indeed, cognitive restructuring is an educative process of actively disputing maladaptive thoughts and beliefs. Various scholars have worked on the effects of gambling on people. Weatherly(2013) observed that there are differences in young and old age while gambling, the young people make gambling as a way out of their problems, especially finance, but for the old age, it is part of entertainment. Barrault(2013) found that there was a significant relationship between individuals with gambling addiction problem and depression disorders. Nowak and Aloe (2014) observed that gambling online gain more risks compared to other gambling habits. Mariya(2018) reported an increase in winning value and the winning frequency may result in risk decision making and increase stimulus when each time their gambling. In they studies, Nower& Blaszczynski(2006) observed that impulsivity played a major role in the gambling addiction through several aspects such as quick decision regardless of their impact and consequences more likely to chose risky decision and always looking for attention.

Theoretically, social learning theory by Albert Bandura 1986 explains the possibility of behavioural modification of the youth from gambling addiction. Social learning theory suggests that social behaviour is learned by observing and imitating the behaviour of others. Social learning has four meditational processes, these are: attention: the degree to which we notice the behaviour; retention: how well we remember the behaviour; reproduction: the ability to perform the behaviour and modification: the will to emulate the behaviour. Bandura stated that behaviour, environment, and person/ cognitive factors interact in a reciprocal manner. As a result, the environment can determine a person's behaviour. However, the person can act to change the environment and the cognitive perception .With the application of the theory, gambling addicts will be encouraged to quit gambling with the rise of rewards that would be equivalent to their winning to put their minds away from gambling. Hence, gambling has become a worldwide problem which has cut across gender and age. Many gamblers have become addicted with resultant consequences of gambling disorder of reaction to winning, losing, desperation and hopelessness. Efforts by various researchers to find lasting solution to gambling addiction have not yielded the desired result which necessitated this study to contribute in determining efficacy of psycho-educational interventions in the management of gambling addiction among youths.

Purpose of the study

The aim of the study is to determine the various psycho-educative interventions foe management of gambling addiction among youths. Specifically, the study investigates:

1. behavioural modification interventions for managing gambling addiction among youths
2. cognitive restructuring interventions for managing gambling addiction among youths.

Research questions

1. What are the Behavioural modification interventions for managing gambling addiction among youths?
2. What are the Cognitive restructuring interventions for managing gambling addiction among youths?

Method

The research design adopted for this study was descriptive design. The population of the study was made up of 1000 gamblers gotten from 20 gambling shops in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu state. Simple random sampling was adopted for the study where 30 gamblers were selected from each gambling outlet, making a total of 600 respondents selected for the study. The instrument for data collection was Behavioural Modification Interventions Questionnaire (BMIQ) and Cognitive Restructuring interventions Questionnaire (CRIQ) both designed by the researcher. These items were validated through selection of 10 gamblers for the face validity through trial testing for the instrument. The questionnaires were made up of two clusters which covered Behavioural modification strategies and cognitive restructuring strategies for ameliorating gambling addiction. The instrument was a rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree(A)=3, Disagree(D)=2 and strongly Disagree(SD)=1. A total of 600 copies of the questionnaire were given out to the respondents in the sampled gambling outlet which was collected back after four days. Data obtained were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer research question while chi-square was used to test the hypotheses. The cut-off point considered as agree for the respondents was 2.50 or above which was considered positive while a mean score below 2.50 was considered negative.

Results

Research Question One: What are the Behavioural modification strategies for managing gambling addiction among youths?

Table 1: mean ratings and standard deviation of behavioural modification interventions for the managing gambling addiction among youths.

SN	Item Description	X	SD	Decision
1	Exposure to new line of trade	3.40	0.77	Accepted
2	Exposure to new friends	3.17	0.95	Accepted
3	Engaging in learning new tasks	3.19	0.94	Accepted
4	Participating in life changing activities	2.82	1.04	Accepted
5	Promise of reward	3.40	0.63	Accepted
6	Exposure to reading spiritual books	2.75	0.65	Accepted
7	Engaging in leisure trip frequently	3.30	0.55	Accepted
8	Exposure to game playing	2.90	0.48	Accepted
9	Participating in awareness against gambling	3.06	0.63	Accepted

Table 1 shows all the items (1-9) under behavioural modification strategies to ameliorate gambling addiction had mean scores range from 2.75- 3.40. the scores indicated that the exposure to new line of trade, exposure to new friends, engaging in learning new tasks, participating in life changing activities, promise of reward, exposure to reading spiritual books, engaging in leisure trip frequently, exposure to game playing and participating in awareness against gambling are some of the behavioural modification strategies to ameliorating gambling.

Research Question Two: What are the Cognitive restructuring interventions for managing gambling addiction among youths?

Table 2: mean ratings and standard deviation on cognitive restructuring interventions for managing gambling addiction among youths.

S/N	Item Description	X	SD	Decision
10	Pictorial representation of negative effects of gambling	3.18	0.73	Accepted
11	Frequent emphasis on negativity of gambling	3.12	0.79	Accepted
12	Making affirmative words rejecting gambling	2.87	0.75	Accepted
13	Listening to encouraging tapes	3.41	0.77	Accepted
14	Family show of acceptance and love	3.29	0.74	Accepted
15	Making public renouncement of gambling	2.85	0.70	Accepted
16	Reciting positive words denouncing gambling	2.86	0.84	Accepted

Table 2 shows all the items 10- 16 under cognitive restructuring strategies to ameliorate gambling addiction had mean scores range from 2.83-3.41. The scores indicated that Pictorial representation of negative effects of gambling, frequent emphasis on negativity of gambling, making affirmative words rejecting gambling, Listening to encouraging tapes, Family show of acceptance and love, Making public renouncement of gambling and Reciting positive words denouncing gambling are the cognitive restructuring intervention to managing gambling addiction.

Discussion

From the result of research question one, the respondents accepted that exposure to new line of trade, exposure to new friends, engaging in learning new tasks, participating in life changing activities, promise of reward, exposure to reading spiritual books, engaging in leisure trip frequently, exposure to game playing and participating in awareness against gambling are some of the behavioural modification interventions for managing gambling. The adoption of these behaviour modifications are aimed at reducing the depressive nature of these gamblers because most of them do find themselves depressed confirming the earlier report of Barrault (2013) who found that there was a significant relationship between individuals with gambling addiction problem and depression disorders. However, to modify the behaviour of the addict, one step may not be enough as (Adomeh, 2005) rightly said that some of the different scientific methods to apply include: engagement in constant research; establishment of the target behaviour to be acquired; development of treatment programmes; utilization of the treatment package and evaluation of the treatment programme.

In research question two which discussed the Cognitive restructuring interventions for managing gambling addiction among youths, the respondent was on the opinion that Pictorial representation of negative effects of gambling, frequent emphasis on negativity

of gambling, making affirmative words rejecting gambling, Listening to encouraging tapes, Family show of acceptance and love, Making public renouncement of gambling and Reciting positive words denouncing gambling are the cognitive restructuring interventions for managing gambling addiction. This compliment the earlier study of (Traeger, 2013) who stated that Cognitive restructuring may involve several steps: write down the situation, list negative thoughts, identify cognitive distortions or errors that may underlie each thought, challenge each thought and generate rational response.

Conclusion

Gambling addiction has been found to be devastating and has cause more harm than good to the youths but there could be some psycho-educational interventions that would help manage their effects on the youth. Such interventions according to this study are behavioural modification strategy which are exposure to new line of trade; exposure to new friends; engaging in learning new tasks; participating in life changing activities; promise of reward; exposure to reading spiritual books; engaging in leisure trip frequently; exposure to educational game playing and participating in awareness against gambling and cognitive restructuring strategy which are Pictorial representation of negative effects of gambling; Frequent emphasis on negativity of gambling; Making affirmative words rejecting gambling; Listening to encouraging tapes ; Family show of acceptance and love; Making public renouncement of gambling and Reciting positive words denouncing gambling. These interventions would go a long way in helping the addicts come out of the problem of gambling addiction.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proffered by the study:

1. Government should create more information and communication technology related jobs to the youths to keep their minds off gambling.
2. Those who have been in the web of addiction should not be treated as outcast but be re-united to the family as a show of love.
3. The schools should devout time in teaching the youths the effects of addictive gambling.
4. Parents should monitor their children relationship at early age so that they will not fall into the hands of gamblers.
5. There should be policy regulating the activities of gambling outlets in the country.

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