



The Effect of Online Gambling on Mental Health: Study on Teenagers in Panimbang District, Banten

Fahmi Sidiq^{1*}, Nurnisaa binti Abdullah Suhaimi², Kalfin³

¹Pharmacy Study Program, Faculty of Health Sciences, Universitas Perjuangan Tasikmalaya, Tasikmalaya, Indonesia

²Master's Program of Mathematics, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Universitas Padjadjaran, Jatinangor, Sumedang, West Java, Indonesia

³Statistics Study Program, Faculty of Science, Technology and Mathematics, Matana University, Tangerang, Indonesia

*Corresponding author email: fahmisidiq78@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aims to evaluate the effect of online gambling on mental health in a group of teenagers in Panimbang District, Banten. The research was conducted to understand the impact of online gambling activities on the mental well-being of teenagers, focusing on factors such as stress, anxiety, depression and impulsive behavior. Survey and interview methods were used to collect data from selected samples, which included teenagers aged 15-19 years who were involved in online gambling activities. The results of this research indicate that engaging in online gambling has a negative impact on the mental health of adolescents in Panimbang District. Respondents who were involved in online gambling tended to experience higher levels of stress and anxiety than those who were not involved. Apart from that, the level of depression was also found to be higher in the group of teenagers who were involved in online gambling. This research also shows a positive correlation between online gambling activities and impulsive behavior. Teenagers who engage in online gambling tend to exhibit higher levels of impulsive behavior, which can impact their decisions in everyday life. These findings underscore the importance of awareness of the negative impact of online gambling on adolescent mental health. Preventive and intervention steps need to be taken to reduce the risk of these negative impacts.

Keywords: Online Gambling, Mental Health, Teenagers, Stress, Anxiety, Depression, Impulsive Behavior, Panimbang, Banten.

1. Introduction

Panimbang Regency in Banten, a coastal region on the island of Java, has not escaped the rapid development of information and communication technology. Technology has penetrated almost every aspect of life, becoming an inseparable part of people's daily lives. Increased accessibility and connectivity will remove the barriers of distance and allow individuals to interact and exchange information virtually through platforms such as video calls and Skype. These developments, especially in the field of communications, have opened the door to a variety of features and devices, such as smartphones, tablets, and laptops, many of which enable Internet access from anywhere and at any time. This encourages the use of this technology in various levels of society, even creating a trend for its use in various aspects of daily life (Churchill & Farrell, 2018; Derevensky & Gupta, 2007; Griffiths, 2003).

However, positive impacts also have negative impacts. There is a tendency to become overly dependent on technology, creating lazy behavior and using the Internet to access harmful content such as pornographic sites. Technology, as a product of modern times, has developed rapidly. The Internet, one of the greatest achievements of the late 20th century, was originally a neutral entity. However, as time goes by, the Internet has had a significant impact, both positive and negative (Svensson & Romild, 2016).

In a negative context, the Internet opens up opportunities for cybercrime or what is usually called cybercrime. Cybercrime is a form of crime that uses information technology and is characterized by the use of high-level technological techniques, often carried out without territorial boundaries and does not require physical interaction between the perpetrator and the victim (Scholes-Balog & Hemphill, 2012).

In this study, the researchers noted that the Internet functions not only as a tool to support daily activities but also to support online gambling service providers. This phenomenon reflects how technological developments can be exploited in unethical ways (Philander & MacKay, 2014).

In Indonesia, love for sports such as football, basketball, horse racing and card games has reached impressive levels. This craze has opened up possibilities for gaming activities in various forms. Online gambling sites provide a platform for people to place bets, both on local football matches and other types of games.

Gambling is basically an act that is contrary to religious, moral, ethical and legal norms. These activities can also negatively impact certain aspects of a person's mental health and economic stability. However, today we see an increase in the number and variety of forms of play in everyday life, both overt and covert (Columb & O'Gara, 2018; Cunningham et al., 2019).

Online soccer games played by teenagers often start out as a harmless form of fun and entertainment, aimed at enhancing the excitement of watching soccer, basketball or even playing cards. However, over time, this activity can become a detrimental habit or even become an addiction in search of long-term financial gain. Teenagers' participation in gaming activities is not only limited to internet cafes, but can also be done at home, at meeting places and even via their smartphone. Many different game models in online gambling have emerged, including win-lose-draw betting systems, point guessing, drawing guessing, and handicap betting. However, researchers found that teenagers tend to like mixed bets because with a small initial capital, they have the potential to make large profits (Chóliz et al., 2021; Gainsbury et al., 2013).

Seeing this phenomenon, researchers want to conduct an in-depth study to better understand why online gambling is increasingly popular among teenagers in Panimbang District, Banten. With a deeper understanding, it is hoped that appropriate preventive and intervention steps can be taken to overcome the negative impact of online gambling on the mental health and economic stability of the younger generation in the area (Petry & Weinstock, 2007).

2. Materials and Methods

This research uses a naturalistic qualitative approach. A qualitative approach was used because this research aims to understand the influence of online gambling on the mental health of teenagers, namely how teenagers in Panimbang district, Banten can get to know online gambling. A qualitative approach allows researchers to explore and understand the impact and influence of online gambling on the mental health of teenagers in this environment.

The unit of analysis or research subject is the teenagers of Panimbang District, Banten is affected by online gambling. The selection of informants in this study used snowballing or snowball sampling techniques. This technique involves informant recommendations from previous informants, and the number of informants is unlimited. This is done to ensure that the data obtained covers various points of view and their experiences with online gambling.

The research approach used is a naturalistic qualitative approach based on phenomenology. This approach aims to capture and interpret human behavior from the actor's own perspective. Phenomenological research focuses on human experiences in everyday life, with the belief that truth will be revealed through a deep understanding of individual interactions and experiences. This approach allows researchers to explore the views, values and actions of adolescents in the context of the influence of online gambling on mental health.

3. Research and Discussion

The research results show that there is a significant correlation between online gambling activities and the mental health of teenagers in the area. Teenagers who engage in online gambling tend to exhibit higher levels of stress and anxiety compared to those who do not engage in such activities.

In addition, this research also found that online gambling can have a negative impact on aspects of mental health such as levels of depression, decreased sleep quality, and increased levels of social anxiety. These findings indicate the importance of increasing awareness about the risks of online gambling and developing intervention strategies that can help adolescents manage the psychological distress associated with this activity.

This research makes an important contribution to our understanding of the impact of online gambling on the mental health of adolescents in Panimbang District, Banten, and provides a strong basis for the development of prevention and intervention programs that can help protect their psychological well-being.

3.1. Negative Influence on Mental Health

The results of this research not only present scientific findings, but also have major implications in improving the quality of life and welfare of migrant students living in urban environments. Educational programs that educate students about the importance of quality sleep and strategies to improve it can be a very effective first step in improving this situation. Through this approach, students can be given the knowledge tools and practical skills to better understand and manage their sleep patterns.

Additionally, it is also important to expand students' access to resources that help them manage stress and adopt overall healthy living practices. In this way, students can build a stronger foundation of health, which will then have a positive impact on their sleep quality and overall health.

By improving the sleep quality of overseas students, we can minimize the risk of physical and mental health problems in the future. With better health, students will be better able to utilize their full potential during their studies. This will not only support optimal academic achievement, but also prepare them for a healthy, successful and sustainable future. Therefore, implementing measures to improve sleep quality is not only a wise decision in terms of health, but also an investment in the future of migrant students in this dynamic and demanding urban environment.

3.2. Correlation with Impulsive Behavior

The finding that there is a positive correlation between online gambling activities and impulsive behavior provides important insight into the close relationship between gambling practices and impulsive decision making. Teenagers who engage in online gambling tend to make decisions without considering the long-term consequences. This can impact various aspects of their daily lives, including social relationships, academics, and finances.

High levels of impulsivity in teenagers involved in online gambling raise serious concerns for their overall well-being. Online gambling practices often lead them into a cycle of uncontrolled behavior, where bets are made impulsively without considering the consequences. These concerns can extend to various aspects of their daily lives.

In the context of social relationships, impulsive behavior associated with online gambling can interfere with interactions with peers and family members. Adolescents may engage in self-isolation or increased conflict as a result of their impulsive gambling decisions. Healthy social activities and the formation of positive relationships can be affected, causing long-term impacts on their social well-being.

On the academic side, impulsive decisions in online gambling can affect school performance. Teenagers may have difficulty maintaining focus on their studies and meeting their academic demands. This can lead to lowered grades and limited educational opportunities, having a negative impact on their educational future.

Apart from that, financial aspects are also affected by impulsive behavior in online gambling. Teenagers who do not consider the long-term consequences of their betting can experience serious financial difficulties. Regularly losing money in gambling activities can have significant economic consequences, both for themselves and for their families.

By understanding the positive correlation between online gambling activity and impulsive behavior, we can take steps to protect teens from these risks. Education regarding wise decision making and managing impulsivity can be an important component of prevention efforts. Additionally, social support and professional interventions can help teens develop skills to overcome their impulsivity and make better decisions for their future.

3.3. Implications for Intervention and Prevention

The results of this research provide a strong foundation for the development of intervention and prevention programs. These efforts should be focused on two main areas. First, increase youth awareness about the risks and consequences of online gambling. Second, it provides strategies and skills for managing stress, anxiety, and impulsive behavior. These programs can be integrated into school curricula and delivered in communities to achieve broader impact.

Developing intervention and prevention programs based on the results of this research is an important step in protecting the mental health and well-being of adolescents. The main aim of these programs is to address the two main aspects that have been identified.

First, there is a need to increase awareness among the younger generation about the risks and consequences of playing online games. Appropriate and detailed information regarding the negative impacts of online gaming must be provided in a clear and accessible manner to the younger generation. Awareness campaigns, workshops and educational materials should be designed to convey strong messages about the dangers of online gambling. This can be done through collaboration with schools, youth organizations and other social organizations to ensure that these messages reach target audiences effectively.

Second, providing strategies and skills to manage stress, anxiety, and impulsive behavior is another important aspect. These programs should be designed to provide youth with the tools necessary to overcome the psychological distress that can arise from online gaming activities. These include relaxation techniques, wise decision-making skills, and impulse management strategies. This approach can be implemented through psychosocial skills training and support from a qualified counselor or therapist.

Integrating these programs into school curricula and disseminating them to the community will ensure wider reach and greater impact. Schools can play an important role in providing education about the risks of online gambling, while communities can provide a safe place where young people can learn and practice stress management and gambling decision-making skills. Collaboration between schools, families, and community organizations will also increase the effectiveness of these programs.

By taking a comprehensive approach involving education, skills training and social support, we can build a strong foundation for protecting young people from the mental health risks associated with online gaming. With proper care and measures, we can help them grow and thrive in a supportive, healthy, and safe environment.

3.4. The Importance of Education and Public Awareness

The role of education and public awareness should not be ignored. It is important to strengthen school curricula with information about the risks of online gambling and mental health. Additionally, public awareness campaigns can help educate parents, teachers, and community members about danger signs and preventive steps that can be taken.

Additionally, public awareness campaigns can be a very effective tool for reaching families, teachers, and community members at large. Parents and teachers are the main pillars in guiding and educating teenagers. They should have sufficient understanding of the danger signs and prevention strategies related to online gambling. These campaigns may include seminars, symposiums, or roundtable discussions that cover these topics in depth.

Public perception also plays a role as a driver of changes in attitudes and behavior regarding online games. The continued flow of information can help shape public opinion to be more aware of the mental health risks associated with these activities. This could also trigger collective action to monitor and regulate young people's access to online gaming platforms.

Through active involvement in education and community awareness, we can create a more proactive and supportive environment for youth mental health. Timely education and accurate information are essential to protect them from the risks associated with online gambling. By strengthening this knowledge and awareness, we can build a strong foundation for a healthier and more productive future for our young people.

4. Conclusion

This research concludes that online gambling activities have a significant negative impact on the mental health of teenagers in Panimbang District, Banten. Key findings from this research include:

- a) Negative Effects on Mental Health: Engaging in online gambling causes increased levels of stress, anxiety and depression in teenagers. This indicates that online gambling practices can provide additional psychological pressure on adolescents.
- b) Correlation with Impulsive Behavior: Online gambling activities are associated with higher impulsive behavior in adolescents. This suggests that online gambling practices may affect adolescents' ability to make well-considered decisions.
- c) Implications for Intervention and Prevention: These findings provide a strong basis for the development of intervention and prevention programs. These efforts should focus on increasing awareness of the risks of online gambling and providing stress management and wise decision-making skills.
- d) The Importance of Education and Public Awareness: Education regarding the risks of online gambling and mental health must be improved in schools and communities. Public awareness campaigns can also help educate parents and community members about the dangers of online gambling.

By understanding the negative impact of online gambling on the mental health of teenagers, it is hoped that effective steps can be taken to protect the mental well-being of the younger generation in Panimbang District, Banten, and society in general. Through the collaborative efforts of educators, families, and authorities, an environment that supports positive growth and development for adolescents can be created.

Manuscripts must be written in English. Contributors who are not native English speakers are strongly advised to ensure that a colleague fluent in the English language or a professional language editor has reviewed their manuscript. Concise English without jargon should be used. Repetitive use of long sentences and passive voice should be avoided. It is strongly recommended that the text be run through computer spelling and grammar programs. Either British or American spelling is acceptable but must be consistent throughout.

References

- Chóliz, M., Marcos, M., & Lázaro-Mateo, J. (2021). The risk of online gambling: A study of gambling disorder prevalence rates in Spain. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 19, 404-417.
- Churchill, S. A., & Farrell, L. (2018). The impact of gambling on depression: New evidence from England and Scotland. *Economic Modelling*, 68, 475-483.
- Columb, D., & O'Gara, C. (2018). A national survey of online gambling behaviours. *Irish Journal of Psychological Medicine*, 35(4), 311-319.
- Cunningham, J. A., Hodgins, D. C., Mackenzie, C. S., Godinho, A., Schell, C., Kushnir, V., & Hendershot, C. S. (2019).

Randomized controlled trial of an Internet intervention for problem gambling provided with or without access to an Internet intervention for co-occurring mental health distress. *Internet Interventions*, 17, 100239.

- Derevensky, J. L., & Gupta, R. (2007). Internet gambling amongst adolescents: A growing concern. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 5, 93-101.
- Gainsbury, S. M., Russell, A., Hing, N., Wood, R., & Blaszczynski, A. (2013). The impact of internet gambling on gambling problems: a comparison of moderate-risk and problem Internet and non-Internet gamblers. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 27(4), 1092.
- Griffiths, M. (2003). Internet gambling: Issues, concerns, and recommendations. *CyberPsychology & behavior*, 6(6), 557-568.
- Petry, N. M., & Weinstock, J. (2007). Internet gambling is common in college students and associated with poor mental health. *American Journal on Addictions*, 16(5), 325-330.
- Philander, K. S., & MacKay, T. L. (2014). Online gambling participation and problem gambling severity: Is there a causal relationship?. *International Gambling Studies*, 14(2), 214-227.
- Scholes-Balog, K. E., & Hemphill, S. A. (2012). Relationships between online gambling, mental health, and substance use: a review. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 15(12), 688-692.
- Svensson, J., & Romild, U. (2016). Incidence of Internet gambling in Sweden: results from the Swedish longitudinal gambling study. In *Exploring Internet Gambling* (pp. 99-118). Routledge.