

# Predictors of gamblers beliefs about responsible gambling (RG) measures

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## Predictors of Gamblers Beliefs About Responsible Gambling Measures

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### Abstract

Responsible gambling (RG) measures are methods aimed at reducing and preventing negative consequences associated with gambling. Some RG measures are set by authorities or gambling operators while others are available as features for gamblers to use themselves (e.g. budget tools where personal monetary limits are set prior to gambling). The present study is based on a general gambler population and investigates how RG measures with some specific RG features are assessed by the gamblers. The data was collected in 2013 and 2015. The samples were drawn from the Norwegian Population Registry. In total 9129 gamblers participated. Gamblers were asked to state to which degree they agreed that ten specific RG measures help or would help them controlling their gambling. Overall, between 35 and 42% neither agreed nor disagreed, but among those with an opinion, most agreed. A multiple regression analysis identified eleven variables as significant predictors of positive beliefs about RG measures: female gender, young age, playing random games only, being a moderate risk or problem gambler, reporting high impact from gambling advertisements as well as the personality traits agreeableness, openness and neuroticism. Playing low risk games only, reporting a high amount of spending on gambling and the personality trait extraversion were inversely related to positive beliefs about RG measures. The total explained variance was however only 7.1%. Positive beliefs about RG measures can relate to needs for external based countermeasures to minimize or reduce problems. Negative views may reflect a wish to play without obstacles, take risks or to trust in self-control.

**Keywords** Responsible gambling · Gambling problems · Pre-commitment · Prevention · Harm reduction · Gambling

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- Introduction
- Method
- Results
- Discussion

# Introduction

- RG measures can prevent gambling problems and reduce negative consequences from gambling
- Primarily available for online gambling and more seldom applicable to land-based gambling
- Measures provided by authorities or gambling operators and tools /features where the gamblers can regulate their own gambling behaviour
- E.g. maximum loss limits, tools for personal limits, monitoring, pop-ups and self tests
- Several studies address how gamblers evaluate or assess RG measures, fewer studies have looked in to effectiveness
- The knowledge about how RG measures are viewed are important for both regulators and operators

# Method

- Sample drawn from the National Population Registry of Norway
- Data collected in two Norwegian prevalence studies (UiB 2013 and 2015)
- Postal survey to 38,000 persons in the age 16 through 74 years
- Responses from 9,129 gamblers of a total of 15,556 respondents (59% had gambled the last 12 months)
- Overall response rate 42.6%
- This study is with gamblers only

# Studied variables

- Beliefs in RG measures

Can beliefs be explained by

- gender
- age
- place of birth (Norway or outside)
  
- if you play low risk games only – or not
- if you play skill games – or not
- if you gamble for lower or higher amounts
- if you gamble online / remote or not

# Or can beliefs be explained by

- if you are a moderate risk/problem gambler – or not

(PGSI = 3-7/8 + or 0-2)

- extraversion
  - agreeableness
  - conscientiousness
  - neuroticism
  - openness
- MINI IPIP (4 items per dimension, scale from 1 to 5 (very inaccurate – very accurate))

- impact from gambling advertising

9 statements with four response alternatives, scale from 1 to 4 (strongly disagree - strongly agree)

Total score for all 9 statements (1-4)

Example of statements:

*“I play with higher risk (use more money) because of gambling advertisements”*

# The gamblers

	<i>N=8 588-9 129)</i>	Percentage	Mean (SD)
Men		54.2 %	
Age (16-74)			45.26 (15.2)
Born in Norway		92.1 %	
Played games with medium or high risk		73.5 %	
Played skill games		39.6 %	
Higher game spending		11.0 %	
Gambled online		27.0 %	
Moderate risk or problem gambler (PGSI 3+)		5.2 %	
Personality Traits			
Extraversion			13.99 (3.5)
Agreeableness			16.57 (2.7)
Conscientiousness			15.84 (3.0)
Nevroticism			10.00 (3.3)
Openness			13.78 (3.2)
Effect from gambling marketing			1.91 (0.6)
Total score – Beliefs about RG measures			2.98 (1.1)

# Gamblers beliefs in RG measures

Descriptive statistics. Percentages, mean and standard deviation (*SD*) for the ten items used to construct the total score for the Beliefs about RG measures (*N*=8,791- 8,859).

The following factors help me or would help me to regulate my gambling consumption:	Totally disagree % (1)	Disagree % (2)	Neither disagree nor agree % (3)	Agree % (4)	Totally agree % (5)	Mean	<i>SD</i>
<i>a. Prizes go direct to my bank account</i>	21.1	5.6	38.8	18.7	15.8	3.03	1.3
<i>b. Upper limit for stakes</i>	22.5	6.8	36.3	18.8	15.6	2.98	1.3
<i>c. Continuous feedback from the game on my losses</i>	<b>20.7</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>35.4</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>3.08</b>	<b>1.3</b>
<i>d. Continuous feedback from the game on my time spent gambling</i>	21.9	7.3	42.1	16.6	12.0	2.89	1.3
<i>e. Upper limit for prize size</i>	25.4	9.5	38.6	14.9	11.5	2.78	1.3
<i>f. The game has predefined limit for losses</i>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>36.8</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>3.07</b>	<b>1.3</b>
<i>g. Prior to gambling. I can set a loss limit in the game</i>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>35.2</b>	<b>22.9</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>3.14</b>	<b>1.3</b>
<i>h. Prior to gambling. I can set a time limit in the game</i>	20.9	7.0	41.6	17.6	12.9	2.95	1.3
<i>i. I can tell the game to ban me for a certain period</i>	21.7	6.6	39.8	17.4	14.6	2.97	1.3
<i>j. Through the game I can take a self-test and get feedback if I have gambling problems</i>	21.5	6.2	42.0	16.2	14.1	2.95	1.3

11 of the independent variables were significant predictors of beliefs about RG measures

Regression Analysis Summary for Demographic, Gambling and Personality Variables Predicting Beliefs about RG Measures (N=8,275).

Predictors	Unstandardized		Standardized		
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Gender (women 0, men 1)	-.134	.028	-.059	-4.844	.000
Age	-.010	.001	-.132	-10.928	.000
Place of birth (outside Norway 0, Norway 1)	-.064	.045	-.015	-1.430	.153
Game risk (at least one medium/high 0, low only 1,)	-.088	.030	-.035	-2.901	.004
Game type (at least one skill game 0, random only 1)	.066	.028	.029	2.312	.021
Game spending (low 0, high 1)	-.288	.040	-.081	-7.224	.000
Gambled online (no 0, yes 1)	-.035	.030	-.014	-1.177	.239
Moderate risk/problem gambler (no 0, yes 1)	.135	.058	.027	2.345	.019
Extraversion	-.011	.004	-.033	-2.823	.005
Agreeableness	.027	.005	.065	5.307	.000
Conscientiousness	-.006	.004	-.015	-1.278	.201
Neuroticism	.010	.004	.030	2.632	.008
Openness to experience	.012	.004	.035	3.083	.002
Self-reported impact from gambling advertisement	.251	.023	.126	10.977	.000

Dependent variable: Beliefs about RG measures.  $R^2=.071$ ,  $F_{14,8261}=44.901$ ,  $p<.001$

# Discussion – Beliefs in RG measures

More often lower beliefs:

- Men
- Extraversion
- Higher game spending
- Play skill games
- Play low risk games only

More often higher beliefs:

- Younger
- Affected by gambling marketing
- Agreeableness, Openness and Neuroticism
- Moderate risk-/problem gambler

Similar findings for gender, age and skill games:

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# More often lower beliefs in RG measures

Men, Extraversion, Higher spending, Play skill games or Low risk games only

- Men take more risk
- Extraverted like to be stimulated, and are driven by external rewards
- Skill games < - > illusion of control, beliefs in own skills

⇒ RG measures can be valued as

- obstacles
- less necessary
- less relevant

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# More often higher beliefs in RG measures

Younger, Affected by gambling marketing, Agreeableness, Openness, Neuroticism and Moderate risk-/problem gambler

- Young age is a risk factor (impulsivity and risk taking)
- Marketing can affect problem gamblers' intention to not gamble
- Agreeableness (protective factor), Openness (interested in new measures) and Neuroticism (risk factor)
- Risk and problem gamblers experience needs for RG measures

⇒ RG measures can be valued as

- external help to keep control
- protection against conflict
- something new
- reduce risk and uncertainty
- reduce problems and negative consequences

Johansson, A., Grant, J. E., Kim, S. W., Odlaug, B. L., & Gøtestam, K. G. (2009). Risk factors for problematic gambling: A critical literature review. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 25(1), 67-92.

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# Jon Elster: Self binding (Pre-commitment)

Passion - emotions or cravings  
may cause people to deviate from plans  
laid in cooler moments.

=> Need for self binding

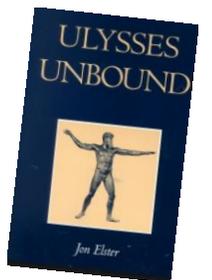
- create delays or eliminating options
- throwing or give away the key

In gambling this becomes RG tools as e.g. self exclusions and limit setting tools  
for money and time.

Elster, J. (2000). Ulysses unbound: Studies in rationality, precommitment, and constraints.  
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



Image: Ulysses and the Sirens by H.J. Draper



# Thank you!

The article can be read here:

<https://rdcu.be/bntJk>