

The opiate toxin of online gambling: a consumer behavior analysis of online gambling users' addiction levels

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to identify the factors that influence online gambling addiction, the impact on online gambling addicts and how to deal with online gambling addicts on the behavior of online gambling consumers in Lumajang Regency. A descriptive research methodology with a qualitative approach was used to understand in depth the online gambling addiction behavior that occurs in Lumajang Regency. The research results show that online gambling addicts have been involved in online gambling games since 2023, the majority of online gambling addicts use slot play as their game. Their main drive to play is to make big profits early on, which in turn leads them to become trapped in an addiction of trying to repeat that success. Economic factors are the main trigger for them to participate in online gambling. The impact that people feel when playing online gambling is very significant, especially the negative impact that results in them being trapped in debt. The majority of the reasons they are in debt are curiosity and the desire to keep trying even if they experience defeat. Even in one day, they are able to spend a substantial amount of money playing online gambling. In the end, these people expressed a strong desire to stop the habit of playing online gambling because they felt it had a very influential impact on their lives.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Online gambling has become an increasingly worrying global phenomenon. In recent years, technological advances and increasingly easy internet access have expanded the reach of gambling from physical casinos to digital platforms (Nawawi & Yuliana, 2024). This has led to a significant increase in the number of people involved in online gambling activities. In various countries, including Indonesia, online gambling addiction has become a serious social issue. Factors that cause online gambling addiction include (Makarin & Astuti, 2023): 1) Accessibility and ease of access. Advances in internet technology and mobile devices make it possible to access online gambling sites anytime and anywhere. Users only need a smartphone or computer and an internet connection to gamble, making this activity increasingly accessible to various groups, including teenagers and young adults (Kusumo et al., 2023). 2) Availability and Variety of Gambling Options. Various types of gambling games are available online, from sports betting, poker, to casino games such as slots and roulette. This abundance of choices attracts different types of players with different preferences, increasing

the likelihood of addiction (Al Goni et al., 2024). 3) Marketing and Promotional Strategies in online gambling. Online gambling sites often use aggressive marketing strategies, such as registration bonuses, discounts and attractive prizes to attract new users. Constant advertising on social media and other digital platforms also plays a big role in attracting attention and luring potential gamblers (Siringoringo et al., 2024). 4) Illusion of Control and Winning Potential. Many people are trapped in the illusion that they can control the outcome of the game or have a strategy that can increase their chances of winning. Success stories about big wins also encourage many people to try their luck, even though in reality the chances of winning are very small (Sriyuni et al., 2023). 5) Social and Environmental Influences, Friends and the social environment can influence someone to get involved in online gambling. Social pressure or simply following trends can make someone start gambling without realizing the risk of addiction (Player et al., 2020).

The impact of online gambling addiction can be caused by 1) Economics. Gambling addiction often results in serious financial problems, including mounting debt, bankruptcy and loss of assets. Some individuals may even engage in criminal acts to fund their gambling habits (Lubis et al., 2023). 2) Psychological and Emotional, Stress, depression and anxiety are often experienced by those who are addicted to gambling. Failure in gambling can lead to feelings of hopelessness and low self-esteem (Hanif & Partini, 2023). 3) Social, relationships with family and friends can be damaged due to gambling addiction. Many individuals who are addicted to gambling experience social isolation because they spend a lot of time gambling and avoid social interactions (Mustaqilla et al., 2023).

Temporary handling and prevention efforts carried out by several parties include: 1) Education and Awareness, educational programs about the dangers of gambling addiction need to be improved, both through mass media, educational institutions and local communities (Ihsanudin et al., 2023). The public needs to be given proper information about the risks and consequences of online gambling. 2) Regulation and Supervision, the Government needs to tighten regulations and supervision of online gambling sites, including strict law enforcement against violations (Andiani & Ruslie, 2023). Restricting access to online gambling sites can also be an effective preventive measure. 3) Support and Rehabilitation, Counseling and rehabilitation services for individuals who are addicted to gambling must be easily accessible. Support from family and friends is also very important in the recovery process (Tama et al., 2023).

Online gambling addiction is a serious problem that requires attention and action from various parties. A combination of technological advances, aggressive marketing strategies, and social factors have made online gambling more attractive and accessible, ultimately increasing the risk of addiction (Siringoringo et al., 2024). Effective preventive and intervention measures are urgently needed to address this problem, as well as provide support for those affected by gambling addiction (Ramli et al., 2019).

Online gambling in Lumajang Regency is starting to increase from the previous year. This situation can be seen in the rise of online gambling cases in Lumajang Regency from 12 cases in 2023, until mid-2024 cases increased to 20 cases. This increase in cases has made researchers interested in researching online gambling in Lumajang Regency.

2. METHOD

In this research, the author used descriptive qualitative methods and case studies. Generally, qualitative research aims to explain a phenomenon as deeply as possible, by collecting in-depth data, and then showing the importance of the depth and detail of the data studied (Sugiyono, 2019:1), and case studies are a series of scientific activities carried out intensively, detailed and in-depth information about a program, event and activity, either at the individual, group of people, institution or organization level to obtain in-depth knowledge about the event (Rahardjo, 2017). The informant selection technique used in this research is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a technique for selecting data source informants with certain considerations. These special considerations include, for example, people who are considered to know best about what is expected, or as authorities who will make it easier for researchers to explore the objects and social situations being studied (Sugiyono, 2019: 54). In this research, researchers used data triangulation techniques, namely by combining 3 data collection techniques (observation, interviews, and documentation). Data analysis techniques are the process of systematically searching and compiling data, obtained from interviews, field notes and documentation, by arranging data into categories, describing it into

units, synthesizing it, arranging it into patterns, choosing what is important and what is important. what will be studied, and make conclusions so that they are easily understood by oneself and others (Sugiyono, 2019:63). The steps used in data analysis are data reduction, data display and data verification (Sugiyono, 2019:89). This research was carried out with the aim of obtaining clearer information or to get a complete picture, as well as allowing researchers to conduct observational research. Therefore, the location is in Lumajang Regency.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the theory adopted by researchers, namely Social Pathology, this is the science of social symptoms which are considered "diseases" from social factors, or the science of the origins and characteristics of diseases related to the nature of human existence in society (Ajidin, 2024). Based on the results of interviews with the Head of the Lumajang Police Tipidter Unit as well as observations in the field that there is an online gambling phenomenon among the people of Lumajang, online gambling is now able to make people forget everything. The feeling of pleasure that arises from playing online gambling can make people hope for the benefits they will get from online gambling. Online gambling has spread in the Lumajang Regency community starting in 2023, with 12 cases. As the months and years increase, in May 2024, online gambling cases will increase by 20 cases. The increase in cases is due to the Covid-19 pandemic which has an impact on the number of unemployed/layoffs. Meanwhile, when it comes to returning to work, job vacancies are increasingly competitive and difficult. This situation makes the people of Lumajang Regency think narrowly and engage in online gambling. Apart from that, online gambling can be done anywhere and at any time without other people knowing, the most important thing is that the internet network is strong and smooth, and you have money to gamble.

The results of an interview with a psychologist at Bhayangkara Lumajang Hospital stated that online gambling addiction is an addiction that can affect a person's thinking patterns. The momentary pleasure of gambling games can provide an emotional boost that makes individuals feel better, even if only for a moment. It is this momentary emotion that makes individuals gradually become addicted to online gambling. In an effort to escape from online gambling addiction, addicts need therapy to change their behavior, apart from that a psychotherapy approach is needed. Psychotherapy helps explore and process the emotions that drive gambling behavior. By understanding the emotional roots of addiction, individuals can more effectively overcome the urge to gamble. According to the psychologist, ways to process emotions can be done using various methods, such as Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) and hypnotherapy. The journey to recovery is not instant. The length of the process depends on the individual's own motivation and commitment. Addiction has the potential for relapse (Aprilia et al., 2023), therefore, he said, the process must be carried out gradually and continuously. Apart from that, to escape online gambling addiction, it is also necessary to develop new behaviors that are more adaptive and useful, such as exercising or other more positive activities. If someone is addicted to online gambling, the recommended first step is to seek help from the people closest to them. Talking to trusted people and seeking support from your immediate environment can be an important first step. Visiting a psychologist or therapy can also help in the recovery process, but support from the immediate environment is considered to have a crucial role in overcoming online gambling addiction.

Likewise, the results of interviews with religious figures in Lumajang Regency stated that in the Islamic view, gambling is included in the haram category. This is not just a personal opinion, but has been stated in the Tarjih Fatwa. In the Al-Qur'an, gambling is stated as a prohibited act in Surah Al-Ma'idah verse 90. Thus, every Muslim who adheres to the principles of his religion must stay away from gambling practices, including online gambling (Fitriya et al., 2024). The importance of awareness of the dangers of online gambling is not only related to individuals, but also to society as a whole. Religious leaders and community leaders play an important role in providing education to the public to avoid online gambling. This gambling practice not only harms oneself, but also damages family relationships and the surrounding environment. Affected families often experience conflict and financial instability. In order to overcome the problem of rampant online gambling, it is important to realize that gambling is haram in Islam and has detrimental impacts. We must unite to provide education to the public to avoid this gambling practice. With collective awareness and action, we can combat this mass addiction and protect the well-being of individuals and our society as a whole.

The results of interviews with online gambling players said that they first became familiar with online gambling, namely from the influence of the surrounding environment, the results of learning from friends or from their respective social media, so that online gambling has now become popular among the public, of course this is a deviation or deviation. (Affan & Saefudin, 2023). It can be interpreted that deviation or aberration is behavior that deviates from the general trend or average characteristics of most people in society. From what is obtained in the field, people are familiar with online gambling due to the influence of the surrounding environment. In relation to the socio-cultural environment, this deviation or deviation in behavior is Situational Deviation, where this type of deviation or deviation is caused by the influence of various situational or social forces outside the individual, as well as the influence of situations that make the person concerned an integral part of it (Rusmanto, 2024). This situation has a coercive influence so that the individual is forced to violate general rules and norms or formal law. There are various factors that make students want and get involved in online gambling activities. This is based on the fact that they have a feeling of interest, curiosity and simply want to try, especially because they have a view about online gambling, both in terms of the practical procedures or rules of the game and the benefits that may be obtained, without thinking about whether this will have a positive or negative impact. and whether it is a deviant act or not (Harefa et al., 2023). The following is a description or explanation of the causes of the increase in online gambling players in society:

3.1. Economic Factors

Economic factors play a significant role in the increase in online gambling players. The following are several economic aspects that encourage people to engage in online gambling (Rizal et al., 2024).

Economy crisis. Insufficient Income: When someone feels like their income is insufficient to make ends meet, they may look for alternative ways to earn extra money. Online gambling is often seen as a shortcut to overcome economic difficulties even though the risk of loss is very high. **Economic Crisis:** In times of economic crisis, such as a recession or pandemic, many people experience pay cuts, job loss, or a decrease in income. This situation encourages people to look for fast ways to earn money, and online gambling becomes one of the attractive options.

Unemployment. High Unemployment Rates: High unemployment rates leave many people with more free time and great financial stress. Without a steady job, some people may turn to online gambling as a way to pass the time and try their luck at earning money. **Lack of Job Opportunities:** The lack of decent and stable job opportunities can make online gambling seem like a way to earn an income. **Inflation and High Cost of Living. Rising Cost of Living:** When the cost of living rises faster than income increases, many people feel pressured to find additional sources of income. Online gambling is often promoted as a way to make money quickly, although in reality it more often results in losses. **Inflation:** High inflation reduces people's purchasing power, forcing them to look for alternative ways to maintain their standard of living. Online gambling is one method considered by several people.

Social Pressure and Lifestyle. Social Pressure: In a society where wealth and social status are highly valued, the pressure to maintain a certain lifestyle can drive individuals to look for quick ways to earn money. **Desire to Maintain a Lifestyle:** When a person is accustomed to a certain lifestyle, they may use online gambling as a way to maintain that lifestyle even if their income is insufficient. Overall, the economic factors that encourage people to engage in online gambling are varied and complex. Efforts to overcome this problem must include a holistic economic approach, such as increasing employment opportunities, financial education, and adequate social support (Setyawati et al., 2023).

3.2. Psychological and Social Factors

The increase in online gambling players is also influenced by complex psychological and social factors. The following is a more detailed explanation of how these factors contribute to the increase in online gambling activity (Migu & Zaky, 2022):

Stress and Emotional Distress. The Need for Escape: Many people use online gambling as a form of escape from stress, anxiety, and emotional distress. They seek entertainment and comfort in activities that can provide a temporary sensation. **Depression and Loneliness:** People who are depressed or feel lonely may turn to online gambling as a way to deal with their negative feelings. **Addicted. Gambling Addiction:** Just like other addictions, gambling addiction involves the inability to control the urge to gamble despite knowing its negative impacts. This addiction can be exacerbated by the gamification mechanisms that are often used in online gambling applications.

Influence of Friends and Environment. Peer Group Influence: If someone is in an environment or group of friends who gamble frequently, they are more likely to partake in the activity due to social pressure or a desire to fit in with the group. Normalization of Gambling: In some communities, gambling can become an activity that is considered normal and socially acceptable, thereby encouraging more people to get involved. Social Pressure and Economic Status. Prestige and Status: In some societies, financial success is considered very important and people may gamble to achieve higher economic status or maintain a social image. The combination of these psychological and social factors creates an environment that supports and encourages an increase in online gambling. Efforts to overcome this problem require a holistic approach that includes education, increasing awareness, mental health support, and stricter regulations on advertising and operations of online gambling sites (Ruswandi & Halimah, 2024).

3.3 Advertising and Promotion Factors

Advertising on Social Media. Sponsorship and Endorsements: Many online gambling sites use influencers and celebrities to promote their services on social media platforms. Endorsements from famous figures can increase the credibility and attractiveness of the gambling site. Interactive Content: The use of interactive content such as live videos, Instagram stories, and quizzes related to gambling attracts user attention and increases participation. Gamification. Game Elements: Many online gambling sites use gamification elements to make the gambling experience more interesting and enjoyable. It includes leaderboards, achievements, and daily challenges that motivate users to keep playing. Prizes and Competitions: Offering prizes through competitions or tournaments attracts many players to participate, hoping they can win big prizes.

Use of the FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) Strategy. Limited Time Offers: Special offers that are only available for a limited time create a sense of urgency and encourage users to act immediately so as not to miss out on the opportunity. Seasonal Promotions and Special Events: Promotions related to certain events such as holidays, major sports tournaments, or special celebrations attract users to gamble during those periods. Psychological Effects of Advertising. Highlighting Big Wins: Ads often feature stories about big winners to create the illusion that big wins are common and easy to achieve. Compelling Visuals and Audio: Use of flashy graphics, bright colors and attractive sound in an advertisement increases its appeal and makes it more impressive in the mind of the user. Overall, the advertising and promotion strategies used by online gambling sites are very effective in attracting attention and encouraging user participation. This approach not only reaches a wide audience but also makes the gambling experience feel more interesting and profitable, even though in reality, the risks and losses are enormous (Fadilla et al., 2023).



Figure 1. Interview session with one of the online gambling addict informants



Figure 2. Interview session with one of the informants from the Lumajang Police Tipidter Unit



Figure 3. Interview session with one of the psychologist informants at Bhayangkara Hospital, Lumajang



Figure 4. Interview session with one of the Lumajang Regency religious figure informants

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the problem formulation set by the author in this research, it can be concluded that the increase in the number of online gamblers in Lumajang society is caused by internal and external factors. Internal factors include the inability to absorb prevailing values and norms, where society does not strengthen these values and norms within themselves. Apart from that, there is also the factor of feeling disappointed due to big losses in online gambling, which makes some people take actions out of control regarding online gambling and ignore the norms and rules of society. The first external factor is economic problems. In this case, people continue to play online gambling because they have spent a lot of money on it. They think they will stop if the capital they spend can be returned, even though the possibility of this is very small. The next external factor is the influence of the community environment. Many people start playing online gambling because they are influenced by their environment. This happens through a process of exchanging information, offers, seduction, and invitations, which creates curiosity. Finally, they try playing and online gambling becomes a habit that is difficult for them to break. The last one is the impact of technological progress. Due to this factor, people use the internet to facilitate various activities. Online gambling is different because it uses the

internet, allowing players to gamble anytime and anywhere. Playing online gambling is also easy, so anyone can do it comfortably, safely and practically. Meanwhile, regarding family conditions, not everyone has family problems, but it is important for families to be open and honest in everyday life, especially in using cell phones.

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