

Developing and validating lower risk online gambling thresholds with actual bettor data

Lower risk gambling guidelines for how much time and money are spent gambling might reduce gambling-related harms.

Online player betting records can help us develop specific lower risk limits to help guide online gamblers.

The Study

Examined three **longitudinal datasets of actual player betting records** from bwin Interactive Entertainment, AG between 2000 and 2011.

Attempted to develop **six lower risk gambling limits** for time and financial measures of gambling involvement.

Amount wagered per month

Percentage of yearly household income wagered online

Frequency of gambling per month

Daily betting amount variability

Betting amount escalation during player's first 6 months

Net outcome of gambling per month

Tested how well each of the limits predicted **screening positive for Gambling Disorder** and **four proxies for gambling-related problems**.

Voluntary self-limiting

Closing one's account

Voluntary self-exclusion

Being assigned a flag for potential problem gambling by customer service

General **empirical support differed** for each online gambling limit's prediction of a positive screen for Gambling Disorder and the four gambling harm proxies.

Key Findings



Increasing Empirical Support

Lowest Empirical Support

Highest Empirical Support

Four limits best supported lower risk online gambling. Users who exceeded any of these thresholds were more likely to screen positive for Gambling Disorder.

Wagering 167.97 Euros or less each month

Spending 6.71% or less of annual income on online gambling wagers

Losing 26.11 Euros or less on online gambling per month

Variability in daily amount wagered of 35.14 Euros or less during one's active duration

Key Takeaways

Gambling online above lower risk limits increases risk of experiencing gambling-related problems.

Although not gambling is the most certain way to avoid problems, guidelines for lower risk limits could stimulate safer gambling practices.

Though these four limits predict elevated risk, their accuracy is only moderate.

Gambling operators could use online thresholds in these four areas to help educate their customers about safer play, but should advise them that individual cases might warrant higher or lower thresholds depending on circumstances.