



Lecture

Universität Hamburg, Fakultät für Psychologie und Bewegungswissenschaft
Arbeitsbereich Pädagogische Psychologie und Motivation
Wintersemester 2020/2021

Interacting Effects of Personal Vulnerabilities and Product Features in Gambling Addiction

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19. Januar 2021

16.15 Uhr – 17.45 Uhr

online via ZOOM

While other behavioral addiction are emerging (e.g. video gaming), Gambling Disorder has been recognized in psychiatry for several decades and is now conceptualized alongside substance use disorders in the DSM-5 and ICD-11. The dominant medical model of Gambling Disorder acknowledges the importance of personal risk factors, instantiated at a neurobiological level, in determining vulnerability. As evidence for this vulnerability, I will present a recent study examining neural and neurocognitive markers in unaffected biological siblings of people with gambling disorder (Limbrick-Oldfield et al., 2020). Although this approach has made considerable advances, it neglects the significant further role played by gambling products, of which modern slot machines are one of the more harmful offerings. Our research on product features has examined slot machines from two perspectives. One line of research looks to attribute the risk profile of modern slot machines to specific ‚structural characteristics‘ such as the game speed or intense audiovisual feedback (Cherkasova et al., 2018). These active ingredients may influence reward processing or risky decision making. An alternative approach is that many features may coalesce to create an immersive experience. Ratings of slot machine immersion are associated with gambling problems, and a recent study has used eye tracking to differentiate two competing explanations of immersion, which we call being ‚zoned in‘ versus ‚zoned out‘ (Murch et al., 2020). These findings carry implications for both treatment of gambling problems and the regulation of existing and emerging gambling products.

Publications

Cherkasova, M. V., Clark, L., Barton, J. J. S., Schulzer, M., Shafiee, M., Kingstone, A., ... Winstanley, C. A. (2018). Win-concurrent sensory cues can promote riskier choice. *Journal of Neuroscience*, 38(48), 1171–18.

<https://doi.org/10.1523/JNEUROSCI.1171-18.2018>

Limbrick-Oldfield, E. H., Mick, I., Cocks, R. E., Flechais, R. S. A., Turton, S., Lingford-Hughes, A., ... Clark, L. (2020). Neural and neurocognitive markers of vulnerability to gambling disorder: a study of unaffected siblings. *Neuropsychopharmacology*, 45(2), 292–300. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41386-019-0534-1>

Murch, W. S., Limbrick-Oldfield, E. H., Ferrari, M. A., Macdonald, K. I., Fooker, J., Cherkasova, M. V., ... Clark, L. (2020). Zoned in or zoned out? Investigating immersion in slot machine gambling using mobile eye-tracking. *Addiction*, 115(6), 1127–1138. <https://doi.org/10.1111/add.14899>

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