

# Author's Accepted Manuscript

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PII: S0165-1781(15)00542-9  
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2015.07.082>  
Reference: PSY9134

To appear in: *Psychiatry Research*

Received date: 15 October 2014  
Revised date: 7 July 2015  
Accepted date: 22 July 2015

Cite this article as: Jacqueline F. Moghaddam, Gihyun Yoon, Michael D. Campos and Timothy W. Fong, Social and behavioral problems among five gambling severity groups, *Psychiatry Research*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2015.07.082>

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## Social and behavioral problems among five gambling severity groups

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### Abstract

Gambling has been associated with various social and behavioral problems, but previous analyses have been limited by sample bias regarding gambling symptom severity range and the role of antisocial personality disorder (ASPD). This study utilized a nationally representative data set and examined various characteristics of behavioral problems and ASPD among five gambling severity groups. Participants were 42,038 individuals who took part in the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions (NESARC) and provided information on social and behavioral problems, ASPD, and gambling. Using DSM-IV criteria, we derived five gambling groups from the total sample: non-gambling, low-risk, at-risk, problem, and pathological gambling. Associations between all problematic behaviors and nearly every gambling severity level were significant prior to adjustment for sociodemographic variables and ASPD. Following the adjustment, all significant associations persisted, with the exception of sexual coercion. In the adjusted model, the financially oriented behaviors had the strongest associations with gambling. All gambling severity levels were associated with an increased risk for a number of problematic behaviors and social problems in comparison to non-gamblers. Further examination of gambling problems in financial and criminal justice settings is recommended.

Keywords: Pathological gambling; problem gambling; social problem; behavioral problem; antisocial personality disorder; financial problem; criminal justice  
I. Introduction

Previous research utilizing the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions (NESARC) has found an increased risk for pathological gambling<sup>1</sup> among individuals reporting problematic behaviors such as fire setting, shoplifting, and cruelty to animals [Blanco, et al., 2010;

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<sup>1</sup> As defined by the DSM-IV.

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