



Tempting fate: Chasing and maladaptive personality traits in gambling behavior



Giovanna Nigro*, Maria Ciccarelli, Marina Cosenza

Department of Psychology, Università degli Studi della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli, Viale Ellittico, 31 81100, Caserta, Italy

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:
 Gambling
 Gambling disorder
 Chasing
 Maladaptive personality domains
 DSM-5
 PID-5-BF

ABSTRACT

Chasing, or continuing to gamble in an attempt to recoup losses, is a salient feature of problematic gambling. This study, which controlled for gambling severity and alcohol consumption, investigated the association between chasing and maladaptive personality trait domains among habitual gamblers. Participants comprised 126 adult habitual gamblers (73% males) aged between 18 and 69 years. They were administered the South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS), the Personality Inventory for DSM-5-Brief Form (PID-5-BF), the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT), and a computerized task developed to assess chasing behavior. Participants were randomly assigned to two chasing conditions (Control and Loss). Data were submitted to correlational analysis, univariate and mixed-model ANOVAs, logistic and linear regression analyses. Results showed that the decision to chase was strongly associated with the PID-5-BF Disinhibition domain scores, whereas chasing proneness was related to the Disinhibition, Detachment and Psychoticism domains. Interestingly, chasers scored higher than nonchasers on maladaptive personality dimensions, even after controlling for gender, age, chasing condition, alcohol consumption, and gambling severity. Since these findings support the idea that chasers and nonchasers are different subtypes of gamblers, clinical interventions should take into account the additive role of chasing in gambling disorder.

1. Introduction

Chasing losses is a salient feature of problematic gambling and represents an important step in the development and maintenance of gambling disorder (Breen and Zuckerman, 1999; Corless and Dickerson, 1989; Lesieur, 1979; Lister et al., 2016; McBride et al., 2010; O'Connor and Dickerson, 2003; Toce-Gerstein et al., 2003). Chasing consists in continuing gambling to recoup previous losses (Lesieur, 1979). “The “chase” begins when a gambler bets either to pay everyday bills that are due or to “get even” from a fall” (Lesieur, 1984, p. 1). According to Lesieur (1979), “If we have to draw a line between the compulsive and noncompulsive gambler (there is some overlap), it is in the amount of “chasing” done by the compulsive gambler” (p. 81). Toce-Gerstein et al. (2003) found that 75.9% of problem gamblers, as defined by life-time NODS score, reported chasing losses. According to Lesieur (1984), it is useful to distinguish between *chasing within a session* and *chasing across sessions*. Chasing within a session is typical of regular gamblers, whereas returning later to chase losses is a distinguishing characteristic of compulsive gambling. In the same vein, and in line with DSM-IV criterion (APA, 1994), Breen and Zuckerman (1999) introduced the distinction between within- and between-session

chasing.

Even if chasing is one of the few observable signs for disordered gambling (Gainsbury et al., 2014), the only criterion of gambling disorder absent in substance use disorder (Quester and Romanczuk-Seiferth, 2015), and has been recognized playing a central role in the development of gambling disorder, to date very little is understood about this complex behavior (Campbell-Meiklejohn et al., 2008; Nigro et al., 2018; Parke et al., 2016; Worhunsky et al., 2017). Therefore, it is not surprising that experimental research on this topic still remains relatively scarce (for a review, see Lister et al., 2016).

Generally speaking, research on chasing focused mostly on the role of individual differences on chasing behavior. In the following brief review of the extant literature we describe aims and main results of studies on chasing, indicating for each contribution the effects due to gender, if any.

Breen and Zuckerman (1999) investigated the role of individual differences, namely sensation-seeking and impulsivity, in within-session chasing in a sample of male undergraduates. They found that chasers were higher in impulsivity than nonchasers.

O'Connor and Dickerson (2003) found that chasing losses and chasing wins were both associated with impaired control over

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: giovanna.nigro@unicampania.it (G. Nigro).

gambling. No gender difference in chasing, nor in impaired control was observed.

Linnet et al. (2006) compared pathological and non-pathological gamblers in episodic chasing. They observed that pathological gamblers showed significantly more chasing and poorer decision-making strategies than non-pathological gamblers, mostly among males.

Campbell-Meiklejohn et al. (2008) analyzed the brain mechanisms of chasing losses in minimally-experienced gamblers and found that chasing was associated with increased activity in cortical areas linked to incentive-motivation and an expectation of reward. No gender difference was reported.

Kim and Lee (2011) studied the effects of the Behavioral Approach System (BAS) and the Behavioral Inhibition System (BIS) on decision-making. They found that the association between personality traits and winning probabilities influence decisions-making, providing evidence that decision-making and chasing in gambling situations, both after having winning and losing experiences, are affected by personality traits. No difference between male and female participants in chasing behavior was reported.

Lister et al. (2016) analyzed the role of gambling goals (i.e., gambling achievement-orientation) on chasing behavior in a sample of young adult gamblers. They observed that gamblers with higher winning money motivation were more likely to decide to chase and chased more in response to either losses or wins. No gender difference was reported.

Bibby (2016) carried out two experiments analyzing the role of alexithymia and impulsivity in loss-chasing. Results showed that alexithymics are more likely to loss-chase than non-alexithymic individuals. This author did not find main effects or interactions between gender and the other study variables.

Parke et al. (2016) investigated the impact of stake size, a risk factor for loss-chasing, on inhibition and reflection impulsivity. Results indicated that decision-making was more impaired at higher stakes in comparison to lower stakes. Gender differences were not tested, since only two females participated in the study.

Worhunsky et al. (2017) compared the neurocognitive mechanisms of chasing in individuals with gambling disorder and cocaine-use disorder with healthy controls. Relative to healthy controls, disordered gamblers' choices to quit chasing were associated with greater engagement of a medial frontal executive-processing network. They found no main effect of gender or group-by-gender interaction between- or within-subjects factors across components by examining activity in functional brain networks.

Finally, Nigro et al. (2018) investigated the relation between chasing and decision-making. They found that chasing affected decision-making and that the association between gambling severity and decision-making performance was significantly mediated by chasing. These authors reported that males scored significantly higher than females in terms of both gambling severity and chasing frequency.

To our best knowledge, only a handful of studies assessed chasing in gambling using behavioral tasks. With the exception of Linnet et al. (2006), who measured episodic chasing (i.e., sequences of persistent poor choices leading to losses) within the Iowa Gambling Task (IGT), Bibby (2016), Breen and Zuckerman (1999), Campbell-Meiklejohn et al. (2008), Lister et al. (2016), Nigro et al. (2018) and Worhunsky et al. (2017) developed or implemented ad hoc procedures for estimating within-session chasing. More specifically, Breen and Zuckerman measured chasing by means of a computer-generated gambling program, based on the Newman et al. (1987) model, developed for studying antisocial personality. The program was modified to reward a subject at a predetermined rate, which was high initially, but diminished steadily the longer each subject played (p. 1103). The object of the game was to bet on randomly generated cards from a deck of playing cards. Campbell-Meiklejohn et al. (2008) administered a computerized loss-chasing game that required choosing between gambling to recover a loss, at risk of doubling its size, or quitting (p. 294).

Lister et al. (2016) asked participants to play slot machines located in an immersive virtual casino environment. After the first 30 spins, participants decided whether they wished to stop or to continue play. The subsequent number of plays following that decision were tallied. Bibby (2016) measured chasing by means of an adapted version of the Cambridge Gambling Task (Rogers et al., 1999), originally developed to assess decision making and risk taking behavior outside a learning context. After 10 practice trials, the participants played the gambling task for 100 trials. Worhunsky et al. (2017) assessed chasing using a modified version of the loss-chase task developed by Campbell-Meiklejohn et al. (2008). Finally, Nigro et al. (2018) developed a computerized chasing task that simulates a card game in which participants played against the house. After the first 30 trials, participants could decide whether to continue or to stop the game. Although in the above-mentioned papers chasing behavior was measured in quite different ways, the tasks share some following overlapping features: the game was apparently chance-determined, the outcomes of the game were manipulated, participants won or lost some money, and both the decision to chase and the number of trials played were considered measures of interest. In addition, participants could stop in any moment during the task. Summing up, the few behavioral tasks devoted to assess chasing focused on within-session chasing, given the difficulties in reproducing in the laboratory between-session chasing, as defined by Lesieur (1979) and the DSM-IV and the DSM-5 criterion for disordered gambling. Although these studies did not report additional information about the psychometric properties of the behavioral tasks, there is no reason to doubt about their ecological validity, mostly because these procedures simulate real life game situations.

Although both the DSM-IV and the DSM-5 focus on chasing losses ["After losing money gambling, often returns another day to get even ("chasing" one's losses)"], in broader sense, chasing refers to gaining more or recouping lost money (e.g., Blaszczynski and Nower, 2002). For instance, O'Connor and Dickerson (2003), who investigated the role of chasing in relation to impaired control over gambling, observed that between-session chasers reported significantly higher impaired control scores than within-session chasers, but found no difference between returning later to chase after large wins or after losing. Ultimately, since the house always wins, in the long run the inability to stop gambling might turn wins in losses. In such a perspective, chasing wins and chasing losses might be rather regarded as two sides of the same coin (Nigro et al., 2018). As noted by Linnet et al. (2006), "one of the inherent problems of chasing to the pathological gambler may be that they do not notice the chasing behavior until it is too late, [...] and then has limited resources for stopping or compensating the behavior" (p. 48). Relative to healthy controls, problem gamblers are less likely to adopt a long term advantageous strategy, even in the face of negative feedback (Linnet, 2013).

Although previous research has investigated the role of maladaptive personality traits in the development and maintenance of problematic gambling (for review, see Carlotta et al., 2015), only few studies examined the association between individual characteristics and loss chasing behavior.

Prior investigations have shown that loss chasing is linked with impulsivity, sensation-seeking, emotional dysregulation, hyposensitivity to losses, behavioral disinhibition, and impaired decision-making (Bibby, 2016; Breen and Zuckerman, 1999; Linnet et al., 2006; Kim and Lee, 2011; Lister et al., 2016; Nigro et al., 2018; Ochoa et al., 2013; Parke et al., 2016). It is noteworthy to underline that although previous studies clearly indicated that several individual characteristics of gambling addicted individuals are strong predictors of chasing, little effort was made to ascertain to what extent gambling severity and chasing overlap each other, and even less to disentangle gambling severity from chasing.

However, to date no study examined the relation between chasing behavior and DSM-5 pathological personality trait domains. The present study aimed to fill this gap by investigating this association in a

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/6811320>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/6811320>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)