



A STUDY INTO THE THEMES AND TYPOLOGIES OF BINGE GAMBLING EPISODES

BY VERITY HARRIS.

SUPERVISOR: DR. AMANDA ROBERTS AND DR STEPHEN SHARMAN

LITERATURE REVIEW

- Literature suggests a new type of problem gambling.
- Binges are recognised in substance abuse, as excessive period of consumption
- Binge Gambling: Meets core criteria, but time-frame means diagnosis rarely occurs
- Binge Gambling Screening Tool (Cowlshaw *et al.*, 2016) found they were more prevalent than problem gamblers
- Very little literature into Binge Gambling though
- Only criteria developed by Nower and Blaszczynski (2003)

NOWER AND BLASZCZYNSKI CRITERIA

- (a) the sudden onset of an irregular and intermittent period of sustained gambling;
- (b) involving excessive expenditures relative to income;
- (c) rapidly spent over a discrete interval of time;
- (d) accompanied by a sense of urgency and impaired control;
- (e) resulting in marked intra- and inter-personal distress,
- (f) the absence, between bouts of any rumination, preoccupation or cravings to resume participation in gambling

MOTIVE & METHODS



Research suggests to look into the patterns and relationships of binge gambling with other gambling types.

Themes and typologies of problem gamblers binge episodes, to gain potential insight into binge gamblers episodes.

Gordon Moody Association: intensive residential treatment programme in the UK for the most severely addicted.

Access to 10 years worth of data.

52 interviews used, aged 21– 63, all males.

Thematic Analysis: Chosen for it's flexibility, simple use and ability to analyse latent level of data.

Ethics has been collected and approved by SOPREC

Research discussing binge gamblers is in reference to Nower and Blaszczynski (2003)

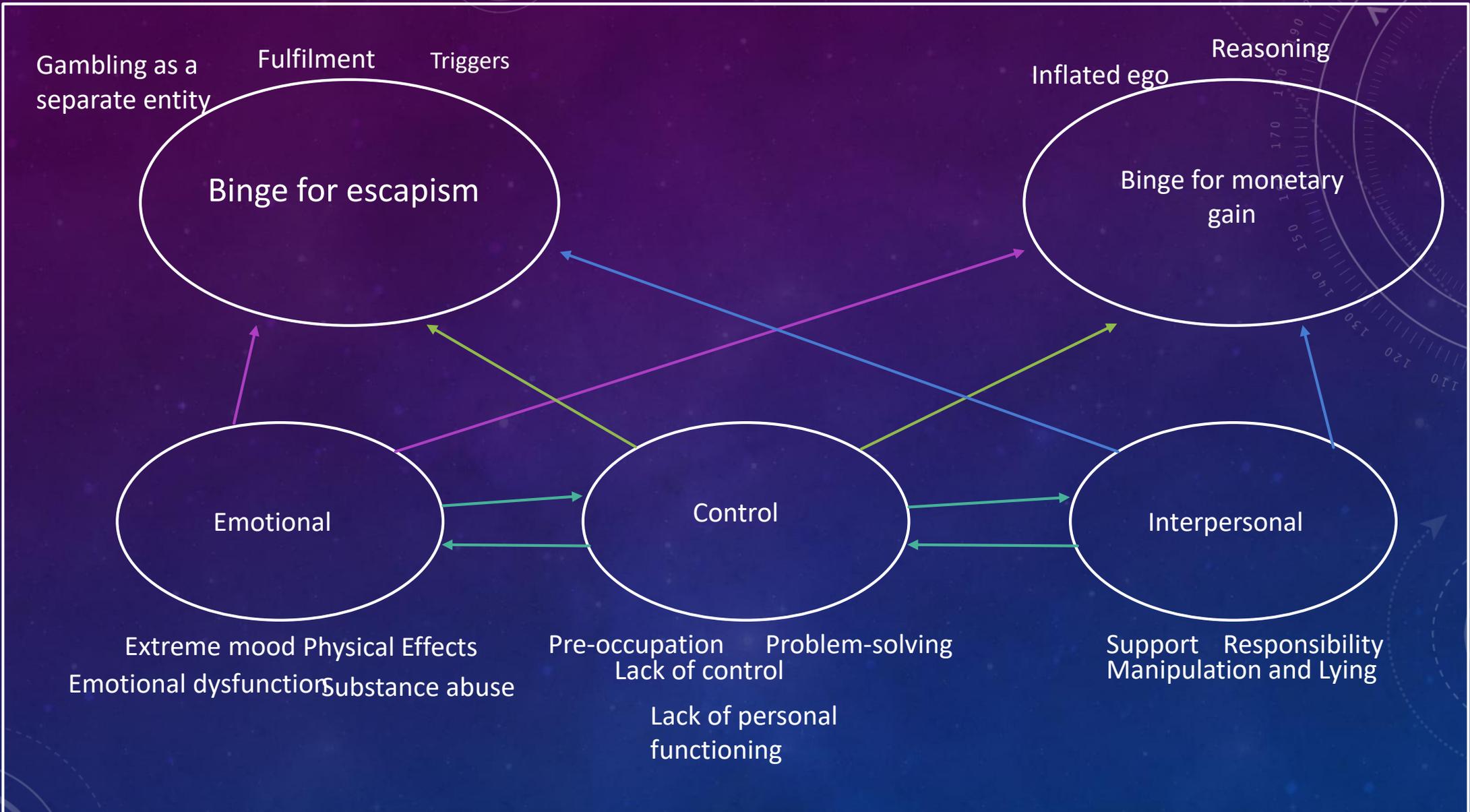


Figure 1. Map showing how the themes and typologies interact with each other

RESULTS

- TYPOLOGIES: Binge for Escapism
- *Since breaking up with X in June 2011, I have probably had 3 or 4 binges lasting a week or two. Each time the binges were quicker and more destructive than the last.*
- Using as a coping mechanism
- Matches to Emotionally Vulnerable Pathway
- Potential to be linked to shame motivation (Schlagintweit, Thompson, Goldstein and Stewart, 2017)
- For binge gamblers: binges found to be maladaptive coping mechanisms in other binge disorders. This indicates that the ability to cope with stressors is key in both addictive and binge behaviours.

RESULTS



- **TYPOLOGIES: Binge for Monetary Gain**
- *I could use the money in my betting account to pay off my debt, but not me, I wanted to pay the debt off with gambling money, so the debt was paid off for free*
- Over-estimation of chances of winning, behavioural addiction
- Matches to Behaviourally Conditioned Pathways
- For binge gamblers: most likely would not apply to the sub-set due to research indicated their binges are related to psychosocial stressors

RESULTS

- THEME: Emotional
- *I had lost it all and headed home with nothing. I was numb. The feelings of elation turned into instant feelings of depression and suicide. I had lost everything, and it was the first time since my relapse, I looked at myself and just felt empty*
- Both positive and negative mood changes, relating to win and loss periods
- Losses caused extreme negative mood and emotional dysfunction, resulting in isolation , depression and suicidal ideation
- Mood disorders are common in problem gamblers with 96.3% problem gamblers also met criteria for one or more of other psychiatric disorders
- For binge gamblers: research shows similar emotional reactions

RESULTS



- THEME: Control
- *Despite remembering that moment of rock bottom and where gambling had taken me, I still chose to gamble again. Could nothing stop me gambling? Clearly not.*
- Lack of control related to a pre-occupation for gambling, which affected personal functioning.
- Would become homeless, go without sleep or food, just to gamble
- Control affects their decision-making, which is predictive of problem gambling (Ciccarelli *et al.*, 2016)
- For binge gamblers: They do not experience pre-occupation between episodes which is why they are not being diagnosed.

RESULTS

- THEME: Interpersonal
- *Not thinking, I texted my dad saying – ‘I need help, I’ve lost control and some loan sharks are coming for me at 3pm’ and that was all the text said...I don’t know how or why those words came out of my mouth. I didn’t owe anyone £4k at the time, I just wanted to recomp my losses and had minimal hope I could manipulate my dad.*
- How the binges effected their relationships, personal and professional. Manipulation and lying to family was common, but often led to isolation and rejection.
- 70% of arguments within gamblers’ intimate relationships were due to gambling debts (Downs & Woolrych, 2010)
- For binge gamblers: interpersonal relationships often the trigger for episodes.

LIMITATIONS

- Initial interview question was not operationalised – no definition.
- All male sample – may be different results for women
- Large sample size for time consuming data- not easily quantifiable

CONCLUSIONS

- Understand the mechanisms behind binge episodes
- Shows how the underlying themes interact to maintain behaviour
- Supports previous research into problem gamblers and binge gamblers.
- Indicates the distinctions between the two groups and how to direct future research
- Similar study should be conducted, looking into the potential themes and typologies of binge gamblers



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