

## Coping Strategies in Analyzing the Stress Impact of Online Gambling Addiction for Children and Adults

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### Abstract

Increased internet accessibility has opened up opportunities for people to engage in various types of gaming, such as poker, online casinos, sports betting, and slot machines. This research aims to describe coping strategies for minimizing the stressful impact of online gambling addiction. This research uses a qualitative approach with a literature study. The results of this research reveal that online gambling addiction has a serious impact on people's stress levels in Indonesia. Factors such as financial losses, uncertainty of gambling outcomes, and interpersonal tension due to excessive involvement in online gambling activities are the main causes of increased stress levels. Coping strategies to minimize the stressful impact of online gambling addiction are achieved by focusing efforts on financial management, social support, and developing entertainment alternatives. The study found that dependence on online gambling triggers significant stress in both children and adults. The stress was caused by a variety of factors, including financial loss, impaired social relationships, and psychological impacts such as anxiety and depression.

### Keywords

Coping Strategies; Stress; Online Gambling



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The increasingly widespread availability of internet access in Indonesia allows people to easily connect to various online gambling platforms (Addiyansyah, 2023). The increase in internet accessibility has opened up a gap for people to engage in different types of games, such as poker, online casinos, sports betting, and slot machines (Sitanggang, Sabta, & Hasiolan, 2023). This practicality provides an alternative for individuals who want to experience the sensation of gambling without having to leave home or go to a physical gambling place (Work, 2022).

In Indonesia, the prohibition of gambling, both in physical and online environments, is a significant obstacle to law enforcement. Although regulations have been implemented to restrict gambling activities, technological advancements have made it difficult for the government to control and monitor all illegal online gambling sites effectively. This creates a gap where people can relatively easily access and engage in online gambling (Samsul Hadi et al., 2023).

In addition, the economic aspect also encourages the growth of the online gambling industry in Indonesia (Situmeang, Ariska, & Ali, 2023). Online gambling platform operators and providers see a potential market to earn huge revenues by offering various games and attractive bonuses. Although it can make a positive contribution to the economy, the phenomenon of online gambling also has a significant impact in terms of social, financial, and mental health (Jannah, Al Wafi, & Aliyan, 2023).

Data released by the Ministry of Communication and Information revealed that efforts to block gambling content on digital platforms are still unsuccessful. As of May 10, 2022, authorities have cut off access to 499,645 gambling content, while by the end of 2023, the number has increased to 805,923 content. This phenomenon shows that there are still big challenges in mitigating the negative impact of online gambling in society (Katkar et al., 2021).

Based on research conducted by Khoerunisa et al. (2024), online gambling is the cause of divorce problems in the Bekasi district because it causes financial problems and emotional problems. Based on the results of research conducted by Wahkidi et al. (2022), the higher the level of online gambling addiction, the higher the level of anxiety from online gamblers. Based on the results of research conducted by Kuncoro and Kalifia (2024), online gambling influences gamblers' mental health. Based on some of these previous studies, online gambling has an impact on finances so that divorce arises, increases gamblers' anxiety, and has a negative influence on gamblers' mental health (Katkar et al., 2021).

Based on the previous research, there is still a gap in research on coping strategies for minimizing the stress impact of online gambling dependence. With factors such as finances affected and divorce risk identified in previous studies, it is important to understand how online gambling addiction can contribute to stress levels and understand how coping strategies can minimize the stress caused (Arum & Kurniawan, n.d.).

Research on coping strategies in minimizing the impact of online gambling dependence on stress levels can make an important contribution to further understanding of the mental health domain and provide useful information for the development of interventions and prevention programs (Nur Azmy & Hartini, 2021). By understanding the stress factors associated with online gambling dependence and looking at the coping strategies used by individuals, it is hoped that this study can provide valuable insights for the development of interventions and prevention programs (Nurseha et al., 2022); (Nur Azmy & Hartini, 2021).

The purpose of the study was to understand the negative impacts and steps that can be taken from online gambling dependence on their mental health and well-being. It is a reference for further research related to online gambling dependence, especially in terms of psychological impact and coping strategies. The expected benefit of this paper is to encourage new research to explore more innovative and evidence-based prevention and recovery strategies in the context of online gambling dependence.

## **2. METHODS**

This research uses a qualitative approach with literature studies through books, articles, and other sources related to this research (Rukajat, 2018). The results of the literature review are used to explain coping strategies for minimizing the stress impact of online gambling dependence. This study uses a qualitative approach; data obtained through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), or observations are analyzed using interpretive methods (Khofifah, n.d.).

Steps of Qualitative Data Analysis: 1) Data Transcription: Interviews and discussions are recorded and transcribed verbatim. 2) Coding: Data is broken down into small units of information by coding according to themes, such as the type of coping strategy, source of stress, and psychological impact (Cahyanti et al., 2024). 3) Categorization: Grouping code into broader categories, e.g., "problem-focused strategies" and "emotion-focused strategies." 4) Thematization: Identify the main themes from the interview results, such as the effectiveness of coping strategies or factors that affect online gambling dependence. 5) Data Interpretation: Researchers interpret data to find deep meaning and relate to relevant theories.

The Analysis technique uses Thematic Analysis, which involves identifying patterns or themes in the data and focusing on the coping strategies used by individuals. Narrative Analysis is to understand the experiences of individuals involved in online gambling addiction and how they cope with stress.

### **3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

#### ***3.1. Online Gambling Dependence***

Gambling dependence *Online* is a serious problem involving individuals in online gambling activities with unsettling impacts. Data analysis shows that the prevalence of gambling dependence *Online* in Indonesia has continued to increase in recent years. It was found that about 30% of the total respondents experienced symptoms of gambling dependence *Online*, with repeated patterns of betting and lack of control over impulses being the dominant hallmarks(Cahyanti et al., 2024).

Repeated behavior to gamble is one of the main causes of online gambling addiction. Individuals who engage in this activity tend to place bets continuously, often without being able to stop themselves despite having suffered losses before. This inability to control impulses reflects a deeper problem. Lack of control over impulses is also a characteristic of online gambling dependence.

#### ***3.2. The Impact of Online Gambling Dependence on the Level of Public Stress in Indonesia***

This study found that online gambling dependence has several negative impacts on people's stress levels in Indonesia. From the survey data conducted, 40% of respondents reported high levels of stress directly related to their online gambling practices. The stress experienced by online gambling players also varies from difficulty sleeping, uncontrollable emotions, feeling frustrated when losing online gambling, consuming alcohol excessively, stealing and selling things owned, and getting into debt to suicidal thoughts. Easy access through digital platforms strengthens impulsive behavior, increasing the risk of addiction, especially among vulnerable groups such as adolescents and young people(Winanti, 2022).

The social impact of online gambling dependence is also significant. It found that 25% of the total respondents reported the presence of strain in interpersonal relationships, while 15% reported financial problems as a direct consequence of their online gambling habits. Individual productivity can be impaired due to distracted focus and energy on gambling activities. In the context of mental health, the impact of

online gambling cannot be ignored. The impact of online gambling on a person's stress level can be significant and potentially detrimental to mental well-being. First of all, the financial factor is one of the main causes of stress in the context of online gambling. Losing money invested in gaming can create intense financial stress, especially if individuals engage in excessive gambling practices. The feelings of anxiety and stress that arise due to these financial burdens can affect an individual's daily life, creating a negative cycle that is difficult to overcome.

Additionally, the uncertainty of online gambling results can create high levels of stress (Parandita, 2023). Uncertainty and anticipation related to the game's outcome can provide prolonged emotional distress. Individuals who engage in online gambling may feel tense, restless, or even anxious while waiting for the outcome of their bets. This can affect sleep quality, increase emotional tension, and interfere with focus on daily activities. Online gambling can also trigger interpersonal stress. Excessive involvement in gambling activities makes individuals less responsive to the needs of family or social relationships. The tension that arises from the imbalance between the attention paid to online gambling and social responsibility can create conflict and social isolation, increasing overall stress levels (Danti, 2021).

The impact of online gambling on a person's suicide rate is a serious issue and requires deep attention from the community and authorities (Ramadhan, 2023). Several studies and reports have shown a link between excessive gambling practices, including online gambling, and an increased risk of suicide. The factors involved involve financial, emotional, and social aspects, creating a psychological burden that can trigger suicidal actions. The financial aspect of online gambling can lead to unbearable stress, especially when individuals experience significant losses. Big losses in gambling games can create a debt burden that puts heavy economic pressure. This condition, when not handled properly, can lead the individual to the point of despair that drives them towards suicide as a form of escape from unresolved financial problems.

In addition, the emotional aspect also plays a key role. Online gambling addiction is often associated with mental disorders such as anxiety and feelings of hopelessness. When individuals feel unable to cope with the negative effects of gambling, the emergence of suicidal thoughts is biased as a result of hopelessness and loss of hope. Social aspects can also affect the suicide rate related to online gambling. The stigma and social isolation that individuals who engage in gambling may experience can increase the risk of suicide.

### ***3.3. The Use of Coping Strategies in Estimating the Stressful Impact of Online Gambling Dependence***

Despite the negative impact caused, the data also shows that the majority of respondents (70%) use a variety of coping strategies to reduce stress levels resulting from online gambling addiction. The most common coping strategies are seeking social support, focusing on positive activities, and setting clear financial boundaries. However, despite these efforts, 45% of respondents admitted difficulties in implementing the coping strategy consistently. There are also several respondents (20%) who stated that they have not found an effective coping strategy for overcoming stress caused by online gambling dependence. One of the 5% who successfully used the coping strategy revealed that "the coping strategy helped me a lot in slowly helping to quit playing *online gambling*."

The use of coping strategies plays a very significant role in efforts to minimize the stress effects that often arise as a consequence of online gambling dependence. In the face of these complex challenges, individuals can design and implement a variety of coping strategies in response to the levels of stress and uncertainty that accompany online gambling activities. A crucial first step in dealing with the psychological impact of *online gambling* is understanding and awareness. Individuals need to clearly understand the financial risks involved and the psychological impact that can arise as a result of their involvement in online gambling behavior. This awareness creates the foundation for developing effective coping strategies (Rifai, Herawati, & Mulyani, 2023).

Coping strategies can include a variety of approaches, ranging from financial management to seeking social support (Tamara et al., 2023). Setting financial limits is a concrete step that can help reduce financial uncertainty and minimize the impact of stress. Through the conscious decision to set a daily or monthly limit on the amount of money invested in *online gambling*, individuals can create a structure that helps control gambling behavior. Social support also plays an important role in coping strategies. Involving family, friends, or mental health professionals in recovery can provide crucial emotional support. Sharing experiences and feeling heard can reduce the psychological burden, allowing individuals to manage the stress that arises better.

The development of alternative entertainment is also the focus of the coping strategy. Shifting the time previously spent gambling *online* into positive activities, such as developing new hobbies, engaging in physical activity, or improving personal

skills, can help replace harmful habits with more positive behaviors. By combining these various coping strategies, individuals can design a holistic and adaptive approach to reduce stress arising from online gambling dependence. An in-depth understanding of the negative consequences of online gambling, solid social support, as well as an emphasis on developing positive habits can help form a strong foundation for achieving psychological well-being and overcoming the effects of emerging stress.

This analysis highlights the importance of prevention efforts and more effective interventions in dealing with the problem of online gambling addiction and the stress impact it generates. Recommendations for the development of broader prevention programs, education about the risks of online gambling, and easier access to counseling and mental support services were identified as steps that need to be taken to mitigate these negative impacts.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The impact of online gambling dependence on people's stress levels in Indonesia has serious implications and requires deep attention. Socially, easy access through digital platforms increases the risk of addiction, especially in vulnerable groups such as adolescents and young people. This impact creates stress on the individual and creeps into family dynamics, creating financial problems and strain interpersonal relationships.

Mental health aspects are also significantly affected by online gambling addiction. It was found that financial factors are the main cause of stress, creating pressure due to intense losses. Additionally, uncertainty about gambling outcomes can increase emotional tension, interfere with sleep quality, and hinder concentration on daily activities. To overcome the stress impact that arises from online gambling dependence, the use of coping strategies is crucial. Involving a variety of approaches, from financial management to social support, coping strategies help individuals cope with the resulting stress. The establishment of financial limits, emotional support, and the development of entertainment alternatives are key points in efforts to reduce the negative impact of online gambling dependence.

With a deep understanding of the negative consequences of online gambling dependence, the implementation of holistic coping strategies can form a solid foundation for achieving psychological well-being and reducing the impact of stress that arises. Therefore, prevention, intervention, and community support efforts are urgently needed to address the complex challenges faced by individuals and communities affected by online gambling dependence. In conclusion, the steps taken

to reduce the impact of online gambling dependence require cooperation between governments, non-governmental agencies, and communities and recognition of the importance of a holistic and sustainable approach to ensuring the psychological well-being of society as a whole.

It is recommended that further research focus on specific age groups or demographics, such as adolescents, young adults, or older people, to understand the dynamics of online gambling dependence and coping strategies that may differ between age groups. Research on groups with different socio-economic backgrounds can also clarify the differences in impacts and coping strategies among more vulnerable groups.

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