

PROBLEM GAMBLING AND FAMILY VIOLENCE: RESEARCH UPDATE

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6. What is the nature of the relationship?
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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROBLEM GAMBLING AND FAMILY VIOLENCE VICTIMISATION

- No equivocal findings
- All studies found:
 - Disproportionately high rates of IPV victimisation in problem gamblers
 - OR
 - A significant association between problem gambling and IPV victimisation
- Over one-third of problem gamblers report being victims of physical IPV (38.1%)
- Relationship may be exacerbated by less than full employment and clinical anger problems
- Violence extends to children and other family members



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROBLEM GAMBLING AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PERPETRATION

- No equivocal findings
- ALL studies found:
 - IP perpetration is over-represented in problem gamblers
 - Problem gambling is over-represented in IPV perpetrators, or
 - There is a significant relationship between problem gambling and IPV perpetration
- Over one-third of problem gamblers report being perpetrators of physical IPV (36.5%)
- Problem gambling is over-represented in perpetrators of IPV (11.3%)
- Relationship may be exacerbated by younger age, less than full employment, clinical anger problems, impulsivity, and alcohol and substance use problems
- Violence extends to children and other family members
 - Prevalence of perpetrating physical child maltreatment by problem gamblers was 56.0%



Limitations of the Literature

Few studies exploring the relationship between problem gambling and *family* violence

Limited to physical violence or fail to differentiate between types of violence

Reliance on treatment-seeking problem gambling samples

Few studies employ control groups

Reliance on samples from the US

Lack of validated instruments

No collateral reports

No studies exploring the possible reciprocity, bi-directionality, or displacement of violence

Few attempts to explain the mechanisms underpinning the relationship

Reliance on cross-sectional study designs

Gambling plays a role because I'm angry at him and the aggression comes out in my relationship with my children.

Program of Research

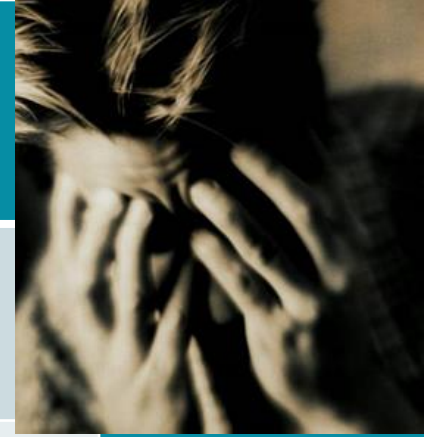
Systematic literature review

Screening of problem gambling and family violence in Australian services

Exploration of the relationship in problem gamblers and family members from Australian services

Replication in Hong Kong (complete) and New Zealand (underway)

Exploration of the relationship in Australian community



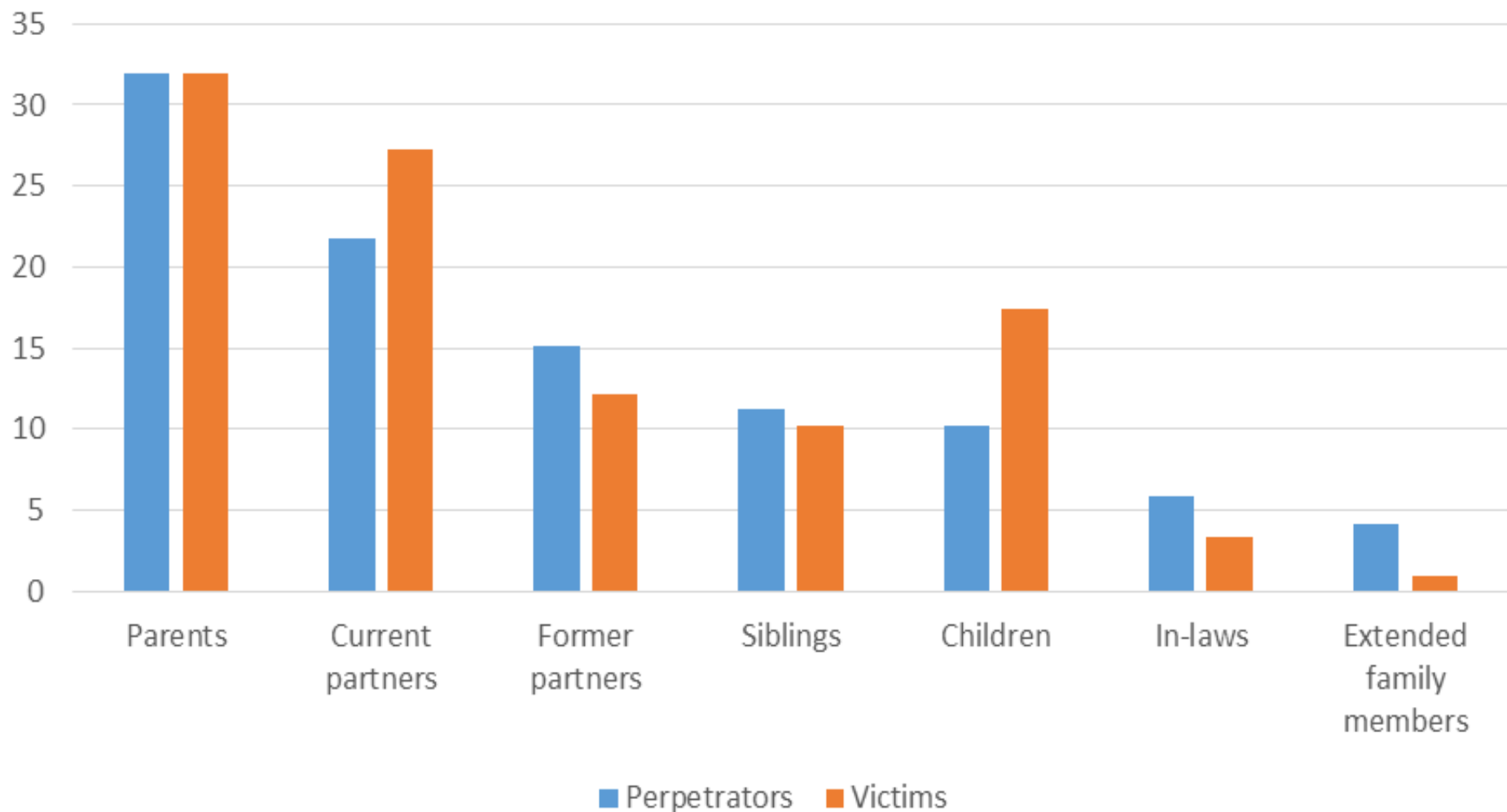
Prevalence of Problem Gambling and Family Violence in the Australian Community

PGSI category	FV victimisation	FV perpetration	Both FV victimisation & perpetration	Either FV victimisation & perpetration
Non-problem gambling	9%	9%	6%	13%
Low-risk gambling	20%	19%	14%	25%
Moderate-risk gambling	17%	13%	6%	22%
Problem gambling	33%	33%	18%	46%

Prevalence of Problem Gambling and Family Violence Across Australian Treatment Services

	Gambling services			FV services	Alcohol & drug services	Mental health services	Financial counselling services
	Men	Women	Total				
FV victimisation	21%	37%	27%		54%	62%	37%
FV perpetration	21%	27%	23%		49%	33%	33%
Any form of FV	29%	43%	34%		84%	62%	48.1%
Problem gambling				2.2%	4.3%	2.0%	10.6%

Identity of Family Members as Perpetrators and Victims



Types of Family Violence in Treatment-Seeking Problem Gamblers

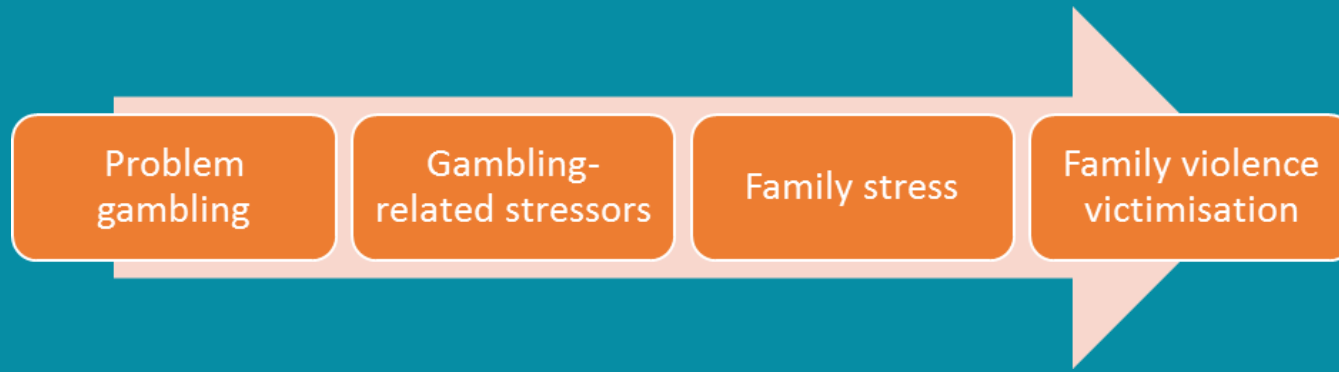
HITS items	FV victimisation	FV perpetration
Physically hurt you	17.9%	16.5%
Insulted or spoken down to you	50.9%	41.0%
Threatened you with harm	21.2%	28.6%
Screamed or cursed at you	48.6%	44.8%
Any of the above	55.7%	49.5%

Factors Associated with Family Violence Victimisation and Perpetration

Family violence victimisation	Family violence perpetration
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem gambling severity• Psychological distress• Post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms• Gambling-related coping motives• Gambling-related legal consequences• Impulsivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem gambling severity• Gambling-related legal problems• Impulsivity <p><i>When they get angry, they get very depressed and can't reach out to anyone else because they are so caught up in their own problems and narcissistic behaviours</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Psychological distress (mediator)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Psychological distress (mediator)

Nature of the Relationship: Problem Gambling and Family Violence Victimization

- Most problem gamblers thought there was a relationship between their gambling and family violence victimisation (77%)
- Most family members also thought there was a relationship between the problem gambling and their perpetration (73%)



Only because of the gambling problem [of husband] makes me so angry and so I lash out.

He couldn't understand why I was gambling and he got angry at me after I had been gambling all our money.



He [ex-husband] destroyed the family with gambling and mistrust and I'm angry with him".

IPV victimisation

Need to escape
distress

Problem gambling

The aggressive behaviour was there and I gambled to feel a bit better. It's a place to go when I didn't want to be at home and around him.

My husband is violent and I need to gamble. I gamble and it makes him pick a fight with me and then he's violent.

Gambling was my only outlet because he took my life away. I didn't even exist. He had all the control and I just wanted to get a bit of my own money so I could have some control over my life. He would give me money and I would go to TAB on the weekends and gamble away. His behaviour, control and violence was always the real issue, not my gambling. Since we separated, I have no reason to gamble.

I'd rather go gambling than be around him... it's a vicious cycle... when he's mean I'd rather be out...

Nature of the Relationship: Problem Gambling and Family Violence Perpetration

- Most problem gamblers thought there was a relationship between their gambling and family violence perpetration (80%)
- Most family members also thought there was a relationship between the problem gambling and their victimisation (72%)



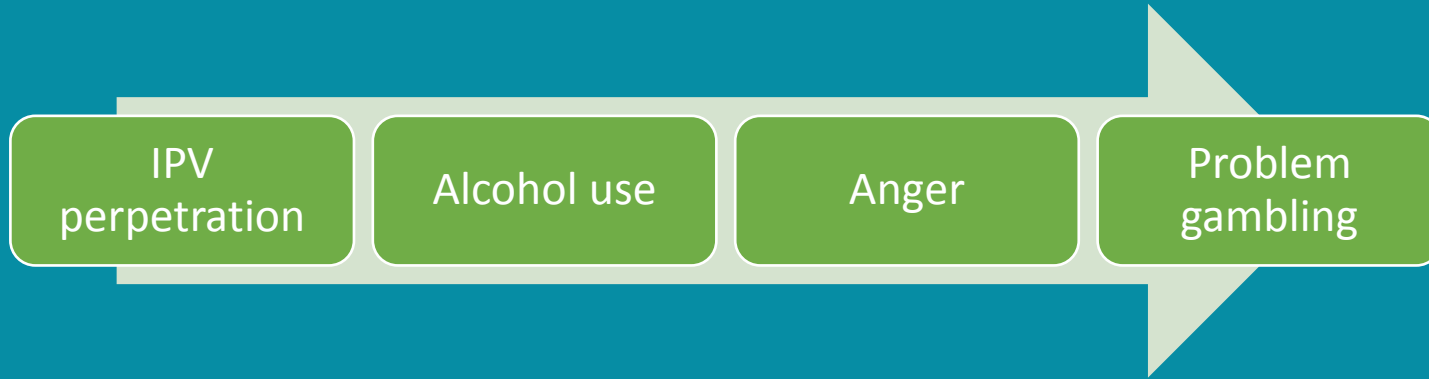
When he's [husband] lost a lot of money and then comes home angry and gets it out on me.

He [husband] gets aggressive when he doesn't have money and loses his temper. When he loses money, he takes it out on his close ones.

She [wife] gets very defensive about her gambling, becomes irritable and nasty if she had a big loss or if someone says something to her about her gambling. Always making excuses, not taking responsibility.

Go gambling, you come home and there's no money to pay bills or buy food and we have a fight. He cops my aggression. Spirals down from that.

Feeling of desperation and becomes anger, and it's hard to think at the time and I've never been in trouble before. I don't know what happens, starts with 'can I borrow some money' and it'll escalate from there and I yell at her and then it goes into physical violence.



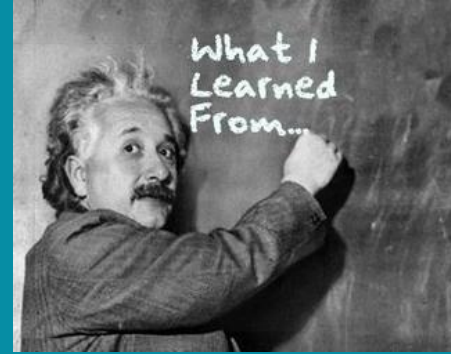
Feel so depressed. Guilty. Sorry I did it. Things send me off a lot faster than before.

Clinical Implications

- There is a need for routine screening for IPV in problem gambling programs and screening for problem gambling in IPV programs accompanied by effective referral and management protocols for co-occurring conditions.
- Alcohol and drug services, mental health services, and financial counselling services should also develop screening, referral and management protocols for problem gambling and family violence.
- Further research is required to investigate the nature of the relationship between problem gambling and violence that extends into the family beyond intimate partners.



KEY MESSAGES



- There is significant international evidence for the relationship between problem gambling and IPV
- There is limited research investigating relationship between problem gambling and family violence – but violence seems to extend to children and other family members
- Most common forms of violence are insults or speaking down to and screaming or cursing at
- Relationship may be exacerbated by several variables
- Both relationships are mediated by psychological distress
- Further research exploring the nature of the relationships are required