

Assessing the unregulated deceptive marketing of online gambling and its effects on youth: A brief response on significant articles regarding its drawbacks

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With the mass advancement in IT and internet capabilities, online gambling (OG) has become increasingly available, contributing to the augmentation of advertising and marketing of OG. However, many of these marketing schemes deliberately tap into young consumer subjectivity, creating a co-occurrence with problem gambling and financial losses. This brief response will solidify that the moderately unregulated deceptive marketing of OG has ramifications amongst youth. Firstly, López-González et al. (2017) emphasise how strategies such as skill-enhancing and risk-lowering advertising, heuristic of representativeness, intrinsic sensory, celebrity endorsements, and free-money incentives contribute to ludomania. According to research they gathered, supporters of the Australian Rugby League, many of whom are families with pubescent children, were subject to 322 episodes of gambling advertisements throughout three matches (López-González et al., 2017). They argue, as a result, that minors may be susceptible to early-onset gambling addiction. Furthermore, Abarbanel et al. (2020) explore the use of Twitch for mechanisms in gambling engagement amongst viewers. They illustrate how streamers employ various exploitative monetization marketing techniques, namely integrating elements based on chance: unpredictable rewards, in-game predictions, and giveaways. These techniques are considered OG marketing yet are still within the lines of Twitch gambling legislation causing concern for the safety of young naïve streamer enthusiasts. Lastly, Bouguettaya et al. (2020) consolidate that increases in gambling and problem gambling behaviours, as well as more favourable views towards gambling, are linked to exposure to gambling-related advertising. They assess research regarding gambling advertising with links to gambling attitudes, intentions, and behaviour. Together, I found that these studies underscore that the legality of OG marketing is

highly superficial and unclear depending on the jurisdiction and type of advertising. Additionally, they all agree that more high-quality quantitative, experimental, and long-term research should be conducted on the effects of OG marketing, and governments should be held accountable for enforcing policies detailing the legal distribution and restrictions of OG marketing amongst youth to ensure safety.

(Word count: 317)

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