

Do the perceived causes of gambling addiction differ from substance use and other behavioural addictions? A qualitative study of people with lived experiences



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INTRODUCTION

There has been a paucity of studies investigating the Syndrome Model of Addictions proposed by Shaffer and colleagues (2004)

The current study aimed to assess the perceived causes of gambling, substance use, other behavioural addictions from people with lived experiences

METHODS

A secondary analysis of the Quinte Longitudinal Study was conducted

Participants were grouped depending on their lived experiences: gambling ($n = 383$), substance use ($n = 394$), and other behavioural addictions ($n = 287$)

Participants responded to an open-ended question asking them what they perceived to be the cause of their addiction. The responses were then coded using thematic content analyses

RESULTS

Twelve overarching themes were identified across groups (Figure 1)

The most common perceived cause of addiction across groups was as a coping mechanism (Figure 2)

Groups only differed on two of the twelve causes. The SU group was more likely than either group to report addictive properties and the BA group was more likely than the gambling group to report coping

Winning money was a response that was unique to gambling

DISCUSSION

Results suggest common themes across addiction types as well as themes unique to gambling providing empirical support for the Syndrome Model of Addictions

Coping with negative affect and mental health was the most common cause across addiction, which suggests a need to address negative affect in treatment

Understanding perceived causes of addiction may help inform effective treatment methods

Figure 1. Percentage of all codable responses describing each perceived cause of addiction

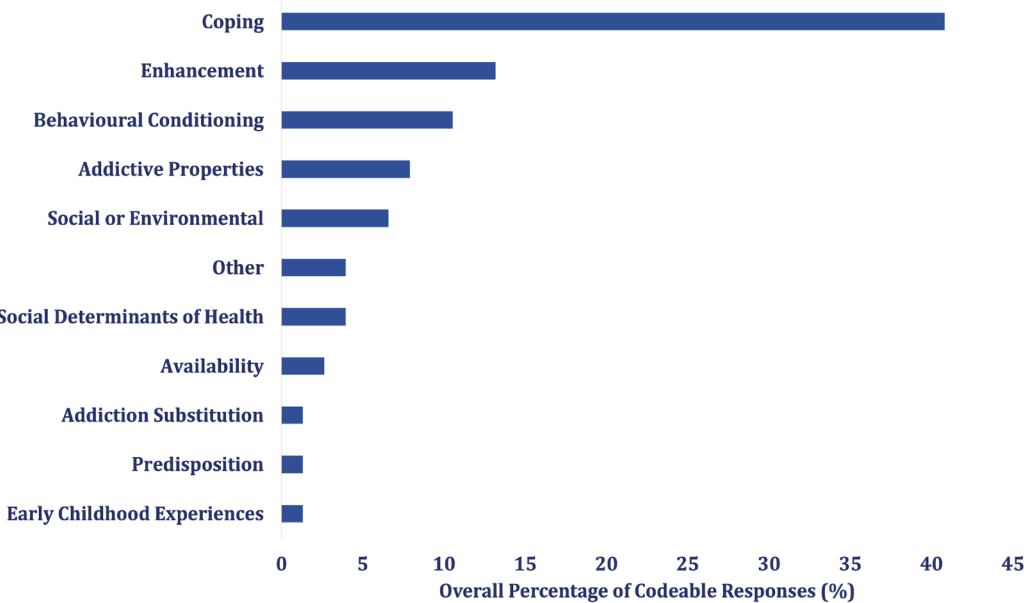


Figure 1. Percentage of codable substance use, gambling, and behavioural addiction responses describing each perceived cause of addiction

