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Gambling-related harm and criminal activity - combining population-based Finnish Gambling Harms survey with register data

Problem gamblers are at-risk of committing non-violent property crimes to fund their gambling. Not just problem gamblers, but gamblers more broadly may experience gambling-related harm. The presentation outlines the background and results of a first wave data (n=7186) of the longitudinal Gambling Harms survey. In 2016, 0.9 percent of the respondent had experienced at least one social deviance harm, such as feeling outcast from religious or cultural community. Based on the survey, 0.2% had committed a crime due to their gambling.

The aim of the study is to explore gambling-related harm as well as criminal charges based on criminal records. It focuses particularly on social deviance harm subcategory of the Harms Checklist. In addition, the survey data of adult gamblers will be combined with national registers by Statistics Finland in January 2019. Therefore, it also explores whether gambling severity, measured using the Problem and Pathological Gambling Measure (PPGM), is associated with income-generating crime like frauds and embezzlements, rather than other types of crime. The data is analyzed using logistic regression. Further results of the study including the prevalence rate, and the relationship between register-based recorded criminal activity of all respondents, different social deviance harms and gambling severity will be presented.

Implications for crime prevention, harm reduction and for policy makers as well as for further research will be discussed at the conference, particularly from the perspective of socioeconomically vulnerable subgroups.

Keywords: gambling, crime, problem gambling, survey, register data

Biography:

Kalle Lind, MSSc, is currently working as a researcher at the National Institute for Health and Welfare, Helsinki, Finland. He is also completing his PhD studies (sociology) at the School of Social Sciences and Humanities at the University of Tampere, focusing on gambling-related crime reported to the police in Finland. In addition, he has been studying gambling and crime among
prisoners and support program participants. His research interests include gambling, crime, addiction, and treatment development, which he approaches using both qualitative and quantitative methods.