Skill-based Gambling Machines: Consumer attitudes and capacity for informed choice

Dr. Sally Gainsbury, Dr. Kahlil Philander, Ms. Georgia Grattan

Submission for Individual Paper Presentation

Abstract
Skill-based gambling machines combine elements of video games (skill, social interaction, competition, achievement and progress) with the random pay-out schedule of electronic gaming machines (EGMs, slots, pokies, VLTs, FOBTS). These new machines are designed to be more engaging than traditional EGMs and specifically appeal to younger generations to address the aging EGM player base apparent in many international jurisdictions. Skill-based gambling machines are currently only legally provided in a handful of U.S. states. International regulators have expressed concerns regarding the potential for machines to lead to harms due to players misunderstanding the extent to which skill can influence outcomes (illusions of control) and the subsequent capacity for informed consent. The extent to which consumers are interested in playing the new machines is not well understood, making their commercial viability unknown.

This presentation will share research results from two empirical studies examining consumer attitudes towards skill-based gaming machines, their interest and intent to play, and the extent to which they understand the role of skill vs. chance. Participants were recruited online and from U.S. casinos which provide skill-based gaming machines and completed surveys after exposure to the machines.

Implications
This presentation will provide research evidence regarding two important questions for researchers, regulators, policy makers, and industry professionals about skill-based gambling machines: Who is likely to play these? And Do consumers understand how skill-based gambling machines work?

Acknowledgment
This research was conducted with assistance from GameCo. The efforts of Mr. Blaine Graboyes and Ms. Danielle Rosenberg to facilitate participant recruitment are greatly appreciated.

Funding
This work was supported by an Australian Research Council Discovery Early Career Research Award [DE1060100459] awarded to Dr. Sally Gainsbury. In-kind support for this research was provided by GameCo.
Author Details

Dr. Sally M. Gainsbury
Science Faculty, Brain & Mind Centre, Psychology
Gambling Treatment & Research Clinic
The University of Sydney
94 Mallett Street, Camperdown NSW 2050 Australia
Email: sally.gainsbury@sydney.edu.au
Telephone: +61 2 8627 5642

Dr. Kahlil S. Philander
Carson College of Business, School of Hospitality Business Management
Washington State University
Email: kahlil.philander@wsu.edu

Ms. Georgia Grattan
Science Faculty, Brain & Mind Centre, Psychology
Gambling Treatment & Research Clinic
The University of Sydney
94 Mallett Street, Camperdown NSW 2050 Australia
Email: ggra9588@uni.sydney.edu.au

Presenting author bio: Dr. Sally Gainsbury is the Deputy Director of the Gambling Treatment and Research Clinic within the Brain and Mind Centre, and Senior Lecturer within the School of Psychology at University of Sydney. She is Editor of *International Gambling Studies*. Her research focuses on the impact of emerging technologies on gambling, harms, and other behavioral addictions and developing interventions to enhance well-being and minimize harms.

Co-author bios
Dr. Kahlil Philander is a gambling economist, an Assistant Professor at Washington State University's Carson College of Business, and research affiliate at the University of Sydney School of Psychology. Previously, he oversaw the GameSense responsible gambling program as Director of Social Responsibility at BCLC and served as Director of Research at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas International Gaming Institute.

Ms. Georgia Grattan has recently completed her Bachelor of Psychology with Honours at the University of Sydney. She completed an internship and worked as a research assistant within the Gambling Treatment and Research Clinic in the Brain and Mind Centre.