

Title:

Revising the Pathways Model of Problem Gambling: Two Decades of Lessons Learned

Abstract:

The Pathways Model is a highly cited etiological model of problem gambling. Over the past two decades, a number of studies have found support for the model's utility in classifying gambling subtypes. In addition, empirical research conducted by the original authors has suggested key revisions in the original model to maintain its stability over time. This presentation will provide an overview of the original model, related findings in the past 20 years, and introduce the revised model.

A convenience sample of 1,168 treatment-seeking problem gamblers in the U.S., Canada, and Australia completed the Problem Gambling Severity Index and the Gambling Pathways Questionnaire. Empirically validated risk factors were analyzed using latent class analyses, identifying a three-class solution as the best-fitting model. Those in the largest class (Pathway 1) reported the lowest levels of all etiological risk factors. Participants in class 2 (Pathway 2) reported the highest rates of anxiety and depression, both before and after gambling became a problem, as well as childhood maltreatment, and a high level of gambling for stress-coping. Those in class 3 (Pathway 3) reported high levels of impulsivity; risk-taking, including sexual risk-taking; antisocial traits; and coping to provide meaning in life and to alleviate stress.

Implications: The revised model provides an evidence-based, parsimonious summary of key risk factors that may variously predispose individuals to develop gambling problems. Those factors provide a "road-map" to guide clinicians in individualizing treatment to address the most important predictors of relapse.

Presenter Bios:

Lia Nower, JD, Ph.D. is Professor and Director of the Center for Gambling Studies at Rutgers University. Her research focuses on etiology and treatment of problem gambling, harm reduction and responsible gambling, and big data analyses of online gambling and sports wagering. She serves as a Senior Editor for *Addiction* and Assistant Editor of *International Gambling Studies*. Dr. Nower is the 2022 recipient of the Lifetime Research Award from the National Council on Problem Gambling.

Alex Blaszczynski, Ph.D. is Professor Emeritus at the School of Psychology, Sydney University, the former director of the Gambling Research Unit and Gambling Treatment Centre, and the current editor of *International Gambling Studies*. Dr. Blaszczynski is the recipient of several lifetime achievement awards for his research, which spans four decades and ranges from the etiology and treatment of problem gambling to the development of harm reduction and responsible gambling strategies for use in gambling venues.

Vivien (Wen Li) Anthony, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor and Scientific Director for Video Gaming and eSports at the Center for Gambling Studies at Rutgers University. Her research focuses on problem technology use, including video gaming, esports, gambling and other interactive technologies, as a type of behavioral addiction.