

COMMUNICATIONS AND NEW MEDIA PROGRAMME

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES



Using personality traits to predict one's tendency to gamble online

A Talk by Dr. Byungho Park
Communications and New Media Programme

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Gambling has been seen as a serious issue for health communication practitioners and scholars due to the addictive nature of this activity. While the mechanism of how individuals get addicted to gambling is still under debate among psychologists (Griffiths, 2006), the gambling industry has been expanding to a whole new area -- the Internet.

The online gambling market has been expanding at a very fast rate of more than 50% per year (Global Betting and Gaming Consultants, 2005). The impact of online gambling was strong enough to force the law makers in the United States government to pass a law to ban it.

Gambling - both online and offline - provides strong excitement to players and scholars see this as a reason for making it so attractive, and even addictive to some people. What is puzzling to scholars is that some people can easily control their behaviour while others become pathological gamblers. One approach to understand this is to use individual difference in one's personality to find correlation between one's tendency of being a pathological gambler. Zuckerman's Sensation Seeking Scale (1979) is one of them, and studies up to date came up with mixed results.

This study uses both Zuckerman's Sensation Seeking Scale (1979) and Lang's Motivation Activation Measure (Lang, Wang, & Bradley, 2004) and compares their correlation with individual's tendency for gambling online. Using data collected from young people from the general population, both measures had significant correlation with individual's online gambling experience and pathological online gambling symptoms based on DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association, 1994) modified for online gambling. However, there was a difference between Zuckerman's SSS and Lang's MAM for predicting the dependent variables. Implications of the findings from the data for health professionals will be discussed.

About the Speaker:

Byungho Park received his Ph.D. in Mass Communications from Indiana University - Bloomington in 2006. His research focuses on motivated cognition in the context of processing mediated messages. His research interests include cognitive processing of video games and interactive advertising, and the impact of structural features and content of mediated messages on motivated cognition. Dr. Park's current research project is about motivated cognition during video game play. He holds an MA in Telecommunications and a BS in Computer Science, both from Korea University.

