

Gambling among foreign-borns in Sweden

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A qualitative study

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Background



Risky gambling patterns is more common in certain groups of society, foreign-borns being one of them. Approximately 12% of the Swedish population is born outside of Europe (20% outside of Sweden).



According to the Public Health Agency, 10.5% of men born outside of Europe have “risky gambling patterns”, compared to 4.6% among those born in Sweden. Gambling, however, is less common.



Similar results have been found in Denmark, Norway, Germany and Australia.

Previous research

Intern



Lack of research, but also difficulties to generalize between cultures, countries and background (migrant, refugees etc). For other disorders/behaviors, there is a mixed picture depending on the disorder studied



Wardle et al., (2019) identified three broad factors affecting the risk of developing PG:

- Integration stress
- Marketing/availability
- Cultural/religious aspects



A lack of studies controlling for socioeconomic factors, or investigating gender etc.

*Wardle, H., Bramley, S., Norrie, C., & Manthorpe, J. (2019). What do we know about gambling-related harm affecting migrants and migrant communities? A rapid review. *Addictive behaviors*, 93, 180-193.

Main research questions

What does their relationship to gambling look like?

Has their relationship to gambling changed after coming to Sweden?

Does their culture have a different view on gambling and PG?

What is their experience of and view on treatment?

What are their ideas on why PG is more common among foreigners?

Methods

Intern



Qualitative study with 12 males born in the Middle East, North Africa and Afghanistan.



Interviews took 20–60 minutes and followed a semi-structured questionnaire. The interviews were conducted live, via video calls or telephone and transcribed verbatim.



The interviews were analyzed using conventional content analysis.

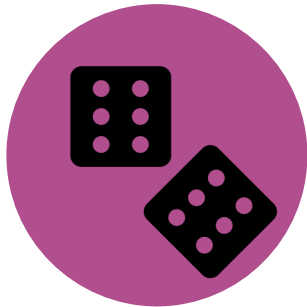
Participants

ID	Age	Age arrival in Sweden	Origin country	Participated in treatment/support	Main problem game
IP1	59	22	Iraq	-	Casino, online casino
IP2	20	14	Afghanistan	Yes	Online casino, betting
IP3	44	24	Turkey	Yes	Online casino, betting
IP4	55	16	Turkey	Yes	Online casino
IP5	42	9	Iran	Yes	Poker
IP6	47	4	Turkey	Yes	Online casino, betting, horse betting, poker
IP7	36	5	Turkey (Kurdistan)	No	Betting
IP8	41	25	Tunisia	Yes	Online casino, kasino
IP9	65	25	Iran	Yes	Online poker, online casino
IP10	37	Born in Sweden	Turkey	No	Betting, online casino
IP11	42	16	Iran	Yes	Online casino
IP12	39	6	Iran	-	Poker, casino, online casino

Results

<u>Category</u>	Relation to gambling	Gambling in childhood	Gambling in Sweden vs origin country	View on gambling in origin country	Proposed explanations	Helpseeking
<u>Code</u>	Gambling as entertainment /Gambling as part of friendship	Gambling within family	Availability of gambling	Unknown phenomena	Sense of exclusion	Keep it quiet
	Gambling for money	Gambling among friends	Gambling ads	Negative view of gambling/gamblers	Economic stress	Seeking treatment or peer support
	Problem gambling	Gambling while growing up	Insights about gambling	Religious views/haram	Anxiety	Help from family
	Peer support volunteer			Innocent gambling	Money as status	
					Risk-taking	

Relationship to gambling



All participants had a problematic relationship to gambling:

"It caused my divorce, and I have been a bit depressed. I have actually used gambling as a form of anxiety relief."

IP4, 55 years old and born in Turkey .

Gambling in Sweden and origin country



Big differences in availability between Sweden and origin country:

"Before coming here I knew nothing about roulette and such things. I learned about roulette and lotto here and I started gambling and then it just got worse and worse."

IP1, 59 years old and born in Iraq.

View on gambling in origin country



All participants mentioned that gambling and PG was stigmatized in the origin country.

"To be a gambler in Iran at that time was the worst that could happen a famliy. You didn't talk about people who lost money at all."

IP9, 65 years old and born in Iran.

View on gambling in origin country

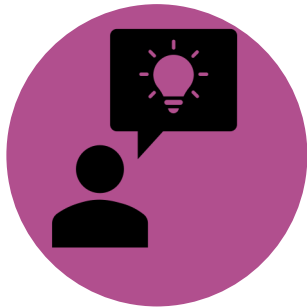


However, some described more socially accepted forms of everyday gambling:

"It's very involved in the everyday life in our countries that when you do something, you bet on it. It's a type of gambling, gambling isn't just roulette, black jack or online casinos."

IP5, 42 years old and born in Iran.

Proposed explanations



Some participants highlighted cultural factors:

"A cultural thing, all over the Middle East, is that it is a "society of prestige" where it is highly regarded to be rich. (---) That's why we buy expensive things, pay for dinners on restaurants and so on. It's supposed to look good on the outside, the image you project to friends and the rest of society is very important in our culture"

IP12, 39 years old, born in Iran.

Proposed explanations



Others underscored factors related to the migration and integration process:

"I think the process of becoming a part of Sweden is one explanation. You have no social network and gambling becomes a past time activity. Something social. The economic part is important too, it's very tough economically in the beginning and many have a responsibility to send home money"

IP11, 42 years old and born in Iran.

Help seeking



Many expressed that there was a higher barrier for foreign-borns to seek treatment:

"It's a taboo of sorts, they're ashamed, they don't want family and friends to know. In the best case scenario their wives know and maybe their kids. But many of them haven't told anyone else. That where you see a difference compared to those born in Sweden."

IP9, 65 years old and born in Iran.

Help seeking



Many also expressed an understanding that the whole family will get involved:

"I have been to all sorts of therapy, and the psychologists here in Sweden will tell family members to "cut him off if he does this and that", but that's not how it works in our culture. We can't just throw someone out on the streets, it doesn't happen. And that goes for other addictions as well.

IP6, 47 years old and born in Turkey.

Almost done!



Take home messages

Intern



High levels of stigma surrounding PG and help-seeking.

- Could this also explain the elevated levels of PG?
- How do we reach this group?



Mixed picture regarding gambling in origin country:
On one hand prohibited and stigmatized, on the other hand a part of everyday life.



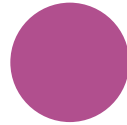
The relationship to money seems to be of essence:

- Importance of luxury and extravagance
 - Difficult economic situation
- Expectations to support family economically
 - Sudden enhanced economic status

Limitations



Only male respondents, several have been involved in peer support groups etc.



No respondents from Somalia, Eritrea and Syria which are major origin countries.



The focus on migration and culture might obscure other factors that might be least as important.

Thank you for listening!

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