An updated systematic review and meta–analysis regarding preventive interventions for gambling

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Introduction

A key issue for gambling research and the industry is how to prevent gambling associated with risk and severe problems

Strategies for prevention has been applied in school settings, online at gambling sites and casinos

The goal is to delay and decrease gambling behaviour resulting in less harm on an overall level

Reviews are a way to understand what works

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Introduction

We published a review in 2021 looking at educational interventions and RG measures (both land-based and online). E.g. self-exclusion, limit setting, pop-up messages, and personalized feed-back

A literature search was carried out covering the period from 2000-2018

The review did not find an evidence base for the preventive measures included. PNF decreased the number of days played

Aim & update

To assess the certainty of the evidence relating to different gambling preventive measures in the context of educational programs and consumer protection measures (e.g. responsible measures for both real-world and online gambling).

In 2022, work began with doing an update with the same aim, but the time-period was 2018–2022

To look at newly published studies

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Methods

Replicated the previous review

Broadened the search terms

Title and abstract screening and after that full text screening

Checked for bias and graded the papers

Standard practice for reviews. No pre-registration!

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Methods: review I & II

The first review included eight studies focused on educational interventions and for RG measures 20 studies

The second review included an additional 17 studies for RG measures and one study focused on an educational intervention (four studies had a high risk of bias)

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Results

No change when it comes to the evidence base for educational interventions

New measures added in RG: breaks in play and contacting the playing directly. Also, two studies that were not classified

No evidence base for the different measures. However, encouraging players to set limits led to an increase in limit setting (no changes in gambling)

Results

Calling individuals that gambled had a medium sized effect, but only one study was included

It was only possible to a meta-analysis for one RG measure. The studies differ when it comes to when and how the measure is implemented and what outcome measure are used. Individual studies might show an effect

Discussion & conclusions

More research needs to be carried out, but research also needs to be set in a framework

Understand what interventions are the same or target the same behaviour

Difficult to replicate studies – prevention is a moving target

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Discussion & conclusions

Calling players seem to be an efficient RG measure. Is it because the customer is exposed in a non-gambling situation?

Should RG measures be used in a gambling setting or be implemented in a different way

The challenges with doing good school-based interventions remain

The RG measures needs to remain at gambling sites!

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Thank you!

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