

## Factors influencing treatment motivation in patients with gambling disorder

### What this research is about

People with gambling disorder (GD) often drop out of treatment and relapse. When people internalize stigmatizing beliefs (e.g., negative societal labels and stereotypes about people with GD), they may have lower self-esteem and self-efficacy. Internalized stigma may lead to people trying to hide their addiction. They may also have lower motivation to seek treatment. The purpose of this study was to examine whether the treatment motivation of patients with GD is affected by internalized stigma, perceived social support, depression, and anxiety.

### What the researchers did

This study included male patients between the ages of 18 and 60 who were diagnosed with GD according to the DSM-5 criteria. Participants were recruited from the Erenköy Mental Health and Neurological Diseases Training and Research Hospital, Sancaktepe Addiction Counselling and Training Center, between April and December 2022.

Participants must have at least primary school education. They also had to sign a consent form and complete a set of scales before the first interview. This study excluded patients diagnosed with another psychiatric illness or a neurological disorder. It also excluded people with visual, hearing, or cognitive loss at a level that would prevent communication or affect their ability to complete the scales.

A total of 165 patients were included in the study. In addition to answering sociodemographic information, the patients completed the following:

- Internalized Stigma Scale in Mental Illness
- Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support

### What you need to know

The purpose of this study was to examine whether the treatment motivation of patients with gambling disorder is affected by internalized stigma, perceived social support, depression, and anxiety. Data from 165 male patients with gambling disorder from Istanbul were analyzed.

The findings suggest that people with higher levels of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to seek treatment had higher levels of internalized stigma, including feeling alienated, endorsing negative stereotypes about people with gambling disorder (GD), perceived discrimination, and social withdrawal. The study also found that people with higher levels of extrinsic motivation had more anxiety and depression symptoms.

Overall, treatment motivation was explained by internalized stigma. Regarding specific treatment motivation, intrinsic motivation was explained by feeling alienated, while extrinsic motivation was explained by depression, anxiety, and endorsing stereotypes. Social support did not affect treatment motivation.

- Beck Depression Inventory
- Beck Anxiety Inventory
- Treatment Motivation Questionnaire, adapted for GD

### What the researchers found

Of the 26 included studies, 17 examined costs at the

The researchers did not find any link between treatment motivation and age, history of gambling, age at first gambling, frequency of gambling, and total duration of gambling. In addition, history of

gambling, previous treatment attempts, and social support were not associated with treatment motivation.

The researchers found that people with higher levels of intrinsic motivation for seeking treatment had higher levels of various aspects of internalized stigma, including alienation (i.e., feeling disconnected from society), confirmation of stereotypes (i.e., endorsing negative stereotypes about people with GD), perceived discrimination, and social withdrawal. Intrinsic motivation referred to being compelled to seek treatment for internal reasons such as wanting to make changes.

People with higher levels of extrinsic motivation also had higher levels of various aspects of internalized stigma, including alienation, confirmation of stereotypes, perceived discrimination, and social withdrawal. Extrinsic motivation referred to being compelled to seek treatment for external reasons. Higher levels of extrinsic motivation were linked to more anxiety and depression symptoms.

People with higher levels of treatment motivation had higher levels of various aspects of internalized stigma, including alienation, confirmation of stereotypes, perceived discrimination, and social withdrawal.

People with more depression and anxiety symptoms had higher levels of treatment motivation. Surprisingly, people who reported higher levels of social support had lower levels of treatment motivation.

The researchers examined which factors helped to explain the change in treatment motivation. Three aspects of internalized stigma, namely alienation, confirmation of stereotypes, and perceived discrimination, explained about 34% of the change in treatment motivation.

Regarding specific treatment motivation, about 30% of the change in intrinsic motivation was explained by alienation and overall internalized stigma. About 31% of the change in extrinsic motivation was explained by depression, anxiety, and confirmation of stereotypes. About 6% of the change in interpersonal help seeking (i.e., willingness to seek

out the help of others) was explained by confirmation of stereotypes.

### How you can use this research

Practitioners and treatment providers can use this research to address stigma related to gambling. Addressing stigma may improve people's willingness to seek treatment.

### About the researchers

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### Citation

Kapuci, Ö & Ünübol, B. (2024). The effect of internalized stigma, perceived social support, depression and anxiety levels on treatment motivation in patients with gambling disorder. *Journal of Experimental and Clinical Medicine*, 41(3), 690–700.  
<https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/omujecm/issue/89754/1493166>

### Study Funding

This study was supported by the Green Crescent within the scope of PhD thesis study scholarship.

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### About Greo Evidence Insights

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