

research snapshot

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Playing free online social casino games predicts online gambling

What this research is about

Social casino games are free games on the internet. They are set up to be like traditional casino games. Gamers are provided with free virtual credits to make their bet, and do not use real money. Free credits are reloaded periodically for gamers to use. However, gamers can buy more credits to continue playing after they lose or to play games with higher stakes. Gamers are often encouraged to buy more credits from the gaming operators. The purchase of virtual credits makes playing social casino games more similar to gambling with real money. It is possible that the more a person plays social casino games with virtual credits, the more likely it is for the person to see gambling as an acceptable activity. The researchers examined whether playing social casino games could lead to online gambling. They also examined factors that could influence moving from playing social casino games to online gambling.

What the researcher did

The researchers recruited people who had played social casino games, but had not gambled online for money. A total of 409 individuals participated. They answered an online survey that asked them how much time they spent playing social casino games, their motivations for playing, and whether they had paid for virtual credits. Participants who had agreed to be contacted were emailed a follow-up survey 6 months later. This survey asked if they had gambled online for money. A total of 100 participants replied to the follow-up survey.

What the researcher found

The researchers found that many social casino gamers reported gambling online for money after 6 months. Gamers who had paid for virtual credits were more likely to gamble online than gamers who had not paid for

What you need to know

The researchers examined whether playing social casino games could lead to online gambling. They surveyed social casino gamers who had not gambled online for money and followed up with them after 6 months. The researchers found that many social casino gamers moved to gamble online after 6 months. Gamers who had paid for virtual credits were more likely to gamble online than gamers who had not. Time spent on social casino games, desire to build gambling skills, and motivations to have fun and seek excitement did not predict the move from playing social casino games to online gambling.

virtual credits. Time spent on social casino games, desire to build gambling skills, and motivations to have fun and seek excitement did not predict the move to online gambling.

How you can use this research

Intervention and prevention providers may find this research useful to understand the risks of playing social casino games. There are no regulations for social casino games at present. Also, this type of gaming is advertised on social networking sites. Government agencies and prevention providers should monitor the effects of social casino gaming, particularly among youth. Government agencies may want to establish regulations for the social casino gaming industry.

About the Researcher

Hyoun S. Kim, Michael J. A. Wohl, and Melissa M. Salmon are affiliated with the Department of Psychology at Carleton University. Rina Gupta and Jeffrey Derevensky

are affiliated with McGill University. Email:
michael.wohl@carleton.ca

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Keywords

Social casino, online gambling, gambling, migration, micro-transactions, time, gambling motivations, enhancement, skill building, credits

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