

research snapshot

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Impact of advertisements and inducements on betting

What this research is about

Betting on racing and sports events has become more and more popular in Australia. This might be because betting advertisements (ads) have also increased. It is very hard to measure betting ads' effect on betting behaviour. Past research has mainly focused on bettors' recall of hearing/seeing betting ads at a single point in time; however, people may not actually know what drives their betting behaviour. Also, little is known about how wagering inducements influence betting behaviour. Wagering inducements offer one or more incentives to bet. The most common offers include refund/stake-back offers, sign-up offers, bonus or better odds, multi-bet offers, or winnings paid on losing bets.

This study explored whether betting ads and inducements influenced intended betting, actual betting, and spending more than intended among regular bettors over a short time period. It also studied whether or not these differed by problem gambling risk status.

What the researchers did

Participants were Australian adults, including 318 regular horse/greyhound race bettors and 279 regular sports bettors. Participants completed a survey that captured their demographic information and their problem gambling risk status via the Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI).

Participants then completed up to 15 ecological momentary assessments (EMAs). Participants were sent five surveys per week for three weeks (with a 2-week break in between each survey week). The EMAs captured participants' exposure to 20 different types of betting ads and inducements. Examples of betting

What you need to know

Hearing/seeing betting ads and inducements increased the likelihood of betting and increased spending when betting. For race bettors, but not sports bettors, hearing/seeing ads was also linked to betting when not planning to do so and spending more than intended. Compared to regular bettors without gambling problems, bettors with moderate-risk and problem gambling spent more when betting, bet when not planning to do so, and spent more than intended. Direct messaging of betting ads/inducements via emails, texts, and phone calls had the greatest influence on betting behaviour. Brands promoted during live and televised events and ads on betting websites/apps were also influential.

ads included brands appearing during live and televised events, television ads, direct messages, social media posts, etc. Inducements included sign-up bonuses, refer-a-friend offers, refund/stake-back offers, etc. Participants stated how often ('never', 'a few times', or 'often') they had heard or seen each type of ad/inducement in the past 24 or 48 hours (since the last survey). The EMAs also asked participants about their actual and intended betting via two questions: "Roughly how much money did you place on race bets in the 24 hours prior to 5 p.m. today?" and "Roughly how much money do you intend to place on race bets in the next 48 hours after 5 p.m. today?"

For both sports and race bettors, the researchers analyzed the impact of betting ads/inducements on intended spending, actual spending, and actual

spending when considering intended spending. They also analyzed the impact of specific messaging on moderate-risk/problem gamblers (PG/MR) compared to regular bettors without gambling problems.

What the researchers found

There were 6,843 EMAs for analysis. Among race bettors, hearing/seeing betting ads and inducements did not affect betting intentions. However, both were linked with greater likelihood of betting and spending more when betting. PG/MR race bettors did not gamble more often than other regular bettors, but they were more likely to gamble when they had not planned to do so and spent more when betting.

Among race bettors, hearing/seeing advertising brands, websites, and in-game commentary were linked with greater likelihood of betting. Brands and commentary were also linked with increased spending and excess spending. Inducements offered via direct messaging increased betting intentions, actual betting, and betting when not planning to do so. Stake-back offers increased the likelihood of betting and the amount spent betting.

Among sports bettors, hearing/seeing betting ads and inducements was linked with greater likelihood of betting. Ads were also related to greater spending. Neither was linked with spending more than intended. Compared to other regular bettors, PG/MR sports bettors bet more often, spent more when betting, were more likely to bet when not planning to do so, and spent more than they planned to.

Among sports bettors, hearing/seeing ads on websites/apps and brands during events, and multi-bet inducements were linked with higher likelihood of betting. Television ads were linked to greater betting spending. Ads on websites/apps led to increased likelihood of betting when not planning to do so.

How you can use this research

This study could help in the development of regulations on gambling advertising. For example, policy makers could restrict betting ads. This might help to reduce betting spending and spending more than intended among regulator bettors, including

those at higher risk of experiencing gambling harm. They could also restrict the types of inducements that have the most influence on betting spending, including direct messaging and stake-back offers.

About the researchers

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Citation

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