



RESEARCH SYNOPSIS

Janiri, L., Martinotti, G., Dario, T., Schifano, F., & Bria, P. (2007). The Gamblers' Temperament and Character Inventory (TCI) personality profile. *Substance Use & Misuse*, 42(6), 975-984. doi:10.1080/10826080701202445

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Can personality variables assessed with the Cloninger's Temperament and Character Inventory be used to assess at-risk social gamblers?

PURPOSE

The Cloninger's psychobiological model of personality assumes that both genetic and environmental factors have an influence on the development of a specific personality vulnerability that could lead to developing either an addictive or an impulsive-compulsive disorder. The purpose of the present study is to assess the personality profiles of probable pathological gamblers (PPGs) and non-pathological gamblers (non-PGs) in comparison with non-gamblers.

HYPOTHESIS

Specific temperamental and character dimensions of Cloninger's model of personality would differentiate PPGs from both non-PGs and non-gamblers.

PARTICIPANTS

Sixty active gamblers (male to female ratio of 1.8:1; average age 39.3 years); twenty-five were recruited from Gamblers Anonymous and 35 were recruited from a bingo site in Rome. Controls were 65 non-gambling subjects (matched for age, gender, and education with the group of gamblers) recruited among the staff of the University General Hospital in Rome.

PROCEDURE

Study subjects were compared with controls with respect to each scale of the seven personality dimensions of TCI. Probable pathological gamblers and non-pathological gamblers were differentiated according to the SOGS results (i.e., non-PGs were defined as those who had scores of 1 to 4, while subjects scoring 5 or more were included in the PPGs group). Probable pathological gamblers were then subgrouped according to presence of other addictive behaviours and family history for either substance misuse or gambling to also allow for examination of

differences in the TCI temperamental and character dimensions based on these variables.

MAIN OUTCOME MEASURES

A validated Italian version of the 20 item South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS) was used to assess pathological gambling in the past 6 months. The Temperament and Character Inventory (TCI) is a 266 item measure designed to assess dimensions of the Cloninger's model of personality. It includes four temperamental (i.e., Novelty Seeking; Harm Avoidance; Reward Dependence; Persistence) and three character (i.e., Self-Directedness; Cooperativeness; Self-Transcendence) dimensions.

KEY RESULTS

Thirty-two gambling subjects (30 from the bingo site) were classified as non-PGs and 28 (23 from the GA group) as probable pathological gamblers (PPGs). There were no statistically significant differences between non-PGs and PPGs with respect to the sociodemographic variables considered. Gender was found to be related to Reward Dependence (female > male); level of education was associated to Harm Avoidance values (less educated individuals had higher Harm Avoidance scores than those with higher education); and marital status was associated with Self-Transcendence scores (separated/divorced individuals had higher Self-Transcendence scores than married individuals who in turn had higher Self-Transcendence scores than single individuals). The sub-sample of PPGs reporting a substance misuse problem showed higher Novelty Seeking and lower Cooperativeness than the remaining probable pathological gamblers. Those who reported a family history of pathological gambling and/or of substance misuse showed higher Novelty Seeking and lower Cooperativeness values than the remaining PPGs. Those with a duration of problem gambling of less than 10 years showed higher Harm Avoidance values than those who had a longer duration of gambling. Those who reported a duration of problem gambling longer than 20 years showed lower Cooperative values than those who had a shorter duration of problem gambling.

LIMITATIONS

The study was exploratory in nature and did not offer any specific hypotheses.

CONCLUSIONS

Evidence is given here that there are specific temperamental and character personality dimensions associated with probable pathological gambling. Consequently, the identification of a personality profile at risk for problem gambling may have a

preventative and treatment value. Future research should further explore whether personality dimensions (and especially Novelty Seeking) are important predictors of problem gambling.

KEYWORDS: gambling, novelty seeking, personality profile, South Oaks Gambling Screen, temperament, personality

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