

# research snapshot

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## Features of betting platforms preferred by young people who bet on sports

### What this research is about

Different betting platforms (e.g., in-person and online) have different features that can influence speed of play, monetary transactions, gambling promotions, and more. Online betting has increased in recent years. Online betting is quicker and more convenient compared to land-based gambling due to the travel and potential wait times of the latter. It also enables immediate deposits and bets through electronic monetary transactions and allows people to receive betting promotions directly to their device.

Unlike land-based betting and betting using a computer, smartphone betting is entirely portable. People essentially can gamble at any time in any place. Due to the nature of smartphone usage, when betting on apps, people are more exposed to intermittent schedules of reinforcement associated with gambling. Research suggests that engaging in smartphone betting may be riskier compared to betting on other platforms, with the potential to increase the onset of gambling-related harms.

In this study, the researchers aimed to examine which platforms young adults preferred to bet on, their preferred betting platform features, and whether feature preferences depended on problem gambling severity and gender.

### What the researchers did

The researchers recruited 616 young adults aged 18–29 who resided in Australia. To be eligible for the study, participants had to have bet monthly on sports, esports, or daily fantasy sports (DFS) in the past year. Participants were recruited through Qualtrics in April 2021. In the survey, participants responded to

### What you need to know

In this study, the researchers investigated features of sports betting platforms preferred by young adults (aged 18–29) living in Australia. Participants rated the importance of 24 features of betting platforms. They also completed a discrete choice experiment in which they chose among different groups of features. The researchers found that young adults preferred to bet on smartphones. The most important betting platform features were the ability to place bets instantly from any location and the ability to make electronic financial transactions.

questions regarding their demographics, betting platforms used, and the Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI). They also rated the importance (i.e., their preferences) of 24 features of betting platforms.

In addition to the survey questions, participants completed a discrete choice experiment. In this experiment, they chose between different groups of betting features. This was different from a rating task because it required participants to make “trade-offs” in their choice of important features. Six groups of betting features were examined. Participants chose between two groups each time and indicated which option they would prefer when betting.

### What the researchers found

Of the 616 participants, 33% were men and 67% were women. About 85% engaged in sports betting, 51% in esports betting, and 49% in DFS at least monthly. Many participants engaged in weekly betting (31% for sports, 17% for esports, and 16% for DFS). Most

participants exhibited some level of risk for gambling-related problems. Based on the PGSI, 15% were classified as non-problem gambling, 18% as low-risk gambling, 24% as moderate-risk gambling, and 43% as problem gambling.

Smartphones emerged as the one platform preferred by the participants that offered all desired features. The researchers found that participants used smartphones the most for sports betting (73%), followed by computers (13%) and land-based venues (7%). Smartphones were also most commonly used for esports betting (64%) and DFS (63%).

Participants rated the most important betting platform features as the ability to place bets from any location, place bets instantly, make electronic financial transactions, and have quick access and transfer of money for betting. Features that were least important included the ability to bet with cash, avoid others while betting, and bet anonymously. Participants with moderate-risk or problem gambling placed more importance on several features related to privacy, betting with multiple operators, making in-play bets, seeing frequent promotions, and betting with cash/credit card. Men also rated privacy features as more important than women.

In the discrete choice experiment, being able to instantly place bets from any location and being able to make electronic financial transactions were the features that had the most impact on the choice made. Being able to access betting information online moderately easily and being able to bet with multiple operators were also important features that impacted choice. Social features, privacy features, and access to promotions were not found to predict participants' platform choice. No significant differences were found based on gender or problem gambling severity.

Overall, these results indicate that many of the features favoured by young adults who bet on sports have the potential to increase betting behaviors.

### How you can use this research

This research can be used by policy makers and gambling regulators. The findings suggest that

implementing restrictions on betting promotions, in-play betting, and betting with electronic funds may be warranted to support people at risk of gambling problems. There is a need to reinforce consumer protection tools (e.g., mandatory pre-commitment) to address the risks associated with smartphone betting.

### About the researchers

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