What this research is about
Gambling and depressive symptoms often happen at the same time. Past research suggests that this is not because one of them is a risk factor for the other. It suggests that there is an underlying factor that both disorders have in common.

This factor may be rumination. Rumination is an unhealthy coping strategy. It involves constantly thinking about the symptoms of a disorder and the possible causes and consequences of those symptoms. This can make the symptoms worse and last longer.

Rumination is made up of two sub-factors: brooding and reflection. Brooding involves focusing on the symptoms of a disorder without acting on them. Reflection involves actively examining symptoms to try to solve them. The current study examined the relationship between the rumination sub factors and gambling.

What the researchers did
The analysis included 506 people with at least one symptom of pathological gambling. Pathological gambling is a condition defined by continuous gambling that leads to distress. The researchers assessed participants’ symptoms of problem gambling and depression. Then they grouped participants based on the number of symptoms. The groups were at-risk, problem, or pathological gamblers. The researchers also assessed participants’ demographics and whether they had symptoms of rumination. Demographics included employment, education, and marital status. Symptoms of rumination included brooding and reflection.

What the researchers found
The majority of participants were considered pathological gamblers. Pathological gamblers reported the most depressive symptoms and they had the highest brooding and reflection scores, followed by at-risk and problem gamblers.

Brooding, but not reflection was statistically associated with symptoms of problem gambling. Specifically, an increase in brooding lead to an increase in problem gambling severity. Brooding appeared to have a greater impact on problem gambling severity for participants with fewer problem gambling symptoms. Other factors associated with symptoms of problem gambling included low education, and being single or male. Having a job was associated with less problem gambling symptoms. Age and migration background were not associated with problem gambling symptoms.

How you can use this research
Brooding may explain why gambling and depressive symptoms happen at the same time. Treatment
providers can target brooding tendencies in the treatment of gambling problems or depression. Researchers can build upon the findings of this study by examine the longitudinal relationship between gambling problems, rumination, and depression.

**About the researchers**

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**Citation**


**Keywords**

Rumination, pathological gambling, depression, brooding, reflection

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