

knowledge snapshot



Analysis of a responsible gambling campaign in the UK

What this article is about

Gambling can be harmful to the person who gambles, their loved ones, and communities. The UK government has promoted the idea of responsible gambling to address gambling-related harm. Responsible gambling puts the responsibility of the consequences of gambling on the individual. Responsible gambling initiatives include encouraging people to set time and money limits for their gambling and enrolling in self-exclusions programs that ban them from casinos. Others have argued that a public health approach would be more effective at reducing gambling-related harm. A public health approach focuses on broad gambling policies and practices instead of placing all of the responsibility on individuals to regulate their gambling.

The Senet Group was an organization formed by four large gambling companies in the UK. The Senet Group ran a responsible gambling campaign starting in 2015. This campaign had the tagline: “When the fun stops, stop.” The effectiveness of this campaign is not fully known. The aim of this study was to analyze how the Senet Group framed the problem of gambling-related harms, its causes, and solutions. The researchers also examined an evaluation the campaign funded by the Senet Group and its claims of effectiveness.

What was done?

The researchers collected material related to the Senet Group and their campaign. Material included websites, advertisements, interviews, and news articles. The researchers then conducted a framing analysis. A framing analysis involves examination of how a particular problem is defined, interpreted, and evaluated, as well as the type of treatment

Why is this article important?

The aim of this article was to evaluate a responsible gambling campaign in the UK, *When the Fun Stops, Stop*. The campaign was originally funded and delivered by the Senet Group, an organization formed by four major gambling companies. The researchers gathered materials related to the Senet Group and their responsible gambling campaign. They found that the Senet Group framed the problem of gambling-related harms as one that affects a small portion of people. The Senet group emphasized the individual’s responsibility in problematic gambling. The authors reviewed the Senet Group’s evaluation of the campaign and concluded that there is little evidence to support that the campaign is effective.

recommended. The researchers also identified five documents from the Senet Group’s website. These documents reported on the campaign’s effects, including people’s recognition of the campaign’s phrases and its effects on responsible gambling.

What you need to know

The researchers organized their findings into three categories. The first was how the Senet Group framed the problem, including how they portrayed gambling, defined gambling harms, explained the causes, and proposed solutions. The second was how the campaign was framed as well as theories/evidence that informed its creation. The third was claims about the evidence and impact of the campaign.

In terms of how the Senet Group framed the problem, several themes were identified. First, the Senet Group portrayed most people as being responsible and gamble for recreational purposes. Only a minority are viewed as being harmed by gambling. This creates a contrast of “us vs. them”, where people with gambling problems are viewed as “them”. The next theme focused on the Senet Group’s solutions to this problem, which were individually focused. The final theme was industry self-regulation. The Senet Group proposed that the gambling industry should impose their own regulations on gambling.

The researchers found that there are ambiguity and mixed messages in the “When the fun stops, stop” campaign. These messages promote gambling while warning about gambling too much. They also found that the campaign adopts a fun, humorous, and light-hearted tone.

The Senet Group framed the campaign as being informed by other effective health initiatives. For instance, the use of humor was portrayed as something that had made the campaign’s messaging accessible. The Senet Group claimed that over 80% of people who gamble are aware of their responsible gambling campaign. The Senet Group portrayed their campaign as effective because the tagline “When the fun stops, stop” is simple and people like it.

The evaluation of the documents from the Senet Group’s website revealed that several of their studies had significant weaknesses and could be biased. The researchers concluded that there is little evidence to support the assertions that the campaign is effective.

Who is it intended for?

This research is intended for policy makers and researchers interested in how to reduce gambling-related harm. The results of this paper indicate that promotion of responsible gambling as a way to manage gambling-related harm may not be effective. It also highlights the need to assess these measures independently of the gambling industry.

About the researchers

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