Gambling behaviors and psychopathology related to attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in problem and non-problem adult gamblers

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Abstract
Previous studies showed that Pathological Gambling and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) often co-occur. The aim of this study was to examine whether ADHD is associated with specific severity patterns in terms of gambling behavior, psychopathology and personality traits. 599 problem and non-problem-gamblers were recruited in addiction clinics and gambling places in France. Subjects were assessed with the Wender-Utah Rating Scale-Child, the Adult ADHD Self-Report Scale, the Mini International Neuropsychiatric Interview, the Temperament and Character Inventory, the South Oaks Gambling Screen and questionnaires assessing gambling related cognitive distortions and gambling habits. 20.7% (n=124) of gamblers were screened positive for lifetime or current ADHD. Results from the multivariate analysis showed that ADHD was associated with a higher severity of gambling-related problems and with more psychiatric comorbidity. Among problem gamblers, subjects with history of ADHD were also at higher risk for unemployment, psychiatric comorbidity and specific dysfunctional personality traits. This study supports the link between gambling related problems and ADHD in a large sample of problem and non-problem gamblers, including problem-gamblers not seeking treatment. This points out the necessity to consider this disorder in the prevention and in the treatment of pathological gambling.