

Behavioral addictions among adolescents: Do the predictors of pathological behaviors differ across gambling and video-gaming?

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Few studies have until now analyzed the relationship as well as the differences and similarities between pathological gambling and video-gaming among youth. The aim of the present study was to analyze the relationship between gambling and video-gaming behaviors, and to investigate the differences and similarities in a set of individual at-risk factors predicting pathological gambling and video-gaming. Participants were 1063 adolescents (60% males, mean age=15.69, SD=1.13) attending high school in Italy. The *South Oaks Gambling Screen – Revised for Adolescents* (SOGS-RA) and the *Game Addiction Scale* (GAS) were used to respectively measure the severity of gambling and video-gaming problems. A significant positive correlation was found between the SOGS-RA and GAS total scores ($r=.29, p<.001$). Two separate regression analyses were conducted to investigate the impact of gender, probabilistic reasoning, sensation seeking, loneliness, and feeling pressure to conform to peers on behavioral problems, considering respectively the SOGS-RA and GAS total scores as dependent variables. Results indicated that both the models were significant ($p<.001$). Specifically, gender ($\beta_{\text{gambling}}=-.15, p<.001$; $\beta_{\text{gaming}}=-.25, p<.001$) and feeling pressure to conform to peers ($\beta_{\text{gambling}}=.14, p<.001$; $\beta_{\text{gaming}}=.22, p<.001$) were found to be predictors of problems in both the behaviors, whereas probabilistic reasoning ($\beta=-.11, p<.01$) and sensation seeking ($\beta=.11, p<.01$) were associated with problems only for gambling, and loneliness ($\beta=.17, p<.001$) had a predictive power just for video-gaming problems. It would be useful for interventions aimed at preventing adolescents from behavioral addictions to consider specific and a-specific at-risk factors concerning pathological gambling and video-gaming.