

Gambling: Metasynthesis of Qualitative Research from 1998–2015



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BACKGROUND AND AIMS: *Gambling is a multifaceted phenomenon. It can be viewed from many different angles. This paper strives to provide an insight into the mechanisms and dynamics of gambling using the results of earlier qualitative studies. DESIGN:* It provides a metasynthesis of 34 qualitative studies of gambling carried out from 1998 to 2015. The focuses of these studies vary and so do the specific perspectives assumed by their authors. The results of these studies were analysed by means of qualitative methods to create a story of gambling. **RESULTS:** The studies coincide and confirm each other. Therefore, they enable a more nuanced description of the story of gambling. Gambling provides the players with various opportunities to ob-

tain gratification, not only financial, but also, and more importantly, psychological and emotional. Gambling continues despite crossing the line of recreational usage and becomes problematic. This persistent involvement in gaming consequently influences not only the players themselves, but also their social environment. CONCLUSIONS: Balance is an essential aspect of gambling. Gambling is a cure for a loss of balance. Gambling also disrupts the player's balance in life permanently. This creates a circle that has neither a beginning nor an end. A continual search for balance and losing it brings excitement and tension to a gambler's life.

KEY WORDS: GAMBLING – ONLINE GAMBLING – AVAILABILITY OF GAMBLING – CONTROL OF GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR

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