



## THE PHENOMENON OF ONLINE GAMBLING UNDER THE GUISE OF ONLINE GAMES AMONG THE YOUNGER GENERATION

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### Abstract

The increasing prevalence of online gambling cases among the young generation in Indonesia has a negative impact in that the younger generation is addicted to online gambling games that are easily accessible anywhere 24 hours a day, which only have a Wi-Fi network, through smartphones, and laptops. This study uses a descriptive method with a quantitative approach; the implementation time of this research starts from September 2024 to December 2024. The population in this study is the entire community attracted to the younger generation, namely those aged 17-29 years who use social media, such as Instagram. The research sample is the younger generation willing to become respondents by promoting a questionnaire on Instagram ads for 1 month. The number of respondents in the study was 90 respondents. The results of the study found that the majority of respondents who were exposed to online games under the guise of gambling were young generations aged 17-20 years. This age group is more vulnerable to social and digital influences due to the level of media literacy and self-control that is not fully mature. Involvement in online gambling is influenced by economic factors, such as low income and the assumption that gambling is an easy way to gain financial benefits. Technology, especially stable internet access, and social media is the main means that facilitate this engagement. Influence from friends, social media promotion, and the presence of influencers are the main drivers of respondents' involvement in gambling activities. Many respondents are exposed to online games through their social environment. Online gambling activities under the guise of gaming have had a negative impact, including difficulty controlling spending, increased addiction, and even a desire to go into debt to continue playing. It shows the addictive and destructive nature of gambling. Some respondents believe their skills or experience can increase their chances of winning. This belief encourages them to continue playing even though losses occur more often.

**Keywords:** Online Gambling, Online Games, Young Generation

### INTRODUCTION

In today's modern era, the development of information technology that is increasingly advanced and rapid over time makes technology and information (Sigove et al., 2022) (Sigov et al., 2022) a fundamental need to obtain news and information quickly and bring changes in people's lifestyles and cause social, cultural and economic problems (Simahatie et al., 2024) (Simahatie et al., 2024). The use of social media has become one of the leading platforms for disseminating information that replaces the role of electronic media (Mihelj & Jiménez-Martínez, 2021) (Mihelj & Jiménez-Martínez, 2021) such as television, radio, and newspapers. It makes it easier for people in Indonesia to access and disseminate information quickly and widely through social media such as Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook. The development of information technology has greatly influenced people's

lives, especially millennials who actively use social media in their daily lives (Szymkowiak et al., 2021) (Szymkowiak et al., 2021).

In this era of globalization, technology is developing increasingly; technology can have a positive and negative influence depending on the user (Skare & Soriano, 2021) (Skare & Soriano, 2021). The positive influence obtained is freedom of access for the sake of science, but by freely accessing the Internet, users are also free to get information that violates the law; one example is the online gambling game; the case is a common thing that we often hear and is increasing in other parts of the world such as in America, China, and of course Indonesia. It is happening among adults and the younger generation of the nation's successors (Putra et al., 2023) (Putra et al., 2023).

One of the cases that must be considered and is very difficult to eradicate in Indonesia is gambling (Pradika et al., 2024) (Pradika et al., 2024). The more sophisticated the technology, the more online gambling is. This case entered the environment of parents, children, and adolescents. The public's view of online gambling is widespread. It is considered a thing for this entertainment because it is detrimental to the people of Indonesia. This gambling is a severe case and must be immediately followed up by law enforcement (Kamalludin, 2024) (Kamalludin, 2024). Law enforcers in Indonesia protect and serve the people in security and order. The rise of online gambling in the younger generation is carried out openly and behind closed doors, so it is considered apathetic and reasonable in various places (Juliani R. K. et al. 2024).

Online slot gambling is one type of gambling that uses money as a bet. In this game, players will buy chips to bet. The number of chips purchased and bets placed will follow the conditions set in the game. Data from the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology shows that access to around 3.4 million gambling content on various digital platforms has been cut off since July 17, 2023 (Source from Antara News). The eradication of online gambling in Indonesia is still challenging to abolish because online gambling sites or applications continue to emerge with different names, even though access has been cut off. A threat that is no less detrimental to him since playing online gambling is a threat to personal data. The personal data of online gambling players is very vulnerable to being traded. Online gambling usually uses illegal applications that are not available on official platforms, and many of these online gambling sites are only through mobile sites. In addition to being illegal, the privacy policy regulating online gambling is also unclear, where personal data can be misused very likely (Ihsanudin Raisan., et al., 2023).

Online gambling has been regulated explicitly in Article 27, paragraph 2 of Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Information and Electronic Transactions contained in the ITE Law, which reads: **“Any person knowingly distributes without rights, transmits and/or makes accessible information or electronic documents that contain gambling content.”**

The increasing prevalence of online gambling cases among the young generation in Indonesia has a negative impact in that the younger generation is addicted to online gambling games that are easily accessible anywhere 24 hours a day, which only have a Wi-Fi network, through smartphones,

and laptops. In this phenomenon, technology development is a gambling container in today's era. As a result, many online gambling platforms and their management promise increasingly large betting prizes such as roulette, jackpot, baccarat, and blackjack. The online gambling case can have the potential to be a criminal act, so it becomes a threat to the privacy and security of users' data. In addition, the large volume of transactions also poses challenges in terms of reporting and analyzing financial transactions.

The proliferation of online gambling platforms has the potential to increase the risk of gambling addiction among individuals predisposed to or engaged in online gambling activities. Engaging in online gambling does not consistently yield financial gains; instead, participants often incur losses. When an individual experiences a loss, the money wagered is forfeited, potentially depleting their financial resources. Consequently, such individuals may feel compelled to seek additional funds to continue gambling, thereby perpetuating a cycle of financial risk and gambling behavior.

Online gamblers can use their money back, but there are also times when they don't have any more money to use as capital. An online gambling player will do everything, including committing theft, to get capital to gamble again. It is the result of online gambling that can damage society. It is also undeniable that a person who is already addicted to gambling will have the intention to be able to make others play online gambling where someone who is addicted to it can make online gambling games that can be played by others, or in other words a person will become a bookie of online gambling who can distribute online gambling games so that others can play them.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Online Gambling**

Gambling risks a certain amount of money or valuable objects for an uncertain outcome in winning money or other valuable objects. Some religions have banned gambling activities. Some countries impose sanctions on those involved in gambling, but some countries provide unique places to gamble, such as casinos. The prohibition was implemented because gambling activities were very detrimental but caused an addictive effect (Sulaiman, 2020).

According to Kartono (2014) (in Asriadi in the journal *Paper Knowledge Toward a Media History of Documents*), gambling is a deliberate bet, namely risking a value or something that is considered valuable by being aware of certain risks and expectations in-game events, matches, races, and events whose outcome is uncertain (Ninla Elmawati Falabiba et al., 2020). Online gambling is gambling that utilizes the internet network so that gamblers can play this game anywhere, anytime, as long as there is an internet network, they can play online gambling. Football gambling, for example, is done directly between two or more people by risking valuables they have secretly. Online gambling is the same as other gambling because in it, there is an element of winning and losing, and there is a value at stake, but where there is an internet network, they can play online gambling. In addition to

using the internet network, online gambling games also take advantage of gambling sites or websites that have been provided by online gambling service providers spread across cyberspace.

### **Forms of Online Gambling**

Online gambling games are the result of social interaction between students. Online gamblers utilize information and communication technology as a means of modern gambling, so it is more profitable for these online gamblers because it does not require them to meet in person (Putra, 2017). Online gambling games in Indonesia are increasing along with the ease of supporting factors to access the Internet through notebooks or gadgets. Some sites to access gambling games (online) are Higgs Domino, Online Poker, and Online Football Gambling.

### **Definition of Online Games**

Arif Sutikno et al. believe online games are played through the Internet or other computer networks. Online games are ubiquitous on modern gaming platforms, including PCs, consoles, and mobile devices, and span many genres, including first-person shooters, strategy games, and massive online multiplayer role-playing games (MMORPGs) (Sutikno et al., 2020). Meanwhile, Sagara and Ahmad stated that the game must use the internet network and be played in multiplayer or with more than one player. Online games are less famous than online businesses (Sagara & Masykur, 2018).

Based on some of the opinions above, the author can conclude that online games are online games that are played by more than one person using internet features by downloading the application first before playing it.

### **Forms of Online Games**

The games often played range from wars such as Mobile Legend, PUBG, Free Fire, and Dominoes to online gambling games such as those where players use money as a bet. Of course, this has a significant impact on students and teenagers who play these online games, so they will become addicted and can even experience dependence on game activities (Nadia Rahmi, 2021).

### **Behavioral Indicators that Affect Online Gambling Behavior**

According to Andika (2018), the factors that affect gambling behavior are based on the results of various cross-cultural studies that experts have carried out, which have identified several factors that are very influential in contributing to gambling behavior. These factors are;

1. ....S  
ocial and Economic Factors: For people with low social and economic status, gambling is often considered a means to improve their standard of living. Unsurprisingly, generous Donations with Prizes) lottery in Indonesia during the last new order era, the interest was more from low-income people such as pedicab drivers, laborers, or street vendors. With minimal capital, they hope to make

the most significant profit or become rich instantly without great effort. In addition, the social condition of people who accept gambling behavior also plays a significant role in the growth of this behavior in the community.

1. Situational Factors are situations that can be categorized as triggers for gambling behavior, including pressure from friends or groups or the environment to participate in gambling and marketing methods carried out by gambling managers. Group pressure makes the prospective gambler feel bad if he does not comply with his group's requirements. Meanwhile, the marketing method carried out by gambling managers by constantly exposing gamblers who manage to win gives the impression to prospective gamblers that winning in gambling is something ordinary, easy, and can happen to anyone (even though, in reality, the possibility of winning is minimal). The role of mass media, such as television and movies that highlight the skills of gamblers who can "see" turn every opportunity into a victory or glorify the figure of the gambler has also encouraged individuals to try gambling games.

2. The Learning Factor where it makes sense if the learning factor has a significant effect on gambling behavior, especially regarding the desire to continue gambling. What has been learned and produced, something fun, will continue to be stored in someone's mind and will want to be repeated at any time. It is what learning theory is called reinforcement theory, which says that certain behaviors will tend to be reinforced/repeated if given gifts/something pleasant.

3. Perception Factor about Probability of Winning: The perception referred to here is the perpetrator's perception in evaluating the chances of winning that he will get if he gambles. Gamblers who find it challenging to leave gambling usually tend to have a mistaken perception of the possibility of winning. They generally feel very confident in the victory they will get, even though, in reality, the chance is minimal because the belief that exists is only an illusion obtained from evaluating opportunities based on an uncertain and very subjective situation or event. They always say, "If you don't win now, you will definitely win at the next opportunity, and so on."

4. Perception Factor of Skills Gamblers who feel themselves very skilled in one or several types of gambling games will tend to assume that success/victory in gambling games is due to the skills they have. They believe their skills will enable them to control various situations and achieve victory (illusion of control). They often cannot distinguish between a victory due to skill and a mere coincidence. For them, a loss in gambling is never counted as a loss but is considered "almost winning," so they continue to hunt for the winnings they think will be obtained.

## **METHOD**

The method used in this study is a descriptive method with a quantitative approach. We conduct surveys through the distribution of questionnaires as a research tool conducted on large and small populations. However, the data studied is from samples taken from the population so that relative

events, distributions, and relationships between variables are found. This research was carried out virtually, covering all Instagram social media users who met the research criteria. The implementation time of this research starts from September 2024 to December 2024. The population in this study is the entire community attracted to the younger generation, namely those aged 17-29 years who use social media on Instagram. The research sample is the younger generation willing to become respondents by promoting a questionnaire on Instagram ads for 1 month. Data processing includes examining data to identify errors or missing data, encoding answers, and entering data into a computer-processed format. The collected data is then analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques to answer the research objectives. The results of the data analysis are interpreted to answer the research questions. Researchers should draw conclusions based on their findings and evaluate the implications of the survey results.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Characteristics Respondent**

#### **1. Respondents by Age**

Respondents aged 17-20 years, as many as 42.2%. This age group is a group of the younger generation who are more vulnerable to the influence of the digital environment, including online games, under the guise of gambling. This age range also shows great potential for engagement in online activities with different levels of digital literacy.

#### **2. Respondents Based on Gender**

Male respondents were 55.6% more than female respondents. It is interesting because it shows that the influence of online games is not only dominant in men but also quite significant in women.

#### **3. Respondents Based on Last Education**

Respondents had a bachelor's degree (44.4%), followed by senior high school (41.1%). It confirms that online gambling, under the guise of gaming, appeals to various levels of education but is dominant among those with higher education.

#### **4. Respondents' Based on Employment Status**

Respondents were students (58.9%), as this group has potentially more free time, which may increase engagement in online gaming under the guise of gambling.

#### **5. Duration of Instagram Use**

Respondents actively use Instagram for 1-2 hours daily (37.8%). This significant use of social media increases the likelihood of exposure to online game promotions under the guise of gambling.

#### **6. Income Per Month**

Respondents had an income of less than IDR 1 million (37.8%), indicating that low economic potential can motivate people to seek additional income through online gambling.

### **Analysis of Research Results**

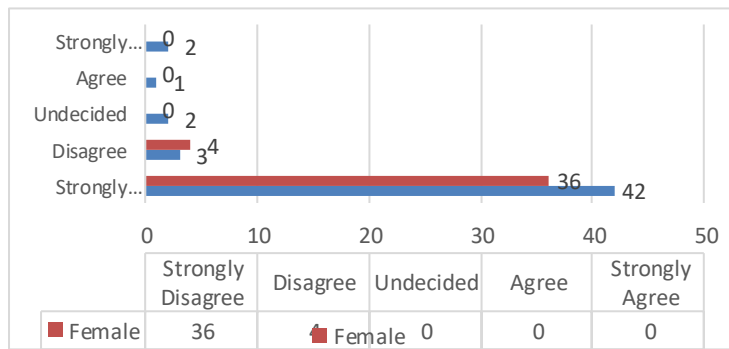


Figure 1.

Playing online gambling with elements of online games provides an opportunity to get financial benefits quickly.

A total of 3 male respondents believes that playing online gambling under the guise of games provides an easy opportunity for financial gain. This belief suggests that online gambling is considered a quick solution to financial problems even though it is more often detrimental.

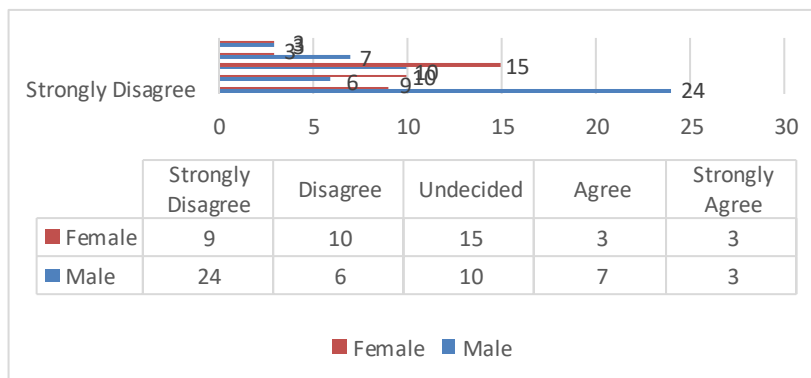


Figure 2. I often see my friends trying to earn extra money through online gambling.

A total of 10 male and six female respondents stated that they often see their friends looking for extra money through online gambling. It suggests that social aspects, such as the influence of friends, have an important role in introducing online gambling to their environment.

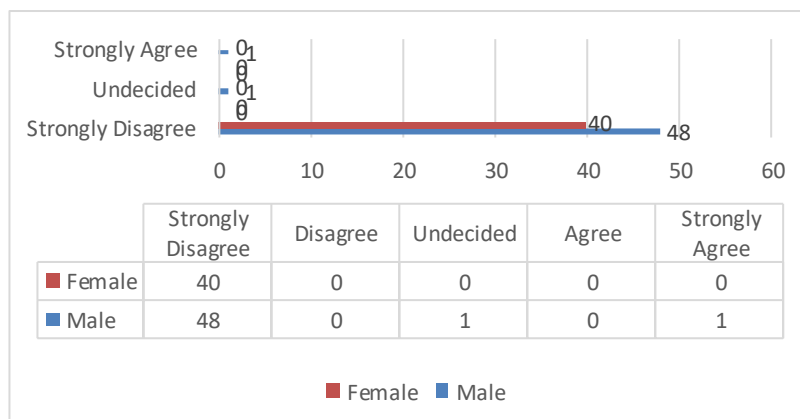


Figure 3. I have never owned or borrowed money to play online gambling with elements of online games.

There was one male respondent who admitted that he had been in debt to play online gambling. It illustrates that involvement in gambling can lead to severe economic impacts, including the use of unstable financial resources.

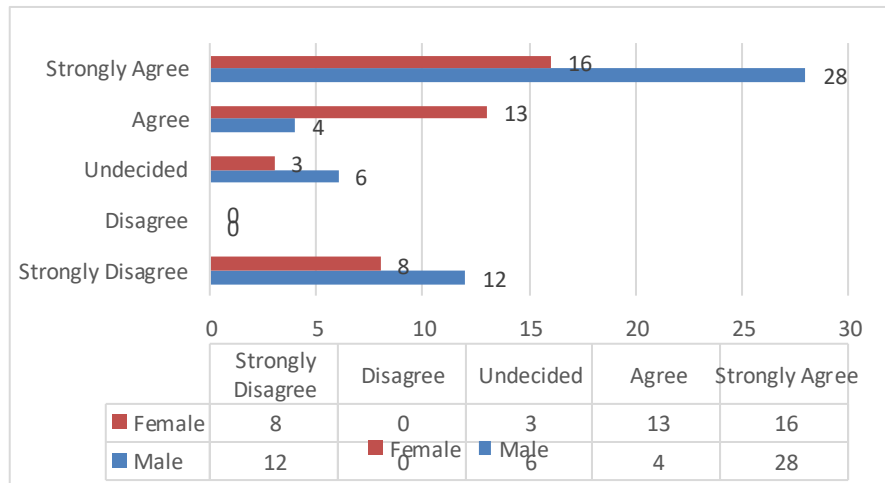


Figure 4.

I feel that playing online gambling encourages players to keep playing to earn money even though they often lose.

A total of 32 male and 29 female respondents felt that their spending on online gambling was challenging to control. It reflects the addictive nature of gambling that encourages players to keep placing bets despite incurring losses.

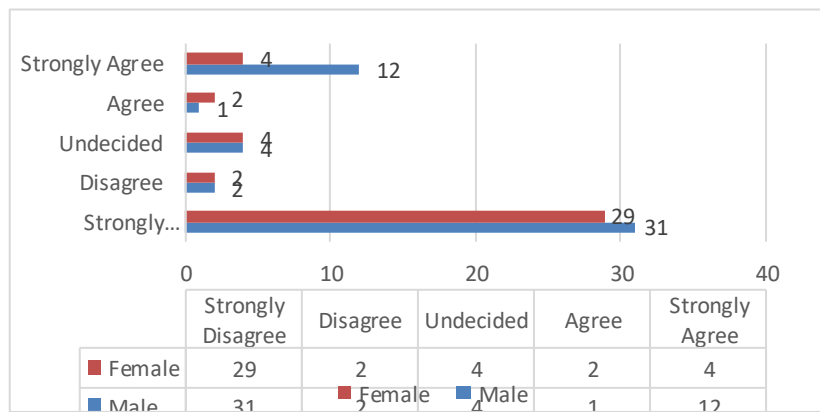


Figure 5. I feel that my expenses for playing online gambling are difficult to control.

Thirteen males and six females stated that their expenses were difficult to control. Although women are also affected, this phenomenon is experienced by more men than women. Mitigation measures such as financial education, psychological support, and access control to online gambling platforms are needed to reduce this negative impact.

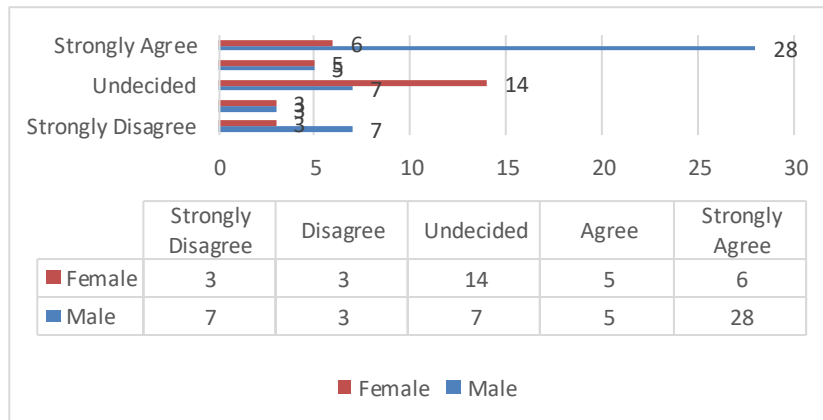


Figure 6. I

Feel that technological advancements that make access more manageable and the situation worse finance of the younger generation.

A total of 33 males and 11 females feel that technological advances have made it easier to access online gambling and worsened their financial situation. The availability of online platforms accelerates young people's exposure to these financial risks.

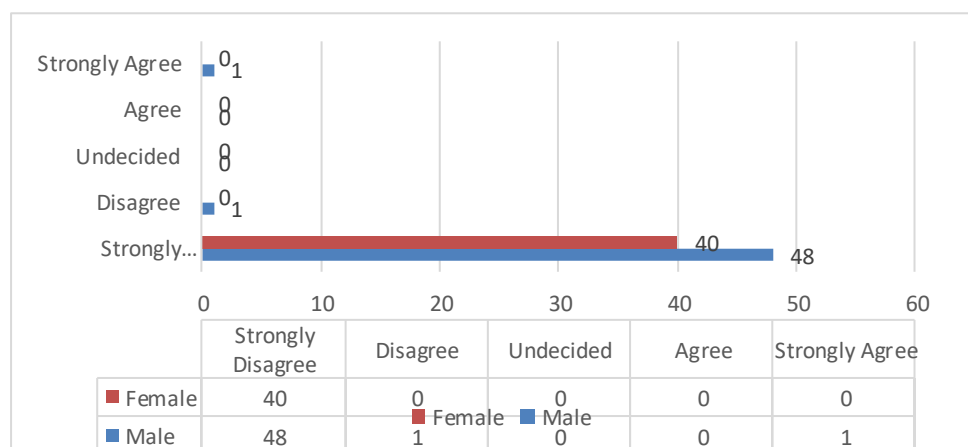


Figure 7. I once spent money to play online gambling.

A total of 1 male respondent stated that he had spent money to play online gambling. Based on the image shows indications that a small percentage of respondents have spent money to play online gambling. Although the direct data is low, this phenomenon has the potential to be an early symptom of deeper involvement in gambling, which can be financially and psychologically harmful. Educational and financial literacy measures are needed to prevent this behavior from developing further. Additionally, further studies need to be conducted to identify the factors that lead to the low recognition of involvement in online gambling among respondents.

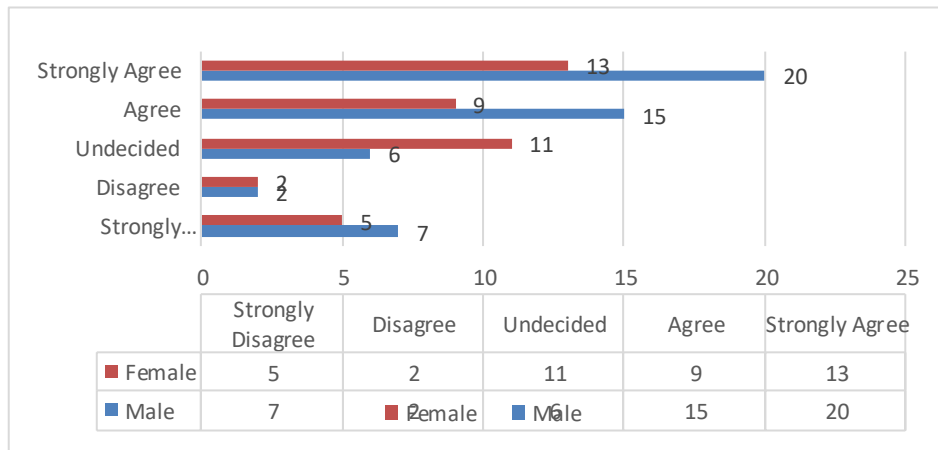


Figure 8. I often see advertisements or promotions on social media.

35 males and 22 females frequently see promotions for online games under the guise of gambling on social media. This suggests that platforms such as Instagram act as a key dissemination medium, attracting users' attention through attractive advertisements and promotions.

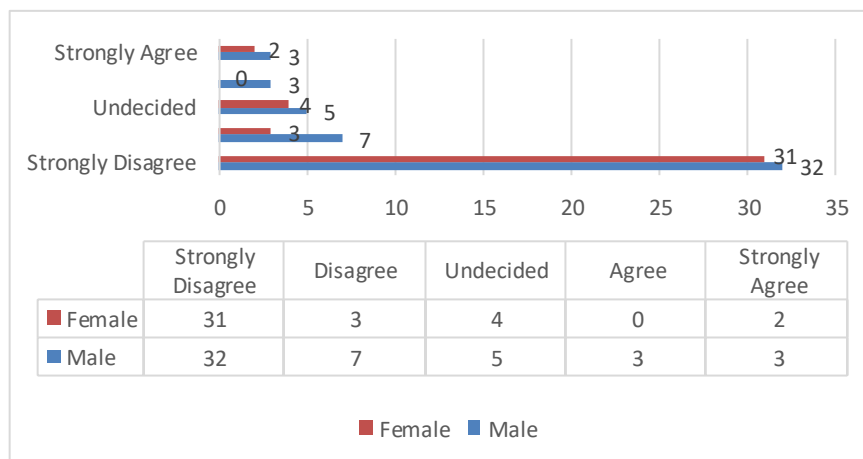


Figure 9

I have felt shunned by friends for not wanting to engage in online games with a gambling element.

A total of 6 males and two females felt shunned by their friends because they did not want to be involved in online games under the guise of gambling. This suggests that social pressure can influence a person's decision to start playing.

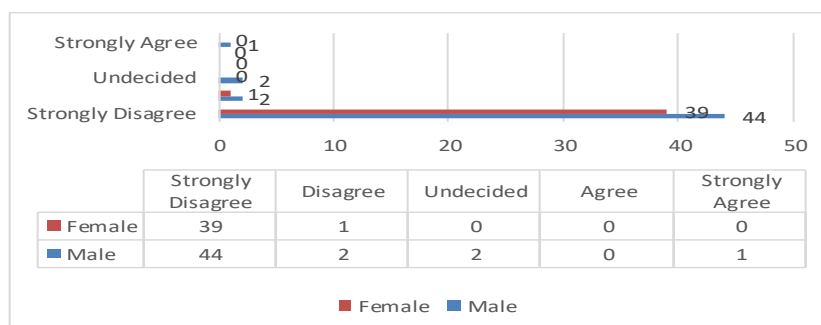


Figure 10

I feel tempted to play because many of my friends also play online games with gambling elements.

One male respondent was tempted to play because many of his friends were involved. This phenomenon reflects the influence of peer pressure in encouraging someone to get involved.

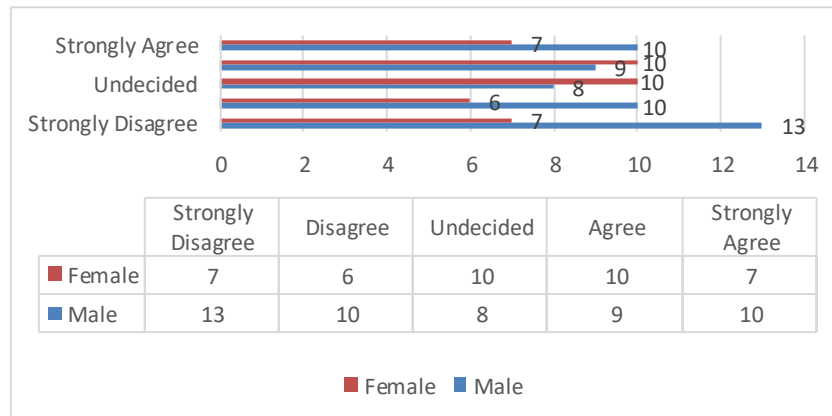


Figure 11 I often see influencers on social media promoting online games that contain gambling elements.

A total of 19 males and 17 females stated that they often see influencers promoting online games under the guise of gambling. It shows that social media influencers have a significant role in promoting gambling indirectly.

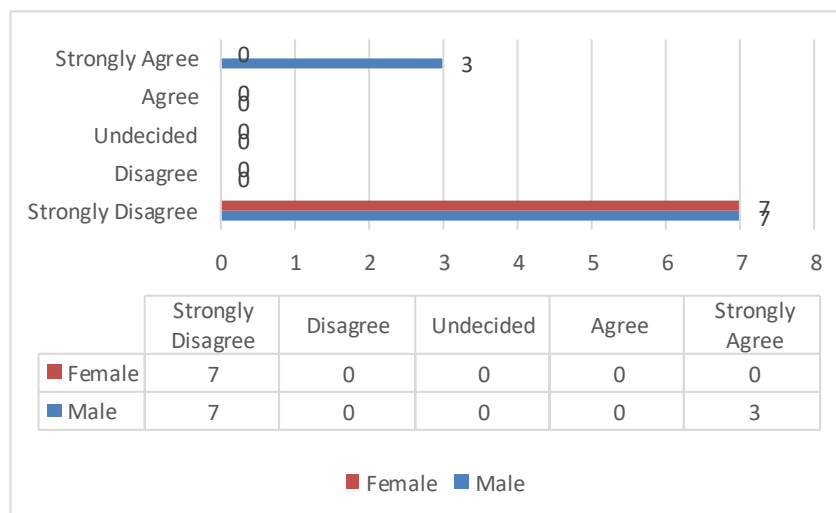


Figure 12

When I get together with friends, I often feel compelled to try online games that contain gambling elements.

Only one person felt encouraged to try online games under the guise of gambling because of the influence of friends when gathering. Figure 12 shows that the influence of friends when gathering has a small but significant impact on a person's decision to try online games with gambling elements. Although only a few respondents admitted to this, it is still an indication that the social environment

can be an initial driving factor in online gambling involvement. To reduce this influence, educational approaches and communities that support positive behavior must be promoted.

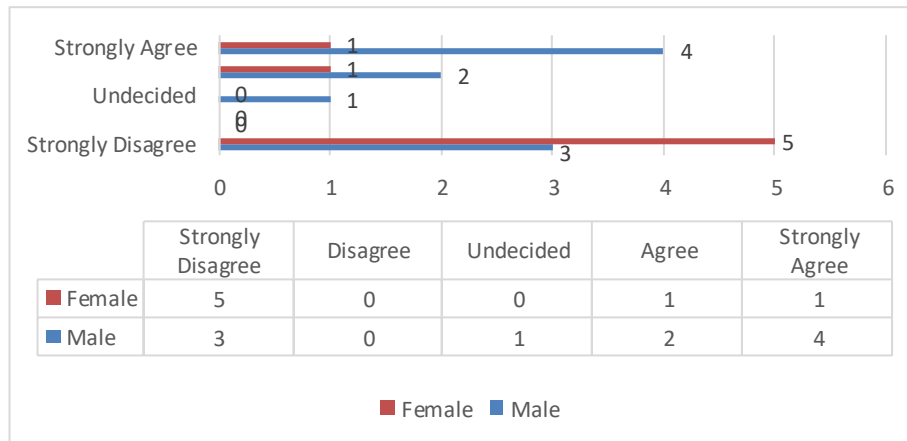


Figure 13

The availability of stable and constant internet access has made more often exposed to online games that contain gambling elements.

A total of 6 males and two females admitted that they were more often exposed to online games under the guise of gambling because of stable internet access. This ease of access increases the likelihood of someone engaging in gambling activities.

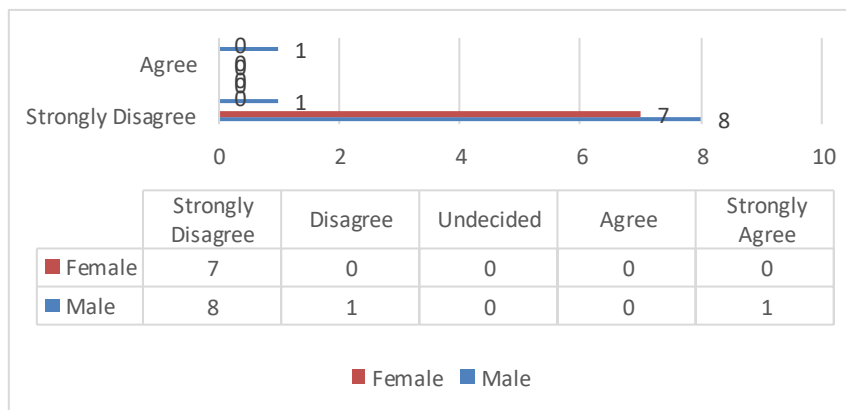


Figure 14

When I am feeling stressed or anxious, playing online games with gambling elements seems to be an exciting escape.

A total of 1 male stated that playing online games with gambling elements became an escape when feeling stressed or anxious. It highlights the psychological aspects that drive a person to seek addictive entertainment.

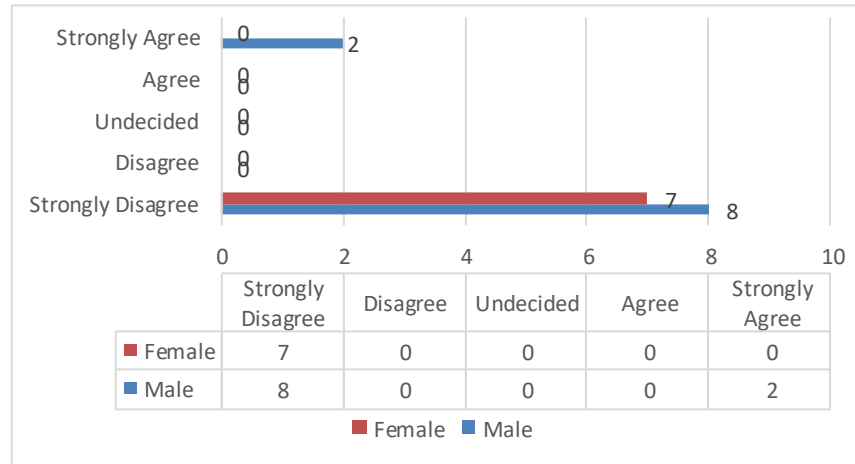


Figure 15

Special promotions or discounts offered by online gaming platforms with gambling elements make me feel interested to try.

Two males felt attracted to try online games under the guise of gambling because of special promotions or discounts. This marketing tactic is effective in attracting new users.

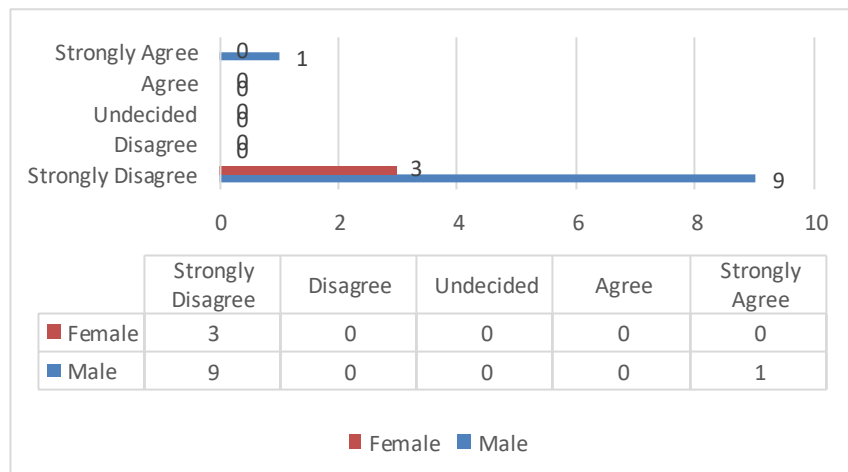


Figure 16. I feel motivated to play online games with gambling elements when others win much money.

One male felt motivated to play after hearing others win a lot of money. This belief is supported by the mistaken perception that victory often happens.

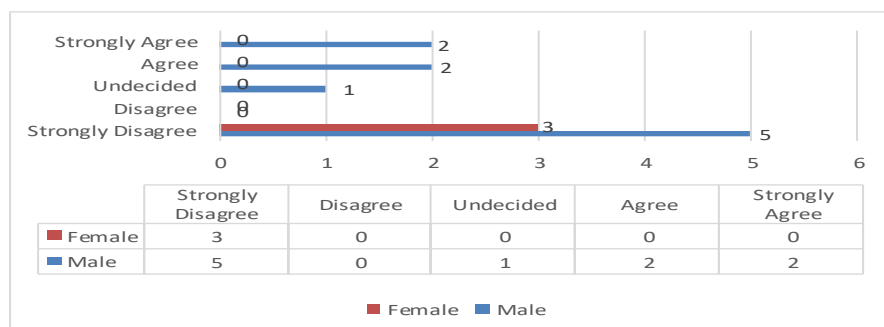


Figure 17 I learned about online games with gambling elements from my friends.

A total of 4 male admitted to learning about online games under the guise of gambling from their friends. It emphasizes the importance of the influence of the social environment in introducing this activity.

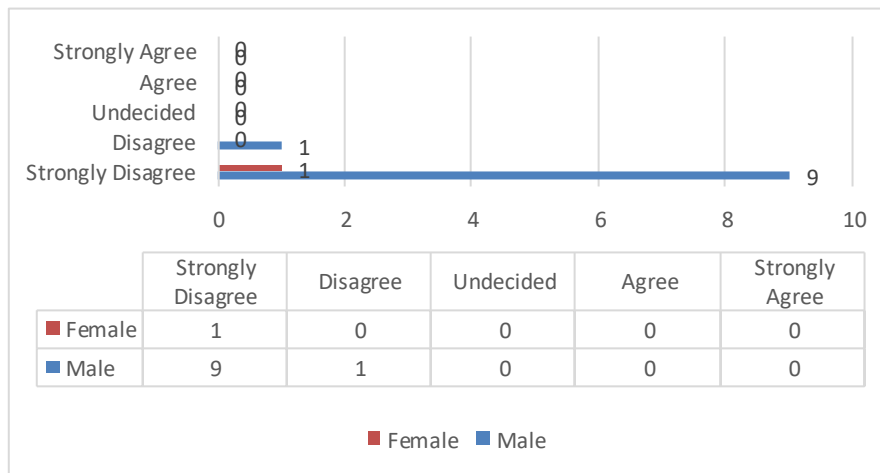


Figure 18. I am confident that I can win online games with gambling elements if I play long enough.

None of the male and female respondents expressed such a belief. Figure 18 shows that respondents, both male and female, have no belief that playing longer will increase their chances of winning in online games under the guise of gambling. It reflects an awareness of the unpredictable nature of the game. However, educational and supervisory efforts are still needed to maintain this rational mindset and prevent the emergence of the illusion of control in the future.

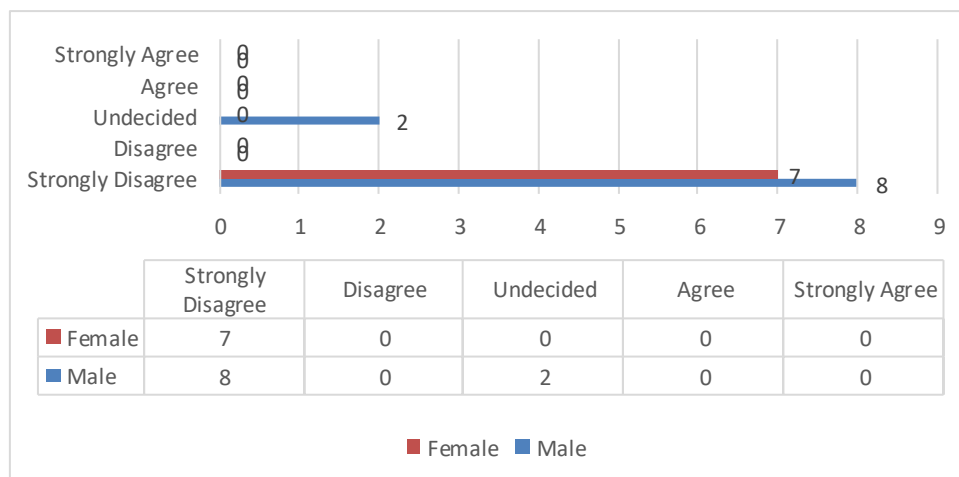


Figure 19. The bigger the bet I place, the greater my chances of winning.

None of the male or female respondents expressed confidence in this statement. Figure 19 shows that respondents have a realistic perception of the relationship between big bets and the odds of winning, with the absence of confidence that big bets increase the odds of winning. These results indicate the potential for previous educational success or real experience that made them aware of the game's risks. However, preventive measures are still necessary to ensure no illusion of control or misperception in the future.

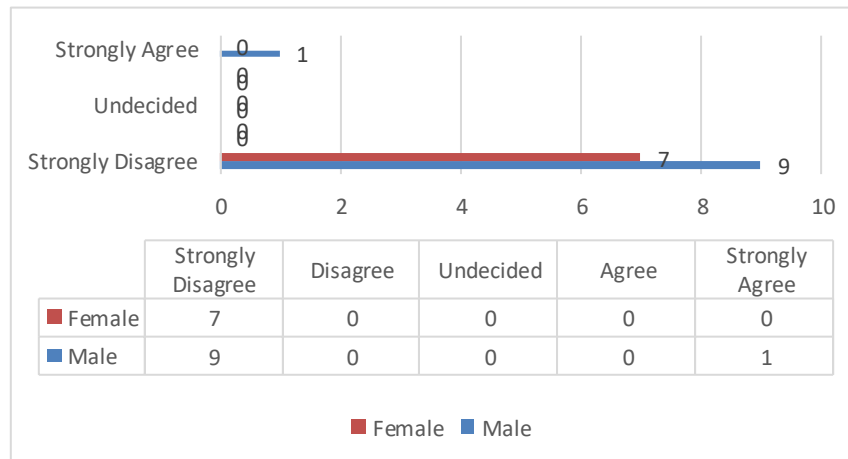


Figure 20

My previous experience playing online games improved my skills in games with gambling elements.

One male respondent felt that the experience of playing online games improved skills in games that contained gambling elements. It suggests the illusion of control, where individuals believe that their skills can affect the outcome of gambling, even though the outcome is highly dependent on luck.

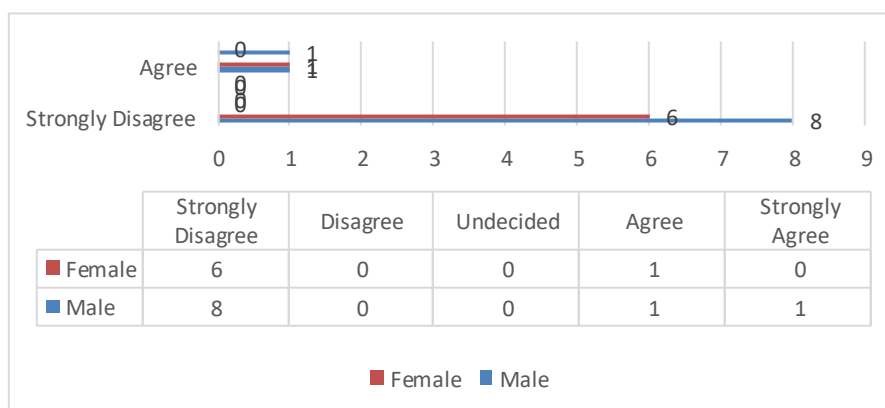


Figure 21. My skills in playing online games affect my chances of winning.

One person believes that playing skills affect the chances of winning. Figure 21 shows that the majority of respondents do not believe skills affect the chances of winning in online gambling, except for one man who has this perception. It reflects a pretty good understanding among respondents about the random nature of online gambling. However, further education is still needed to dispel misconceptions and prevent the negative impact of the illusion of control on involvement in gambling activities.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and data analysis, some conclusions that can be drawn from this study are as follows:

1. Dominance of the Young Generation

The majority of respondents who are exposed to online games under the guise of gambling are the young generation aged 17-20 years. This age group is more vulnerable to social and digital influences due to immature media literacy and self-control levels.

## 2. Economic and Technological Influences

Engagement in online gambling is influenced by economic factors, such as low income and the perception that gambling is an easy way to gain financial benefits. Technology, exceptionally stable internet access, and social media are the primary tools that facilitate this engagement.

## 3. Significant Social Pressure

Influence from friends, social media promotion, and the presence of influencers are the main drivers of respondents' involvement in gambling activities. Many respondents are exposed to online gaming through their social environment.

## 4. Negative Behavioral and Financial Impacts

Online gambling activities under the guise of gaming have devastating effects, including difficulty controlling spending, increased addiction, and even the desire to go into debt to continue playing. It demonstrates the addictive and destructive nature of gambling.

## 5. Illusion of Control and Misperception

Some respondents believed that their skills or experience could increase their chances of winning. This belief encouraged them to continue playing even though losses.

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