![REF2021]

Institution:
Sheffield Hallam University

Unit of Assessment:
UOA20 - Social Work and Social Policy

Title of case study:
Informing Policy Responses to Gambling-Related Crime and Harm

Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:
2013 – 2020

Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:

Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Professor James Banks	Professor of Criminology	2009 - present
Professor David Best	Professor of Criminology	2014 - 2019
Dr Jaime Waters	Senior Lecturer in Criminology	2008 - present
Dr Catrin Andersson	Senior Lecturer in Criminology	2015 - present
Dr Nick Addis	Senior Lecturer in Criminology	2016 - present

Period when the claimed impact occurred:
2013 – 2020

Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?
No

1. Summary of the impact

Research from Sheffield Hallam University has influenced policy making, professional practice, and public and professional understanding of gambling-related harm. Beneficiaries of this research include regulatory agencies in the UK, Asia, Australia and Europe. Banks and colleagues' research informed the UK Gambling Commission's national strategy to reduce gambling harms and their threat assessment of crime problems pertaining to gambling. It has also motivated the Australian government to block access to illegal gambling websites. By giving voice to family members of individuals with gambling problems, Sheffield Hallam's research has benefitted those experiencing gambling-related harm, by evidencing the need for increased treatment and support.

2. Underpinning research

Banks and colleagues have undertaken some of the first research to respond to the global expansion of gambling and the harm it has caused. The liberalisation, economic deregulation and normalisation of gambling that has occurred in many states and jurisdictions across the world has heightened both the range and the potency of gambling products and services available to citizens. Over the last decade, online gambling has been a key propellant of citizens' gambling expenditure, industry profits and state taxation revenues, with UK citizens losing £5.3 billion gambling remotely in 2019 alone. In addition, the most recent figures released by the Gambling Commission suggest that there are in the region of 395,000 individuals with gambling problems in Britain and a further 1.8 million gamblers 'at risk' of developing a problem. Gambling-related harm not only impacts individual gamblers, but extends to family members, friends and others in the community, with the typical problem gambler affecting, on average, six other people. This research has uncovered, examined and furthered understanding of the multitude of serious harms associated with the proliferation of opportunities to gamble, and informed policy, practice and criminal justice responses. Sheffield Hallam's research can be divided into two distinct but interconnected areas of research.

1. Gambling-related crime

Research examining gambling-related crime involved: a systematic review of international literature; an environmental scan of news media, textual and visual analyses of e-gambling advertising; analysis of the records of player-protection and standards organisations; an innovative 18-month virtual ethnography of online gamblers; and interviews with gambling regulators. The research detailed the manifold actual, possible and probable interconnections between gambling and crime in the context of the increased availability of wagering activities across many regions of the world [**R1**]. It demonstrated the ways in which gambling and crime are approached in practice

by gamblers, regulatory agencies and gambling operators. Collectively, this work offered the first empirically driven assessment of the extent and nature of criminogenic harms that result from the proliferation of opportunities to gamble [**R1**-**R5**].

The research demonstrated the challenges of regulating mixed modes of gambling in a digital era and how player protection processes can be advanced through technological, legal and social responses [**R2**, **R3**]. It also highlighted how criminal justice policy makers and practitioners have been slow to respond to the crime and criminal justice implications of gambling, and how a public health response to gambling-related harm necessitates the institution of awareness raising, screening and treatment within criminal justice settings [**R1**, **R2**]. In addition, the research led to the development of a taxonomy of gambling-related crime that enables regulators to identify and explore the extent, nature and organisational dynamics of sub-types of gambling-related offending, whilst identifying the actors and legislation that can be exercised in the prevention, investigation and prosecution of such crimes [**R4**]. Sheffield Hallam's research into betting shop robberies highlighted how they often take place at night when lone working is more likely to occur and typically involve violence or the threat of violence, and the use of a weapon [**R5**]. It demonstrated that greater guardianship of betting shop premises, through an increase in the number of 'frontline' personnel, particularly at night, could help to reduce the risk to retail staff.

2. Gambling-related harm

Research on gambling-related harm incorporated: the first UK survey of family members and friends affected by problem gambling, the first UK survey exploring gambling-related family violence, and semi-structured interviews with gamblers and family members. This work was funded by the Responsible Gambling Trust (£28,883), GambleAware (£44,407) and the British Academy (£9,742) and supported by a range of treatment and support providers including National Problem Gambling Clinic, Gamcare, Gordon Moody Association, Adfam, BetKnowmore, Citizens Advice and branches of Gamblers Anonymous/GamAnon. The principal purpose of this research [R6] was to be the first UK study to give voice to family members, friends and other loved ones of individuals with gambling problems - in order to document their lived experience, with a view to shaping policy and best practice relating to the education, prevention and treatment of gambling-related harm. Collectively, the research demonstrated the impact that problem gambling can have on families and friends, the strategies they employ to try to cope with a loved one's gambling problem, their help-seeking behaviour, and the barriers to help-seeking. The research identified two broad interconnected considerations for policy makers and practitioners. First, there is a need to raise societal and professional awareness and understanding of gambling and its impact on families. Second, family members identified a need for improved access to and availability of support for affected others.

3. References to the research

R1. Banks, J (2017). Gambling, Crime and Society (Palgrave Macmillan). Hard copy submitted as REF2.

R2. Banks, J (2014). Online Gambling and Crime: Causes, Controls and Controversies (Ashgate). Hard copy submitted as REF 2.

R3. Banks, J. and Waugh, D (2018). A Taxonomy of Gambling-Related Crime. International Gambling Studies, 19(2): 339-57. https://doi.org/10.1080/14459795.2018.1554084

R4. Banks, J (2013). Edging Your Bets: Advantage Play, Gambling, Crime and Victimisation. Crime, Media, Culture, 9(2): 171-87. https://doi.org/10.1177/1741659012457361

R5. Banks, J. Addis, N. and Waters, J (2020). Betting Shop Robberies: Reducing the Risk to Retail Staff. Gaming Law Review, 24(9): 592-99. https://doi.org/10.1089/glr2.2020.0019

R6. Banks, J. Andersson, C. Best, D. Edwards, M. and Waters, J (2018). Families Living with Problem Gambling: Impacts, Coping Strategies and Help-Seeking. Project Report. http://shura.shu.ac.uk/23407/1/Families%20Living%20with%20Problem%20Gambling.pdf

R1 and **R2** are monographs, published by Palgrave Macmillan and Ashgate respectively. These books were peer-reviewed at proposal and manuscript stage by respected academic specialists, who provide rigorous independent scrutiny of their quality. **R3**-**R5** are articles which were

rigorously peer-reviewed prior to publication in leading journals in the field. **R6** was a funded report to a national charity, which was peer reviewed by international experts in the field of gambling studies.

4. Details of the impact

Research conducted across the assessment period had several key impacts, deepening public and professional understandings of, and responses to, gambling-related harm, both nationally and internationally. This included contributing to policy and regulatory change, and increased help and support for individuals and families experiencing gambling-related harm.

1. Policy and Regulatory Responses to Gambling-Related Harm Across International Jurisdictions

Sheffield Hallam's research demonstrating the multitude harms experienced by families of individuals with gambling problems [**R6**] has contributed, through Best's involvement, to the development of a framework for measuring gambling-related harms in 2018, which is utilised in **the United Kingdom's first National Strategy to Reduce Gambling-Related Harms** [**E1**]. Banks was also invited in August 2019 by Great Britain's sole gambling regulator and gaming law supervisor, the Gambling Commission, to join a multi-disciplinary expert academic panel to provide research evidence to support the delivery of the three-year strategy [**E2**]. As the Gambling Commission Chair William Moyes recognised in his keynote address at the launch of the strategy on 25 April 2019, the experiences of those affected by gambling *"have played a significant part in shaping this strategy"*, which outlines a partnership approach to delivering two strategic priority areas: prevention and education, and treatment and support.

The research [**R3**] contributed to the development of a taxonomy for considering gambling-related crime, through consultation with advisory agency Regulus Partners, working on behalf of the Gambling Commission. As well as helping the Gambling Commission to chart the area for the purpose of risk assessment, the taxonomy was used as a framework through which the Gambling Commission was able to compile an overview of gambling-related crime in Great Britain [**E6**]. The taxonomy was developed further by Banks, in partnership with Waugh (Regulus Partners), in order to enable jurisdictional comparability and information sharing between regulators in different locations across the world, with a view to addressing locally based offending and enhancing collaborative responses to international crime problems, such as money laundering, fraud, theft, extortion and match fixing.

In **Australia**, two Sheffield Hallam studies [**R1**, **R4**] into online gambling were cited as part of the Australian government's response to Recommendation 15 from the 2015 O'Farrell Review into Illegal Offshore Wagering, which proposed that state and territory governments, in conjunction with industry, should take steps to increase consumer awareness about the risks relating to personal finances and information that result from using prohibited online gambling services [**E3**]. Our research was used in a 2017 research report commissioned by the **Australian government to illustrate how interactive gambling is not immune to criminal exploitation.** In response to the review, in 2019 the Morrison Government instituted several measures to protect Australian citizens, who spend $400 million annually at illegal offshore gambling websites, which are prohibited services under the Interactive Gambling Act 2001. By recognising the risks posed by illegal offshore gambling operators, for the first time, the Australian Communications and Media Authority was empowered to work in cooperation with Australian Internet Service Providers to block their websites.

Malta is second only to the UK in terms of the size of its online gambling market and Sheffield Hallam research has informed the regulation of 294 gaming companies who have been issued with 625 remote gaming licenses. The research has **informed criminal probity checks in the Malta Gaming Authority** (MGA) [**E4**] through our ongoing work with the former Senior Executive Officer in the Criminal Probity Screening Department, who is now Head of the Sports Integrity Unit at the MGA. Sheffield Hallam studies [**R1**, **R2**, **R4**] highlighted avenues for fraud and money laundering in online gambling, and limitations in regulatory measures. The MGA report that Banks'

monographs [**R1**, **R2**] detail *"responses to illegal gambling, money laundering and fraud and theft at online gaming sites that are of practical use to researchers, industry and regulators."* [**E4**].

Sheffield Hallam research was drawn upon by the **Asian Racing Federation's (ARA) Anti-Illegal Betting (AIB) Taskforce's examination of illegal betting in <u>Australia, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa and South Korea</u>**, to illustrate the direct and indirect costs illegal betting brings to societies. ARA's Due Diligence and Research Manager has outlined how this research has been employed to educate the AIB Taskforce - as well as a host of stakeholders, including media, politicians and sporting governing bodies - about threats to the integrity of sports betting and to inform their enforcement efforts. He highlighted how: *"We found… Gambling, Crime and Society* [**R1**] *very useful in several instances to illustrate the direct and indirect costs illegal betting brings to societies."* [**E5**].

2. Increasing Support for Families and Friends Affected by Gambling-Related Harm
The research into gambling-related harm **gave voice to family members and other loved ones of individuals with gambling problems, whose views, opinions and experiences were absent from social policy debate.** This rare opportunity was highlighted by one research participant who noted that: *"I think, for me, this is the first time that I'm really talking about my personal experiences, so it's been useful for me… I want to contribute towards the change…towards what it is that you're doing that could hopefully create hope for other people, including myself."* [**R6**]. Preliminary findings from the study were presented at a Gambling and Families roundtable event [**E7**], hosted by Adfam in November 2017, with a view to identifying the need for support for families experiencing gambling-related harm. The research team provided empirical evidence to demonstrate that families experienced significant and sustained harm across multiple domains, as a consequence of gambling, and that current support - whilst highly valued by service users - was insufficient to meet demand and further funding was necessary. In 2018, Adfam, who supported the Families Living with Problem Gambling project, were awarded £180,000 grant for a three-year period by GambleAware to extend their alcohol and drugs services to gambling, where previously none existed - to support, educate and empower families and frontline workers.

3. Influencing Public Understanding and Professional Discourse on Gambling-Related Harm
Sheffield Hallam research [**R1**-**R4**] has contributed to the **recognition that UK gambling laws are not fit for a digital age, leading to a government review of the Gambling Act 2005**, launched on 8 December 2020 [**E8**]. Evidence was submitted to the House of Lords Select Committee on the Social and Economic Impact of the Gambling Industry (2019) and Banks is quoted extensively in the report Gambling Harm - Time for Action (2020), particularly around the risks of lone working in betting shops [**R5**]. Banks is part of a group of UK academics who published an open letter in the British Medical Journal in July 2020 to the Secretaries of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and for Health and Social Care, urging them to introduce a statutory levy on gambling companies, to deliver reductions in gambling harms. Research findings [**R1**-**R5**] have also been submitted to the Howard League's Commission on Crime and Problem Gambling's call for evidence (2019) into the links between crime and problem gambling, and published in the report *Crime and Problem Gambling: A Research Landscape - The Report of the Commission on Crime and Problem Gambling* (2020).

In addition, Banks was invited to join the International Gambling Think Tank, presenting at the 2017 meeting in Banff, Canada, on responsible online gambling [**E9**]. Organised and coordinated by the Gambling and Addictions Research Centre at Auckland University of Technology, the Think Tank is an international network of researchers, policy makers, service providers and interested others, collaborating to advance understanding of gambling and to reduce gambling-related harm. Sheffield Hallam research has also been translated into plain language summaries or 'rapid communications' by the Gambling Commission's partner, the Gambling Research Exchange Ontario, in order to communicate this work to policy makers, practitioners and other non-academic audiences across the world [**E10**].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

E1.   National Harm Reduction Strategy. Page 12 [Strategy document]

E2.   Letter from the Chair of the Advisory Board for Safer Gambling

E3.   Podesta, J. and Thomas, A. (2017) Betting restrictions and online wagering in Australia: a review of current knowledge. Australian Gambling Research Centre [Policy document]

E4.   Senior Executive Officer - Criminal Probity Screening Department, Enforcement Directorate, Malta Gaming Authority [Letter]

E5.   Due Diligence and Research Manager, Hong Kong Jockey [Letter]

E6.   Regulus Partners (2017) A taxonomy of gambling-related crime: A preliminary review prepared by Regulus Partners for the Gambling Commission. London: Regulus Partners [Confidential document]

E7.   Gambling & Families Roundtable Meeting Note, Monday November 27, 2017 [Confidential document]

E8.   Select Committee on the Social and Economic Impact of the Gambling Industry Gambling Harm - Time for Action [Select Committee report]

E9.   North American Think Tank (NATT) 2017 on Gambling Research, Policy and Practice [Online archive]

E10.   Gambling Research Exchange Ontario (GREO). A system for classifying crimes related to gambling / Problem and pathological gambling rates are high among prison populations [Rapid Communications]