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Workplace factors that encourage and discourage gambling amongst gaming venue employees: an employees' perspective

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WORKPLACE FACTORS THAT ENCOURAGE AND DISCOURAGE GAMBLING AMONGST GAMING VENUE EMPLOYEES: AN EMPLOYEES' PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This paper reports on the second stage of a multi-stage qualitative study into gambling by gaming venue employees and aspects of working in gaming venues that are perceived to influence staff gambling. The paper draws on face-to-face interviews with 34 club, 14 hotel and 18 casino employees. From these data, the paper extracts over 50 reasons why working in a gaming venue can encourage staff gambling, and these are grouped into eight workplace factors – frequent interaction with gamblers, frequent exposure to gambling, influence of fellow employees, influence of management, workplace stress, working shift work, frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions, and 'other' workplace factors. However, dozens of reasons why working in a venue discourages staff gambling are also associated with these factors. The data also reveal numerous reasons why the venues' responsible gambling training and their other responsible gambling measures may not deter staff from gambling or at least encourage them to gamble responsibly. As such, this is the first known comprehensive study worldwide to examine the relationship between working in a gambling environment and employee gambling. It builds on an earlier stage of data collection that gathered opinions on this issue from 32 gambling counsellors in Queensland Australia. Subsequent stages have sought opinions from venue managers, problem gamblers and peak industry bodies, and these results will be reported in additional papers to provide inclusive and stakeholder-based perspectives.

Key Words: employee gambling; gambling workplace; risk factors, protective factors

Introduction

In 2005, we published a paper in *Gambling Research* that reported on Phase One of a qualitative research project examining the gambling behaviour of employees in gaming venues in Queensland Australia and how aspects of their workplace might influence that behaviour. After reviewing the scant literature on the topic, that paper reported findings from interviews with 32 gambling counsellors in Queensland, who identified a range of workplace factors that can encourage gambling, and potentially gambling problems, amongst gaming venue staff, and a range of factors that can deter venue staff from gambling. From that paper, it was concluded that: staff who work in gaming venues appear an at-risk group for problem gambling; that this risk stems from a variety of factors relating to working in a gambling environment; that numerous workplace factors also protect some staff by deterring them from gambling; and that there are strategies venues can implement to better encourage responsible gambling amongst their staff.

Workplace factors influence on venue employee gambling

This paper reports on Phase Two of the same research project, where we gathered employee opinions on how working in a gaming venue influences staff in their own gambling. It draws on interviews conducted with 34 club employees, 14 hotel employees and 38 casino staff from a range of urban, regional and remote locations across Queensland. Ten major workplace factors, supported by numerous different reasons, were identified that can encourage these staff to gamble or at least not deter them from gambling. Nine major workplace factors, also explained by a variety of different reasons, emerged that appear to discourage staff from gambling or at least from gambling heavily.

The paper describes the methodology used for this phase of the study, before presenting and analysing the results. Comparisons are then drawn amongst the responses from the club, hotel and casino sectors.

Methodology

Employee selection was restricted to staff in Queensland clubs, hotels and casinos, as these venues are the major providers of gambling activities and those most frequently associated with gambling problems in this state. The researchers considered including employees from stand-alone TAB outlets, but decided against this, given budgetary constraints and because most Queensland TABs are operated within clubs, hotels and casinos. Thus, the research captured opinions of staff who work in venues that provide gaming machines, table games, keno, TAB and bingo.

Judgement sampling was used to select venues to approach to request participation of their employees. This strategy is based on the researchers' judgements about the overall population and the feasibility of including some of them in the research (Shaffer, Hall and Bilt 1997; Atkinson and Flint 2001). The underlying assumption is that investigators select units characteristic of the population (Legge 2003). The critical selection issue is objectivity, where objective criteria were set for choosing venues. Three main criteria were set - to include employees from adequate numbers of the three venue types, from a range of small through to large venues based on the number of gaming machines, and from venues in different geographic locations. Five regions were selected - Brisbane, the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast, Cairns and Mt Isa/Longreach – to provide data from a metropolitan centre, a heavily populated tourist area, a coastal regional area, far north Queensland, and the outback, respectively.

We gained the support of and designed the employee interview schedule with input from the Queensland Hotels Association (QHA), Clubs Queensland and a representative of three of the four casinos in that state. After liaising with representatives from all four Queensland casinos, three agreed to participate. From a list of all QHA member hotels and a list of all Queensland clubs, we sampled a selection to approach for employee interviews. In the hotel samples for each of the five regions, we tried to achieve an appropriate representation of large and small hotels, independent and chain hotels, and hotels in different socio-economic areas. In the club samples, we tried to achieve an appropriate range of large and small clubs, clubs of different types and clubs in different socio-economic areas. Based on these criteria, we selected at least 10 hotels and 10 clubs from each of the five regions, except for Mt Isa/Longreach where a fewer number of hotels and clubs operate.

In mid-2005, the QHA sent letters to the hotels and Clubs QLD sent letters to clubs we had sampled to encourage their participation. Removing some hotels where management had

changed and letters were returned unopened, we telephoned 71 clubs and 54 hotels to request interviews with both their managers and one or more of their employees. (Seventy-three interviews with club, hotel and casino managers were also conducted, but will be reported in a separate paper.) Of these, 44 club managers and 27 hotel managers agreed to be interviewed. Employee interviews at these same venues were arranged in the initial or follow-up telephone calls with the managers, or during the managers' interviews. In some cases, managers allowed one or more employees to be interviewed during that visit or at a later convenient time. All employees participated voluntarily, although we had no say which employees the club and hotel managers released from duty during paid time to be interviewed. Generally, who was available at that time, their willingness to participate, and the managers' judgement on suitable subjects (e.g. having worked in the industry for a while, being communicative, from a range of positions) determined this selection.

A different approach was taken for recruiting employees from the three casinos. The casinos advertised the research project on-site, including placing posters and information sheets (provided by the researchers) in employee dining rooms, training rooms and on laundry notice boards, they sent emails to employees on their staff intranet, and some promoted the project at their responsible gambling refresher courses. The casinos agreed to allow up to 15 employees at each of the two large casinos and up to ten at the smaller casino to participate in a 30 minute interview during paid time. The Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers' Union (Gold Coast Branch) also telephoned some members to encourage them to participate. Some employees then contacted us to arrange a time to be interviewed. However, as insufficient numbers did so, we spent two days in each of the casinos' employee dining rooms and recruited further participants. The interviews were conducted on-site during this time.

Table 1 shows the geographic and venue breakdown of the 86 club, hotel and casino employees interviewed from the five areas of Queensland.

Table 1: Interviews Completed with Employees

	Brisbane	Gold Coast	Sunshine Coast	Cairns	Mt Isa & Longreach	Total
Club employees	14	4	11	2	3	34
Hotel employees	4	2	2	5	1	14
Casino employees	15	16		7		38
Total	33	22	13	14	4	86

The 34 club employees nominated a range of activities they had performed in gambling venues, including gaming machine clearances, payouts and hopper fills, cashiering and change booth operations, gaming promotions, operating the TAB and keno facilities, providing drink service in gaming rooms, general supervision of gaming rooms, and running bingo. Other activities not directly related to gambling included bar work, reception, foodservice, office work, cooking, marketing, functions coordination and accounting. Similarly, the 14 hotel staff revealed a breadth of experience - as general manager, assistant manager, duty manager, gaming manager, gaming attendant, bar supervisor, bar attendant, TAB supervisor, TAB operator, keno operator, night audit operator, cleaner and general help. The 38 casino employees were from front-of-house, back-of-house, operational, supervisory and departmental management positions. The biggest group were table games dealers (11 interviewees), followed by guest services (4). Three employees were also interviewed from each of the following – departmental management, floor supervisors, food and beverage, and cashier/cage operations. One or

two employees were also interviewed from keno and TAB operations, gaming machines, kitchen, events, cleaning, security and entertainment.

The employee interviews lasted between 20-40 minutes and were tape recorded with permission. The interviews were semi-structured and asked about the employees' work experience in gaming venues, their opinions and experiences about whether and how various aspects of working in gaming venues may influence employee gambling behaviour, and venue strategies that could encourage responsible gambling and discourage gambling problems amongst gaming venue employees. Aspects of the workplace we asked about were based on preliminary investigations we had done (see our earlier paper 2005). Table 2 shows the interview schedule used.

Table 2: Employee Interview Schedule

1. **Your work background**
Can you please briefly tell us what experience you have had working in gambling venues – type of venue, your position, and how long you have been/were employed there?
2. **Close interaction with gamblers**
From your experience, do you think that frequent interaction with gamblers is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?
3. **Frequent exposure to gambling**
From your experience, do you think that frequent exposure to gambling in the workplace is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?
4. **Influence of fellow employees**
From your experience, do you think that fellow employees are likely to influence the gambling activities of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?
5. **Influence of management**
From your experience, do you think that gambling venue managers and their policies and practices are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?
6. **Nature of your work**
From your experience, do you think that workplace stressors are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?
7. **Hours of work**
From your experience, do you think that working the odd hours typical of hospitality work (nights, weekends, shiftwork) influences the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees through its impact on their leisure opportunities? How? Why? Examples?
8. **Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions**
From your experience, do you think that frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions is likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?
9. **Responsible gambling training of staff**
From your experience, do you think that the responsible gambling training completed by gambling venue staff is likely to influence their gambling behaviour? How? Why? Examples?
10. **Responsible gambling strategies in the venue**
From your experience, do you think that the responsible gambling measures implemented in your workplace (e.g. signage, self-exclusion, etc) are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?
11. **Other aspects of the work environment**
From your experience, do you think there any other aspects of the work environment we haven't discussed that are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees? How? Why? Examples?
12. **Venue strategies to encourage responsible gambling**
a. From your experience, do you think that hospitality staff are an at-risk group for developing gambling problems? How? Why? Examples?
b. In your opinion, what are the most effective ways that gambling venues can help encourage responsible gambling and discourage problem gambling for their staff?

The interviews were transcribed and responses grouped under each question in the interview schedule. Content analysis and inductive analysis were used for data analysis. First, open coding was used to break down, examine and compare data to find major elements in the content of the interviews (Berg, 1995). From this, inductive analysis was used to find emerging themes (Patton, 1990). The analysis then synthesised these emerging themes into meaningful core categories of workplace factors, into which the various explanatory reasons were integrated (Strauss and Corbin, 1999). The results are presented below by workplace factor, with numerous reasons each factor was perceived to encourage or discourage staff gambling identified. Indicative quotations are included. The ten factors discussed below are:

- Frequent interaction with gamblers

- Frequent exposure to gambling

- Fellow employees

- Venue managers

- Workplace stressors

- Shift work

- Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions

- Responsible gambling training

- Responsible gambling measures

- Other

Naturally, the methodology described above has limitations. The research project relied on voluntary participation of gaming venues and their staff. It is possible that data from non-participating venues and staff may have revealed additional and different issues. Further, the samples were not random, although attempts were made to ensure they were reasonably representative by including staff from different types and sizes of venues, who were working in a variety of geographic locations and holding a variety of job positions.

Factor 1: The Influence of Frequent Interaction with Gamblers on Employee Gambling

Four reasons that frequent interaction with gamblers can encourage staff gambling emerged from the data, while six were given for how this discourages employee gambling.

Reasons frequent interaction with gamblers can encourage staff gambling:

Staff hear about wins more than losses which creates a hope of winning, as patrons 'talk about the 10 times they did win rather than the 20 times they didn't win'. However, this may depend on the employee's position. One working in cage operations commented she 'mainly sees the bigger winners. I don't often see the losers. This can make you think, if they can win why can't I?' Another noted that 'a cleaner working on the main gaming floor can see people winning and see how many credits they have on their machines…(this) may tempt you to gamble'; 'they think why couldn't it be me? It could be

me next. That attitude'. Exposure to wins also reinforces gambling as a way to make money, as staff 'see a lot of something for nothing'.

Staff get caught up in the excitement of patrons' wins, such as a respondent who explained how 'the jackpot here goes off fairly often, and people get very excited about that' and another that 'when free games come up, you go ooh, who's winning, and get excited about it'. One recalled how, when a jackpot of $1.76 million went off, 'I felt very excited and hyped up. I left work at 10pm and all I wanted to do was play the poker machines. I think everyone who was involved in this win would have felt the same'.

Staff constantly hear about gambling, because 'people tell us what they've won, if they're up or down, which is their favourite machine', 'in the TAB…everyone says this horse will win', 'people give you keno numbers', and 'there is lots of interaction of staff with gaming machine gamblers' which 'makes it tempting to me to gamble'.

Patrons can encourage staff to gamble. For example, 'if it is quiet and you have a few people in here, they say, I want a trifecta - do you want to go halves with me? And I'll say okay'.

Reasons frequent interaction with gamblers can discourage staff gambling:

Staff see problem gamblers and don't want to be like them, because 'if you see someone who is dependent on gambling, you say I'm not going to be like that' and 'I wouldn't want to be one of them…because they have no life; they come in day after day in the same clothes'.

Staff see negative emotional responses to gambling losses, 'how upset the patrons can get sometimes. They can be depressed, and they are spending all their money trying to get it back'. Another related how she gambles less now because of 'the amount of patrons that have cried on my shoulder'.

Staff hear about the effects of problem gambling, where staff have heard that 'people lose their houses at the casino, lose cars, and gambling has cost some of the patrons their marriage'.

Staff see the losses, where 'you see people go home with nothing, and that has turned me completely off it'.

Staff see the amount of money patrons spend on gambling, and to 'see how much money they are pumping in, it puts you off', as 'it can be depressing knowing how much money they waste on the machines and tables'.

Staff see the amount of time patrons spend gambling, where 'staff on the floor often see the same people all day and every day and it turns them off' and 'it deters them if they see people spending hours there'.

Factor 2: The Influence of Frequent Exposure to Gambling on Employee Gambling

Nine reasons were given for how frequent exposure to gambling can encourage staff gambling, while three were thought to deter staff gambling.

Reasons frequent exposure to gambling can encourage staff gambling:

Increases staff familiarity with gambling, because 'if you have never been around them (gaming machines) you have a barrier between them, but if you have been working around them you feel a lot more comfortable around them'. Another explained, 'before I worked in the TAB, I had no idea how to bet on the horses, so that taught me how…so now whenever I go to the pub and I see a TAB I might put a few dollars on'. Similarly, another stated that 'once I got into the industry, I started to gamble a lot more because I know it and understand it'.

Increases staff interest in gambling, especially if 'they want to develop a passion around that career'. One explained 'I certainly wouldn't play them (gaming machines) as much if I didn't work with them…it is something you obviously have an interest in…it is your job'. Another rationalised his gambling by noting 'it's a good thing to go to other places and get a vibe for their gaming room.' Another related how 'you will be asked how to fill in a keno ticket or TAB ticket. I don't know how to answer that, unless I have a go myself'. Another explained that 'I had never played the poker machines before starting work for the casino. I think I started because I am constantly around the machines'.

Normalises gambling for staff, whereby 'it's proximity for one; it's a culture of regularly being in areas that provide gaming facilities; it becomes part of people's lives'. Others observed that 'they think it is just the norm' and 'it probably is more of a lifestyle for a lot of them. They go to work, they're around poker machines. When they're not at work, they want to go and play the poker machines. They do that quite a bit'.

Staff may have ready access to gambling, where 'staff without gaming licences play the pokies here a lot' and 'you see the kitchen staff and the restaurant staff go in there after they finish work and have a few bets…The main thing is the convenience'.

Staff are surrounded by the lights, music and atmosphere, which 'can influence staff gambling. They (gaming machines) are designed to attract you' and 'it is subliminal and the opportunity to make money is hard to resist'. Another noted 'wherever you are in the casino, you can see or hear the pokies, patrons yelling or cheering; there is a talking roulette wheel you can hear. I think this exposure would affect staff, that some staff might think greedy thoughts like why can't that be me?'

New, younger and infrequent workers can gain distorted views about winning. For example, 'for staff who work one three hour shift a week and see someone wining a $5,000 jackpot, it might look like easy money' and they 'are more inclined to get excited about people winning'. Another explained 'when I started I thought it was great! You took it as a sort of fun environment', and 'especially the younger ones, they see it as wow, the wow factors, look what she has won'.

Staff can lose sight of the value of money, as 'you lose your perception of what money is. $20 is like 20 cents to someone working here'. Another observed that 'it changes a dealer's attitude toward their wages/income. Big sums don't seem so big to a dealer'. Another commented that 'the influence of large jackpots, large denomination chips could be an influence because they lose the sight of the value of money. They see so much. If you saw the cash it would give you a totally different perspective, where chips are bits of plastic; its value loses itself'.

Increases perceived insider knowledge about gambling, because 'they think they know this game and could win. Some employees think that the pokies require skill when really how do you outwit a microchip?'. Another explained he 'knows how to play the game to a proper system which would give me an elevated chance' and another that 'a lot of staff think because they have worked at the casino that they have a better knowledge about gambling, therefore have a better chance of winning'.

Staff become attracted to the gambling environment. As one recalled, 'since working at the casino for six years, I am now more inclined to…have a go on the pokies after work, where before working at the casino I couldn't justify even putting $1 in a machine…I play them now because I am around them all day and helping people all day with the machines, and I want to fit in that same environment and turn off completely, have someone wait on you for a change'.

Reasons frequent exposure to gambling can discourage staff gambling:

Staff can become sick of being around gambling, 'because you are around it constantly' and 'it has influenced me not to gamble. On my days off, I don't want to go anywhere near a poker machine'.

Staff see venue takings from gambling, where 'being aware of what goes through turns to you off big time'. As one noted, 'doing clearances turned me off – there is a feed for a family for five years' and another that 'you're not silly; these places are doing million dollar renovations and you know where the money is coming from'. Others see the 'balances on rewards cards' and realise the losses incurred by these players.

Staff have better knowledge of the odds of losing, that 'it's a mug's game', 'because we know what we pay out and what we get in; we see how much money you give out a day in change'. Another noted that 'being aware of the losses and the odds and the chances of winning has given me some insight on the small probability that you will win'. Staff are also sometimes more aware of the low chance of winning promotions. One comment was 'no, we're too smart for that. We see how much other people lose, wasting their own money'.

Factor 3: The Influence of Fellow Employees on Employee Gambling

The interviews revealed ten ways in which work colleagues can encourage staff gambling, and three ways in which they can deter this.

Reasons fellow employees can encourage staff gambling:

Staff gamble together in their workplace. As noted, 'the casino has footy tipping comps, soccer tipping comps, etc. There is a percentage of the staff…that are gamblers and create something to gamble with. This can be from management right through'. Another related how 'we have a few different little punters' clubs…and we put in to most of them. That probably encourages you to gamble'. Another informed us 'we've got a syndicate here, so there is a group of five or six people that bet every week'. Another related how 'I organised our Christmas party last year, and I made it a monopoly money casino night'.

Staff gamble together after work, where 'if you knock off at the same time as anyone else you might go and search for beer and pokies'. Another related how they 'go to the

casino after work and have a couple of drinks and everyone would put some money through or play the tables'. Another commented 'there is a pub across the road, which always seems to be full of casino employees who mainly go over there after work. It's an easy place to meet and is open extended hours. In this bar there are two pool tables, two tables and the rest is full of poker machines'.

Staff gamble together on days off. Some casino staff gamble privately together, with 'more card nights than before; it is becoming more frequent', where 'poker night isn't just a friendly game. I have heard of people losing their pay packet in the private residence of people's home. All the props, chips, felt cloth, proper cards, the serious environment…A lot of the staff take part in these events'. Another explained 'if I am invited to lunch with fellow staff they will always pick a place with nice meal, view and keno…their eyes are glued to the screen. The conversation then turns to what numbers they are getting'. Another simply stated 'if we've got a day off we will go gambling together'.

Staff directly encourage other staff to gamble, where 'there is always someone asking you to contribute to whatever it is they are running - football, poker nights, AFL, tips on horses. Other examples included where 'I have seen people who like to have a bet on footy TAB…and I've seen guys coercing other people to go in with them, and placing reasonable size bets on those', and 'if you finish work and you all went to the TAB…I see other people saying come on, let's have a bet'.

Staff introduce other staff to gambling. As one explained, 'I've seen it. They hook up together and then say let's go and play the pokies, and then a few weeks later the other (new) one will be playing too'.

Staff travel away together to gamble. One interviewee noted that 'as a group, some would jump on a plane to Sydney to gamble'. Another example was given of 'odd groups, they do a once a year trip, for example to the poker tournaments at Canberra…or they go to Crown (Casino)'.

Staff share gambling tips, where 'some people are luckier than others, and they'll tell you that they won this and that, and you'll say, let's…go together so I can have some of your luck. And that is the mentality'. Another observed 'people that have knowledge of slot machines and that have gone to another gambling venue with other staff would make comments about how to play the machine…this machine has this feature and that feature; you get free spins here, etc. I think this would influence the staff member to play that machine. It's industry knowledge'.

Staff gamble together at hospitality nights, such as 'on Monday nights for hospitality nights you go to a pub, have drinks, some gamble…with the hospitality card at the pub you get two free drinks and a free gaming voucher for two $1 coins for the machines'.

Staff social club activities can encourage gambling. One respondent advocated that 'they should get rid of the social clubs because this usually means they will go to a pub…I think these social club days can influence staff to gamble if they are going to a pub'.

Staff gamble before work. As one hotel employee revealed, 'we get a fair few staff here from the casino. A lot. We'd have five regulars, who come at the same time every day, before they start their shift. They usually come in on their own, but sometimes they meet other staff down here'.

Reasons fellow employees can discourage staff gambling:

Friends from work want to avoid gambling venues. One noted 'the people you probably hang out with are your friends from work, and the last thing you want to do is go back into a pub or club. You want to do something different on your days off'.

Staff provide support or advice to stop gambling, such as 'when someone would come in and say they went and played the pokies last night and lost this much money, another gaming staff member would turn around and say you know you're not going to win on them, you know, discouraging them'.

Staff hear about staff losses on gambling, so 'their influence on fellow staff members would be a negative one, because they are aware of the losses that have occurred'.

Factor 4: The Influence of Gambling Venue Managers, Policies and Practices on Employee Gambling

The data revealed four ways that management can encourage staff gambling, and three discouraging influences.

Reasons management can encourage staff gambling:

Managers are sometimes gamblers and so set an example. As one explained, 'you don't see the managers (here) gambling at all, whereas at some venues you do. They're at the TAB a lot. I think that does influence staff. When you see someone you know doing it, someone that you look up to…'. Other managers gamble with staff, 'they say let's go down and put some money through'. Others emphasise the positive aspects of gambling as 'obviously they have to be positive towards gambling and the industry in their position' so 'when a particular person wins a big jackpot, they talk about it quite a lot and it may influence somebody'.

Managers allow staff to gamble in the workplace. As one explained, 'most of the clubs allow their staff to win in-house promotions, so they are encouraging staff to gamble…some venues see it as an opportunity' and another that 'managers encourage employees to play at the venues illegally. It does affect the employees if they are going to be doing it at work, and that will create more problems'.

Gambling can be a job requirement. One interviewee related how 'I've been approached to go and pop down to the bowls club and see what sort of pokies they've got down there. So they (management) can sort of influence their gambling habits in that way I think. They give you the money to put through'.

Workplace has a gambling culture, where 'the guys managing here, they punt on the horses. I play in a lot of corporate days, and you meet the managers from the clubs, and they punt. This is their work I suppose…it is the whole culture'.

Reasons management can discourage staff gambling:

Managers can provide support or advice to stop gambling, where 'the backing that the staff get from the management is good…It makes a big difference, because I don't think that any staff member that had a problem couldn't find help in the club'.

A policy of no staff gambling in the workplace. One observed 'management can definitely have an influence; there is a ban on gambling here. One old chef said he would be gambling every night if there was gambling allowed here' and another that 'you sit on your break, you don't have much to do, and if you could play them, you would'. Another noted there are 'a lot of people that come to work at the casino so that they can't gamble. They have had a previous gambling problem and they start work there because they know they aren't allowed to gamble'.

A culture of responsible gambling. One respondent recalled previous workplaces with a management mentality of 'let's make people gamble more money', where in his current workplace 'there is more that mentality…of we should be keeping an eye on this person. I think that does rub off on staff'.

Factor 5: The Influence of Workplace Stressors on Employee Gambling

Three ways in which workplace stress can encourage staff gambling were revealed and three ways stress can deter staff from gambling.

Reasons workplace stressors can encourage staff gambling:

Staff need to unwind after work, so 'you have a knock off drink and put your money through the pokies', as 'if they have had a stressful day, playing the pokies could be a numbing experience where you don't have to use your brain; you can zone out'. Others prefer to 'play keno at other venues…by myself and watch the numbers over a quiet beer to unwind'. Another noted 'if I have had a stressful day at work, I will go to a pub…and find it easier to sit on my own…because you don't have to talk to anyone, you are not bothered by anyone and can wind down. Being a single female, it is socially acceptable to sit on your own and play the pokies'.

Stress about difficult customers, such as 'patrons blaming me for losing; difficult customers… younger staff find the stressors very difficult…the stress can influence people to gamble, mostly on the pokies because they can go to pubs, clubs to gamble. They do this to relieve the stress'.

Heavy workloads can 'be a trigger. Some people gamble to release the stress…you just need to have a couple of machines go down, and be serving behind the bar by yourself; that is really stressful because you can't be in two places at once. Everyone is under stress when you work in a venue'. Another explained, 'it gets very busy…I think the stressors of the job can influence staff to gamble. Gambling can be relaxing and take your mind off things'.

Reasons workplace stressors can discourage staff gambling:

Staff avoid gambling venues for stress relief. For many, the best stress relief is to 'go home and relax on my own; I want peace and quiet', so 'if I wanted to go and relax, the

last thing I want to hear is the bells and sirens of the machines'. Another noted how 'if I have a crappy day, I don't want to be near anyone. A lot of days I do get sick of people, and just want to go home'.

Stress about problem gamblers, such as 'a lady that drops her children off at school, gambles all day then picks them up…seeing this can also be stressful for the workers…and can definitely discourage the employees from gambling'. Similarly, another commented 'they see a problem gambler, they are there 18 hours a day, they look like shit, they have no life, spend lots of money; this would be a deterrent to influence them to gamble when feeling stressed from work'.

Stress about difficult customers, such that 'the stresses of the people show us the negative effects of gambling. They can be abusive…some don't smile, even after a win. These stresses can turn you off'.

Factor 6: The Influence of Shift Work on Employee Gambling

Ten reasons that shift work can encourage gambling by staff emerged, as did two reasons that shift work might deter staff from gambling.

Reasons shift work can encourage staff gambling:

Staff can suffer social isolation. One explained 'you have time off when everyone else is at work and it's easy to go to the pub and put some money in the pokies'. Another commented that 'shift workers don't have a social network so would tend to go and play the pokies' and another that 'working shift work can become a trap and can cause staff to turn to gambling…shift work can be socially isolating'. One employee who previously had a gambling problem related how 'working shift work, I would find myself going to a local club and…I would sit at a pokie…then it went from putting $1 in to $100 then $100 to $500… I would tell myself on my days off you are staying at home today, but my palms would get sweaty and I would become anxious'.

Lack of alternative social opportunities for staff, such that 'you are more likely to gamble when you are by yourself' and gambling 'beats sitting at home alone'. Another explained that 'you don't really have nightlife any more, so you have to do something with your days…if I am home alone…(gambling's) what I go do'.

Lack of alternative recreational opportunities for staff. One explained, 'if you have a gambling problem, the worst thing you want to be doing is working shift work…you can't play team sports, so that is one of the other problems…', while another commented that 'night can be day for hospitality workers. There are few leisure opportunities when you are on your own'. Similarly, another commented that 'for younger people, working shift work can influence them to gamble…there is nothing else for them to do'.

Only gambling venues are open late at night, so 'gambling could become a shift workers' pastime because it is the only place open when you finish'. A respondent explained 'by the time they get out, everything is sort of finished, but the pokies are still going, and they'll be like, let's go and have a few drinks and play'. Another noted that 'city workers might go to the casino. When you are doing the closes and it is 5am in the morning, it is the one place to go where you can get a drink, and throw some money on the

table'. Some Brisbane interviewees also noted that the 'lockdown' that prevents people from entering venues after 3am means the casino is only place they can go after work.

Staff need to find solitary leisure activities. One observed 'staff from other venues who come in on their own to play' as 'all their friends were at work, and they'd look for some way to fill their time in, and often it was spent in the TAB'. Another commented 'most of my friends are at work when I have days off and I will tend to go to the club to play the pokies…you can go and play the pokies…on your own…the gaming room is a safe environment for loners'. Another observed 'I enjoy playing the pokies and go there so I don't have to talk to people. I'm around a lot of people during the week so on my day off I would rather be left alone. I will have a coffee, sit and play and not have to talk to anyone. I don't have to interact with people. I have spoken to other people in hospitality that feel the same as me'.

Staff tend to socialise with other hospitality workers, such that 'when everyone else is off we are working. Hospitality workers stay in their own little group' and 'late nights, weekends, shifts, it's the worst part of being in this industry, and that is probably why people in this industry socialise within it'.

Staff social life can revolve around the workplace, because 'you'd love to go out to the beach but everyone else is working. So you go down to the pub, where everyone is, where the people you usually associate with are. So I think the odd hours do influence it a lot'. Another noted that 'the staff are attracted back to the hotel. The young girls come back to a place where they feel comfortable'.

Staff gamble while waiting for others to finish work, where they 'gamble if they were hanging around waiting for the others to finish their shift'.

Staff gamble to fill in time between shifts. As one commented, 'it would be harder to resist the temptation to gamble when you have to fill in two hours in between shifts. I deal with a lot of chefs who work split shifts and the ones I do know like to play the pokies in between shifts'.

Shift work makes it easier to hide heavy gambling. As explained, 'if you are a gambler, then working shift work wouldn't help towards your gambling behaviour…if you have a gambling problem it would be easier to hide this because you are going late into the night or on days off when your friends and family are at work. It is easier to avoid it being seen as a problem'.

Reasons shift work can discourage staff gambling:

Staff might go out less. As one commented, 'I think it goes the other way, because your friends are not there, so you don't go out at all'.

No gambling venues open after some shifts. 'You will finish at 4am and there aren't any pubs open to go and gamble at. I think there is a lack of opportunity to gamble when you're working shift work'. Similarly, another commented that on 'night shift, you have time for nothing other than work and sleep. There is also less opportunity to gamble when working the night shift'.

Factor 7: The Influence of Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing and Promotions on Employee Gambling

Gambling marketing and promotions can range from the broad scale advertising of gambling activities in the mass media, to in-house promotions such as member competitions, loyalty programs and jackpots. These were considered to potentially encourage staff gambling in three different ways, while five reasons were offered as deterrents.

Reasons that frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions can encourage staff gambling:

Big jackpots can act as a trigger. As one explained, 'we see a fair few of the big jackpots...every time it got to 29-30 thousand, it would go off. So…I've thought it's going to go off soon; I've thought of going down (to another venue to play it)'. Another noted 'if you do pokie promos, there might be some people in here who might say oh, that's got better odds, so I'll come in here on my day off and have a go'. Another observed, 'some staff working on the machines will see a big win and will go to a club playing the same machine because they have seen big wins on it'. Another noted that 'when I saw the keno go off it did make me think I should go to the club and have a go'.

Raises awareness of jackpot levels, where 'seeing the jackpot going up, knowing what the level is that it jackpots at, could be a big influence', as 'staff certainly do keep an eye on the jackpot. Yes, staff definitely think they have insider knowledge, to give them more chance. So, definitely your links would be a trap'. Another explained that 'staff see that more than anyone, and know when it might go off, even though it is random. So they might see it go up to $5,000, and go and have a gamble'.

Increases knowledge about other promotions, 'because you have the knowledge that other clubs have the same sort of things happening' and 'if I didn't work in the industry I wouldn't understand that those sorts of things go on. It is easy to understand, it is not a hassle. So definitely, that is a big influence'. Another raised the point that 'the new pokies are, I guess, a promotion in themselves. It's new; you want to have a go to see how it works'. Another commented that staff could 'be influenced to join somewhere else which offers similar rewards (to the casino). If they didn't work in a gaming venue they wouldn't know about these reward systems'.

Reasons that frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions can discourage staff gambling:

Promotions are not attractive to the age group, as 'I don't think they're catering to our age group…It is just for the older people'.
Staff are often not allowed to enter workplace promotions, so 'most of the staff would ignore the promotions because they know they can't win'. Similarly, another commented that staff 'are not allowed into the casino or to go in any of the promotions so it isn't any real concern to the employees as to what is being given away'.

Promotions turn staff off. As one noted, 'honestly, it turns me off gambling (when) I watch what people try to do to win the car', and another that 'to me it is pretty annoying. I've been to a couple of places where there have been promos and I just want to get away from it'.

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Heavy gamblers amongst staff are not attracted to promotions. As one explained, 'your heavier bettors don't get involved in the promotions; they won't interact'.

Factor 8: The Influence of Responsible Gambling Training on Employee Gambling

While responsible gambling training would be very unlikely to encourage staff gambling, six reasons were given for why it was not perceived to discourage this. Three reasons were also identified for why this training might discourage staff from gambling.

Reasons that responsible gambling training may not deter staff gambling:

Not all staff undertake the training. This is because training is not readily available in all areas. One Cairns respondent noted 'it seems to be concentrated down south…we don't seem to get it here'. Training may also not be done due to expense, with one interviewee complaining that 'the government makes them too expensive for little and big clubs with lots of staff'. Additionally, training may not be done because it is voluntary, as 'people don't have to spend money on staff training any more…it is not compulsory any more. If you're not encouraged to do it, you won't'.

May not encourage staff to reflect on their own gambling, as 'it definitely won't influence the staff's gambling. They don't look at themselves'. One noted 'it is a piece of paper to me…a few policies that you learn', while another said that 'it aims more at problem gamblers, spotting issues with problem gamblers, ways of approaching them and helping them' and 'it probably doesn't relate to staff's own gambling. They think of it as relevant to their jobs; they don't think of it in relation to themselves'.

Training was not engaging. As one recalled, 'I think there was a lot more potential there to influence them. The trainers…seemed to be approaching it from the point of view that we are just here to do a job for the club, to appease legal requirements. It didn't make me more aware of the odds or the human side of gambling problems'.

People may be in denial about their own gambling, such that 'whether you have training or not…people can…lie to themselves' and 'most of them still want to go and play and have a bit of fun. Nobody thinks they have a problem'.

Training can provide a false sense of security, that 'definitely it sort of gives you the mindset that you are immune to it. I couldn't possibly have a gambling addiction, because I know what constitutes a person with a gambling addiction, and I am not that person'.

Staff can be sceptical about the venue's commitment to responsible gambling, as 'everyone sees the training as a bit of a joke' and 'if anyone that attends the training had a problem they wouldn't take the course seriously' because 'the company doesn't care about responsible gambling, they just want the money. They don't care if the patron is down to their last dollar'. Another commented that when he did the training, he 'read between the lines and thought that the casino was trying to not let the staff feel responsible for people's gambling problems and addictions'.

Reasons that responsible gambling training discourages staff gambling:

Raises awareness for staff of problem gambling and its signs. One explained 'we can also see the different signs of what to look for in problem gamblers. With the training

we've had…you sort of notice if someone is getting down or really stroppy at you, they'll spend too much money and, yeah I think it would influence staff in their own gambling'. Similarly, another said 'the training made me more aware, say if you spend too much, well just stop and recount everything to make sure you don't have a problem. I think the staff probably put themselves in the shoes. It would be a positive influence'.

Raises awareness for staff of the effects of problem gambling. As noted, 'when you are sitting in a room and they are telling you the things that can happen to problem gamblers, how much money they have won and lost over a year…that certainly influenced me' and 'they get counsellors to come and talk to you and…they tell you what people lose and the results of it. And after seeing that, personally again I don't think I would gamble'. Another noted that 'the issues raised, for example how it can destroy lives and families, would have to make them think twice about excessive gambling. I'm not sure if it would have a direct effect on them changing their gambling patterns, but I think it would definitely make them think about it'.

Raises awareness for staff of the poor odds in gambling. One respondent who had sought advice for her gambling problems noted, 'I think seeing a lot of other people win made you think you could do that too. Until I went to venue support…and found out that it is all random and set wins, about the percentages that they paid out'. Another speculated that 'by doing your RSG you learn the odds and all, and that could…make you not want to play them'.

Factor 9: The Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures on Employee Gambling

Other responsible gambling measures, such as signage about counselling, the odds of winning and self-exclusion, were thought to not deter staff from gambling for seven reasons, while five reasons emerged for why these measures discourage staff gambling.

Reasons that responsible gambling measures may not deter staff gambling:

Staff don't look at signage and/or are sceptical about it. As noted, 'I don't think they take any notice…they don't even look at them, and if they look at them, they say that is rubbish'.

Signs become too familiar, as staff see 'the same signs every single day so they become the background, part of the furniture', or as one person explained, 'signage is good for people who look at it, but I think the staff…get to a stage where they don't see it'.

Signs are aimed at patrons not staff, so are considered 'something that is there for other people'. As one commented, 'you also think that that material is not directed at me…as far as staff goes, it is promotions material for the patrons'. Another explained that 'staff think the signs are just for the patrons. The signs aren't in the staff toilets so to me I think it is directed just for the patrons'.

Signage is too discreet. As one commented, 'the signs aren't very well positioned so you don't really see them very much. They're very small and discreet'. Another noted that the cards have not been replaced 'for a long time so no one is looking at them. I think it should be more of an impact for them to take notice'.

Signage is misleading, in that 'it says, are you looking for a hot tip? Everyone picks it up and puts it back down when they realise what it is about. Everyone thinks they're going to get a tip and then they don't'.

People may be in denial about their own gambling, such that 'if someone is going to gamble they will gamble', 'if there are staff with a gambling problem that they wouldn't admit to it, like any addiction', and 'if you're a gambler you're a gambler; you wouldn't take notice of the signage'.

Signage can trigger gambling. Interestingly, one employee who previously had a gambling problem, thought the signage encouraged her to gamble. As she explained, 'I don't think reading a coaster with a warning on it will stop me playing the pokies. If anything, if I am in a club and see this, I am is more likely to play the pokies than not. If I don't see this, it doesn't trigger me to want to go and play'.

Reasons that responsible gambling measures discourages staff gambling:

Signage raises awareness of gambling problems, especially 'if they thought they had a problem' and for 'someone who was new'. With 'signs all over the place, it sort of rubs it in a bit more, what gambling can do, as far as the down side of it. And the gambling cards, that sort of backs that up'. Thus, 'they might go down and put $5 through, but they won't go and put their whole pay through' as 'it reinforces the possibility that gambling can affect you in an adverse way…it's not all fun'.

Signage raises awareness of where to get help, because 'staff are aware of the signs etc as they need to instruct the patrons to these if they are after any information or direction. Because of this, the staff would be aware of where to go if they need help'.

Measures can trigger problem recognition, 'if I did have a problem and it was on my mind, it (signage) would then be the thing you would see and say, okay I need help. I think a staff member would think the signage etc would relate to them if they actually had a problem'. Another noted that 'if there was a staff member with a problem, they know the procedures to follow for self exclusion'.

Staff involvement in self-exclusion of patrons deters staff from gambling, as 'it is pretty scary to go through the self exclusion. I did it about six months ago with a customer'. Another recalled, 'customers with problems asking if they can get themselves self-excluded from the casino. Being involved with this does make me reflect on my own gambling habits'.

Measures raise awareness of the poor odds of winning, in that 'the odds do have an effect. It makes me more aware. When I go and play the pokies, I know that there is a huge chance that I am going to lose this money that I am about to put in. It makes you aware of the problems'.

Factor 10: The Influence of Other Aspects of the Work Environment on Employee Gambling

Nine additional points were raised in response to the question of whether other aspects of the work environment are likely to influence the gambling behaviour of gambling venue employees.

Workplace factors influence on venue employee gambling

Reasons that other aspects of the work environment encourage staff gambling:
Some staff drink a lot of alcohol, and 'you seem to up the ante after you've been drinking. And you don't realise until the next day just what you have done. Whereas if you haven't been excessively drinking you have more control. Alcohol and gambling don't go together'. Another contended that 'alcohol has a major part to play in how much a person spends. It makes it easier with the money. I know that after a couple of drinks I'm more inclined to put more money through than when I am in a straight frame of mind'.

Reluctance to expose problems due to fear of job loss, as 'losing your job is a circumstance. If you have the assets to gamble, you wouldn't tell them (management) that you have a problem'. Another observed 'if someone has a gambling problem, I probably think that they wouldn't talk about it or would try to hide it'. Another thought 'they may be a little embarrassed to go down that path (seek help) because they might know that person who they have to see. Or they may be embarrassed because they have let themselves get into this position, especially after doing the training, seeing what it can do to people. They would think to themselves I should know better.

Employees cannot gamble at the workplace so a problem might go undetected. As one explained, 'we get a lot of staff from the other clubs around, and they're pretty big gamblers. So we may not see where some of our staff go and what they do'. Similarly, another explained, 'you don't know if someone is gambling. If you are working in a venue and you see them gambling you could register that they might have a problem, where they would now be going elsewhere'.

Some staff have the opportunity to bet on credit. As one noted, 'I have seen credit betting on keno at $200 a time by staff' and another that 'obviously, there are cases, like the credit betting…in a smaller pub you might get away with it'.

Irregular wages of casual staff, 'who are on big money from week to week…and all of a sudden they've got extra money that they want to throw in the machines to double it'.

Low wages of some staff, where 'if you see people winning, you think your chance is equal to theirs, especially when you don't see how much they put in. And it is a relative wage as well. We as hospitality workers are in a key demographic to be a gambler just because of our wage bracket'. Another explained, 'if I was paid better and thought that the company was going to look after me in the future, give me a career path, I would be a lot less likely to gamble. One of the reasons that makes me want to gamble is the feeling of hopelessness; for example property prices, I would never be able to buy my own home. Not that I think that I'll win the money to buy a house, but there is a slim chance'.

Young age group of staff, where 'a lot of the dealers are gamblers. I think the rest of the staff are pretty aware of the dangers of gambling, but it's different for the dealers because it's in their face and most of them are younger. They have also been told by the company that they are the best, the most needed in the company, which can make the dealers think that they are better than anyone else'. Another commented the younger staff 'have no fear, no mortgages. The older staff are more keen to work and make money, where the younger ones like to go out, drink, and gamble'.

Self-exclusion is too difficult due to embarrassment and fear of job loss, because 'as far as self exclusion…you can…be uncomfortable and don't want to seek help in a venue because that is your job' and because 'staff would be more inclined to hide that there is a

problem with themselves. The minimum time for exclusions is 12 months. And they know this…I really don't think staff would disclose that they had a problem'.

Staff are overlooked in problem gambling, so that 'I don't think people realise that we have opportunity and exposure. The industry is usually forgotten in talk around problem gambling. Because we're all the same, our gambling is overlooked'.

Workplace Factors Perceived by Employees to Encourage or Not Deter Staff Gambling

Table 3 summarises the themes and major sub-themes discussed above relating to workplace factors that can encourage, or at least not deter, gambling amongst gaming venue staff and whether each was identified by the club, hotel and casino employees.

Table 3: Workplace Factors Perceived by Employees to Encourage/Not Discourage Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff

	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff
Frequent Interaction with Gamblers:			
Staff hear about wins more than losses	√	√	√
Seeing people win creates hope of winning	√	√	√
Staff get caught up in the excitement of patrons' wins	√	√	√
Staff constantly hear about gambling	√	√	√
Patrons can encourage staff to gamble		√	
Frequent Exposure to Gambling:			
Increases staff familiarity with gambling	√	√	√
Increases staff interest in gambling	√	√	√
Normalises gambling for staff	√	√	
Staff may have ready access to gambling	√		
Staff are surrounded by the lights, music and atmosphere	√	√	√
Infrequent workers can gain distorted views about winning	√		√
New or younger staff can gain distorted views about winning	√	√	√
Staff can lose sight of the value of money	√		√
Increases perceived insider knowledge about gambling			√
Staff become attracted to the gambling environment			√
Influence of Fellow Employees:			
Staff gamble together in their workplace	√	√	√
Staff gamble together after work	√	√	√
Staff gamble together on days off	√	√	√
Staff directly encourage other staff to gamble	√	√	√
Staff introduce other staff to gambling	√		
Staff share gambling tips		√	√
Staff gamble on hospitality industry nights		√	√
Staff travel away together to gamble			√
Staff social club activities can encourage gambling			√
Staff gamble before work			√
Influence of Venue Managers, Policies & Practices:			
Managers are sometimes gamblers and so set an example	√	√	
Managers gamble with staff	√	√	
Managers allow staff to gamble in the workplace	√	√	
Gambling can be a job requirement	√		
Workplace has a gambling culture	√		
Managers sometimes talk about big wins			√
Managers might talk about gambling in a positive way			√
Influence of Workplace Stressors			
Staff need to unwind after work	√	√	√

Workplace factors influence on venue employee gambling

Staff can experience stress about problem gamblers	√	√	
Staff can experience stress about difficult customers	√		√
Staff can experience stress from heavy workloads	√		√
Influence of Shift Work:			
Staff can suffer social isolation	√		√
Lack of alternative social opportunities for staff	√	√	√
Lack of alternative recreational opportunities for staff	√	√	√
Only gambling venues are open late at night	√	√	√
Staff need to find solitary leisure activities	√		√
Staff tend to socialise with other hospitality workers	√		√
Staff gamble to fill in time between shifts		√	√
Staff social life can revolve around the workplace		√	
Staff gamble while waiting for others to finish work		√	
Shift work makes it easier to hide heavy gambling			√
Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing & Promotions:			
Promotions can act as a trigger	√	√	√
Reinforces gambling as way to win money	√	√	√
Raises awareness of jackpot levels	√	√	√
Increases knowledge about other promotions	√	√	√
Staff get caught up in the excitement of promotions			√
Influence of Responsible Gambling Training			
Training is not readily available in all areas	√		
Training may not be done due to expense	√		
Training may not be done because it is voluntary	√		
May not encourage staff to reflect on their own gambling	√	√	√
Training was not engaging	√		
People may be in denial about their own gambling	√		√
Training can provide a false sense of security	√		
Staff can be sceptical about the venue's commitment to responsible gambling			√
Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures:			
Staff don't look at signage and/or are sceptical about them	√		
Signs become too familiar	√	√	√
Signs are aimed at patrons not staff	√		√
Signage is too discreet	√		√
Signage is misleading		√	
People may be in denial about their own gambling			√
Signage can trigger gambling			√
Other Aspects of the Workplace:			
Some staff drink a lot of alcohol	√	√	
Reluctance to expose problems due to fear of job loss	√		√
Some staff have the opportunity to bet on credit	√	√	
Irregular wages of casual staff	√		
Low wages of some staff	√		√
Young age group of staff	√		√
Self-exclusion is too difficult due to embarrassment and fear of job loss		√	
Staff are overlooked in problem gambling		√	
Employees cannot gamble at the workplace so a problem might go undetected	√		√

Workplace Factors Perceived by Employees to Discourage Staff Gambling

Table 4 summarises those themes and sub-themes relating to factors perceived to discourage staff from gambling and whether each was identified by the club, hotel and casino employees.

Table 4: Workplace Factors Perceived by Employees to Discourage Gambling and/or Encourage Responsible Gambling by Gaming Venue Staff

	Club Staff	Hotel Staff	Casino Staff
Frequent Interaction with Gamblers:			
Staff see problem gamblers and don't want to be like them	√		√
Staff see negative emotional responses to gambling losses	√	√	√
Staff see the effects of problem gambling	√	√	√
Staff hear about the losses	√	√	√
Staff see the amount of money patrons spend on gambling	√	√	√
Staff see the amount of time patrons spend gambling	√		√
Frequent Exposure to Gambling:			
Staff can become sick of being around gambling	√	√	√
Staff see venue takings from gambling	√	√	√
Staff have better knowledge of the odds of losing	√	√	√
Influence of Fellow Employees:			
Staff provide support or advice to stop gambling		√	√
Staff hear about staff losses on gambling			√
Friends from work want to avoid gambling venues	√		
Influence of Venue Managers, Policies & Practices:			
Managers can provide support or advice to stop gambling	√		√
A policy of no staff gambling in the workplace	√	√	√
A culture of responsible gambling	√		√
Influence of Workplace Stressors			
Staff avoid gambling venues for stress relief	√	√	√
Staff can be deterred by stress about problem gamblers			√
Staff can be deterred by stress about difficult customers			√
Influence of Shift Work:			
Staff might go out less	√		√
No gambling venues open after some shifts			√
Frequent Exposure to Gambling Marketing & Promotions:			
Staff are aware of the low chance of winning promotions	√	√	√
Promotions are not attractive to the age group	√		
Staff are often not allowed to enter workplace promotions	√	√	√
Promotions turn staff off	√		
Heavy gamblers amongst staff are not attracted to promotions		√	
Influence of Responsible Gambling Training			
Raises awareness for staff of problem gambling and its signs	√	√	√
Raises awareness for staff of the effects of problem gambling	√		√
Raises awareness for staff of the poor odds in gambling	√	√	√
Raises awareness for staff of ways to seek help	√	√	√
Influence of Other Responsible Gambling Measures:			
Signage raises awareness of gambling problems	√	√	√
Signage raises awareness of where to get help	√	√	√
Can trigger problem recognition	√	√	√
Staff involvement in self-exclusion of patrons deters staff from gambling	√	√	√
Raises awareness of the poor odds of winning		√	

Comparisons amongst Club, Hotel and Casino Employees' Responses

Tables 5-7 summarise the opinions of the employees we interviewed from the clubs, hotels and casinos (respectively) about each of the workplace factors we questioned them about. Their responses are categorised as 'encourages gambling', 'discourages gambling', 'either/both', 'no influence' and 'don't know/no response'.

Table 5: Summary of Club Employee Opinions about the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling

Influence of…	Encourages Gambling		Discourages Gambling		Either/Both		No Influence		Don't Know/No Response		Total	
Frequent interaction with gamblers	3	(9%)	7	(21%)	13	(38%)	11	(32%)	0	(0%)	34	(100%)
Frequent exposure to gambling	9	(27%)	6	(18%)	8	(24%)	8	(24%)	3	(9%)	34	(100%)
Fellow employees	15	(44%)	0	(0%)	3	(9%)	14	(41%)	2	(6%)	34	(100%)
Venue managers	4	(12%)	19	(56%)	0	(0%)	11	(32%)	0	(0%)	34	(100%)
Workplace stressors	15	(44%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	17	(50%)	2	(6%)	34	(100%)
Shift work	24	(71%)	1	(3%)	0	(0%)	8	(24%)	1	(3%)	34	(100%)
Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions	20	(59%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	13	(38%)	1	(3%)	34	(100%)
Responsible gambling training	0	(0%)	16	(47%)	0	(0%)	11	(32%)	7	(21%)	34	(100%)
Responsible gambling measures	0	(0%)	14	(41%)	0	(0%)	14	(41%)	6	(18%)	34	(100%)

Table 6: Summary of Hotel Employee Opinions about the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling

Influence of…	Encourages Gambling		Discourages Gambling		Either/Both		No Influence		Don't Know/No Response		Total	
Frequent interaction with gamblers	7	(50%)	1	(7%)	3	(21%)	2	(14%)	1	(7%)	14	(100%)
Frequent exposure to gambling	9	(64%)	1	(7%)	3	(21%)	0	(0%)	1	(7%)	14	(100%)
Fellow employees	8	(57%)	0	(0%)	1	(7%)	3	(21%)	2	(14%)	14	(100%)
Venue managers	0	(0%)	3	(21%)	5	(36%)	5	(36%)	1	(7%)	14	(100%)
Workplace stressors	4	(29%)	1	(7%)	1	(7%)	5	(36%)	3	(21%)	14	(100%)
Shift work	11	(79%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	3	(21%)	0	(0%)	14	(100%)
Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions	4	(29%)	2	(14%)	0	(0%)	5	(36%)	3	(21%)	14	(100%)
Responsible gambling training	0	(0%)	8	(57%)	1	(7%)	2	(14%)	3	(21%)	14	(100%)
Responsible gambling measures	0	(0%)	7	(50%)	0	(0%)	4	(29%)	3	(21%)	14	(100%)

Table 7: Summary of Casino Employee Opinions about the Influence of Workplace Factors on Staff Gambling

Influence of…	Encourages Gambling		Discourages Gambling		Either/Both		No Influence		Don't Know/No Response		Total	
Frequent interaction with gamblers	3	(8%)	12	(32%)	13	(34%)	5	(13%)	5	(13%)	38	(100%)
Frequent exposure to gambling	13	(34%)	2	(5%)	14	(37%)	5	(13%)	4	(11%)	38	(100%)
Fellow employees	25	(66%)	2	(5%)	1	(3%)	7	(18%)	3	(8%)	38	(100%)
Venue managers	1	(3%)	27	(71%)	1	(3%)	7	(18%)	2	(5%)	38	(100%)
Workplace stressors	7	(18%)	2	(5%)	9	(24%)	16	(42%)	4	(11%)	38	(100%)
Shift work	21	(55%)	0	(0%)	2	(5%)	10	(26%)	5	(13%)	38	(100%)
Frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions	8	(21%)	2	(5%)	7	(18%)	17	(45%)	4	(11%)	38	(100%)
Responsible gambling training	0	(0%)	26	(68%)	0	(0%)	8	(21%)	4	(11%)	38	(100%)
Responsible gambling measures	1	(3%)	18	(47%)	0	(0%)	14	(37%)	5	(13%)	38	(100%)

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The following points compare overall responses given by the club, hotel and casino employees to each of the workplace factors analysed earlier, and speculate on some reasons for any major differences.

Frequent interaction with gamblers was perceived as predominantly encouraging gambling amongst staff only by the hotel respondents, with the club and casino interviewees more inclined to the view that this interaction could either encourage or discourage staff gambling, depending on the circumstances. Indeed, the casino interviewees were far more likely than the other two groups to report that this interaction mainly deterred staff from gambling. The sheer numbers of gamblers and heavy gamblers at the casinos, the typically larger bets and losses, and the opportunity for 24 hour gambling by patrons may underpin this finding.

Frequent exposure to gambling, while endorsed as an influence on staff gambling by all three groups, gained more mixed responses. Again the hotel staff were more likely to consider this an encouraging influence on staff gambling, while the club and casino staff tended to consider that this exposure can either encourage or discourage staff from gambling. Again, the larger scale of gambling operations in the casinos and many clubs might explain this result, with these employees more likely to be surrounded by extensive gambling facilities and to recognise the extent to which gambling losses contribute to the venues' revenues.

Fellow employees were seen as a major encouraging influence on staff gambling, particularly amongst casino employees (two-thirds) and hotel staff (over half), while nearly equal proportions of the club respondents (about two-fifths) considered fellow employees either as being an encouraging factor or as having no influence on staff gambling. Certainly amongst casino employees, there are organised group activities that involve gambling, such as private card nights, trips to other casinos, race days and other social club activities that involve gambling. These seem to occur particularly amongst table dealers. Additionally, many comments were made about how younger staff tend to socialise and gamble together more than do older workers. Perhaps the casinos and hotels tend to employ younger workers with fewer financial and family responsibilities than older workers tend to have.

Venue managers and their policies and practices were considered to discourage staff gambling by over two-thirds of casino interviewees and over one half of club respondents. While only one-fifth of hotel employees endorsed this view, all three groups acknowledged that policies of no gambling in the workplace, where implemented, deterred staff from gambling. From Table 4, it seems that the clubs and casinos may have a more overt culture of responsible gambling and perhaps also have stricter policies and procedures around staff gambling in the workplace. Certainly the casinos have a zero tolerance approach to this.

Workplace stress was a factor attracting quite polarised opinions. Amongst the club employees, nearly equal proportions (around half) felt such stresses either encouraged staff to gamble or had no influence. The views of hotel staff were equally polarised, with about one-third each being divided in this way. However, workplace stress was considered by the largest group of casino employees (about two-fifths) as having no influence on staff gambling. Perhaps the casinos are less stressful places to work, with peaks and troughs in customer demand being more easily covered by a larger workforce. It may also be that casino staff can remain more detached from their customers by virtue of stricter policies on staff interaction with gamblers, larger numbers of non-regular patrons and a hierarchical

structure that allows staff to refer difficult or emotional customers up the chain of command. Certainly there was the sense amongst some casino employees that they had learned to cope with or had become more immune to stressful patrons.

Shift work was considered by all three groups as a major influence encouraging venue staff to gamble. Over one half of casino interviewees endorsed this view, and over 70 per cent of the hotel and club employees. As evident from Table 3, there are a range of issues associated with shift work that make it difficult for staff to have a normal social life, as the odds hours and weekends worked place limits on recreational, family and group activities, leaving gambling as an accessible and socially acceptable solo activity. However, some casino employees commented that shift work might make some employees less inclined to go out, as there are no gambling venues open after work for staff who finish early in the morning. This may help to explain why shift work was perceived by casino staff as slightly less of an influence on staff gambling than for the hotel and club employees.

Frequent exposure to gambling-related marketing and promotions were perceived by over half the club interviewees to encourage staff to gamble, although only about one-quarter of hotel and casino employees endorsed this view. An explanation for this finding may be that the casino staff are not allowed to enter workplace promotions and so take less notice of them, while hotels tend to run less promotions and ones with smaller prizes than do the clubs.

Responsible gambling training was seen to mainly discourage staff gambling, or at least to encourage responsible gambling amongst staff, by over two-thirds of casino interviewees, over one-half of hotel employees and by a little under half of the club staff we interviewed. Certainly, the casinos operate quite extensive responsible gambling training, including regular refresher courses, and these are delivered to all employees. In contrast, responsible gambling training for club and hotel staff can be more ad hoc, subject to availability, affordability and the commitment of individual venue managers. Not all hotel and club staff are trained in responsible gambling, with some venues opting to have training only for gaming licensees.

Other responsible gambling measures were considered less of an influence on staff gambling by all three groups. Between 40-50 per cent of club, hotel and casino staff considered these measures as discouraging gambling or promoting responsible gambling amongst employees. Most comments on these measures focused on signage, which was considered too familiar, 'part of the furniture' and directed only at patrons by many staff in all three types of venues.

Other workplace factors were identified as encouraging gambling amongst venue employees. Frequent and heavy drinking of alcohol by some staff, combined with a tendency to gamble more when they drink, was identified by hotel and club staff as a risk factor. It may well be that casino staff also have similar drinking patterns, but because drinking is discouraged in their workplace and gambling is prohibited, this combination may go unnoticed. Further encouragement to gamble was ascribed to low wages of some staff, so that gambling may seem an attractive way to 'get ahead', and to irregular wages where extra cash in the pay packet may tempt some to gamble. The generally young age group of venue staff was also seen as a factor which makes this group more likely to gamble. Club and hotel staff also mentioned that some staff have the opportunity to gamble on credit on the TAB or keno. While acknowledged as a rare occurrence, there is no doubt this occurs. The tight security at casinos would likely deter this situation. Finally, some

factors were identified relating to staff being reluctant to expose a gambling problem, finding it difficult to self-exclude, being able to hide a gambling problem from their employer or being overlooked in responsible gambling efforts. It seems there is some concern amongst staff that revealing a gambling problem would lead at least to embarrassment, if not job loss.

Conclusion

This paper has reported on the second stage of a larger study into gambling by gaming venue employees and aspects of working in gaming venues that are perceived to influence staff gambling. The paper drew on face-to-face interviews with 34 club, 14 hotel and 18 casino employees. From these data, the paper extracted 60 reasons why working in a gaming venue can encourage staff gambling, and these were grouped into eight workplace factors – frequent interaction with gamblers, frequent exposure to gambling, influence of fellow employees, influence of management, workplace stress, working shift work, frequent exposure to gambling marketing and promotions, and 'other' workplace factors. However, 34 reasons why working in a venue discourages staff gambling were also associated with these factors. The data also revealed 15 reasons why the venues' responsible gambling training and their other responsible gambling measures may not deter staff from gambling or at least encourage them to gamble responsibly. As such, this is the first known comprehensive study worldwide to examine the relationship between working in a gambling environment and employee gambling. It builds on an earlier stage of data collection that gathered opinions on this issue from 32 gambling counsellors in Queensland Australia. Subsequent stages have sought opinions from venue managers, problem gamblers and peak industry bodies, and these results will be reported in additional papers to provide inclusive and stakeholder-based perspectives.

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