Gambling in culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Australia

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The evidence base about gambling within many Western cultures, including Australia, is now quite large and it suggests that gambling is a prevalent and culturally accepted activity in Australian culture as elsewhere. However, the evidence base about gambling in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities living in Australia, and other Western nations, remains limited. This paper examines the available literature about gambling participation within culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities in Australia.

KEY MESSAGES

- CALD communities within developed nations—including Australia—tend to *participate in gambling less* than the overall population, but those who do gamble may be *more likely to experience problems*.
- CALD people who gamble may be more likely to develop problems than individuals from the general population due to different beliefs about luck and chance, factors relating to migration, and issues around stigma and shame.
- Stigma and shame can create considerable barriers to help seeking in CALD communities.
- Increased access to gambling and migration stressors may increase the chance that migrants might gamble, placing them at additional risk of developing problems.
- Both specific CALD and culturally appropriate mainstream gambling help services are needed to support CALD gamblers and their families.

This paper reviews the research examining gambling in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, with a focus on Australia. Participation, problems, beliefs and attitudes of different CALD communities are examined to provide a brief overview of the research to date.

The research indicates:

- Worldwide, gambling and gambling problems are present, to some extent, in most cultures.
- The meaning of gambling varies across cultures; this affects when and how it is accepted.
- Research related to gambling in CALD communities is limited because of both social and pragmatic reasons.
- CALD communities within developed nations—including Australia—tend to *participate in gambling less* than the overall population, but those who do gamble are *more likely to experience problems*.
- Reasons CALD individuals are at higher risk of gambling issues include beliefs relating to luck and chance, factors relating to migration and issues around stigma and shame.
- Stigma and shame related to gambling can affect the entire family and place barriers in the way of help seeking for people in CALD communities.

Australia—a culturally and linguistically diverse country

Historically, gambling was present in many early civilisations; however, its acceptability has fluctuated over time (Abbott & Volberg, 1999). For some societies, including those in the South Pacific region and most parts of pre-colonised Australia, gambling was not a part of their early

history (Abbott & Volberg, 1999; Binde, 2005; Tse, Dyall, Clarke, Abbott, Townsend, & Kingi, 2012). European colonisation often introduced or increased gambling within societies, leading to growth in the availability, participation and expenditure of gambling in some regions, including Asia–Pacific (Tse, Yu, Rossen, & Wang, 2010). Today most cultures have gambling[1] (and problem gambling[2]) within their communities (Raylu & Oei, 2004).

Australia is a culturally and linguistically diverse country. Australians originate from over 250 ancestries and speak almost 400 different languages at home (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2007). The 2011 Census revealed that almost half of the population were either born overseas (26%) or had at least one overseas-born parent (20%; ABS, 2012; ABS, 2014). In fact, since September 2005 migration has become the main source of population growth in Australia (Department of Immigration and Citizenship [DIC], n.d.). Historically, the majority of Australia's migration has come from Europe; however, the most common birthplaces of recent migrants are China and India (ABS, 2012).

In addition to being culturally and linguistically diverse, Australia has an established gambling culture. While recent prevalence studies suggest a gradual decline in overall participation rates in the population, just under two-thirds of Australians (64%) still gamble each year (Hing, Gainsbury et al., 2014), and Australians have the highest per capita gambling expenditure in the world (H2 Gambling Capital, 2014). Gambling is perceived to be a part of "Aussie" culture, and migrants often see gambling as a way to integrate themselves into Australia's culture and lifestyle (Feldman, Radermacher, Anderson, & Dickins, 2014).

This picture, however, is not the same across all cultures within Australia. This discussion paper seeks to examine gambling across culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, with a specific emphasis on Australia. Within the context of this paper, CALD communities will be defined as communities living within a majority Westernised English-speaking culture (such as Australia) with "diverse language, ethnic background, nationality, dress, traditions, food, societal structures, art and religion characteristics" (Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria [ECCV], 2012, p. 1). Within Australia, individuals from CALD communities are considered to be those who were born overseas and do not originate from countries classified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as "main English-speaking countries" (i.e. Canada, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States of America) (ECCV, 2012). In addition, given the marked contrast between mainstream and Indigenous culture within many Western countries (including Australia), we will also consider relevant research conducted with Indigenous cultures.

Gambling research in CALD communities

The evidence base related to gambling within many Western cultures, including Australia, is now quite large. In contrast, the evidence base for CALD groups living within these majority cultures remains limited. There are several explanations for the limited amount of culturally specific gambling research.

The first issue faced when conducting research with CALD groups is the difficulty in clearly defining a cultural group. Culture is a socially constructed concept that involves many characteristics, including nationality, religion, language and race (Tepperman & Korn, 2002). Looking at the cultural identity of Chinese individuals, for example, in addition to those who live in China, there are others that identify as Chinese but live elsewhere—such as "Malay Chinese", "Singapore Chinese" or even "Australian Chinese". Each of these labels may have a slightly different meaning for those who inhabit them. Therefore, research results obtained with people who identify as Malay Chinese may have limited relevance for people from other Chinese cultural groups.

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1 Gambling is defined as the placing of a wager or bet in the form of money or something of value on the outcome of an uncertain event that may involve the elements of skill and chance (Problem Gambling Research and Treatment Centre, 2011)

2 Problem gambling is gambling characterised by difficulties in limiting money and/or time spent on gambling which leads to adverse consequences for the gambler, others or for the community (Neal, Delfabbro, & O'Neil, 2005)

A related issue involves the constraints of geography, which means that studies generally focus on specific ethnic communities or geographical locations. Differences in culture and environment limit the generalisability of individual study findings to other communities or locations, even within the same country (Stevens & Golebiowska, 2013).

Even when researchers are sensitised and willing, there can be difficulties. Many cultural groups attach a significant amount of stigma to gambling and/or gambling problems. This can create a significant barrier to research participation, as people may be unwilling to discuss socially undesirable behaviour (Beattie, Blaszczynski, Maccallum, & Joukhador, 1999; Feldman et al., 2014; Ohtsuka & Ohtsuka, 2010). Even when this is not a significant issue, it can be difficult for researchers to recruit within tight-knit cultural groups unless they find an appropriate gatekeeper to provide introductions. Research can also incur additional expenses when recruiting minority groups where English is not the first language. Translators are often needed when recruiting, conducting research and transcribing data (Feldman, Radermacher, Browning, Bird, & Thomas, 2008; Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority [VCGA], 2000). This issue can be overcome by enlisting bilingual researchers (e.g. Ohtsuka, 2013; Ohtsuka & Ohtsuka, 2010).

Furthermore, there are many different CALD groups present within Western countries, and gathering meaningful research about each one is unfeasible without significant funding. This has resulted in an uneven examination of different cultural groups, such that we have pockets of information about gambling within particular CALD groups but no knowledge of the gambling patterns in others. The CALD cultural groups that are by far the most researched are the Chinese and various Indigenous cultures (e.g., Maori in New Zealand, Native Americans in the US, First Nations in Canada and the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia; Oei & Raylu, 2007).

The research critiqued in this discussion paper reflects this limited and uneven research base. It should also be noted that even within the groups that have been the focus of more extensive research, findings are still limited, lack replication and, at times, are inconsistent in their findings (Raylu & Oei, 2004). In addition, much of the research was conducted a number of years ago, and must be interpreted with caution in the current environment.

The meaning of gambling across cultures

Gambling varies in meaning across different communities and cultures (Abbott & Volberg, 1999; Feldman et al., 2014; McMillen, Marshall, Murphy, Lorenzen, & Waugh, 2004; Productivity Commission, 1999; Quynh-Du, Doughney, & Vu, 2009; Tan-Quigley, McMillen, & Woolley, 1998; Tepperman & Korn, 2002). When a culture is exposed to gambling, a collective attitude develops towards it over time. Attitudes are affected by many things including traditions, social practices, customs and laws (Shweder, 1991). Once developed, attitudes are passed down through generations via cultural practices and customs (Chui & O'Connor, 2006; Tse, et al., 2012; Wong & Tse, 2003; Wu Yi, Walker, & Blaszczynski, 2008). Therefore, while many gambling activities may appear to be similar, they will have various meanings across different cultural settings (Abbott & Volberg, 1999). As a consequence, definitions of socially acceptable gambling behaviour are culturally specific and often highly ingrained (Tan-Quigley et al., 1998).

See Box 1 for a summary of the research examining the attitudes of different cultures towards gambling. Note that this box compares the attitudes of different cultures to activities that fall within the Western definition of gambling, and that each culture may label these activities differently (e.g. as "gaming" rather than "gambling").

One recent study, which examined the attitudes, beliefs and experiences of Chinese- and Tamil-speaking individuals in Victoria, Australia, provides a good example of the subtle differences that can be found between cultures. The study found that both communities viewed gambling as "gaming" that had become problematic (Feldman et al., 2014). In part, this stemmed from the very negative connotations that the word gambling had in both Tamil and Chinese languages. Where

Box 1. Differential attitudes to gambling activities across culture

Not accepted

- Russian—"reprehensible pastime"
- Tamil—not part of the culture, a sin

Somewhat accepted

- Arabic—a source of entertainment and refuge but also of shame, a source of quick money
- Caribbean—not universally accepted but seen as part of one's status, considered manly
- Italian—an individual pastime (apart from cards, which is seen as a social activity) and not generally shared with the family
- Latin American—not universally accepted but seen as part of one's status, considered manly
- Macedonian—an enjoyable activity, which sometimes results in feelings of shame

Accepted

- Aboriginal (Australia)—a source of pleasure and fun, a way to make money
- Chinese—positive, part of the culture, a way to "test one's luck", and a source of quick money
- Croatian—traditional pastime, a source of personal entertainment
- Greek—traditional pastime, an enjoyable form of social contact and entertainment shared with family and friends, a source of quick money
- Hispanic—a pleasurable hobby or social activity, part of one's status, considered manly
- Korean—a way to escape, a pleasurable and social activity
- Maori—not historically part of the culture but a common pastime currently
- Pacific/Samoan—an enjoyable, sociable activity
- Vietnamese—an enjoyable activity, a source of quick money, a game of luck and skill

Source: Abbott, 2001; Abbott & Volberg, 1999; Abbott & Volberg, 2000; Blaszczynski, Huynh, Dumlao, & Farrell, 1998; Chui & O'Connor, 2006; Connor, 1973; Feldman et al., 2014; Hing, Breen, Gordon, & Russell, In Press; Loo, Raylu, & Oei, 2008; Tan-Quigley, et al., 1998; The Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW [ECCNSW], 1999; Tse et al., 2012; Tse et al., 2010; VCGA, 2000; Wilson, 1969

the study found that the cultural views diverged was that Tamils viewed both gaming and gambling as being a sin and not part of the culture. The Chinese, however, integrated gaming into many of their cultural celebrations and saw this as a fun and enjoyable pastime, and a way to "test one's luck". Gambling, on the other hand, was when gaming became uncontrolled and problematic, leading to shame and stigma for the individual and their family (Feldman et al., 2014). This type of culturally relevant distinction has important ramifications for research participation. If, for example, researchers recruit using the Western term gambling, rather than gaming, they will likely lose people from these groups who feel that they participate infrequently or non-problematically.

Gambling participation

While gambling prevalence studies have been conducted in many countries and jurisdictions over a number of years, very little attention has been given in these studies to gambling participation within CALD communities. The few studies that have attempted to measure this have generally found that gambling is a fairly common activity, enjoyed by a range of different CALD communities, and that many members of CALD communities participate in gambling at one point or another (Scull & Woolcock, 2005).

Some forms of gambling are highly entwined with culture—mahjong, for example, is closely associated with Chinese social customs—and play on these forms of gambling is accepted and, in some cases, actively encouraged (Ohtsuka & Chan, 2010; Wu Yi et al., 2008). It is important to note, however, that the Chinese do not view activities such as mahjong as gambling, despite the game involving staking something of value on the outcome. Rather they view it as a game, and games are culturally appropriate and provide benefits to the players (e.g. as a way of keeping the mind active). Card games are similarly viewed as an important, traditional, social activity for some other groups including Indigenous peoples in Australia and Greek communities (Hing & Breen, 2014; ECC NSW, 1999).

A Victorian study by the Victorian Casino and Gaming Authority (VCGA) examined the gambling behaviour of Arabic, Chinese, Greek and Vietnamese communities within Victoria, compared to a sample of the general population. They found that—apart from the Vietnamese community—these CALD groups gambled less frequently than the general Australian population (VCGA, 2000). While this finding is supported by other research examining CALD groups within Australia (Blaszczynski et al., 1998; Moore & Ohtsuka, 2001), it should be interpreted with caution as at the time of writing these studies were at least 15 years old and used small samples. Therefore, these findings cannot be said to provide a current or representative picture of these cultural groups in today's society. To update and improve our understanding of gambling within CALD groups, further studies are needed to ascertain whether this finding still holds true today.

A small number of prevalence studies conducted in Western nations—generally completed before 2001—have included a focus on the Indigenous community of the area (e.g. Maori in New Zealand; the First Nations in Canada; Native Americans in the US; Aboriginal peoples in Australia). In contrast to the findings of the VCGA, these studies have generally found heightened gambling participation rates compared to the overall populations (Abbott, 2001; Abbott & Volberg, 1999; Abbott & Volberg, 2000; Elia & Jacobs, 1993; Hing, Breen, Gordon, & Russell, 2014; McGowan, Droessler, Nixon, & Grimshaw, 2000; The First Nations Information Governance Centre, 2012; Wardman, el-Guebaly, & Hodgins, 2001).[3]

Gambling problems and CALD communities

A growing body of research conducted both in Australia and other English-speaking countries suggests that while those from CALD communities are less likely to take part in gambling activities overall, *those who do gamble* are at significantly greater risk of developing problems with their gambling compared to the general population (Clarke, Tse, Abbott, Townsend, Kingi, & Manaia, 2007; Moore & Ohtsuka, 2001; Raylu & Oei, 2004; Thomas et al., 2011; VCGA, 2000; Wu Yi et al., 2008) .

The report released by the VCGA, for example, indicated that while people from Arabic, Chinese and Greek communities gambled less than the general population, those who did gamble were up to seven times more likely than Australian gamblers to develop severe problems with gambling (VCGA, 2000). It has also been estimated that in the Australian Chinese community, problem gambling rates are between two and eight times higher than in the general population (Blaszczynski, et al., 1998; VCGA, 2000). Similarly, an Australian study found that international students were at greater risk of experiencing problems with their gambling compared to a group of domestic students, despite gambling less frequently (Thomas et al., 2011). Interestingly, a detailed examination of international students found that it was the English-speaking males who were most at risk, followed by male students from China and other Asian countries. In contrast to this, Stevens and Glebiowska's (2013) analysis of general population surveys did not find being a CALD community member was a risk factor for problem gambling.

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3   For more information on Australian Indigenous gambling see our Indigenous Gambling Discussion Paper.

It is possible, however, that these figures still under-estimate the extent of problems within CALD groups. As discussed earlier, stigma may result in a reluctance to participate in research into problem gambling. A study from 1998 found that up to one fifth of Asian respondents described a family member as having a problem with gambling (Blaszczynski, et al., 1998).

The research presented here, therefore, suggests that individuals from CALD groups may be at higher risk of gambling problems than their mainstream-culture counterparts. The extent to which this applies and why this might be the case is still unclear. The prevalence rates of problem gambling in different CALD groups remain relatively unknown as little research has been completed, the majority of the research occurred some time ago, it was not applied evenly to different groups or regions, and none of the studies completed to date contained representative samples.

CALD-specific gambling issues

A range of factors that affect CALD participation and engagement in gambling has been discussed in the literature. Some factors are thought to apply to multiple CALD groups, others are more culturally specific.

Beliefs about luck and chance

All societies have views and beliefs about luck, chance and good fortune. Within the context of gambling, these views are important as they affect how individuals from that culture will approach games that are based largely on chance (Oei, Lin, & Raylu, 2008; Ohtsuka & Ohtsuka, 2010; Papineau, 2005; Thomas et al., 2011). While some beliefs regarding luck and chance in gambling are unique to a particular culture, there is evidence to suggest there are also some beliefs that are common across cultures (Feldman, et al., 2014;Ohtsuka & Ohtsuka, 2010). For example, almost all cultures consider winning to be proof that one is lucky (Ohtsuka & Ohtsuka, 2010).

Some beliefs about luck and chance are strongly influenced by the religion or spiritual beliefs of the culture in question (e.g. praying to the Chinese god of wealth *Cáishén*) (Ohtsuka, 2013; Ohtsuka & Ohtsuka, 2010; Tan-Quigley et al., 1998; Thomas, et al. 2011). In some cultures, such as Vietnamese and Chinese, luck is inextricably linked with one's character. Therefore, a display of good luck through gambling wins provides evidence to others of an individual's good character (Ohtsuka & Ohtsuka, 2010). See Box 2 for some examples of belief-based behaviours that individuals from CALD groups use to influence their luck while gambling.

Beliefs about luck and chance can lead to erroneous or irrational beliefs about gambling outcomes. For example, distorted beliefs can lead to disproportionate feelings of control over a gambling outcome (Ohtsuka & Chan, 2010), and this can affect how people gamble. These distorted beliefs about luck and chance are known risk factors for the development of gambling problems (Clarke et al., 2007; Ladouceur, Jacques, Ferland, & Giroux, 1998; Ohtsuka & Chan, 2010; Thomas et al., 2011). An individual, for example, may think that gambling on lucky numbers, colours or days gives them a better chance of winning or that using particular rituals provides them with an edge, leading to larger and more risky betting.

Within the Australian context, people from Chinese cultural backgrounds have been shown to have stronger beliefs in their ability to control the outcome of their gambling, compared to a Caucasian group (Oei et al., 2008). This finding coheres with another Australian study examining gambling in international and domestic students, which found that international students as a group had a stronger tendency to report distorted beliefs about gambling than their domestic counterparts (Thomas et al., 2011).

Box 2. Strategies for lucky gambling

- Choosing a lucky table/machine/dealer/player
- Switching to a different table/machine if money is not won
- Taking a break to eat, drink or use the bathroom to allow luck to change
- Washing away bad luck
- Using lucky numbers
- Bringing along, or gambling with, lucky friends/acquaintances
- Being generous or wishing others good luck
- Being surrounded by lucky gamblers
- Praying
- Following signs from celestial calendar or oracle

Source: Feldman et al., 2014; Ohtsuka, 2013; Ohtsuka & Ohtsuka, 2010

Migrants as a risk group

Specific factors are argued to increase the chance that migrants might gamble, placing them at additional risk of developing problems: welcoming gambling environments, increased exposure and access, and migration stressors.

Welcoming environments

For many new arrivals to Westernised countries such as Australia a lack of culturally appropriate activities for entertainment (particularly during the evening) may result in visits to gambling venues (Chui & O'Connor, 2006; Feldman et al., 2014; Ohtsuka, 2013; Tan-Quigley et al., 1998). Casinos, for example, pay specific attention to providing a venue that is perceived as safe, attractive and culturally sensitive for individuals from CALD communities. Many casinos offer culturally specific food, drink and entertainment (including gambling games) that are inexpensive and designed to make people from a wide variety of minority cultures feel welcome. Decor is designed in such a way as to be appealing and glamorous, and casinos are open very long hours, mimicking the busy nightlife exhibited in many cities overseas. In addition, there is a clear security presence and many people around, allowing patrons to feel safe and secure within the casino environment. It is thought these casinos may be particularly attractive to those who have recently arrived from a country with a distinctly different culture or those who have not integrated well into the majority culture (Chui & O'Connor, 2006; Clarke et al., 2007; Feldman et al., 2014; Tan-Quigley et al., 1998; Thomas et al., 2011; Tse et al., 2012; VCGA, 2000).

Increased exposure and access

There is relatively high accessibility to a wide variety of gambling activities within Australia compared to many other countries, in particular Asian and Muslim majority countries (Thomas et al., 2011). Meaning that there are more commercial opportunities to gamble in Australia relative to many other countries. Cross-sectional studies have found that high accessibility to gambling is positively related to uptake and frequency of gambling as well as gambling problems (Cox, Yu, Afifi, & Ladouceur, 2005; Moore, Thomas, Kyrios, Bates, & Meredyth, 2011; Storer, Abbott, & Stubbs, 2009; Thomas, Allen, & Phillips, 2009). It has been argued that sudden increased exposure to gambling through migration may result in a rapid increase in gambling engagement (Feldman, et al., 2014; Scull & Woolcock, 2005; Wong & Tse, 2003). As discussed above, a lack of culturally appropriate alternatives may combine with general curiosity and availability to drive engagement. Those migrating from countries with limited gambling opportunities may also lack important knowledge about the risks

associated with particular gambling activities, potentially increasing their vulnerability to gambling problems (Thomas et al., 2011).

Migration stressors

There is now a strong body of evidence showing clear associations between the experience of stressors and gambling problems; in particular, in relation to the more continuous forms of gambling such as electronic gaming machines or "pokies" (Bergevin, Gupta, Derevensky, & Kaufman, 2006; Thomas & Moore, 2003; Turner, Zangeneh, & Littman-Sharp, 2006). Research has shown that people who experience gambling problems report gambling as a temporary cognitive and physical escape from stressors.

This relationship has been used as the basis for arguments that the experience of migration and its related stress may also lead to gambling problems in those who gamble (Ohtsuka, 2013; Thomas et al., 2011; Wu Yi et al., 2008). Stressors that are characteristic of the migration process and which may put gamblers at risk of developing a problem include the loss of support networks (e.g. family and friends), the strain of communicating in a foreign language, boredom and changes to lifestyle (Feldman et al., 2014; Scull & Woolcock, 2005; Tan-Quigley et al., 1998; Thomas et al., 2011; Wong & Tse, 2003). In addition to the stress and anxiety of the migration process, the reasons for migration (e.g. seeking refuge from war, work) may also increase an individual's vulnerability to developing a problem with gambling (Feldman et al., 2014; Thomas et al., 2011).

Young adults coming to Australia as international students is a further group of particular concern and has been a focus of a number of research studies. These studies identified stressors in relation to academic success, finances and the absence of family and social supports on top of the stressors common to all migrants. In addition to this, young students are often experiencing their first taste of independence and are curious about gambling (something that is often inaccessible in their home country). This, together with the range of stressors outlined above, makes international students particularly vulnerable to engaging in risky gambling behaviour and developing gambling problems (Feldman et al., 2014; Moore et al., 2013; Thomas et al., 2011; Thomas & Thomas, 2002; Wu Yi et al., 2008).

Stigma and shame

As discussed earlier, there is a large amount of variation in the cultural acceptance of gambling and gambling problems. For many societies and cultures, a significant amount of shame and stigma is attached to gambling. For some communities, any participation in gambling is cause for shame and secrecy (Feldman et al., 2014; Productivity Commission, 1999). This may work as either a risk or protective factor for individuals from these CALD communities. The stigma around gambling can protect individuals by preventing them from engaging in any form of gambling. For those who choose to gamble, however, stigma and shame may increase vulnerability as the extent of the gambling is often hidden from family and friends, along with any subsequent issues that may arise. This means that significant others are unable to provide assistance to the gambler until considerable harm is done. In other CALD communities, recreational gambling (or gaming) is acceptable but excessive or problematic gambling will result in shame and stigma (Feldman et al., 2014; McMillen et al., 2004; Productivity Commission, 1999).

The ramifications for engaging in unacceptable behaviour in particular cultures can be severe. For collectivistic cultures where the group is prioritised over the individual, the consequences of excessive gambling can be widespread, with shame or stigma stemming from individual behaviour reflected on the entire family or family network (Scull & Woolcock, 2005; Tan-Quigley et al., 1998). Familial and social ties are at the centre of these societies and unacceptable behaviour affects not only the individual but the entire family's prospects in business, marriage and social standing (Tan-Quigley et al., 1998).

Help seeking in CALD communities

Shame and stigma are known to be significant hurdles to seeking and acquiring help for gambling problems in the general population (Carroll, Rodgers, Davidson & Sims, 2013; Horch & Hodgins, 2008). The differences in how varying cultures view gaming and gambling also have ramifications for when and how individuals seek help (Loo et al., 2008; Oei et al., 2008; Tan-Quigley et al., 1998; Tepperman & Korn, 2002).

The generalised stigma that can follow gambling can lead gamblers to attempt to solve their problem themselves or within the family unit rather than to seek help from their community or professional services (Feldman et al., 2014; Loo et al., 2008; Thomas et al., 2011; Wu Yi et al., 2008). This can place a considerable burden upon the family as they try to manage the financial and emotional fall out from gambling problems.

Cultural mores also influence help seeking decision-making. The concept of counselling and therapy as available within Australia is a distinctly Western concept, and one that is often foreign to individuals from some CALD groups. The initial preference for some groups is to deal with the problem within the family. If the problem is severe, advice and support may be sought from cultural elders. Again, however, if the shame of gambling is severe, this important source of support may not be available (McMillen et al., 2004; Tan-Quigley et al., 1998). Outside, professional help may only be sought if (a) people are aware of, and understand, the services on offer, and (b) problems are beyond the scope of the family or community to fix (Feldman et al., 2014; Loo et al., 2008; Wu Yi et al., 2008). This is evidenced by the fact that it is often the family members of those who are having problems who initiate contact with formal help services (Feldman et al., 2014; Tan-Quigley et al., 1998).

Where professional support is sought, CALD clients may have particular cultural needs. Some individuals and groups feel that being able to communicate in their own language with someone who understands their cultural background is desirable. Other individuals and groups prefer to go outside the community, often to ensure that others in their community do not find out about their problems, thus avoiding bringing shame on their family (Feldman et al., 2014; Loo et al., 2008; Raylu & Oei, 2004; Wu Yi et al., 2008). Further, people from collectivistic cultures have highlighted the need for family involvement in the counselling process (Feldman et al., 2014). While some mainstream services acknowledge this and invite the family to attend as a group, this approach is not standard practice in Western-based services, which prioritise client privacy. This lack of understanding may therefore function as a further barrier for individuals from CALD communities to accessing formal help (Feldman et al., 2014; Thomas et al., 2011).

Conclusion

Australia is a diverse society with a rich history of migration and a strong gambling culture. Meanings of gambling vary across culture, affecting its acceptability and availability. The research base relating to gambling in CALD communities is limited, and the number of different groups and additional costs involved in such research presents an ongoing challenge to research within these groups. Individuals from CALD communities in Australia are less likely to participate in gambling activities than the general population, but are more likely to develop problems with their gambling if they do participate. New migrants may be particularly at-risk of problem gambling due to personal experiences and a lack of experience and knowledge about gambling. Different cultures also vary in their beliefs about luck and chance, which may affect how chance-based gambling activities are approached. Depending on attitudes towards gambling, CALD groups may have high levels of stigma and shame associated with gambling and/or gambling problems. This stigma may affect the reputation of the family within the community and how individuals seek help, leading to families attempting to manage problematic gambling without external and/or professional help.

Implications

- Research into varying CALD communities is still very limited and much of the existing research is now out of date.
- Targeted research for groups identified as at risk due to high participation or harms related to gambling should be prioritised.
- Both mainstream and culturally specific gambling help services are needed to support CALD gamblers and their families. Mainstream services should ensure that they are culturally responsive to successfully engage with individuals from CALD communities.
- Providing culturally appropriate information about gambling to individuals arriving in Australia is critical to ensure that they understand the risks of gambling, including how this may vary for different forms of gambling.

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