

Alcohol and other drug moderators of the relationship between negative emotional states, emotional impulsivity, and problematic gambling



Research Team:

Dr Nicholas Kerswell (presenting)

Holly Stokes

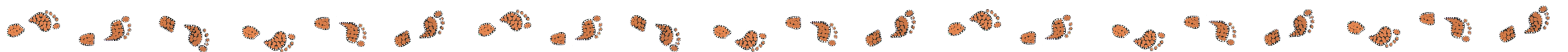
Richie Wilson

Georgia Dellosa

Shevy-Jean Zerner

Disclosure of Interests:

The authors declare no competing interests



Acknowledgement of Country

Lives Lived Well recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original inhabitants of the land now known as Australia and their continuing connection to land, air and sea. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands across which we work and live, and pay our respects to elders, past and present.

Lives Lived Well is proud to work in partnership with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We are committed to reconciliation through our day-to-day work and our Reconciliation Action Plan.



Recognition of lived experience

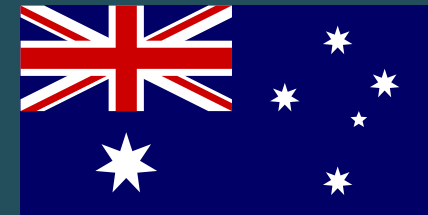
We recognise the contribution of people with a lived and living experience of mental health difficulties, problematic alcohol and other drug use, and suicidality to our work. We value the voice of lived experience, including families, carers and support people.

Recognition of service

We respect and give thanks to all who have served and are currently serving in our defence force and their families. We acknowledge the unique nature of military service and the sacrifice demanded of all who commit to defend our nation.

Commitment to diversity and inclusion

Lives Lived Well celebrates diversity and is committed to providing inclusive services and workplaces. Everyone has the right to live well, with dignity and respect. We offer support to all people without judgment or discrimination.





Background

- People experiencing gambling related harms often report co-occurring challenges with depression, anxiety, and substance use.
- **Impulsivity**, particularly driven by emotional states, is an underlying factor
- Hypothesised that the relationship between impulsivity and problem gambling is positively moderated by substance use



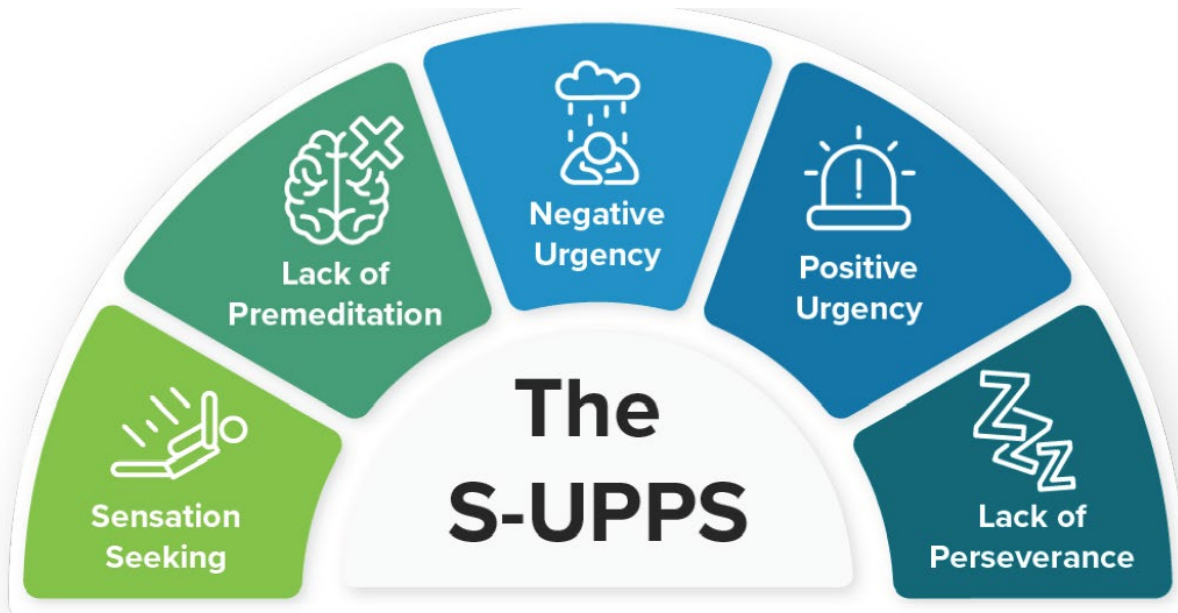


Method

- LLW clients complete a comprehensive outcome measures (OM) suite
- We analysed baseline OMs from over 5,600 unique clients accessing treatment.
 - **PHQ-9**
 - **GAD-7**
 - **WHO-ASSIST**
 - **S-UPPS**
 - **PGSI**
- Analysed results using SPSS26 with hierarchical regression and PROCESS Model 14 (moderated mediation)



Short Impulsive Behaviour Scale



- **Negative Urgency:** The tendency to act impulsively when experiencing negative emotions, often leading to risky behaviours to reduce distress.
- **Positive Urgency:** The tendency to act impulsively when feeling overly excited or positive, which can also lead to risky behaviours.
- **Lack of Perseverance:** Difficulty maintaining focus and completing tasks, especially when faced with challenging or tedious activities (procrastination).
- **Lack of Premeditation:** A tendency to act rashly without thinking about the consequences.
- **Sensation Seeking:** The desire for novel and thrilling experiences, often associated with risk-taking.



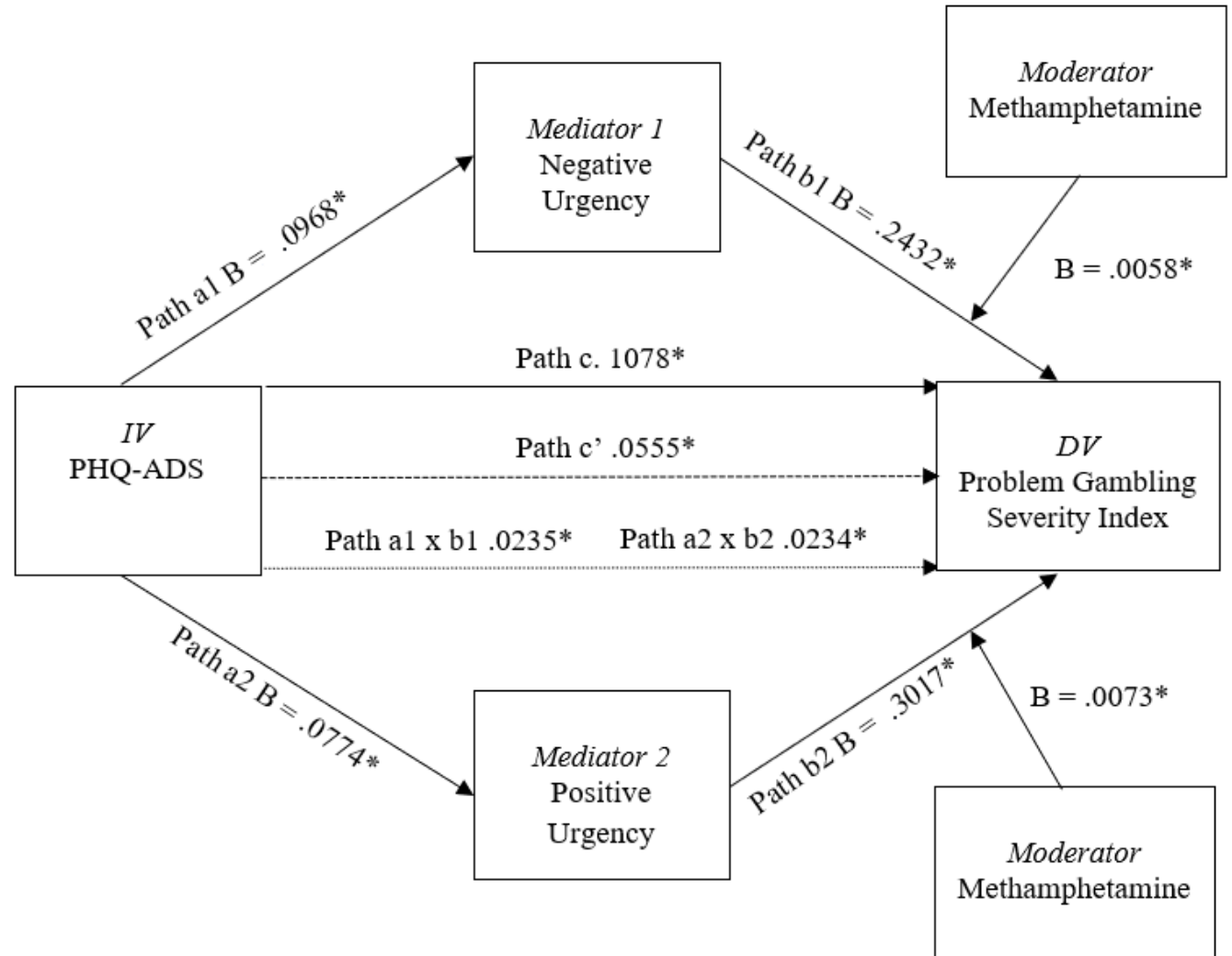
Results

- **Depression** and **anxiety** were significant predictors of problem gambling
- PGSI Categories (n = 5604)
 - Non-Gambler: 2467 (44%)
 - Low Risk: 569 (10.1%)
 - Moderate Risk: 977 (17.45%)
 - Problem Gambler: 1591 (28.45%)
- Following hierarchical regression, **methamphetamine** was the only substance (WHO-ASSIST) significantly associated with problem gambling (PGSI)
 - Only **negative urgency** and **positive urgency** were retained from the S-UPPS



Moderated Mediation Model

- Hierarchical regression and Model 14 of the PROCESS Macro (version 4.2) by Andrew Hayes
- Combined PHQ-9 and GAD-7 to form PHQ-ADS ($r = .81^*$)
- Negative urgency and positive urgency retained as mediators following hierarchical regression
- Methamphetamine retained as moderator following hierarchical regression
- Methamphetamine associated with increased problem gambling severity
- Stronger for positive urgency than negative urgency



Conclusions

- Harms associated with problem gambling may be greater where there are co-occurring harms associated with use of methamphetamine.
- Workers supporting individuals impacted by problem gambling should be alert to the potential contribution of methamphetamine use.
- Emotionally driven impulsivity (negative and positive) appears as a common factor.
- Integrated treatment approaches that address emotional impulsivity and substance-specific risks, particularly methamphetamine, could reduce gambling-related harms.





Lives **Lived** Well

For enquiries please contact us:

1300 727 957

info@llw.org.au

www.liveslivedwell.org.au

