

Family Resilience in Combating Online Gambling Issues in the Digital Era

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Abstract

This study examines the strategic role of family resilience as a fundamental element of national resilience in the face of modernization. The family, as the smallest unit and foundation of national resilience, faces new threats in the digital era where homes are no longer fully safe due to device infiltration. Online gambling has emerged as the largest digital social pathology, damaging the family's economic, protective, and socialization functions. Modernization is impacting many areas from shifts in economic and social dynamics to changes in cultural beliefs, hence families are increasingly finding it difficult to maintain their integrity and roles. The research demonstrated how healthy family structures could potentially foster stability by fostering character, morality, productivity, and civic consciousness among individuals and possibly affect a nation. Via using a qualitative-descriptive method, the paper underlines how family resilience acts as a buffer against the negative consequences of modern depravity including moral degradation and identity crises. As such, building a resilient nation in the present depends on improving family resilience by means of valued education, religious and cultural reinforcement, as well as supportive government policies.

INTRODUCTION

While the appearance of the digital era may seem to be abrupt, the flow of day-to-day lives have been altered significantly as technology and many life improvements become integrated into modern society. It is however not present without its downsides, as digital economy, marketing, banking, etc, become part of human lives, be it from work to standard living commodities, the issue falls in the category of misuse and digital literacy (Donald, 2014). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the gradual rise of online gambling has made its way to society, this is in fact related to people being kept in their homes and unable to perform their daily routine before the pandemic. As internet access became more prevalent, its accessibility in the pandemic brought both benefits and flaws, though the flaws in place has made its way even after the pandemic and has become a crisis in family resilience and/or individual resilience (Brodeur et al., 2021). The threat landscape has been fundamentally altered by the digital age. The invasion of gadgets and the always-on nature of connectivity means homes are not wholly safe anymore. Online gambling is the most pronounced digital social pathology of today. There are a lot of data showing a rapid growth of accessibility and addiction rates, especially after the

pandemic. This weakens functions of the family in economic stability, protection and socialization (Momen et al. 2025; Roman et al. 2025; Şengönül 2021).

The most prominent issue of misuse in the digital era is human's complete and utter reliance along with gross complacent, resulting in habits that were not present before to emit in someone's later years. A person's neglect of password security or reading, for instance, may lead to issues to not only their private lives, but also extend into others. The fact that you may share your private information, be it willingly or by any chance unwilling, would then cause problems stemming from pure negligence in the hopes of accessibility (Tunca, 2024). It should be remembered that problems are more commonly attributed to human error, though security measures are built to prevent such occurrences, the alteration in someone's routine has made them rather careless. This applies to all age groups as well (Ewing, 2014).

Despite these studies, there remains a significant research gap in comprehensively examining how family resilience can serve as a strategic defence mechanism against online gambling threats within the Indonesian context. While existing research has focused on the consequences of online gambling and general family resilience, there is limited integration of specific strategies to enhance family resilience as a countermeasure to the unique challenges posed by the digital era. Furthermore, the role of family as both the first line of defence and the primary victim of online gambling addiction requires deeper investigation through an interdisciplinary approach combining psychological, sociological, and legal perspectives. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the intricacies of family resilience alongside the overgrowth of online gambling, encompassing the wide array of dangers posed by online gambling and the potential strategies for strengthening family resilience in the face of these digital threats.

This research offers novelty by integrating Walsh's Family Resilience Framework with contemporary issues of digital gambling addiction, providing a comprehensive analysis that bridges psychological theory with practical family-based interventions. The study aims to analyze the impact of online gambling on family resilience, identify key protective factors, and propose strategic interventions to strengthen family resilience against digital threats. The benefits of this research include contributing to the development of evidence-based policies for family protection, providing practical guidelines for families and communities in combating online gambling, and serving as a reference for government programs aimed at enhancing family resilience as part of national defence strategy. The research utilizes a qualitative-descriptive method with a literature review approach, examining various academic articles, government reports, legal documents, and case studies to develop comprehensive insights. The findings are expected to inform practical recommendations for strengthening family resilience as a buffer against the negative consequences of online gambling, contributing to both family well-being and national resilience in the digital era.

This paper is written to explore the intricacies of family resilience alongside the overgrowth of online gambling. This paper also attempts to encompass the wide array of dangers posed by online gambling and the possible reduction of family resilience in the face of online gambling.

METHOD

This paper used various articles, books, journals, and documents procured through the Google search engine and Google Scholar. The paper is written with qualitative descriptive data in mind while also slightly implementing numerical data to provide context and factual data. It should be noted however, that the data retrieved is varied due to the amount of discussion needed to provide clear yet concise ideas of online gambling and its gripping addiction. Therefore, any data collected through the aforementioned methods are strictly for academical and education purposes

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Online Gambling and Its Impact on Families

The Prominent Issue

Technology in the 21st century has become so intertwined with human lives that most of our day to day routines are closely related with technology, as smartphones, laptop, tablets, wi-fi, and the Internet in general has been introduced to the population as a quick and effective tool to aid human functions. Though the thought of having a vast library just a flick away in your pocket seems comforting, the misuse of the technological application would be the very core of the issue. Accessibility means usefulness, useful tools are then improved or upgraded for the purpose of creating a far more technical appliance in serving humans, be it in medicine, engineering, or smart technology, the probability of all ranges and sectors choosing to be more accessible is part of human doctrine (Greco, 2018).

Accessibility for the Internet was a trend in the early 2000's, the temptation of knowledge, digital connections, entertainment has brought the human urge to its maximum, accessibility to the point of concern is the birth of Internet (Joshi et al., 2022). Though it barely changed in 2025, the overuse of the Internet has reared its ugly head in some form or another. Online gambling has all the right criteria of hooks to tempt individual's unknown to the system. The system of online gambling stems from the yearning of quick monetary gain along with the addicting system of push and pull. It dictates how it would win, however, to the unassuming, a chance to strike it big and earn a generational fortune. Relating back to accessibility, online gambling has a striking offer of accessibility, anyone of any age or background may play, it would seem as they play against the house on their own terms and volition, however, the system itself is built to cheat and manipulate you to play repeatedly (St-Pierre et al., 2014).

Psychologically, a system of continued reward along with losses would stimulate the human brain to release hormones that projects happiness, hormones such as dopamine, serotonin, oxytocin, or endorphin are released when someone associates themselves winning whilst gambling. Pure association of controlled happiness hooks people to want to play more, aside from the economic standpoint, which will be discussed later on, the highs of winning could also be related to the rush of adrenaline released when playing (Tomska, 2025). In turn, the pure mention of online gambling would induce a sort of pleasure one could not easily escape, as they may recall memories of winning and grandiose moments of them spending the gambling money as enjoyment, thus proving the point of memory correlation being the systematic tactics of online gambling to trap someone (Gainsbury, 2015). From the previous mentions of this issue it indicates online gambling as a major social pathology with widespread

accessibility via smartphones and the internet, leading to addiction which thoroughly disrupts family economic productivity, social harmony, and societal familial values.

Bunga Tanjung Village Case Study

In the northern region of Sumatra, Indonesia, in March 2023, Indonesian law enforcement conducted a raid in Bunga Tanjung Village, Marindal II, Patumbak District, which uncovered an illegal gambling operation through a machine known as “fish shooting”, a common device utilized in online gambling. The raid itself is part of operation Pekat Toba 2023

which resulted in the seizure of two machines which were heavily used for betting games linked to a remote server (Arifina et al., 2024). The activities from the perpetrators have violated Indonesia’s Criminal Code Article 303 and 303 bis, along with the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE), a regulation which prohibits electronic content related to gambling or any associated with it (Hukumonline, 2024; UU ITE, 2016).

A study performed by Arfina et al. (2024) has reported that gambling has led to internal issues within family, alongside problems arising externally, be it relating to work or local economy. As the impact of online gambling within local communities, families, and the general environment has been disrupted significantly, financial losses were counted among the damages which exceed IDR 2 million per day in extreme cases, that also led to domestic conflict. Due to the accessibility of gambling machines placed in public stalls (*warung*), they facilitate ease of access towards the addictive behaviour inhibited by the local community correlated by online gambling. In some cases, these behaviours conjured actions such as theft and unproductivity in the region, the issue itself is known to also affect the children in the area.

Thus, it is suggested that authorities should strengthen digital patrols and enforce stricter legal measures as a response to the danger. Community-based solutions such as, literacy campaigns, family counselling programs, and administrative sanctions on unlicensed venues are heavily recommended to combat online gambling issues. Moreover, a tighter regulation of digital gaming centres and collaborations with the local government, NGOs, and law enforcement is to be emphasized as to establish long-term prevention and social rehabilitation to those affected (Paramarta, 2022; Arifina et al., 2024).

The Role of Family Resilience in Combating Online Gambling

The study utilizes Froma Walsh’s Family Resilience Framework (2016). Family resilience, according to Walsh, is not a static condition but rather an active process of recovery from crisis which would often describe a form of coping mechanism. Walsh breaks down resilience into three key areas to look at such things as online gambling, where families would often bear the brunt of one member's behaviour:

- a. **Belief Systems:** How does the family interpret the crisis caused by online gambling? Do they blame each other, or see it as a shared challenge that must be overcome together (making meaning from adversity)?
- b. **Organizational Patterns:** Online gambling drains finances. How does the family adapt economically? Is there flexibility in roles (e.g., the wife forced to work because the husband is addicted to gambling), and how do they access external social/community support?
- c. **Communication Processes:** Online gambling addiction is filled with lies (money manipulation). Walsh emphasizes how families rebuild open communication, honesty, and collaborative problem-solving.

Resiliency is deeply related to a particular part of an entity to withstand shocks or trauma and how said entity may jump back either to its status of origin or perhaps to a lower degree. The proper study of observing shocks is closely connected with defence, since resilience could be interpreted as the very flesh and blood of the organization, defence per se, would be the armour or armaments suitable before contact to resilience. In this paper, family resilience acts as the micro-level status of the family, while a stable economy, proper health and safety, and structural housing are the foundation of its defence, a family's resilience is the family's ability to recuperate from sudden shocks, how they cope, how and when they would rebound from otherwise unpleasant events (Meadows et al., 2016). However, it should be noted that in some cases, even though the defence mechanism of the family should be more than enough, families sometimes lack the proper resiliency to face certain issues. For instance, a family who is not only wealthy, but also has all the amenities an ordinary family has and still more, would sometimes lack family connections with one another, a distanced relation, improper family hierarchy, lack of affection in the household, etc, may tend to cause problems internally, thus cracking the issue from within (Duck & Wood, 1995). Thus, cases of family abuse or intolerant children towards parents may affect the resiliency of family, the accumulated stress is akin to a tension bridge, the tougher the pressure the more likely it is to bend and break. Some children's adolescent years may be filled with terror, discomfort, or mistrust with their siblings, parental figures, or other relatives, which may show not only in their adulthood, but sometimes even while they are before pre-teens. The issue itself does not only stem from economic issues, livelihoods, or education, it may show from the internal domestic aspect, lack of proper affection and trust prove to destroy the likelihood of balance in family, hence may result in future issues like drugs or substance abuse, gambling, commitment issues, sloth like tendencies, and educational problems (Green, 2008).

It should be noted that, relations are not only built off of trust and affection alone, the principle that transactional value within a relationship is also quite real, as in many forms transactional relationships should not be undervalued or to be precise, be seen as fake bonds between one another. Transactions are a part of life itself, breathing constitutes oxygen which releases carbon dioxide, walking is an exchange of human energy from the body being expelled with the goal of a person reaching a destination, it should be considered normal that humans love one another is also transactional. We provide companionship and deep affection, per se a family member, while another provides the same value or otherwise alternatives, alternatives being capital gain or other benefits (Sameroff, 2009). Aside from the idea of transactions, protective factors to maintain family resilience such as emotional support, communication, and adaptability, would serve a family's relationship and thus their resilience greatly. The overarching factor of transaction should not be seen as a lesser type of relationship, as we all perform transactions by simply just existing, as mentioned before. Thus, familial love and protection of one another is emphasized in battling any circumstance, sudden unprecedented events may ruin a family if they are not readily prepared. In the COVID-19 pandemic, families were huddled with one another to hold out in the storm, the issue created an economic divide which could destroy a family, however, if one is prepared not only in their defensive capabilities, but also their internal family resilience to any forms of danger, the families sometime retain their value or only demerit themselves by a small margin (Cassinat, 2021).

The preteens stated beforehand is needed to provide ample descriptive and accurate point of view of families against online gambling, an epidemic that causes strain in family and mutual distrust. The cold and unfeeling machine people face are commonly associated as a one-way ticket out of poverty or sometimes family troubles. Thus, by resolving family issues, one part of the problem in combating online gambling could be reduced, even if sometimes only by a margin. A loving and caring family would be less likely to have issues with gambling, though it may not be sure-proof, the absence of one would likely result in a larger chance, it is not about combating it, it is to ensure proper retaliation and prevention (Subramaniam, 2017).

A family is meant to be a sanctuary, by diminishing said value, the familial bonds which were meant to keep unnecessary acts such as gambling, are not kept at bay, rather it may become someone's past time or alternative to vent out. If a proper way to fight it is to have a family, then love would not be necessary, it should not only be about blood, it should be relations which stave away the dark underbellies of the world, to keep a child safe from physical or mental harm proposed by online gambling (George, 2015). The absence of a father could be a determining factor of a child's ability to view harmful activities, for instance, as such, mothers and fathers would emphasize child growth. While in other cases, fathers or mothers, saw their child as obstacles or a nuisance, thus relieving the fact that they are useless factors and would rather choose a quick and less intrusive way to earn money, online gambling (Subramaniam, 2017). Since the accessibility of online gambling has become much more than an issue some individuals face, a family and the sum of its parts have to somehow have the literacy and knowledge as to why to avoid it entirely. For example, a child, if given money irresponsibly, would use their money to fill their account and gamble away their family's income, in some cases, they would steal from others and their own family. In addition, friends would also aid in reducing the factors of online gambling and may prevent issues parents may have passed by them. Though it should also be noted that companions of any form may also propose such dangers as well, thus needing family supervision (Mazar et al., 2018).

Strategies in Enhancing Family Resilience Against Online Gambling

Since the overarching issues of awareness are severely lacking, most confrontational methods to restrain someone from even forming contact with online gambling would prove to be minimal. The creation of such websites that employ online gambling are very accessible, thus, the general population may emit a form of curiosity towards such games. As the appearance of online gambling inhibits the idea of probable wins and chasing losses. Simply put, the highs were never enough, similar to withdrawal, the higher the highs, the more difficult it is to replicate, hence creating a vicious loop (Monaghan, 2009). Thus, one of the most common means of prevention is an active use of communication, bonds connected by blood have significant dealings with such cases, as such, there are times when blood bonds by association would prove effective due to bias and relation (Sondakh et al., 2023). Communication often necessitates proper connection, and as discussed before, prohibition without a form of affection would feel jarring and may backfire as a result. Children, for instance, would listen to the ones they feel most trustworthy or inclined to be with, by forming a correlation with a child through parental guidance and is then supported by the fact that the child and parental figure's relations are assumed to be well, then the efficacy would be probable (Marionneau et al., 2023).

While the core essence of combating online gambling is through guidance and literacy, it however is not adequate if not paired with proper literacy foundation. Since the volatility of any known environment would dictate the outcome of one's belief, a strong and structured foundation would provide a shield in avoiding online gambling. Moreover, the usual targets of online gambling are highlighting vulnerable people, economically impaired individuals find comfort in knowing there is a slight chance of earning a massive fortune, even with its known drawbacks (Paterson et al., 2021). The most urgent issue as of late is that online gambling operations view children as easy targets, the idea of a vulnerable and easily influenced individuals have created a toxic relationship of pushing and pulling wants. Hence, a fitting educational system is needed to fight online gambling, its addicting system puts harm on children, more so inclined towards poorer children. Money is the very essence of what gambling is, as children may sometimes experience the life of hardship and thus necessitating a sudden change for the children's life, even if it is brought through illegal means, as children would barely disparage morality (Giménez et al., 2022). Programs educating children to derail from online gambling is a necessity, especially in lower income neighbourhoods and even more so in economically weak countries. Programs where children are taught the dangers and issues of online gambling must take precedence, which would marginally lower the chance of children's engagement in online gambling. Hence, they should view the online gambling experience as either a waste of time or a waste of resources, this aids in the overall safety and development of children (Keen et al., 2017).

Rehabilitation and counselling also play a large part in combating online gambling, although only handling the issue within the process or the aftermath. The strategies devised should focus on boosting family resilience across Walsh's dimensions through belief systems (religious and cultural education), organisational adaptability (financial literacy and role flexibility), and communication (open family dialogue). This presents family resilience-building as a national defence strategy to counteract the moral and economic disruption of online gambling. The receiving end of such issues are mostly gambling addicts, the mere mention of gambling addiction is usually associated with unnecessary spending and the utter reluctance of giving up on gambling itself. Oftentimes it relates to the desperation of an individual or simply the desire to escape a certain lifestyle even for a moment (Rodda et al., 2013). Support hotlines for online gambling addictions may remedy the aftereffects of withdrawal, as correlation and causality in addiction would sometimes lead to a dead end. A relation with a feeling and not a goal for instance, would create a false sense of redemption and thus unable to properly mediate the issue entirely, but rather create a gap for addicts to chase the high again (Griffiths, 2010). A stable and supportive environment is necessary to overcome the symptoms of online gambling, in most cases they lack the basic hormones which relay happiness, thus creating a mindset filled with anxiety and unease. Unfulfilled goals may also come into play as they reduce the person's motivation and erase any ideal circumstances with work and effort. Aside from the unease the withdrawal brings, a sense of emptiness and a mental itch would create an uncomfortable environment, thus worsening the effect (Okray & Direktör, 2021).

The presence of a suitable and a stable environment would induce a certain pattern which comforts people, recognizing a group of people provides safety and sometimes conformity. Although dull, the created sphere of friends or families forming connections with

one another brings a sense of security and said relations in a sense would prove to be detrimental in the resiliency against online gambling (Wachs, 2005). A communal gathering would substitute many deficiencies one would have in life, per se, if at their home they would often feel enclosed or unloved, thus a source of escape may be needed, thus, rather than utilizing online gambling as a coping mechanism. A community formed not always out of blood will be beneficial to someone's mental health, be it small or grand (Caplan, 2013). Conversely, a religious standing within someone's life has proven to be effective as well. Religion, though in the scientific world may seem less necessary, but for some people provides safety in more ways than one, since religion does not discriminate, poor or wealthy, different skin pigmentation or otherwise, religion provides a beneficial outlook for someone's life, to uphold morality and stray away from illegal activities (Kirichenko, 2018). However, both community and religion, which may seem to be unnecessary alternatives, has proven to have a significant effect on people of all backgrounds and ages (Wainwright, 2017). The essential factor of fighting online gambling is eradicating the notion of striking it big and living the life of luxury in a fast-track manner, while to the literate it may sound obtuse, to the common people it has the charm of a potential financial overturn brings great joy and promise to many (Biloslavo, n.d.). By utilizing religion and communities of people, people would be incentivized to avoid gambling altogether, they may deem it as sacrilegious in their religion or shunned in their community. Hence, the most probable method to remove online gambling, at least in a regional sector, is to strengthen not only family resilience, but overall region resilience towards illegal or immoral acts, thus, at the very least, reducing the probable issue of rampant online gambling (Hoffman, 2000).

Policy and Societal Factors

The international world has many governments implementing a comprehensive strategy to combat illegal online gambling as a way to safeguard families. In Indonesia, for instance, a multifaceted approach has been adopted, through combining technological utilities, financial regulations, along with constant community engagement, it is possible to address the issue itself.

A significant measure in Indonesia for example, has been established known as the Online Gambling Eradication Task force, which successfully reduced access to online gambling by 50% within the first month of operation. The achievement itself is earned through the removal of over 3.38 million gambling-related content, as well as blocking thousands of bank and e-wallet accounts which were linked to gambling activities, and collaborating with numerous digital platforms in order to eliminate any gambling-related keywords present in advertisement or otherwise (ANTARA News, 2024a). In addition, the government has frozen approximately 5,000 bank accounts who were suspected of facilitating illegal online gambling transactions (The Jakarta Post, 2024). Beyond the current enforcement, preventive measures have also been emphasized to combat online gambling as a crime issue. Moreover, digital literacy campaigns are intensified, more so in rural areas, which aims to educate citizens concerning the risks of online gambling. Initiatives, for example, the "*Bundaku*" program attempts to empower mothers with financial knowledge as to uphold household literacy through a parental figure, thereby positioning families as the first line of defence in fighting against online gambling (ANTARA News, 2024b). Furthermore, there are considerations being

discussed to implement age restrictions on social media platforms as to protect minors from exposure of gambling content (The Australian, 2024).

Fittingly, online gambling addiction or even gambling itself has become an issue of mental health, as correlation to incidents of domestic issue or crime itself would sometimes stem from individuals needing extra financial income to aid their gambling addiction (Scholes Balog & Hemphill, 2012). Retroactively, it may perform as an endorphin, dopamine, or adrenaline boost, which thrill-seekers yearn for, however, those short and inconsistent highs whilst chasing losses prove to be detrimental to a person's mental health (Petry & Weinstock, 2007). Though the lack of actual consideration by family members or communal peers may accelerate the issue further, it should also be noted that individual resilience can come into play, as they may have a higher mental faculty and analytical skills to prevent themselves from falling into gambling (Geis, 2004). Since the disparity of someone's mental capacity is different to one another, it should be heavily emphasized that family resilience along with strong community presence is necessary to uphold a status quo. The less people escape to uncertain activities the better it is to attempt and solve the issue, thus, needing the appropriate mental health care, literacy, and awareness (Siricharoen, 2024). Therefore, it should be safe to assume that mental health along with other factors would implicate that a stronger resiliency against online gambling is rooted in upbringing and education.

CONCLUSION

Family resilience is the foundation of national resilience and is being tested by rapid modernization. Valued education, religious and cultural fortification should be used to strengthen families as the smallest unit against digital threats such as online gambling as this is not only a domestic affair but rather a vital national strategy. Families in a wide array of conditions serve as the primary learning environment and the foundation for developing values, identity, and moral behaviour. As the impact of technology, global culture, and evolving economic systems grows, families face challenges that threaten their unity and purpose. Issues such as internet gambling, diminishing personal relationships, and reduced parental responsibilities proactively proves the importance of family structures which can absorb and respond to such shocks without collapsing. Attempting to cease the spread of negative ideas and behaviours requires strengthening internal ties, encouraging open communication between one another, and instil a mutual respect inside homes. Henceforth, the practical path to reducing the threat of online gambling and its addictions lies heavily on families and friends, through proper guidance and upbringing, the cycle of exposure and addiction may be reduced and hopefully stopped.

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