

How We Play?

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Abstract: Gambling and its restrictions were a very important question in our past and still is nowadays. Betting and playing for winning has its ups and downs and there is no doubt it can cause several types of addictions. In the past few months I explored the past of Gambling and researched that today's Hungary how connects itself to this type of entertainment. I wanted to answer the questions, what Hungarians play and how they are playing.

Introduction

Gambling is a source of entertainment throughout the human history. Even before the birth of Christ in the ancient Mesopotamia, archaeologists found dices and other types of tools that indicated the presence of the games of chance.

My goal was to discover the in depth history of gambling, understand the types of games that people played in the past, and the motivation of the residents to play in different countries. I read today's gaming laws, and understood the past in order to get experience, so I can compare the history with the modern generation's gaming habits. In order to get information, I created a survey with easy to answer questions, which focused on gambling habits, lottery, and online gaming.

This short extract is fully based on my research on gambling; "How we play?" which entirety is readable and available in Hungarian.

1 Gambling history

Gaming for money was a habit of the rich and as well the poor. Gambling was popular in the UK and the USA as well. The rich often visited horse and hound races where betting required experience and knowledge. Without up to date information the bettors most of the time could not guess the winning horses or hounds. That is why these types of events were popular within the rich. They did

not play for money, more likely for entertainment and success, so they can prove their knowledge and skill.

On the other hand, the poor, working class often played for earning money, and for the slightest chance to break out of poverty. The games they played were winnable only by chance. These were games like lottery, color and number picking games. Several states forbid gambling and the poverty had to play on the streets or in secret pubs. Crime syndicates usually controlled the situation paying the police and political members so they can continue their gaming empire. They offered loans with high interest rates. This led to addictions and huge debts, which made the recovery from the games very difficult for many people. The syndicates made sure to threaten the families of the players and collect their money. (American Gaming Association, 2016) (Mike Huggins, 2013) (Munting, Roger, 1993)

In Hungary gambling got huge attention as well, Queen Maria Theresa tried to regulate the common people's habit of gaming but failed most of the time because they always renamed the games or changed minor rules in order to continue playing without insulting the law. Count Széchenyi István while travelling abroad mostly in Britain, discovered the greatness of horse racing and the social activities of casinos. He started to buy and bring horses to Hungary, which led to the first horse race in 1827 on sixth of June. On the first race, mostly foreign horses and riders participated but with time, Hungarian racers appeared as well. The famous horse Kincsem was born in a Hungarian herd too. By this time, Hungary was famous by its horses all over Europe. (Kulcsár Krisztina, 2013) (Dr. Fehér Dezső, 2002)

2 Research on Hungarian gambling habits

In order to get information today's gambling habits, I created a short survey, which contained questions about preferred gambling types, gaming habits, and online gaming.

I had four hypothesis, which are the following. Before the research, I thought young adults will follow the older generation in gaming habits and will play as much lottery as they do. Thanks to the advertising campaign of Szerencsejáték Zrt. people are thinking of Gambling as a form of entertainment nowadays not as a harmful and dangerous type of activity. I assumed people often playing lottery would play numbers that are emotionally connected to them instead of random numbers. Finally, but not least I had a feeling that even though online gambling is safer and easier very few people are using this option in their everyday life.

2.1 Survey details

The survey contained easy to answer questions and took about five minutes to complete. I got 340 answers by the time my research ended. By the answers, I could create groups of similarities. I analyzed the answers by age and sex. About half of the answers were given by young university students under the age of 30 and the other half by people with the age over 50. I assumed the 340 answer that I got are correctly representing our country's and its resident's gaming habits.

The replies could be divided by age, sex, living place and education. I used statistical methods like the coefficient of colligation and Cramer's rule, which helped me to discover the strength of connection between the data about the responder and the exact question. I calculated the connection of sex and the regularity of playing lottery. The result of the calculation showed that the gender does not indicate the gaming habits reliably. The exact number is 0,2124 which shows a pretty weak connection between the two aspects. The association of the living area and gaming habits was untrustworthy as well. People are playing just as much in the suburbs and villages as in the capital. The result was 0,127, which indicates even weaker connection. The detailed calculation is included in the original dissertation.

I mainly focused on the connection between replies and the age of the responders. I assumed the difference between generations would show interesting data. I separated the people who replied into two groups. People under the age of 30, most likely university students, and the responders over the age of 50. I used association on the age and gaming habits as well. As I expected, the results showed that the connection between playing lottery and the age of the responder are much stronger than the aspects that I analyzed earlier.

2.2 Results

The first hypothesis, which assumed that young adults play as much as the older generation failed. By the answers, I found out that university students mostly under the age of 30, are very well informed about gambling and its winning chances. Because of this, they are very pessimistic about playing. The received answers showed that this generation rarely or never play, and when they do, they are most likely betting or using „tippmix“. On the other hand, answers showed that most of the older generation are still buying lottery tickets at least monthly. Because of these facts I did not accept my first hypothesis.

The second hypothesis was about the motivation about playing. Is it for entertainment purposes only? Most of the answers said they only see gambling as a form of entertainment and not as a reliable income source. Of course, the chance is always there to win but they cannot depend on it at all. Based on the answers I accepted the second hypothesis.

With my third hypothesis, I thought that people who are often playing lottery would play numbers that are emotionally connected to them. The replies that I got showed that about 50% of women tend to play emotionally important numbers but only the 27% of male repliers do this as well. This meant that half of the woman, and most of the male responders are playing random numbers when they are buying a ticket. These percentages were too low to accept the hypothesis.

My last hypothesis was connected to online gambling. As I expected most of the responders knew about the possibility that they can gamble online and buy lottery tickets on the Szerencsejáték Zrt. website. Even though online gaming is easier, more comfortable and safer even most of the younger responders said that they do not use this feature. About 10% of the young and the older repliers said that they often buy lottery tickets online.

2.3 Online gambling laws in Hungary

Hungarian laws are forcing gambling websites to show the time spent on the page and the lost amount of money, as well as players can use self-limiting features such as banning themselves for a limited time from the game, setting the amount, which they can upload, or the amount they can lose in a period of time. I think these laws are making online gambling safer because players can see all the time the amount they lost, and I think this information can prevent many from further playing. (XXXIV. Rules of gambling in Hungary of 1991)

3 Suggestion

My suggestion is that the Szerencsejáték Zrt. should promote online gambling for their already playing customers because it is comfortable and safer considering the reasons above.

It is understandable that many cannot play online because of the circumstances, and because of the fact that gaming is preceded by a long registration sequence, which can be discouraging. The registration requires lot of personal data as well as a card number, so it is understandable that lot of people do not want to share this information online. The Hungarian residents are still very unfaithful with online data sharing and transactions. That is the reason I am suggesting an optional registration opportunity in the classical lottery stores as well. People could register easily without giving important information and receive a card, which would contain their personal gaming habits such as lost amount, diary of the last bets and other useful data. The gambler could show the card to the assistant who would be able to share this information. With this solution gamers could see how much they are losing or winning in the stores as well.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I found out that gambling was very popular since the early ages of human history. Betting for money was a popular entertainment source for the poor and as well the rich. Aristocrats and the upper class mostly played in order to prove their knowledge and betting skills. On the other hand, in the slums and the ghettos the poverty played for earning small cash and for the chance to break out from their everyday life.

I was wrong about my theory that the younger generation is still into gambling as the older one, and they are following their gambling habits. From the replies, I got the information that young adults are aware of the negative side effects of gambling and their winning chances. They rarely or never play anything, even when they do, they are most likely betting on sport events.

The survey showed that in Hungary very few people are seizing the opportunity to gamble and buy lottery tickets online even though they know about this possibility. Researching the gambling laws of Hungary I found out that these kind of sites are forced to show players crucial information, like the amount of money they lost. Because of this and other useful features I think online gambling should be promoted to already, existing players or an optional registration system could be implemented to lottery stores so players would be able to reach this kind of information there as well. I believe the sheer fact that gamblers could see how much they are losing, would stop many from playing.

My research will continue in the Online gambling territory and my final goal is to raise awareness about its threats for mothers with young children.

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