



# The Ravaging Effects of Online Gambling on The Social Functioning of Male Breadwinners In African Families

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**Abstract:** This systematic review examines the ravaging effects of online gambling on the social functioning of male breadwinners in African families. Online gambling negatively impacts the social functioning of male breadwinners in African families. The researcher realized that online gambling among male African breadwinners leads to habitual neglect of the family and deterioration in socialization. As a result, the way African families function socially is often changed negatively by the male gambler's behaviour. Additionally, because these men are seen as the heads of the families and superiors in their communities, families are further burdened as they fear confronting the situation. The researcher adopted the PRISMA methods for this paper. Based on their excellent reputation and strong recommendations, the researcher used the following scientific search databases to gather data for this study: Google Scholar; Taylor and Francis; Scopus, ScienceDirect, and ResearchGate. The researcher gathered 23 peer-reviewed journal articles, published between 2011 and 2024, and verified them after screening to ensure the study's eminence. Online gambling is growing daily across the globe, particularly in African continents. Some families rely on online gambling for survival due to the poverty rate and high unemployment among African communities. Male breadwinners are opting for online gambling to support their families financially despite its addictive nature and lack of monitoring in many parts of Africa. Because online gambling is so addictive, some male breadwinners find that they spend less time with their families, being more focused on gaming. This study is pivotal as it creates awareness in African continents about the ravaging effects of online gambling among male breadwinners. This study can be further expanded by focusing on African continents, especially in South Africa, where online gaming has been recorded as high in the past few years among males.

**Keywords:** African Families, Online Gambling, Impact, Male Breadwinners, Family/Social Functioning, Online Addiction

## 1. Introduction

The world of online gambling is expanding rapidly, posing a serious challenge to certain countries, particularly in Africa, where it severely harms family structures. Online gambling is more addictive than other types of gaming (Choliz, 2016). Since addiction is a process that is often difficult to predict, it usually leaves family members shocked, and some family structures change completely. Even worse is when the family's social functioning is severely disrupted by the male breadwinner falling victim to online gambling since this interferes with the family's everyday functions and makes it difficult for some family members to transition to a new life. Based on data from the American Gaming Association in June 2021, there are over two thousand online gambling websites in the world. This has prompted some lawmakers to suggest that internet gambling be legalized to help the economies of certain countries (Ma, Kim & Kim, 2014). Correspondingly, Gainsbury (2015) argues that because it is so convenient to access at all times, online gambling carries a danger of addiction, family neglect, lack of socialization, and financial misuse. Moreover, it has been argued that “the easy access to gambling provided by internet modes may lead to the development or exacerbation of gambling problems” (Gainsbury, 2015, p. 1).

According to Kaya and Deveci (2022), online gambling behaviours are linked to poor parent-child relationships, a lack of confidence in men, and a lack of necessary social support from families. Senormanci, Senormanci, Guglu & Konkan (2014) also agree that some people's uncontrollable addiction to online gambling causes problems in their day-to-day lives and in their relationships with their families. It is particularly concerning that many male breadwinners are occasionally unable to meet their responsibilities to their families due to their habits. Concurring, Su, Han, Yu, Wu, and Potenza (2020) claim that men are more likely than women to become addicted to online gambling, and they further stipulate the differences between cultural and economic variables that influence online gambling. “Males are more prone to develop online gaming addiction than females across age groups” (Su et al., 2020). Since online gambling addiction affects more people than just the gambler, there have been more negative effects linked to it, including harm to individuals, families, and society as a whole (McCormack & Griffiths, 2010). As per the study by McCormack, Shorter,

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and Griffiths (2014), men are more prone than women to be problem gamblers and to engage in online gambling.

It is believed that African men are more likely than other men to develop gambling challenges, which can have serious consequences for both them and their families (Borch, 2013). Men who are addicted to online gambling cause stress and strife in their families, and they show little dedication to and support for them (Dowling, 2014). “The children of problem gambling parents are at risk of developing gambling problems themselves” (Dowling, 2014, p. 6). Online gambling causes problems in family relationships and interferes with the way families function (Senormanci et al., 2014). The study on online gambling (National Gambling Board South Africa, 2016) reveals that, in South Africa, male breadwinners are more likely than female breadwinners to be involved in online gambling. This habit has a detrimental financial impact on their families because the men spend the money that should be supporting their families and reinvest the money they win in the hopes of winning again. Some of them, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, and Northwest provinces, lose their jobs as a result of their addiction to online gambling. In contrast to women, who usually gamble to combat boredom, other authors argue that males engage in online gambling as a means of meeting financial needs (Hing, Russell, Tolchard & Nower, 2016). This can have detrimental effects on their mental well-being and, ultimately, their ability to function socially in their families.

Online gambling frequently leads to social isolation and dysfunctionality at home (Effertz, Bischof, Rumpf, Meyer & John, 2018). Deans, Thomas, Daube, and Derevensky (2016) claim in their research study that males are more likely to experience negative effects from online gambling activities as they are reported to be involved in online gambling more than other people. Males are increasingly engaging in online gambling, which increases the likelihood of gambling-related problems like irresponsibility and neglect of their families (Marmet, Studer, Wicki, Khazaal & Gmel, 2021). Furthermore, Koomson, Churchill, and Munyanyi (2022) assert that men who are under pressure to provide for their families tend to gamble more online in the hopes of winning large amounts of money. “The researcher’s (Koomson et al., 2022) study shows that online gambling influences financial stress among gamblers.” Gambling can lead to dysfunctionality in many homes. In a study conducted by Mathews and Volberg (2013), it was found that more than 84% of married women shared that they were stressed, anxious, and had lost trust because of their husbands, who are the family’s primary providers and online gamblers. This made them fearful that they would lose everything they had worked years to build for their families through online gambling. “Emotionally the gambler’s spouse is often faced with a mixture of strong emotions” (Mathews & Volberg, 2013). Although gamblers themselves suffer the worst effects of online gambling, members of their closest families are also badly impacted by their online gambling for a variety of reasons, which include social issues and sleep disorders that ultimately have a detrimental effect on their health (Estevez, Jauregui, Lopez, Lopez-Gonzalez & Griffiths, 2020). Some families suffered severely when they lost their savings due to male breadwinners’ addiction problems (Amutabi, 2018).

Sear (2021) contends that male breadwinning is typically observed in married couples, where women are responsible for raising the children and men are the breadwinners. In terms of a study by Dowling, Rodda, Lubman, and Jackson (2014), “the gambling problem of one individual has direct negative effects on many concerned significant others” (p. 1254). The social lives of African families with male breadwinners have been severely influenced by their online gambling because some of them are unable to stop, which has an effect not just on them but also on their family members. Even though the Gambling and Pool Act of 1967 regulates betting in Uganda, it is difficult to tax it since it is hard to monitor bettors. It is difficult to determine who is a bettor and how many individuals bet overall in their country. It is also difficult to determine how many people are responsible bettors and how many are gaming addicts (Yawe & Ssengooba, 2014). All of this contributes to the country’s problem with managing gambling. Dellis, Sharp, Hofmeyr, Schwarzmann, Spurrett, Rousseau, and Ross (2014) reveal that online gambling has become problematic in South Africa because of the high level of poverty in the country’s peri-urban and rural communities, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal province. Some African families are turning to gaming as a means of survival, which can lead to addiction and the neglect of important family responsibilities. “Many African nations have outdated regulations on gambling that do not cover online gambling” (Reith, Wardle & Gilmore, 2019, p. 3). This makes regulation much more difficult in certain African countries, which in turn leads to an increase in high gaming and addiction rates that eventually impair family functioning.

The impact of African male breadwinners’ online gambling on their families has received relatively little research attention. This is a knowledge void, which the researcher attempts to close by raising awareness among male African breadwinners of the detrimental impacts of online gambling and how it affects the social functioning and structure of African households.

The following are definitions of online gambling from the National Gambling Board South Africa (2023):

- **Bingo** is a game played in whole or in part by electronic means using cards or other devices that are divided into spaces, each of which bears a different number, picture, or symbol and is arranged randomly such that each card or similar device contains a unique set of numbers, pictures, or symbols.
- **Horse racing** is the sport in which horses and their riders take part in races, typically with substantial betting on the outcome.
- **Sports betting** is a form of gambling that entails placing a wager, also known as a bet, on the outcome of a sporting event. The primary intent of sports betting is to win additional money. With the exception

of spread betting, ‘draw no bet’ wagers, and a few other examples, a bet will have two possible outcomes. Either you win a profit based on the bookmaker’s odds, or you lose your wager.

### 1.1. Problem Statement

Many African communities have suffered as a result of online gambling. Male breadwinners are under pressure to support their families financially, which leads some of them to turn to online gambling as a way to supplement their income. Eventually, some of these individuals develop a gambling addiction, which has a negative effect on the family's ability to function socially as a whole. A drawback regarding online gambling in South Africa is the increase in illegal gaming, which has a detrimental impact on tax revenues and other related economic activity (Stats SA, 2023). Because some people prioritize their gaming over their employment, it causes many to lose their jobs and it also lowers employment opportunities due to much time spent on gaming. Most online gamblers spend less time with their families, and some of them abuse the money meant for their families, which puts stress on other male African breadwinners and changes the entire structure of the family. In addition, a large percentage of people experience social isolation as a result of addiction, parental money misuse, or the shame of not being able to support their families. Cheng and Yee-lam Li (2014) argue that “people may immerse themselves from the virtual world of the internet to escape from stress they experience in the real world” (p. 747). In addition, Sinclair, Pretorius, and Stein (2014) state that male gamblers in South Africa run the risk of abusing drugs as a coping mechanism, which leads to other issues beyond the detrimental effects their gaming has on their families.

### 1.2. Research Questions

1. What are the problems/challenges of addiction in African families?
2. What are the ravaging effects of online gambling on African males?
3. What are the root causes of online gambling?
4. What measures can be used to prevent online gambling among male Africans?
5. What are the roles of the male breadwinners in African families?

### 1.3. Conceptual Framework

The Prospect Theory and Family Stress Model are used in this study since they emphasize gambling and its effects, while the Family Stress Model focuses on the impact of economic hardship on the social functioning of family members. Prospect Theory is usually used in a variety of situations including gambling, which emphasizes that people can make risky decisions if there is potential gain (Ma, Kim & Kim, 2024). This theory suggests that when people take risks, they fail to consider the potential consequences of such actions. Instead, they ignore everything and everyone else and concentrate only on the specific risk they are taking at that time (Barberis, Jin & Wang, 2021). However, some authors argue that Prospect Theory is not about ethical behavior but rather about making decisions in risky situations (Austin, Bosek & Jackson, 2021). Barberis (2012) clarifies that Prospect Theory implies that gambling is not an isolated phenomenon and contends that there are explanations for why people gamble and spend certain amounts of time gambling without considering the risks associated with their actions. This theory contends that some online gamblers continue to gamble because they lack understanding about gambling and its consequences, which leads to addiction. Their choices may not be rational and may eventually affect their closest family members in a negative way (Clark & Lisowski, 2017).

### 1.4. Family Stress Model

The Family Stress Model was also considered essential for this study since it states that financial difficulties put pressure on families and have a detrimental impact on them. Additionally, financial challenges and economic pressures lead to depressive symptoms, particularly in African families; and the model’s primary focus is on family functioning, environmental stresses, and economic stress (Masarik & Conger, 2017). Furthermore, the Family Stress Model focuses on how economic stress affects family dynamics, the family stress process, and how it affects other family members (Masarik & Conger, 2017). This theory emphasizes the relationship between variances in social, psychological, and physical functioning and family financial challenges that cannot be separated (Simons & Steele, 2020). Neppl, Senia, and Donnellan (2015) assert that economic hardship increases behavioral issues, dysfunctional families, and reduces social functioning and family neglect among parents. Barnett (2008) contends in his research on the Family Stress Model that poverty exposes families to a variety of risks, has a detrimental effect on parent-child relationships, and results in parental neglect.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Risk factors for online gambling

Online gambling carries several risks, including the possibility of addiction stemming from compulsive gambling, and men are at a higher risk of addiction than women. Due to the prolonged focus on gambling and negligence of overall health, online gambling offers numerous health and mental health risks, including stress and migraines (Hing et al., 2016). According to reports, the advertising industry is making online gambling worse by constantly promoting it. This draws a lot of attention and increases the risk of online addiction since it entices gamblers to continue their gambling behaviours (Hing et al., 2014). “Online gambling is potentially addictive, including

accessibility, anonymity, affordability, convenience, interactivity and disinhibition” (Dragicevic et al., 2011). Dragicevic et al., (2011) further assert that online gambling encourages more compulsive behaviours, and Columb and O’Gara (2017) argue that this poses a risk of alcohol and illegal substance dependencies.

## 2.2. Root Causes of Online Gambling Addiction

Online gambling is a global challenge and there are many ways to become addicted. Lelonek-Kuleta et al., (2020) found that, in comparison to other forms of gambling and traditional gambling, online gambling has the potential to become addictive since it is easier to access and may be played in a variety of ways, including through a mobile phone. Some countries have lenient laws and regulations regarding online gambling because they benefit gamblers by taxing their winnings. This encourages gamblers to keep playing because there are few or no laws that limit their gambling habits, which can eventually cause addiction in some gamblers (Ahaibwe et al., 2016). Furthermore, because it is less expensive to gamble online than it is to gamble in person, many gamblers are attracted to it, which is one of the causes of online gambling addiction (Goldstein, Vilhena-Churchill, Stewart, Hoaken & Flett, 2016); and “gambling is used to facilitate or enhance positive mood” (Goldstein et al., 2016), leading people to believe that gambling can improve their feelings. However, they eventually find themselves hooked and addicted.

Some root causes of online gambling addictions are genetic, hereditary, and modelled by parents or other family members who have a history of online gambling addiction (Bitanirwe & Ssewanyana, 2021). As technology advances and becomes more widely available, a growing number of exciting new online gambling sites are implemented. Many people are exposed to these sites, become addicted, and find it difficult to stop their gambling behaviours after spending a lot of time learning how to use the new technology (Wood & Williams, 2011). A study conducted in South Africa revealed that some adults have developed an addiction to online gambling as a coping mechanism for their inability to deal with and resolve marital problems. Rather than seeking professional assistance, they turned to online gambling (Sinclair, Pretorius & Stein, 2014); Sinclair et al. (2014) further reveal that “a nationally representative survey in South Africa found that 57% of the adult population engage in some form of legal gambling, that 4–7% of the adult population have sub-threshold pathological gambling (or ‘problem gambling’).”

## 2.3. Gambling Patterns of Online Gamblers

Table 2 shows the participation of South African male and female online gamblers. Depending on their preferences, online gamblers have varying gambling times. This table shows people engaging in sports betting, bingo, and horse racing exclusively. Furthermore, it is evident that some forms of online gambling are favoured by one gender over the other. For example, in South Africa, women prefer online bingo, while men prefer sports betting and horse racing.

## 2.4. Preventative Measures of Online Gambling Among Male Africans

Online gambling has been linked to addictive behaviours that people may find difficult to overcome in the future or when they decide to stop gambling. On the other hand, a variety of preventative measures can be taken to lessen the risk of online gambling, such as experimenting with different addiction programs and changing the settings on devices used for online gambling (Kairouz et al., 2023). Furthermore, by understanding the advantages and disadvantages of online gambling, people can gamble with awareness of what they are getting into, and this can be accomplished by raising awareness of online gambling through various media platforms (Ariyabuddhipongs, 2013). Haele et al. (2011) posit that families of online gamblers can help identify early warning signs of online gambling addiction so they can help gamblers before their gambling gets out of control or they develop an addiction. They can also refer gamblers to professionals like counsellors who can help deal with their online gambling habits, particularly those behaviours that negatively affect their families.

As technology advances daily, Paterson, Whitty, and Boyer (2019) claim that there are online ICT strategies that can be used to reduce the risks or harm associated with online gambling. For example, focused intervention strategies have already been implemented by countries like Australia, which use technology to track risky gamblers and reduce and regulate online gambling sites. Additionally, Drosatos et al., (2018) emphasized the use of self-regulation technology to help active and regular online gamblers to reduce their gaming habits and time spent on online gambling. This technological approach helps to monitor such behaviours, which benefits online gamblers by acting as a preventative measure and minimizing risk and harm. Other studies have also found that self-discipline, age restrictions, and online gambling tools that limit how long a person can play online and at what age some people can play, as well as the adoption of laws and regulations—especially in countries where there are no laws regulating online gambling—can be beneficial in preventing online gambling among male Africans (Marionneau et al., 2023).

## 3. Methodology

The PRISMA method was found to be appropriate because it encourages and permits authors to document the sources used to record the number of records identified through other sources. This method records the number of duplications, the number of records that met inclusion criteria, and the number of records retrieved from each database during data retrieval (Rethlefsen & Page, 2022). PRISMA identifies important databases and screens them by eliminating studies that are not relevant without using a certain strategy. Furthermore, PRISMA is used to present the studies that were both included and excluded from the study (Lee & Koo, 2022). In their study,

Yusop, Rasul, Yasin, Hashim, and Jalaludin (2022) avow that such a systematic review aims to explore secondary data through the collection and objective assessment of pre-existing data on a topic. Yusop et al. (2022) further contend that applying this approach provides a means of identifying study gaps and guiding future directions concerning internet gambling and its impact on the social functioning of male breadwinners in African households. In this way, systematic reviews allow researchers to make evidence-based judgments without feeling under pressure because they limit the overload of data sources available to them (Belle & Zhao, 2023).

### 3.1. Planning Phase

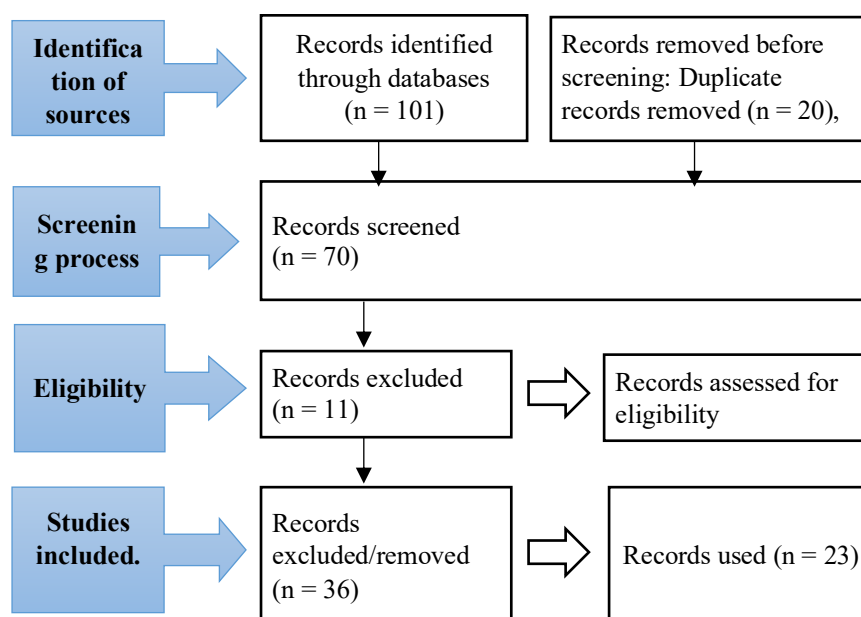
Based on their excellent reputation and strong recommendations, the researcher used the following scientific search databases to gather data for this study: Google Scholar; Taylor and Francis; Scopus, ScienceDirect, and ResearchGate. Therefore, the researcher used the listed terms to retrieve peer-reviewed journals such as:

- a) online gambling and African families,
- b) African male breadwinners,
- c) online gambling and social functioning,
- d) online gambling and African male breadwinners,
- e) online gambling and its negative effects.

In this study, the researcher used content analysis, consulting, and scientific database searches that were pertinent to the study's objectives and title. Information was also collected from the South African Gambling Board Organisation and different sources in all nine provinces of South Africa regarding gambling patterns among both African males and females to learn the different patterns of online gambling.

### 3.2. Scholarly Document Selection Phase

- Figure 1 shows the several steps the researcher used to look for journal articles. Out of the 101 journals that were found during the first search, 20 were not included in the second search because they did not meet the criteria for inclusion, namely:
  - (a) studies conducted globally that address the variables of this study;
  - (b) studies dealing with the ravaging effects of online gambling on the social functioning of male breadwinners;
  - (c) studies written in the English language; and
  - (d) studies published between 2011 and 2024).
- A total of 81 records remained after the 11 eliminated journals underwent another screening. A total of 11 journals were then removed because they contained insignificant information. Out of the 55 scholarly documents that the researcher selected, 32 were eliminated because they included information not related to online gambling among African families, and only 23 scholarly articles from the original 101 journals were used in the study.



**Figure 1:** A systematic review PRISMA flow chart

The researcher gathered 23 peer-reviewed journal articles and verified them after screening to ensure the study's eminence. As Table 1 illustrates, the study's focus is on 23 peer-reviewed journal papers. Every journal article included in the study has been examined by the researcher to ensure compliance with the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The following is an explanation of the inclusion and exclusion criteria:

Inclusion criteria of the journal articles:

- These are studies conducted globally that address the variables of this study.
- They are about the ravaging effects of online gambling on the social functioning of male breadwinners.
- They are written in the English language.
- They were published between 2011 and 2024.

Included in the current analysis are 23 peer-reviewed academic publications from various databases. The table below displays the entire search process that was conducted by the researcher.

**Table 1: Synopsis of the journal articles used in the study**

Author(s) / year and country of publication.	Scholarly document	Methods	Theoretical framework(s)
Hing, Russell, Tolchard & Nower (2016); New York	Journal article	Data analysis, multivariate analysis	N/A
Hing, Cherney, Blaszczynski, Gainsburg & Lubman (2014); Australia	Journal article	Telephonic interviews, data analysis	N/A
Dragicevic, Tsogas & Kudic (2011); UK	Journal article	Online content analysis, clinical analysis	N/A
Columb & O' Gara (2017); Ireland	Journal article	Online survey, questionnaires, data analysis	N/A
Lelonek-Kuleta, Bartczuk, Wiechetek, Chwaszcz & Niewiadomska (2020); Poland	Journal article	Qualitative, in-depth interviews, questionnaire, data analyses, survey	N/A
Ahaibwe, Lakuma, Katunze & Mawejje (2016); Uganda	Dissertation	Quantitative (household survey), qualitative, in-depth interviews, focus group	N/A
Goldstein, Vilhena-Churchill, Stewart, Hoaken & Flett (2016); Canada	Journal article	Qualitative, in-depth interviews, statistical analysis	Motivational models of gambling
Bitanihirwe & Ssewanyana (2021); Ireland	Journal article	Data analysis	N/A
Wood & Williams (2011); Canada	Journal article	Telephone survey, Questionnaires	N/A
Sinclair, Pretorius & Stein (2014); South Africa	Journal article	Qualitative, in-depth interviews, telephonic interviews	N/A
Sear (2021); UK	Journal article	Content analysis	N/A
Sriyasa, Almqvist, Sridawruang, Neamsakul & Haggstrom-Nordin (2018); Sweden	Journal article	Qualitative, in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews	Grounded theory
Akanle, Adesina & Ogbimi (2016); Nigeria, South Africa	Journal article	Qualitative, in-depth semi-structured interviews	Human capital theory
Ningrum & Mas'udah (2021); Indonesia	Journal article	Qualitative, in-depth semi-structured interviews	N/A
Montgomery, Hosegood, Busza & Timaus (2006); South Africa	Journal article	Content analysis, non-participant observation	N/A
Ampim, Haukenes & Blystad (2024); Ghana	Journal article	Qualitative, in-depth semi-structured interviews, observation	N/A
Koenig-Visagie & van Eeden (2013); South Africa	Journal article		N/A
Kairouz, Costes, Murch, Doray-	Journal article	Qualitative, in-depth	N/A

Demers, Carrier & Eroukmanoff (2023); France		interviews, semi-structured interviews	
Ariyabuddhiphongs (2013); New York	Journal article	Content analysis	N/A
Haefele, Lischer & Schwarz (2011); Switzerland	Journal article	Qualitative, in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews, Quantitative method	N/A
Patterson, Whitty & Boyer (2019); Australia	Journal article	A preliminary analysis	N/A
Drosatos, Nalbadis, Arden-Close, Baines, Bolat, Vuillier, Kostoulas, Budka, Wasowska, Bonello, Brown, Corner, McAlaney, Phalp & Ali (2018); UK	Journal article	Content analysis	N/A
Marionneau, Ruohio & Karlsson (2023); Finland	Journal article	Content analysis	N/A

Below, the researcher outlined the demographic profile of gamblers in Gauteng province, South Africa. Based on the data presented in the table below, most gamblers in Gauteng are middle-class African men who are either married or single (Stats SA, 2023).

**Table 2: Demographic profile of gamblers in Gauteng province, South Africa**

Category		Gamblers
Gender	Male	54%
	Female	43%
Marital status	Married	47%
	Single	27%
	Staying with a partner	14%
	Divorced	7%
Household size	5-6 members	16%
	3-4 member	37%
	2 members	36%
	1 member	6%
Race	African	72%
	White	16%
	Coloured	6%
	Indian	5%
Language	English	16%
	Zulu	14%
	Afrikaans	12%
	Tswana	11%
Employment status	Employed	46%
	Unemployed	23%
	Self-employed	15%
	Retired	13%
Housing type	Dwelling/house/brick structure on a separate stand/yard/farm	50%
	Flat or apartment in a block of flats	18%
	Informal dwelling/shack in the backyard or not in the backyard	12%
	Town/cluster/semi-detached/house	11%

Source: Stats SA-2022/2023, Republic of South Africa

#### 4. Findings and discussion

This study found that African male breadwinners' social functioning is negatively impacted by their online gambling. It has shown that online gambling is unregulated in some African countries and that men gamble more than women. Traditionally, gambling has been associated primarily with men (Hunter, Shorter & Griffiths, 2012). The study also established that some African families continue to live in poverty and maintain the traditional view that men should provide for their families, whether or not they are able to do so. Males are then under tremendous pressure to find ways to support their families, which leads them to become involved in online gambling and ultimately reliant on it for their families' survival and subsistence. Due to its accessibility, online gambling can be

difficult for some African men to control, making it difficult for them to spend time with their families and maintain connections with others.

The results of this study indicate that some African males are not adequately trained in responsible gambling practices. This is of great concern, given the fact that gambling is addictive, and if one is gambling for survival, they run the risk of developing an addiction and neglecting their family's social life. The lack of knowledge about online gambling addiction in general has a negative impact on male breadwinners because had they known how addictive online gambling can be, they could have gambled responsibly without any interference with other responsibilities such as family and their social functioning. Montiel, Ortega-Barón, Basterra-González, González-Gabrera, and Machimbarrena (2021) explained that gambling addiction leads to gambling behavioral characteristics such as social functioning problems and financial problems, which some people are not knowledgeable about. The ravaging effects of online gambling hence result in social dysfunctionality among African male breadwinners. Policymakers should implement policies and regulations pertaining to all forms of online gambling to prevent a single person from abusing online gambling. They should also work with ICT experts to monitor the activities of all gamblers and establish a weekly, monthly, or annual gambling schedule for each person. It is evident that the male breadwinner's online gambling negatively impacts families, communities, and eventually the operation of entire countries.

## 5. Limitations of the Study

Despite the researchers' opinion that their varied search terms allowed them to identify all relevant publications in this field, only 23 peer-reviewed journal papers met all inclusion requirements. It is possible that journal articles not included in the databases the researcher identified could have been overlooked. Additionally, the research is limited to the context of Africa. It is, therefore, possible that the researcher overlooked articles that are untraceable.

As the study focus is limited to African families, further research is crucial to increase knowledge about online gambling and its repercussions among African male breadwinners. The results of this study were weakened by the lack of research on online gambling. Thus, more research on the challenges posed by online gambling and its ravaging effects on African families and African male breadwinners should be conducted by social science and social media experts.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations of the Study

The main emphasis of this study is the daily challenges of male breadwinners in families with regard to social functioning as well as the ravaging effects of online gambling. Online gambling has become a global challenge that is negatively affecting the social functioning of male African breadwinners. The study has found that males are more likely than women and other individuals to gamble online. Thus, this research study aims at identifying the challenges to the social functioning of male breadwinners in African families. The researcher made the following recommendations considering the results of the systematic review:

- The South African Gambling Board should provide people with information regarding gambling online.
- African male breadwinners should seek knowledge and further information about online gambling and its effects.
- African males should consider and learn to gamble responsibly.
- African males should find possible ways of preventing online gambling addiction.
- Different online gambling boards across the African continent should provide awareness regarding online gambling and share the ravaging effects of online gambling.

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