

## **theoretical discussion paper**

### **Comments on "Between consumption and investment..."**

This is an interesting manuscript that attempts to differentiate the myriad motives underpinning gambling behaviour using an innovative approach to standard questionnaire measures.

The author acknowledges the unreliability of some of the source data and the methodological limitations imposed by the sample selection procedure and size. He admits that more questions (rather than hypotheses testing) have emerged from his efforts.

However, to give the reader a greater understanding of the nature of the sample selected and its representativeness, more detail is required on the inclusion criteria; for example, what procedure was used to select the 20 players in the sample, and why were these and not others who attended the casino approached? Were they consecutive players entering a specific location on the gaming floor or were they targeted according to some characteristic that they displayed? In addition, it is not clear how the data were actually collected. Were the players using loyalty cards or a similar system that allowed expenditure to be related to individual players, or were data derived from observation or provided by the casino operator? The latter two have some concerns regarding reliability and filtering bias (i.e., operators providing select data from individuals).

The primary objective of the study appears to be an attempt to work backwards from behavioural parameters (consumption expressed as a pattern of gambling—stake, hold, drop, and win) to imputing motivation to explain the behaviour—that is, one type of consumption pattern imputing a desire for money as the motivator (gambling to win) and another imputing fun as the motivator. I must admit to my own incapacity to determine motive from overt behavioural patterns. Judging intent and motive from behaviour is difficult and open to the observer's biases; therefore, a description of the criteria used by the observer would assist the reader in evaluating the validity of such judgements and interpretations. It would have been useful to have interviewed or administered a series of items taping subjective motivation and decision-making processes and coupling this to the behavioural data.

Overall, this is an interesting preliminary attempt at a behavioural analysis of consumption patterns that raises interesting points, stimulating further directions for research.

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