A qualitative analysis of first time gamblers’ experiences and perceptions of gambling on the 2010 FIFA World Cup™.

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Abstract

Mega sporting events such as the Soccer World Cup™ not only attracts the interest of millions of fans, spectators and tourists. It also stimulates people to make predictions and speculations on the outcomes of matches. Gambling is not a new phenomenon. Predicting the results of sports events has preoccupied the minds fans and regular gamblers for decades. The 2010 Soccer World Cup™ hosted by South Africa is no exception. For the regular gambler, the excitement and interest in predicting the outcomes of matches lies in its difficulty as s/he takes into account different factors such as the current form of the team as well as individual players, the team morale, the team selected, skills of the players, coaching strategy, home ground advantage and weather to arrive at a final decision. Little is, however, known about what attracts first time gamblers towards betting on the outcome of matches. The purpose of this study therefore was to explore first time gamblers’ experiences and perceptions on gambling on the outcome of various 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup™ games. Adopting a qualitative approach, the methodology included an extensive literature study on gambling in general and telephonic interviews of between 10-18 minutes duration with a sample of twelve first time gamblers who were recruited through bookmakers’ agencies. The results indicated that the experience was positive and that respondents viewed this participation in this activity as recreation. Respondents experienced greater enjoyment, excitement and social interaction as well as closer bonding with family members and friends. While most respondents indicated that they would continue to gamble on outcome of sport events, it is results indicate that the focus of this participation would be on recreation. It is unlikely that this practice would develop into pathological gambling.

Keywords: gamblers, outcome, betting, predictions, interviews, recreation