

HEALTH RESEARCH ABSTRACT SUBMISSIONS

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College *	College of Public Health
Department *	Community and Behavioral Health
Title of Research *	Proximity to Casinos and Gambling Treatment Centers and the Gambling Treatment Outcome in Iowa: a GIS approach
Other Authors *	N/A

Introduction & Purpose *

This paper examines the proximity to treatment centers and casinos, and assesses the correlation between these distances and the program outcome in the state of Iowa. The Iowa Gambling Treatment Program (IGTP), which started in 1986, provides services across the state. This treatment services benefits over 500 clients to reduce their gambling behaviors and support them.

Problem gambling is often cited as addictive, and the relapse of problem gambling is often cited. Also, some studies using ecological frameworks have demonstrated that individual (e.g. gender, education, etc.) and environmental factors (e.g. proximity to gambling places) are determinants of gambling behaviors.

The participants in the study were about 300 gamblers who consented to the research protocol. Demographic information such gender, education, and income were obtained during the admission process. Also, admitted gamblers were followed until discharge, and discharge statuses were obtained from the IGTP database. The location of casinos and treatment centers along with the clients were geocoded, and the distances were obtained using the ArcGIS software. The final analysis were performed using the R 2.8.1., and used the logistic regression and non-linear mixed-model.

Experimental Design *

This is a secondary data analysis of Iowa Gambling Treatment Outcome (IGTO) data.

Results *

The proximity to casinos was a significant predictor of gambling treatment completion. Gamblers closer to casinos were less likely to complete the treatment plan.

However, contrary to the initial hypothesis the proximity to treatment centers was not a significant predictor of treatment completion.

None of the individual factors in the model (education, gender, and household income) was a significant predictor of program completion.

Conclusions *

The study found that proximity to casinos plays a key role in treatment completion among admitted gamblers in the IGTP.

The study also suggest future direction of gambling treatment outcome studies using an ecological framework.

The null effect of proximity to treatment centers is discussed in the paper along with policy implications regarding to the location of treatment centers.

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