



JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Volume 1, Number 7 (October, 2025)

ISSN: 1595-9457 (online); 3043-4211 (print)

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Received: August 17, 2025 Accepted: September 20, 2025 Published: October 31, 2025

Citation: Akande, Michael A. & Taiwo, Olusanjo A. (2025). "A Philosophical Discourse on Logical and Ethical Foundations of Gambling ." *Journal of Philosophy, Policy and Strategic Studies*, 1 (7): 35-46.

Article

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A PHILOSOPHICAL DISCOURSE ON LOGICAL AND ETHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF GAMBLING

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Abstract

This paper critically analyzes the philosophical underpinnings of gambling, concentrating on utilitarianism as a framework for assessing the moral consequences of gambling. Gambling, which is commonly viewed as a game of chance, risk and reward, is at the nexus of human desire and logical calculation. The ethical ramifications of placing bets on unpredictable and sometimes illogical results, is at the basis of human rationality and probabilistic thinking. Utilitarianism provides a useful ethical framework for assessing gambling because of its focus on maximizing pleasure and reducing misery. Through a critical engagement and analysis of behaviours of gamblers and utilitarian theory, this research investigates whether the apparent advantages of gambling, such as leisure, economic contribution, and psychological fulfillment justify its moral consideration amidst its possible drawbacks; which include addiction, financial ruin, and individual instability. We posit that gambling has logical and ethical appeals which promote social cohesion. The study comes to the conclusion that, although gambling is frowned at in some quarters, utilitarianism offers insightful analysis to the morality of gambling. The paper suggests the importance of placing gambling under societal control to reduce or prevent addiction of interested individuals since the hope gambling offers is of social importance.

Keywords: Gambling, Gamblers' Psychology, Induction, Rationality, Utilitarianism.

Introduction

The roots of gambling could be traced to ancient civilizations like Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, and others, where games of chance were an important part of social and economic life. Around 3000 BCE, six-sided dice, one of the oldest gambling instruments ever unearthed, were found in Mesopotamia (Ashton, 2016: 42). These dice, which were probably made of

bone or ivory, were used in a variety of games of chance, which reflects the early interest in chance-based activities in the area. Additionally, gambling was ingrained in Egyptian culture, as seen by the objects connected to gambling that archaeologists have found in tombs, indicating that both the living and the dead appreciated games of chance (Schwartz, 2006: 76). Senet, a board game with casting sticks in which participants probably bet on the results, is a prominent example. A wide range of gambling activities are indicated by the references to sports-betting in Egyptian writings, including chariot races and wrestling fights. Comparably, there is evidence of gambling in ancient China as early as 2300 BCE, when simple lottery-style games were employed as a source of state income in addition to being a source of pleasure (Reith, 1999: 78). One well-known example is an early form of keno that was purportedly used to finance significant government initiatives such as portions of the Great Wall of China. This demonstrates how gambling was not merely a pastime but also a tool for public financing, a practice that continues today through modern lotteries.

From crude betting methods in ancient civilizations to extremely complex internet gambling systems in the present day, gambling has always been a fundamental component of human communities. Though scholars have defined gambling in various ways, however, one widely recognized position defines it as the act of placing money or valuable items on an uncertain occurrence with the primary goal of obtaining greater monetary or material benefits (Reith, 2019: 171). Gambling is a seductive and contentious activity due to its intricately entwined psychological, economic, and societal elements. The elements of chance, risk-taking behaviour, and the expectation of financial reward are what make this sector prosper. Nevertheless, gambling presents serious ethical issues, especially in light of its effects on people and society, even if it offers economic advantages and amusement (Shaffer & Korn, 2020: 387). Analyzing gamblers, their motives, and the institutions that support them critically is necessary to comprehend the dynamics of gambling. Understanding gamblers' psychology is essential to comprehending their behaviour. There are several sorts of gamblers, from seldom gamblers to pathological or problem gamblers (Blaszczynski & Nower, 2021: 179). Problem gamblers have obsessive behaviours that cause them to suffer financially, socially, and psychologically, whereas casual gamblers bet for fun and without negative repercussions. Different psychological drives, including thrill-seeking behaviour, the illusion of control, and the promise of financial breakthrough, might motivate people to gamble (Toneatto & Nguyen, 2022: 256). Furthermore, according to behavioural addiction theories, drug dependence and gambling addiction are similar, with dopamine-driven reward processes being a major factor in recurrent involvement (Grant *et al.*, 2020: 235). By using smart marketing, game design, and incentive systems that promote sustained engagement, gambling firms take advantage of these psychological inclinations.

Casinos, sports' books, and internet gambling sites are just a few of the gambling institutions that have a big influence on gambling culture and its effects on society. These organizations function under a complicated regulatory environment that differs depending on the jurisdiction; some nations enforce stringent laws, while others take a more lenient stance (Williams, Volberg, & Stevens, 2010: 21). By creating jobs and generating large amounts of tax income, the gaming business supports national economies. But it also brings up moral questions about compulsive gambling, consumer protection, and dishonest business tactics (Hing *et al.*, 2019: 235). To draw in and keep consumers, a lot of gaming companies use 'gamification tactics', compelling advertising, and technology developments. The effectiveness of responsible gambling measures, such as spending limitations and self-exclusion programs, are still up for discussion, even when some regulatory authorities

enforce them (Gainsbury, 2020:123). Therefore, assessing the advantages and difficulties of this complex sector requires a thorough grasp of the nature of gambling, the psychology of gamblers, and the operational tactics of gaming enterprises.

The Concept of Gambling

Risking money or possessions on the outcome of an event, game, or contest whose conclusion is unpredictable and dependent on skill or chance is commonly referred to as gambling (Blaszczynski, 2017: 45). Although the definition of gambling varies depending on the culture and legal system, it usually consists of three main components: prize (the possible reward), risk (the uncertainty of the outcome), and consideration (the amount wagered). Commercial gambling, charitable gambling, and informal gambling are among the various forms of gambling. Commercial gambling includes government-regulated enterprises including lotteries, casinos, and sports betting. Raffles and fundraiser lotteries are examples of charitable gaming that is frequently utilized to assist nonprofit organizations. Although there is no official regulation of informal gambling, which includes betting among friends, it is still very common. Due to the expansion of gambling chances through online platforms brought about by the digital era, accessibility and involvement have grown (Gainsbury, 2015:190). People may now gamble whenever and wherever they want thanks to smartphone apps and internet betting services, which raises the risk of addiction and financial disaster. It goes without saying that gambling has a big impact on the international economy, both positively and negatively. On the one hand, governments, casinos, and internet platforms all profit greatly from legalized gambling. Tax money from casinos and lotteries supports social programs, infrastructure, and public services in nations where gambling is allowed (Walker & Barnett, 1999:187). Additionally, the gambling business generates jobs in industries like technology, hospitality, and tourism, supporting millions of people globally. However, gambling may cause people to lose money, which frequently leads to debt buildup and unstable economies. Research shows that as people look for methods to make up for their losses, problem gambling may lead to an increase in crimes including theft and fraud (Markandya & Pearce, 1989:473). This has led to the ethical assessment of gambling in the society, and because of these dualistic effects of gambling worldwide, governments everywhere are being forced to decide whether to continue in permitting gambling, regulate it, or completely ban it.

There have been many discussions concerning the ethics of gambling, with points of contention ranging from worries about exploitation to debates about individual liberty. According to certain psychologists and philosophers, gambling preys on people's impulsive tendencies and cognitive biases, frequently causing them to make illogical financial decisions. According to Tversky and Kahneman (1971) prospect theory, people are especially susceptible to the appeal of gambling because they have a tendency to misinterpret probability, overestimating their odds of winning and underestimating their potential losses (p. 270). The practice of "loss chasing," in which people keep gambling in an effort to recoup past losses, exacerbates this exploitation even more and frequently has detrimental financial and psychological effects. It seems that some libertarian viewpoints stress that gambling is really a personal choice. According to this perspective, excessive government involvement may be viewed as an unfair limitation on individual liberty as long as people are aware of the dangers and are able to make their own decisions. Proponents of this position contend that gambling should only be restricted to the degree required to avoid direct harm, such as fraud or underage involvement, because it offers amusement, much like other recreational

pursuits. The idea of responsible gambling has surfaced as a framework to encourage safer practices in the gaming business in response to the moral dilemmas surrounding the activity. To assist people in making better decisions, governments, oversight organizations, and advocacy groups have implemented a number of harm reduction tactics, such as age limitations, self-exclusion plans, deposit caps, and public awareness campaigns (Hing *et al.*, 2016:12). A lot of states have also made it mandatory for gambling companies to give consumers tools to track their gaming habits and clear information about odds. The function of advertising and its propensity to promote excessive gambling is a seemingly divisive topic in gambling ethics. The pervasiveness of gambling ads, especially those aimed at susceptible groups like young adults and those with a history of gambling issues, has stoked discussions about the need for more stringent laws. Aggressive marketing tactics, such as celebrity endorsements and promotional incentives, are criticized for potentially raising irrational expectations and normalizing gambling as a risk-free pastime. In response, various governments have looked into ways to reduce the impact of marketing connected to gambling, including required warning labels, advertising prohibitions, and restrictions on promotional offers. In the end, the ethical discussion around gambling keeps changing, striking a balance between the industry's financial gains and personal autonomy while also taking consumer protection issues into account.

Problem gambling, often known as pathological gambling, is one aspect of gambling that needs to be put into consideration. "Pathological gambling" and "problem gambling" are the most often used terminology to define a gambling condition. A mental illness identified by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV) is referred to as "pathological" in psychiatric or medical contexts. As an impulsive disorder that cannot be explained by the existence of a manic episode, compulsive gambling was first added in the DSM-III in 1980 (Lesieur & Rosenthal, 1991:6). (Petry, 2005: 9). Pathological gambling is defined by the DSM-IV as "persistent and recurrent maladaptive gambling behaviour" that has the potential to "disrupt personal, family, or vocational pursuits" (Petry, 2005:219). At least five out of ten criteria must be met for a diagnosis, which is often made during a clinical interview. Items pertaining to cravings, withdrawal (such as restlessness and irritation upon quitting gambling), and tolerance (such as the urge to gamble to get the same thrill) that were taken from the diagnostic criteria for known drug use disorders are included in this categorization. Other topics include diminished self-control or the monetary and psychological damage brought on by compulsive gambling (Lesieur & Rosenthal, 1991:7). The next DSM-V categorization will also include pathological gambling, albeit it will probably be altered in a number of ways. For instance, the categorization will probably be changed from impulse control disorders to the section on addictive disorders and called "disordered gambling." An increasing amount of research indicates that the traits of compulsive gambling and other addictive behaviours have numerous physiological and neuro-physiological similarities, which is the basis for this transformation (Conversano *et al.*, 2012:8). Additionally, the diagnosis may be made using four criteria instead of five, and the last one—illegal activities to supply money for gambling—may be eliminated due to its extremely low degree of support (Petry, 2010:285).

On the other hand, the phrase "problem gambling" has been used in a variety of contexts. Some studies have defined "problem" and "pathological" gambling as existing on a continuum, where they have examined differences in the disorder's intensity. The most severe type of the condition has been referred to as "pathological gambling," while those whose gambling is deemed less severe have been referred to as "problem gamblers." The

famous South Oaks Gambling Screen, for instance, clearly demonstrates this distinction (Lesieur & Blume, 1987: 1184). On this test, people who score 5+ out of 20 are considered "pathological gamblers," whereas those who score 3–4 are considered "problem gamblers." A similar distinction is evident in the recently developed Pathological Problem Gambling Measure (PPGM) by Williams and Volberg (2010:15). In different settings, the phrase "problem gambling" has been used as a public health term to describe situations in which gaming leads to a variety of negative outcomes (Korn & Shaffer, 1999:291). For instance, "difficulties in limiting money and/or time spent on gambling which leads to adverse consequences for the gambler, others, and for the community" is the definition of problem gambling in Australia (Neal *et al.*, 2005:3). In its first significant national assessment, the Australian Productivity Commission (1999: 2) used similar concepts. These kinds of definitions focus on the negative effects gambling has on society and health, as well as the obligations placed on governments and regulators to implement laws and provide funding for programs that lessen the burden placed on the populace. Although conceptually these phrases seem to be distinct, variations between disciplines and nations may generate misunderstandings. Because they want to concentrate on the negative effects of gambling, most researchers in the fields of public health, epidemiology, and psychology refer to anyone who is a candidate for clinical therapy as "problem gambling." Approaches to public health also include an emphasis on varying risk levels or case severity. As with other mental health problems such as depression or anxiety, problem gambling is thought to fall on a continuum. Problems vary in severity from less to more severe, and it is assumed that people will move between categories.

The phrases "compulsive" and "excessive" are also occasionally employed in the literature of gambling. The disorder known as compulsive gambling is characterized by a person's inability to control their impulse to gamble, difficulty in quitting once they have begun, and/or having trouble in gradually reducing their gaming. The idea that the disease involves compulsive components is generally supported by recent reviews (e.g., el-Guebaly, Mudry, Zohar, Tavares, & Potenza, 2011, p. 122). Various types of poor control (O'Connor & Dickerson, 2003: 415) and intense, often uncontrolled cravings to gamble are common complaints from gamblers (Raylu & Oei, 2004:108). The fact that the term "compulsion" only refers to one acknowledged aspect of gambling behaviour presents a challenge, though. When parallels are drawn between obsessive-compulsive disorders (OCD) and pathological gambling, further conceptual challenges emerge. Despite certain behavioural parallels (such as uncontrolled repetitive behaviour), OCD and pathological gambling exhibit distinct neuro-physiological and psychological characteristics, as noted by el-Guebaly *et al.* (2012:345). The motivating factors that influence the behaviours are the main starting point. OCDs are frequently motivated by a desire to regain control over one's surroundings in order to alleviate dysphoric feelings, whereas gambling is typically motivated by attempts to get positive reward. While OCD sufferers frequently score higher on measures of neuroticism (Hwang *et al.*, 2012: 67) and harm avoidance (el-Guebaly *et al.* 2012:346), pathological gamblers tend to score higher on measures of novelty-seeking and impulsivity. Nevertheless, it is also conceded that the two disorders may become increasingly difficult to distinguish in their most extreme forms. At these levels, people with severe problem gambling will increasingly gamble to escape dysphoric states and experience less enjoyment/positive reinforcement from the activity.

When researchers are unable to adopt any specific language (such as issue or problematic) or wish to steer clear of terminology that suggests the presence of an

underlying personal condition or pathology, they may use the ultimate word, "excessive gambling." For instance, Orford (1985:6) favours the term "excessive" in order to circumvent what are thought to be serious problems with the pathology-based definitions. Orford (1985: 7) argues for a more psychological and sociological perspective that avoided the imputation that gambling problems arise from deep-seated and intractable factors that were not amenable to modification over time, based on observations that a significant number of people resolved their gambling difficulties over time or shifted between categories. In other words, his views challenge the assumption inherent in the DSM classification that pathological gambling is always a persistent problem for all individuals affected by the disorder. The conceptual framework that underpins the nomenclature is subject to qualification, even if it is still true that some standardized, valid and reliable methods are still required to help epidemiologists, therapists, and others measure problem gambling at a certain moment in time. For example, labeling someone as 'clinically depressed' at a particular point in time should not automatically lead to assuming they are a 'clinical depressive.' In other words, to be clinically depressed is a temporary state of mind rather than a defining characteristic of a personality. In the same way, identifying a person as a compulsive or problem gambler in a given context should not define them as such permanently. A positive classification or diagnosis may be useful in identifying people who are more likely to be experiencing difficulties at that point in time and who are more at risk in the future. However, one cannot assume that these people will fall into the same category if they were to be interviewed or surveyed again in the future.

Logical Principles and the Act of Gambling

Gambling can be examined philosophically as a decision-making exercise that provides valuable insights into human reasoning in the face of uncertainty. Inductive reasoning, inductive generalization, abductive reasoning, and counter-inductive reasoning are some of the main types of reasoning used in gambling. Each style of cognition represents both the strength and limitations of the human intellect in handling ambiguity using their reasoning capacity. These concepts draw attention to the logical or illogical premises that gamblers use to predict possible outcomes. In some ways, gambling is a stage for epistemological investigation, where individuals actively apply or misapply sophisticated reasoning patterns to uncertain situations. Analyzing these trends demonstrates human rationality's cognitive advantages and disadvantages when it comes to chance. Probably the most popular way of thinking among gamblers is inductive reasoning, which is the act of inferring likely conclusions from patterns in historical occurrences. A person may use inductive reasoning to conclude that a slot machine is "due" for a win if they see that it hasn't paid out in a while. Assuming some degree of consistency in the random processes that underlie gambling mechanisms, this type of reasoning entails extrapolating historical data into the future. A consistent wins of Man United over Bolton for instance creates a persistent behavior for a gambler to stake on the wining team again.

This ignores the statistical independence of many gaming occurrences, dice rolls and roulette wheel spins. The gambler's fallacy, which is based on inductive reasoning, ignores the independence of each game played at different times with different people. It is based on the mistaken notion that short-term errors or differences in a random sequence will be corrected (Tversky&Kahneman, 1971: 106). But since induction represents a natural cognitive disposition—humans are pattern-seeking animals that want to impose order on randomness—its appeal endures. It is impossible to overstate the importance of inductive

reasoning in gambling, just as it is essential in science and daily life. Inductive generalization, in which a general rule is deduced from a small number of facts, is closely associated with inductive reasoning. For instance, a gambler may infer that he is talented or that a "hot streak" is happening if he has won three straight games of poker. This is a shift from specific observations to more general assertions on competency or rational thinking. The quality and size of the sample provide an epistemological risk in this case since biased or small samples typically produce weak generalizations. Inductive generalizations are especially brittle in the gambling industry because results are frequently impacted by factors that the gambler is unaware of or misunderstands. The epistemic problems with inductive generalization are made worse by the modification of downplaying of intelligence by operators and promoters of gambling.

Philosophers like David Hume, who maintained that "all our reasoning concerning matters of fact are founded on a species of analogy" (Hume, 1748/2000: 35), highlighted the need of regularity and recurrence for plausible generalization. Humean caution is especially appropriate in gambling, where regularity is thwarted by the problem of induction; which undermines future outcomes on the basis of the past. Abductive reasoning is another logical way of examining the gambler's mental process. It is what philosophers called inference to the best explanation. Abduction aims to explain observable occurrences in terms of fundamental causes or principles, as opposed to induction, which infers likely outcomes based on frequency. After losing often through inductive consistency, a gambler may believe that the game is "rigged" by agencies or that they were being punished by fate. These are abductive conclusions that were reached as a demonstration of a very close relationship between the aftermath of an occurrence and some underlying fundamental causes. Therefore, gamblers tend to results to prayer, rituals or manipulate the agencies by involving in match fixing, bribing agents or hacking the internet systems of gambling houses. They hope by these actions to eliminate chance and control the fundamental cause of the system. According to Charles Sanders Peirce, abduction is a crucial component of scientific discovery because it enables theories to arise from unusual or unexpected facts (Peirce, 1931–1958, Vol. 5, para. 189). However, when abduction results in magical beliefs or conspiracy theories, it can become epistemologically dangerous in the gambling context. For instance, gamblers frequently depend on unrelated factors like lucky charms or rituals for their success or failure. These abductive leaps reflect a contradiction between intellectual explanation and subjective comfort. Gamblers aim to make meaning of random occurrences by fitting them into bigger narratives or causal frameworks, even when those theories lack factual support. Therefore, in gambling, abductive thinking frequently focuses on the most fulfilling or psychologically comforting answer rather than the best one.

Another odd logic that emerges in gambling environments is counter-inductive reasoning, which is the practice of anticipating the opposite of what repeated experience implies. Counter-induction contradicts inductive thinking, which bases expectations on historical patterns. For example, a gambler would assume that black is "guaranteed" to appear next since a roulette wheel has landed on red five times in a row. This is a certain natural (although flawed) attempt to balance randomness, but it is an inversion of probabilistic reasoning. Philosophers like Imre Lakatos utilized counter-inductive reasoning as a tool in scientific methodology, where it plays a stimulating role in questioning dominant paradigms (Lakatos, 1970:100). In gambling, however, counter-induction typically lacks this intellectual rigor and instead shows as irrational betting behavior. It originates from a misapplication of statistical theory, notably a misunderstanding of the law of big numbers.

The rule of large numbers does not deterministically apply to brief sequences of separate occurrences, even if it does imply convergence over time. However, gamblers often behave as if deviations need to be fixed right now.

Utilitarianism as the Ethics of Gambling

In an effort to provide a standard for what constitutes moral behaviour, the field of ethics in philosophy has given rise to a number of ethical theories. Natural law theory, deontological theory, consequentialist theory and others, are examples of such ethical views. Each of these ethical systems has a standard by which it measures the morality of human actions. Just like other ethical issues such as abortion, suicide, euthanasia, gambling also arouses different perspectives as regards its morality. Ethical issue arises when a situation, decision, or action involves a conflict or potential conflict between different moral principles, values, or duties, leading to question about what is right or wrong, good or bad. It is a situation where there is no clear-cut "correct" answer, or where choosing a seemingly right course of action might violate another social or individual consideration. Gambling thus, falls under the gamut of ethical issue by virtue of dualistic opinions that emerge in the quest to determine whether the act of gambling is right or wrong. If one wants to formulate the yardstick for the morality of gambling, utilitarianism is the appropriate principle because it argues for the consideration of the consequences or expectations associated with actions, and see whether they generate greatest happiness for the greatest number of people or reduces suffering. To a utilitarian, gambling would be a right action if its consequence of high winnings is measured in relation to the little amount one bets with. Such outcome which generates great utility for greatest number of people involved in the act would be right. So, gambling being an act that is capable of increasing the financial status of both society and individual would be a right action because it increases riches over poverty, happiness over suffering. Even if a gambler fails to win, their hope is still not diminished; which is positive feeling.

In a bid to formulate a philosophical foundation for the assessment of gambling, utilitarianism which argues for the consideration of the consequences or the outcomes plays a vital ethical role as it helps to explore logical and ethical implications of the result of gambling on individual and the society at large. Utilitarianism is a consequentialist ethical theory that judges the morality of actions based on their outcomes, emphasizing the maximization of happiness and the minimization of suffering. The principle of utility, first articulated by Jeremy Bentham, holds that the right action is the one that produces "the greatest good for the greatest number" (Bentham, 1789/1988: 14). Thus, to the utilitarian, especially Bentham, gambling would be a right action if its consequence is measured using felicific calculus and such outcome generates greatest happiness for greatest number of people involved in the act, and wrong if it generates pain for the greatest number of people involved. Although utilitarianism may not exactly be a philosophical issue, it is a challenging approach to moral philosophy that has always drawn fervent supporters and detractors. The harsher of its detractors, such as Bernard Williams, have denounced utilitarianism as a pernicious doctrine that disregards the most cherished values of human life and reduces morality to expediency (Williams, 1973: 136). Similarly, John Rawls criticized it for permitting the violation of individual rights in pursuit of aggregate welfare, thereby undermining justice and fairness (Rawls, 1971: 27). In contrast, defenders like J. J. C. Smart argue that utilitarianism is a practical and liberating moral framework that promotes an empirical approach to ethical decision-making and challenges entrenched (Smart & Williams, 1973: 9).

More balanced perspectives, such as those presented by Julia Driver, acknowledge both the strengths and weaknesses of utilitarian reasoning, suggesting that while it offers valuable guidance in many cases, it may also struggle with complex moral contexts (Driver, 2014, para. 2).

Despite the doubts about the theory's ultimate sufficiency, many philosophers have acknowledged the intuitive attraction of fundamental utilitarian concepts. The traditional utilitarian idea that deeds are morally right when they bring happiness or lessen suffering has an indisputable allure: A person is expected to count the consequences for happiness of an act or another course, and they go with the one with the highest favourable consequence. A poor person cannot afford to do nothing when a simple bet can provide them with a fortune. So, it is more reasonable to gamble with little amount, with the hope of reaping something higher. Utilitarianism deals with something that is undoubtedly important in human life, the promotion of happiness (or, as many modern theorists would have it, the satisfaction of human preferences); but it is less clear whether the relationship between our calculation of increment in happiness and the real life situation is justifiable. This is because hope is not always realized even when it produces good feelings. Consequentialist ethical theory like utilitarianism assesses the morality of deeds according to their results, particularly in terms of minimizing pain or suffering and enhancing total happiness or pleasure (Mill, 1863: 9). The works of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill are most frequently linked to this moral theory. They maintained that human behaviour should be assessed according to its utility, or its ability to benefit the largest number of people (Bentham, 1789:24). This theory, which promotes a logical and scientific approach to morality, has influenced ethical decision-making in fields including public policy, economics, and law. Although utilitarianism is widely used, it has also been criticized for having the ability to excuse immoral behaviour in spite of the fact that it increases happiness for majority (Smart & Williams, 1973: 35). For instance, a gambler who most of the time spends hours in gambling houses to the detriment of family bonding will be seen as doing right if he wins enough money to pay for children school fees. After all family bonding may not be valued if there is no money to meet family goals.

John Stuart Mill developed Bentham's theory by highlighting the importance of moral and intellectual abilities to human well-being and by proposing qualitative differences between higher and lower pleasures (Mill, 1863: 13). This change offered a more sophisticated interpretation of utilitarian ethics and allayed certain worries about Bentham's purely quantitative methodology. The idea has been used to support market rules, democratic government, and social programs that maximize the well-being of society. The quality of life promised by gambling with huge reward for little money or risk remains an ethical justification for the act of gambling. However, critics have countered that the quality principle of utilitarianism is likely to produce unfair results, especially when it can sacrifice majority happiness for minority rights (Rawls, 1971: 54). The quality of life at times is subjective and value laden and as such its determination gives room for manipulation.

For instance, people have argued that gambling addiction contributes to misunderstanding and conflicts in families, yet this may not be totally correct since some families have benefited or are benefiting from the wins. The argument of majority losing in gambling can only be valid if a world assessment or survey is carried out. But we know the difficulties that can militate against this. It has also been alleged that gambling-related debt undermines household financial stability and broader economic health. This may be true because some addicts do not care when they have to play with all the money in their

accounts. But this only speaks to addiction rather than the act of playing responsibly. So, what authorities should speak to and control is the addiction that is likely to crop up from long term in playing a game. What is not controvertible is that gambling industries, such as casinos and lotteries, contribute significantly to national tax revenue (Walker & Jackson, 2011: 21). Governments at all levels benefit from the taxes paid by gambling organizations alongside other businesses (Calcagno & Walker, 2016: 93). Beyond revenue, some scholars argue that gambling provides psychological hope and entertainment, which can foster social cohesion, particularly in times of economic hardship (Orford, 2011: 67). The expectation of wealth, whether realistic or not, generated by large gambling wins often sustains optimism among the general public, helping individuals cope with economic uncertainty.

Conclusion and Recommendation

We have been able to show that gambling promotes logical reasoning and human involvement is not unreasonable. The ethical acceptability of gambling may be very low when one applied ethical theories such as natural law and Kantian deontology; and also, when one considers some negative impact of gambling on families, individual finance, and social perception as a whole. However, completely banning gambling would pose serious danger to both individual freedom and economic growth. Authoritarianism, poverty, and societal crisis can arise from restricting people's freedom to explore chances of survival and thus impedes hope and economic growth. According to Mill (1859:16–18), limiting individual freedom stunts moral and intellectual advancement and jeopardizes the advancement of society. Sen also contends that economic bondage, such as restricted access to markets and jobs, fosters poverty and restricts human potential (1999:4–5). Innovation is stifled and social mobility is impossible in the absence of liberty and progress. A thorough analysis of gambling reveals that there are many advantages to it, particularly when it is controlled. Both individual gamblers and the overall economy will benefit from gambling when it is controlled and engaged sensibly. Through excitement, social engagement, and strategic thinking, gambling can improve psychological well-being for individuals (Reith, 2005:120–122). A regulated setting for taking risks, which is associated with elevated dopamine levels and improved mood management, may also be offered by occasional gambling (Griffiths, 2007: 135). At the societal level, gambling makes a substantial tax revenue contribution to the government. These revenues support vital public services including infrastructure, healthcare, and education in many jurisdictions (Walker & Jackson, 2007: 598). The gaming business boosts local economies and creates jobs, especially in the travel and hotel industries (Eadington, 1999: 175). Additionally, many state-run lotteries and casinos allocate a portion of their profits to charitable causes, amplifying their social impact (Walker & Jackson, 2007: 600). With the consideration of these enormous positive effects of gambling, this long-essay, though assessed gambling from the purview of utilitarianism, concludes on the note that the subject-matter should be ethically permissible, but should be placed under and enhanced policy that regulate its activity.

In order to guarantee that gambling is morally acceptable, governments must enact thorough regulatory laws that uphold public welfare and encourage personal responsibility. People should be assisted to control their gambling and avoid addiction. Policies should also include time reminders, betting limits, and self-exclusion measures. Furthermore, advertisement should be strictly controlled to prevent deceptive or manipulative messaging, particularly when it presents gambling as a surefire way to get rich or as a way out of a difficult situation (Orford, 2011: 204–205). Conclusively therefore gambling may serve as a

morally acceptable means of promoting social cohesion and economic advancement when it is governed by the principles of harm reduction, informed consent, and accountability.

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