GAMBLING MODE, GAMBLING MOTIVES, AND TRAIT PERSONALITY

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INTRODUCTION

- In most research that compares online and offline gamblers, offline gamblers are those who gamble exclusively offline (e.g., in casinos or bars); however, those labelled as online gamblers do not necessarily restrict their gambling to the Internet.

- These binary comparisons of online and offline gamblers have typically shown that online gamblers are at an increased risk of experiencing gambling problems.

- However, most people who gamble online also gamble offline to some degree [1]. Consequently, these binary comparisons of online and offline gamblers limits understanding of the level of risk specifically associated with online gambling.

- A small body of recent research has addressed this limitation by separating 'online gamblers' into exclusively online gamblers (ONGs) and mixed-mode gamblers (MMGs) and comparing them to exclusively offline gamblers (OFGs).

- Comparisons of ONGs, OFGs, and MMGs have consistently shown that MMGs are at the greatest risk of problematic gambling [2] and that MMGs who have experienced gambling problems are more likely to report that their most harmful form of gambling is an offline one [3]. These findings suggest that the level of risk associated with gambling online may be overstated.

- **Study Goal:** Conduct exploratory analyses to compare a sample of ONGs, OFGs, and MMGs on indices of gambling motives and trait personality to create a more comprehensive profile of each type of gambler and identify potential reasons for MMGs' proneness to problem gambling.

METHODS

Recruitment
- N = 517 people with gambling problems were recruited using CloudResearch (an online crowdsourcing platform), and identified as ONGs (n = 166), OFGs (n = 171), or MMGs (n = 180).

Measures
- Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI).
- Gambling Motives Questionnaire – Financial (GMQ-F).
- Brief HEXACO Inventory of Personality (BHI).

Statistical Analyses
- One-way, between subjects ANOVAs

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

- Mean age: 36.66 ± 11.9 years.

- Gender distribution: 49.7% female, 49.7% male, and 0.6% transgender or non-binary.

RESULTS

$*$ = p < .05 $**$ = p < .01 $***$ = p < .001

Problem Gambling Severity Scores

Online: 11.41 | Mixed-Mode: 12.32 | Offline: 11.08

Figure 1. $F(2, 509) = 29.12$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = 0.10$

Gambling Motives
Online | Mixed-Mode | Offline

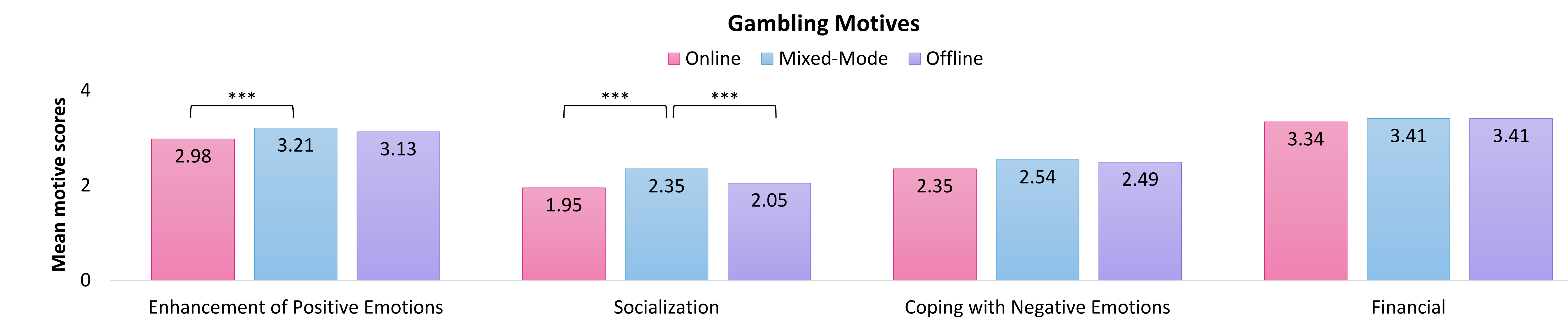|	Online	Mixed-Mode	Offline
Enhancement of Positive Emotions	2.98	3.21	3.13
Socialization	1.95	2.35	2.05
Coping with Negative Emotions	2.35	2.54	2.49
Financial	3.34	3.41	3.41

Figure 3. Enhancement: $F(2, 513) = 6.27$, $p = .002$, $\omega^2 = 0.02$; Socialization: $F(2, 514) = 11.94$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = 0.04$; Coping: $F(2, 514) = 2.79$, $p = .062$, $\omega^2 = 0.01$; Financial: $F(2, 508) = 0.79$, $p = .455$, $\omega^2 = 0.00$

Trait Personality Scores
Online | Mixed-Mode | Offline

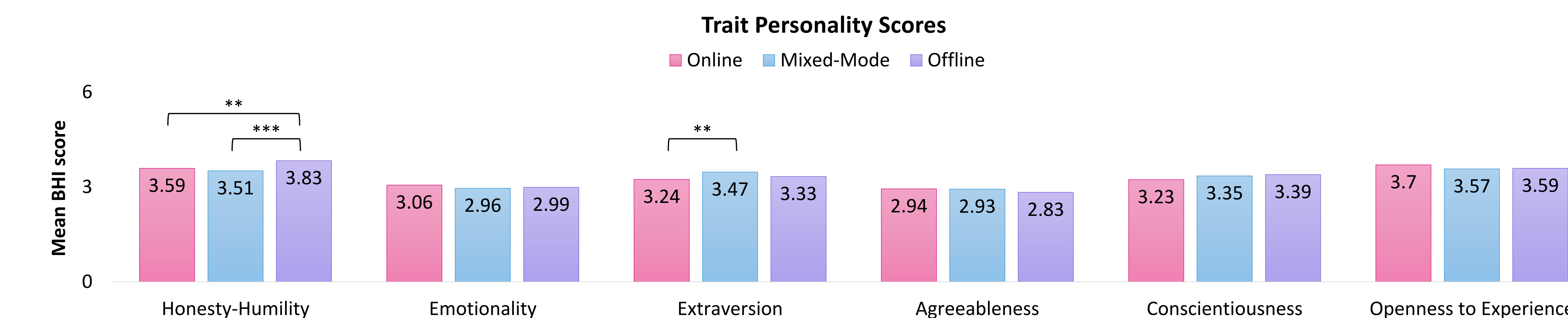|	Online	Mixed-Mode	Offline
Honesty-Humility	3.59	3.51	3.83
Emotionality	3.06	2.96	2.99
Extraversion	3.24	3.47	3.33
Agreeableness	2.94	2.93	2.83
Conscientiousness	3.23	3.35	3.39
Openness to Experience	3.7	3.57	3.59

Figure 4. Honesty-Humility: $F(2, 513) = 8.17$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = 0.03$; Emotionality: $F(2, 514) = 0.91$, $p = .402$, $\omega^2 = 0.00$; Extraversion: $F(2, 512) = 4.19$, $p = .016$, $\omega^2 = 0.01$; Agreeableness: $F(2, 511) = 1.72$, $p = .179$, $\omega^2 = 0.00$; Conscientiousness: $F(2, 514) = 2.25$, $p = .107$, $\omega^2 = 0.01$; Openness to Experience: $F(2, 511) = 2.02$, $p = .134$, $\omega^2 = 0.00$

SUMMARY

Comparisons with Previous Research
- Consistent with previous research findings [2, 3], MMGs reported worse problematic gambling severity than OFGs.

Differences in Gambling Motives and Personality
- MMGs were more likely to endorse enhancement of positive thoughts, feelings, or emotions, and socialization as motives for gambling.

- MMGs reported the lowest honesty-humility scores and the highest extraversion scores.

Relationships Between Gambling Motives and Personality
- People who score lower on honesty-humility tend to be more willing to lie and are more likely to be motivated by material or monetary gain [4] – characteristics that are apparent when gambling becomes problematic.

- Previous research has shown that lower levels of honesty-humility predict greater endorsement of enhancement motives, which, in turn, predict worse problematic gambling [5]. Such an interplay between honesty-humility and enhancement motives could account for MMGs' increased risk of problematic gambling.

- People high in extraversion tend to enjoy social interactions and have positive self-regard [4]. Extraversion has been positively associated with enhancement and socialization motives for gambling [6] – both of which have been linked to a heightened risk of problematic gambling [7, 8].

- It is possible that an interplay between desires to maintain social connections, achieve or maintain a positive sense of self, and increase positive emotions may account for MMGs' higher rates of problematic gambling.

Implications of the Present Research
- This research can lead to improved understanding of which groups of people are at the greatest risk of experiencing gambling-related harm and can inform the development of more effective harm reduction strategies, interventions, and treatment programs.

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