



**Howard League
for Penal Reform**



Commission on Crime and Problem Gambling

Exploring the lived experiences of people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, crime and problem gambling

Research in partnership with BetKnowMore

Background

The Commission on Crime and Problem Gambling has published an academic literature review that has shown that there is limited existing research into the relationship between crime and problem gambling (Commission on Crime and Problem Gambling, 2020). Most research has been undertaken in other jurisdictions, notably Australia, the US and Canada. The Commission seeks to understand the relationship between crime and problem gambling in England and Wales. There is a particular gap in research and knowledge relating to the experiences of people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities in England and Wales. Adolphe et al's systematic review (2018) looking at the relationship between crime and problem gambling recognised the need for research assessing the role of demographic factors.

Recent research suggests that 20 per cent of adults from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities scored one or higher on the Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI) . This is in comparison to 12 per cent of White adults. Of this 20 per cent, seven per cent were classified as problem gamblers (Gunstone and Gosschalk, 2019). This study focussed on gambling treatment and support. It suggested that people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities were less likely to seek treatment and support following the threat of criminal proceedings than their White counterparts (one per cent compared with six per cent respectively).

Studies show that Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities are often over-represented among in-treatment or incarcerated groups (see: May-Chahal et al's (2017) research on prisoners' criminal careers in relation to gambling harm and The Forward Trust's (2020) survey of prisoners' experiences). However, there is little exploration of the reasons for this, of the nature of the relationship between crime and gambling harms in ethnic minority communities, or of variances in the criminal

justice system's response in relation to the diversity of experiences of different ethnic minority communities. Researchers have also identified the importance of acknowledging the plurality and diversity of different racial, cultural and ethnic groups and their experiences, including intersectionality.

The research

This research seeks to focus on and amplify the voices of people from ethnic minority communities who have been directly affected by gambling harms and crime. It aims to highlight the complex interplay between crime and problem gambling through in-depth qualitative research about people's lived experiences. The overarching goal of this research is to develop and situate a knowledge base within the criminal justice system which recognises problem gambling, gambling harms and the specific related needs of people from ethnic minority communities, thus lowering the potential for criminal justice interventions in the future.

The specific aims are to:

- Identify the specific trajectories and experiences of people from ethnic minority communities who are identified as problem gamblers and have had engagement with the criminal justice system. The research should recognise the plurality and diversity of different racial, cultural and ethnic groups and their experiences, including intersectionality.
- Investigate the different patterns of problem gambling amongst different communities, including similarities and differences in crimes, and whether the responses from the criminal justice system vary according to the diversity of experiences.
- Provide a basis for understanding the needs of ethnic minority communities to raise awareness among opinion formers, professionals and the wider public; and
- Highlight any deficits in criminal justice agencies' understanding and provision and signpost for change.

The research should seek to map issues such as how people first engage with gambling, what types of gambling they partake in, how it escalates and when and how it results in them committing crime. The research should also seek to identify how it affects key relationships such as employment, social and familial networks. The research should also explore whether interventions or treatments for problem gambling had been sought or utilised.

We are seeking proposals for primary research conducted alongside peer researchers using qualitative methodologies to understand the experience of adults who have been or who are subject to the criminal justice system as a result of problem gambling.

The successful candidate will work with a group of peer researchers to undertake the research; and alongside key staff from [BetKnowMore](#) and the [Howard League for Penal Reform](#) throughout the process.

Outputs

The research should be presented as a 10,000-word report which includes a literature review, analysis and recommendations. It should include a stand-alone executive summary which can be published as a separate briefing. Both should be written to publication standard.

The Howard League's research guidelines can be found online [here](#).

Timeframe

It is expected that the research and the report will be completed within 10 months from the formal date of appointment.

Budget

£15,000 plus agreed expenses (in line with the Howard League for Penal Reform's expenses policy).

Other information

The Howard League for Penal Reform is seeking to commission an individual to undertake this research rather than a university department. A contract directly with the successful applicant will be issued.

The successful applicant is expected to spend some time in London in the offices of the Howard League and BetKnowMore/in virtual meetings (dependent on wider circumstances).

The researcher will be invited to present the research findings at a Crime and Problem Gambling Commission meeting. It is also expected that the author will support the wider dissemination of the research findings.

Selection process

Please email a CV plus a covering letter highlighting your research experience and suitability to undertake this research along with an outline of your proposed approach to Helen Churcher, Research and Projects Officer, by 12pm on Friday 1 October 2021 (Email: Helen.Churcher@howardleague.org).

If you require any further information, please contact Anita Dockley via email: Anita.Dockley@howardleague.org

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview on Friday 22 October 2021. It is anticipated that this will be conducted via Zoom.

References

Adolphe, A., Khatib, L., van Golde, C., Gainsbury, S., and Blaszczynski, A. (2018), Crime and Gambling Disorders: A systematic review. *Journal of Gambling Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10899-018-9794-7>

Commission on Crime and Problem Gambling (2020), Crime and problem gambling: A research landscape, written by Sarah Ramanauskas, Howard League for Penal Reform

Gunstone, B., and Gosschalk, K. (2019), Gambling among adults from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities: A secondary data analysis of the Gambling Treatment and Support Study: On behalf of GambleAware. London, UK: YouGov. Full text report available at <https://www.begambleaware.org/sites/default/files/2020-12/2020-12-09-gambling-among-adults-from-black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-communities-report.pdf>

May-Chahal, C., Humphreys, L., Clifton, A., Francis, B., and Reith, G. (2017), Gambling harm and crime careers. Journal of Gambling Studies, 33(1), 65-84

The Forward Trust. (2020), Gambling harm and offenders: A survey of prisoners' experiences. London, UK: The Forward Trust. <https://www.forwardtrust.org.uk/publication/gambling-harm-and-offenders-a-survey-of-prisoners-experiences/>