

The Effect of Emotion Regulation and Sleep Quality on Online Gambling Addiction Among Youth in Kediri

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Article History

Submitted :
February 28th, 2026

Final Revised :
July 18th, 2026

Accepted :
September 25th, 2026



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Terapan

Abstract

Background: The growing accessibility of online gambling has become a serious psychological risk factor for Indonesian youth. **Objective:** This study aims to analyze the influence of emotion regulation and sleep quality on online gambling addiction among youth in Kediri Regency. **Methods:** Using a non-experimental quantitative predictive design, data were collected from 30 Indonesian youths aged 18–30 who had engaged or were currently engaging in online gambling within the past three months, selected through purposive sampling, using the ERQ, SQS, and OGAS scales. Data analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression with Jamovi software. **Results:** The overall regression model was significant ($F = 6.47$, $p = 0.005$), with an effective contribution of 32.4%. Partial tests showed that emotion regulation was a significant predictor of online gambling addiction ($t = -3.59$, $p = 0.001$), while sleep quality was not significant ($t = 1.13$, $p = 0.269$). **Conclusion:** These findings confirm that emotion regulation is the dominant psychological factor protecting youth from online gambling addiction. The moderate R-square value (32.4%) indicates that emotion regulation and sleep quality explain a limited proportion of the variance in online gambling addiction, with the remaining 67.6% explained by other external factors. The very limited sample size of this study ($N = 30$) was due to the difficulty of reaching respondents, given that online gambling is an illegal activity in Indonesia.

Keywords: Emotion regulation; sleep quality; online gambling addiction; youth

Abstrak

Latar Belakang: Meningkatnya aksesibilitas judi online menjadi risiko psikologis yang serius bagi pemuda Indonesia. **Tujuan:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh regulasi emosi dan kualitas tidur terhadap kecanduan judi online pada pemuda di Kabupaten Kediri. **Metode:** Menggunakan desain prediktif non-eksperimental kuantitatif, data dikumpulkan dari 30 pemuda Indonesia berusia 18–30 tahun yang pernah atau sedang terlibat dalam judi online dalam tiga bulan terakhir, dipilih melalui teknik purposive sampling, menggunakan skala ERQ, SQS, dan OGAS. Analisis data dilakukan dengan regresi linear berganda menggunakan software Jamovi. **Hasil:** Model regresi secara keseluruhan signifikan ($F = 6.47$, $p = 0.005$), dengan kontribusi efektif sebesar 32,4%. Uji parsial menunjukkan regulasi emosi merupakan prediktor signifikan terhadap kecanduan judi online ($t = -3.59$, $p = 0.001$), sementara kualitas tidur tidak signifikan ($t = 1.13$, $p = 0.269$). **Simpulan:** Temuan ini mengonfirmasi bahwa regulasi emosi merupakan faktor psikologis dominan yang melindungi pemuda dari kecanduan judi online. Nilai R-square yang moderat (32,4%) mengindikasikan bahwa regulasi emosi dan kualitas tidur menjelaskan proporsi variansi yang terbatas pada kecanduan judi online, dengan sisa 67,6% dijelaskan oleh faktor eksternal lain. Ukuran sampel penelitian ini yang sangat terbatas ($N = 30$) disebabkan oleh sulitnya menjangkau responden mengingat judi online merupakan aktivitas ilegal di Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: Regulasi emosi; kualitas tidur; kecanduan judi online; pemuda

Introduction



Digital technology development has fundamentally transformed the landscape of contemporary entertainment, creating unprecedented accessibility to various forms of online content and activities (Han, 2024). This transformation has not only affected video and electronic game consumption but has also permeated the realm of gambling, which can now be accessed through online platforms anytime and anywhere via electronic devices (Saefullah & Vaidyanathan, 2025). Gambling, once synonymous with physical activities using cards or dice, has now transformed into a digital service that is far more accessible than its conventional forms. This ease of access creates new challenges in the context of public health, particularly regarding the potential for addiction and its accompanying psychological impacts (Khairuna & Nasution, 2025).

The phenomenon of online gambling in Indonesia has developed into a nationwide social problem with an alarming trend. Recent data from the Indonesian Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Center shows that from 2017 to the third quarter of 2025, the accumulated value of funds circulating from online gambling activities reached approximately IDR 1,032 trillion, with more than 259 million transactions. As of October 2025 alone, the value of circulating online gambling funds was recorded at IDR 155 trillion, although this figure shows a 56% decrease compared to the same period in 2024, which reached IDR 359 trillion (Yusril Ihza Mahendra, 2025). This decline likely reflects the effectiveness of some of the countermeasures implemented by the government; however, it does not necessarily mean the problem has subsided, the transaction scale, still in the hundreds of trillions of rupiah, continues to indicate that online gambling remains a widespread and structured practice (Saputra & Adhari, 2025).

Youth represent the demographic group most vulnerable to involvement in online gambling (Irene Montiel Dkk, 2021). This occurs because the psychosocial characteristics of the transition period toward adulthood, marked by identity exploration and the pursuit of financial independence, create conditions conducive to engagement in high-risk behaviors (Gezgin et al., 2025). The illusion of easy money, combined with a lack of understanding of the probabilities and financial risks involved, makes youth easily trapped in gambling practices that can ultimately develop into addictive patterns, Septiyo et al. (2025), his vulnerability does not stand alone sociologically but is intertwined with individual psychological factors that determine whether exposure to the temptation of online gambling will result in momentary involvement or a persistent pattern of addiction (Azhard et al., 2026). One of the most highlighted psychological determinants in the behavioral addiction literature is emotion regulation.

Emotion regulation refers to the intrinsic and extrinsic processes individuals use to monitor, evaluate, and modify their emotional reactions in order to achieve specific goals (Agustin, 2024). In the context of addictive behavior, emotion regulation deficits have been consistently identified as a significant risk factor. Individuals with limited emotion regulation abilities tend to use maladaptive coping strategies, including compulsive behaviors such as gambling, as a mechanism to escape unpleasant emotional experiences (Martaria Rizky Rinaldi, 2024). Youth who struggle to manage negative emotions such as stress, anxiety, or frustration tend to seek instant gratification through gambling as a form of maladaptive external emotion regulation (Cardwell et al., 2022).

In addition to emotion regulation, sleep quality is a fundamental aspect that plays an important role in mental and physical health. Adequate, quality sleep is essential for various physiological and psychological functions, including energy restoration, memory consolidation, and emotion regulation (Sri Wahyuningsih, 2024). The relationship between sleep quality and gambling behavior is likely bidirectional. On one hand, sleep disturbances can result in deficits in cognitive control and emotion regulation, which in turn increase vulnerability to impulsive and compulsive behaviors. On the other hand, engagement in online gambling, particularly activities that continue late into the night, can disrupt circadian rhythms and result in sleep deprivation and reduced sleep quality (Sinaga, 2026). Chronic sleep deprivation can worsen decision-making ability and increase emotional reactivity, creating a cycle that reinforces addictive behavior. (Hyndych & El-abassi, 2025).

This can be understood through the self-regulation theory developed by Baumeister et al. (2007) which views self-regulatory capacity as a psychological resource that can undergo depletion when continuously used to control thoughts, emotions, and behavior. Within this framework, both emotion regulation and sleep quality can be understood as two factors that influence the availability of self-regulatory resources: emotion regulation represents the capacity for direct affect control, while sleep quality functions to restore the cognitive resources that sustain the entire self-regulation process, including impulse control to avoid engaging in risky behaviors such as online gambling. When self-regulatory resources are depleted, whether due to unmanaged emotional distress or lack of sleep, individuals become more vulnerable to failing to resist urges to engage in impulsive and compulsive behaviors, including gambling (Baumeister et al., 2007).

A number of studies have also examined emotion regulation and sleep quality in relation to addictive behavior, but thus far these have been conducted separately and in different contexts. One study found an association between online gambling addiction and high levels of anxiety (Dwi Fitria Sari et al., 2024). Another study showed that sleep deprivation has implications for emotion dysregulation (Zajijilah, 2026). While an experimental study on 300 university students found that acute sleep deprivation increased emotion regulation difficulties and partially mediated its effect on problematic online gaming (Zhao et al., 2026). A qualitative study on online gambling addicts showed that participants' emotion regulation abilities remained impaired, with negative emotions such as frustration and anger continuing to dominate, especially after experiencing losses (Fitriyani, 2025). In a related domain, self-regulation has been shown to play a significant role in suppressing online game addiction among adolescents (Lay & Keraf, 2021). While emotion regulation deficits have been shown to directly contribute to the severity of gambling disorder, particularly among younger individuals (Jiménez-murcia, 2019). In another study, high levels of anxiety were found to be associated with online gambling addiction, reinforced by research on 105 university students who use online gambling sites/applications, which found a significant positive relationship between emotion regulation difficulties and internet addiction (Fortuna, 2024) and emotion regulation difficulties mediated the relationship between digital game addiction and decreased life satisfaction among adolescents (Brahim et al., 2025).

Based on the description above, this study aims to analyze the effect of emotion regulation and sleep quality on online gambling addiction among adolescents in Kediri Regency. Specifically, this study will: (1) identify the levels of emotion regulation, sleep quality, and online gambling addiction among adolescents; (2) test the bivariate relationships between emotion regulation, sleep quality, and online gambling addiction; and (3) analyze the relative contributions of emotion regulation and sleep quality to online gambling addiction through multiple regression analysis. A more comprehensive understanding of the psychological factors contributing to online gambling addiction is expected to provide an empirical basis for developing more effective preventive and curative interventions, particularly those targeting the improvement of emotion regulation skills and sleep quality as strategies to reduce the risk and impact of online gambling addiction among adolescents. The findings of this study are also expected to contribute empirically to the pathways model literature by testing whether the extension of the emotionally vulnerable pathway through sleep quality, as argued above, is supported by data in the Indonesian adolescent population.

Hypotheses

H1: There is a simultaneous effect of emotion regulation and sleep quality on online gambling addiction among youth in Kediri Regency.

H2: There is an effect of emotion regulation on online gambling addiction among youth in Kediri Regency.

H3: There is an effect of sleep quality on online gambling addiction among youth in Kediri Regency.

Method

This study employed a quantitative approach with a non-experimental predictive design to analyze the contribution of emotion regulation and sleep quality to online gambling addiction among adolescents in Kediri Regency. This design was chosen to test the statistical relationships and predictive ability of the independent variables on the dependent variable without manipulation or drawing direct causal inferences (Creswell, 2018).

Sample or Population

This study involved 30 adolescents in Kediri Regency who had previously or were currently engaged in online gambling activities as research subjects. The sampling technique used was non-probability sampling through the purposive sampling method, namely a sample selection technique based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The established criteria included: adolescents aged 18–30 years, residing in Kediri Regency, and having engaged in online gambling within the past three months. Participants were recruited through the researcher's personal contact network, given the hidden population characteristics resulting from the illegal status of online gambling activities in Indonesia, making a personal trust-based approach more feasible than open recruitment. The sample size of $N=30$ took into account the limited accessibility of this hidden population. The researcher acknowledges that this sample size falls below the general recommendation for multiple regression analysis with two predictors (Green, 1991).

Procedure

The research procedure began with the development and readability testing of the instrument. The questionnaire was then compiled in Google Form format and distributed to prospective participants through the researcher's personal contact network, with a request that participants who met the criteria also share the link with other individuals in their network who also met the research criteria (snowball sampling). Before completing the questionnaire, participants were presented with an informed consent form explaining the research objectives, guarantees of data confidentiality and anonymity, the right to refuse or withdraw at any time without consequence, and the researcher's contact information for further inquiries. Participation was voluntary, and respondents could only proceed to the research questions after explicitly indicating their consent on the form. All data were stored anonymously and used solely for the purposes of this study, in accordance with the ethical principles of psychological research.

Data Measurement

The instruments used comprised three psychological scales. First, the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ), adapted by Radde, Nurhikmah, and Saudi (2021), with reliability of $\alpha = 0.951$ for the Cognitive Reappraisal dimension and $\alpha = 0.790$ for the Expressive Suppression dimension (Radde et al., 2021). The original ERQ scale uses a 1–7 response format, in this study, the format was adapted to 1–5 to maintain consistency with the other two instruments, following the general view that adjustments to Likert scale categories can be made without reducing the content validity of the instrument. Second, the Sleep Quality Scale (SQS), adopted from Ramadita, Harsanti, and Harmoni (2023) within the Indonesian context, with reliability of $\alpha = 0.868$ (Ramadita et al., 2023). Third, the Online Gambling Addiction Scale (OGAS), adapted from Sari et al. (2024), with reliability of $\alpha = 0.841$ (Dwi Fitria Sari et al., 2024).

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression with the assistance of Jamovi software, after undergoing basic and classical assumption testing. Prior to the main analysis, the data were tested through normality testing, multicollinearity testing via VIF and tolerance values, as well as descriptive statistical analysis and Pearson correlation. All statistical tests used a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

Result

Descriptive Statistics

This study involved 30 adolescent respondents in Kediri Regency who had previously or were currently engaged in online gambling activities. Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to provide an overview of the distribution characteristics of the data for each research variable. Table 1 presents a summary of descriptive statistics for the three variables studied.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

	Emotion Regulation	Sleep Quality	Online Gambling Addiction
N	30	30	30
Mean	33,9	87,0	30,0
Median	33,0	86,0	31,0
SD	4,73	6,70	7,95
Minimum	27	80	10
Maximum	45	105	44

The data in Table 1 show that all respondents (N=30) provided complete data with no missing values. The online gambling addiction variable showed the greatest variation (SD=7.95) compared to the other two variables, indicating considerable heterogeneity in the severity of addiction among respondents.

Assumption Testing

The Shapiro–Wilk normality test showed that the residual distribution had a statistic of $W=0.920$ with $p=0.027$, indicating that the assumption of residual normality was violated at the conventional significance level ($p<0.05$). To trace the source of this violation, skewness and kurtosis for each variable were examined, evaluated using the z-ratio ($z=\text{skewness}/SE$ and $z=\text{kurtosis}/SE$), with a threshold of $z>1.96$ as a criterion more suitable for small sample sizes.

Table 2. Normality Test

	Skewness	SE Skewness	z-skewness	Kurtosis	SE Kurtosis	z-kurtosis
Emotion Regulation	0,962	0,427	2,25*	0,761	0,833	0,91
Sleep Quality	0,763	0,427	1,79	0,050	0,833	0,06
Online Gambling Addiction	-1,200	0,427	-2,81*	1,490	0,833	1,79

* $z > 1,96$ = statistically significant

The kurtosis of all three variables was within normal limits (all $z < 1.96$). However, the skewness for emotion regulation ($z=2.25$) and online gambling addiction ($z=-2.81$) showed significant deviation from a symmetric distribution, while sleep quality was at the borderline threshold ($z=1.79$). The skewness in the online gambling addiction variable, the dependent variable in this regression model, was identified as the primary contributor to the violation of residual normality in the Shapiro–Wilk test. Given this finding, a bootstrap analysis (distribution-free resampling, 1000 resamples) was conducted as a sensitivity test on the regression coefficients, in order to obtain confidence interval estimates that do not depend on the assumption of residual normality. The bootstrap results are reported in the following section, alongside the conventional parametric test results.

Table 3. Multicollinearity Test

	VIF	Tolerance
Emotion Regulation	1.15	0.867
Sleep Quality	1.15	0.867

The multicollinearity test showed that all independent variables had VIF values below 10 (Emotion Regulation VIF=1.15; Sleep Quality VIF=1.15), with a tolerance of 0.867 for both variables, well above the minimum threshold of 0.1, indicating that the two predictors were relatively independent of one another.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

First Hypothesis. A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the contribution of emotional regulation and sleep quality to online gambling addiction. Table 2 presents the results of the model fit test.

Table 4. Model Fit Test Results

Model	R	R ²	F	df1	df2	p
1	0,569	0,324	6,47	2	27	0,005

The regression model showed good fit, with $R=0.569$ and $R^2=0.324$, indicating that 32.4% of the variance in online gambling addiction could be explained by emotion regulation and sleep quality simultaneously. The F-test yielded $F(2,27)=6.47$ with $p=0.005$ (significant at $p<0.01$), confirming that the overall model was significant. Converted to Cohen's effect size, $f^2 = R^2/(1-R^2) = 0.324/0.676 = 0.48$, classified as a large effect size according to Cohen's (1988) convention.

Table 5. Parametric Regression Results

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	df	p
Intercept	44,978	16,713	—	2,69	27	0,012
Emotion Regulation	-1,025	0,285	-0,610	-3,59	27	0,001
Sleep Quality	0,228	0,202	0,192	1,13	27	0,269

Given the normality violation identified earlier, Table 6 presents the bootstrap results (1000 resamples) as a sensitivity test for the regression coefficients above.

Table 6. Regression Results Bootstrap 95% Confidence Interval

Prediktor	B	SE	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	df	t	p
Intercept	44,978	16,713	6,621	83,931	27	2,691	0,012
Emotion Regulation	-1,025	0,285	-1,637	0,052	27	-3,592	0,001
Sleep Quality	0,228	0,202	-0,297	0,568	27	1,129	0,269

Second Hypothesis. The parametric t-test showed that emotion regulation had a significant negative effect on online gambling addiction ($B=-1.025$, $SE=0.285$, $\beta=-0.610$, $t=-3.59$, $p=0.001$). However, the bootstrap results showed a 95% CI of $(-1.637, 0.052)$, this interval still includes zero, although its upper bound is very close to zero. This discrepancy indicates that the statistical significance of emotion regulation in the parametric test is not fully robust against the normality violation and the limitations of the sample size ($N=30$). Thus, although the direction of the effect of emotion regulation on online gambling addiction is consistently negative and the effect size is large ($\beta=-0.610$), consistent with the second hypothesis (H2), the level of statistical certainty regarding this finding needs to be interpreted with caution, given that the bootstrap results do not confirm this significance at the 95% confidence level.

Third Hypothesis. Sleep quality showed no significant effect on online gambling addiction in either the parametric test ($B=0.228$, $SE=0.202$, $\beta=0.192$, $t=1.13$, $p=0.269$) or the bootstrap test (95% CI $-0.297, 0.568$, also including zero). Both methods consistently showed insufficient evidence for an effect of sleep quality in this model. Thus, the third hypothesis (H3) is rejected. Based on the analysis results, the resulting regression equation is: Online Gambling Addiction = $44.978 - 1.025(\text{Emotion Regulation}) + 0.228(\text{Sleep Quality})$

Discussion

This study shows that emotion regulation has a negative relationship with online gambling addiction, while sleep quality does not show a significant relationship. The overall regression model explained 32.4% of the variance in online gambling addiction ($f^2=0.48$, large effect size), indicating that internal psychological factors make a meaningful contribution, though they do not comprehensively explain the entirety of the dynamics of online gambling addiction among adolescents. The remaining 67.6% of the variance is likely explained by factors outside this model, such as economic pressure, social influence, or personality characteristics not measured in this study. Emotion regulation showed a negative effect of considerable magnitude ($\beta=-0.610$) and was significant in the conventional parametric test ($p=0.001$), consistent with the second hypothesis (H2) and in line with the literature affirming the role of emotion regulation deficits in various addictive behaviors as a form of maladaptive coping with emotional distress (Marchica et al., 2019).

However, the sensitivity test results using bootstrapping showed a 95% CI of $(-1.637, 0.052)$ that still included zero, although its upper bound came very close to that threshold. The statistical significance of emotion regulation in the parametric test is not fully robust against the normality assumption violations detected in this variable and in online gambling addiction, combined with the limited statistical power resulting from a sample size below the minimum recommendation for a two-predictor regression (Green, 1991). In other words, the direction and magnitude of the emotion regulation effect are consistent with theoretical predictions, but the statistical certainty regarding the existence of this effect remains fragile and requires replication with a larger sample before it can be concluded definitively. This finding reinforces the view that online gambling can function as a mechanism of emotional escape, particularly among individuals unable to manage their emotions adaptively. When internal emotion regulation strategies are inadequate, individuals tend to seek instant external regulation, one form of which is online gambling, which provides a temporary sensation of euphoria (Aysen Kovan, 2026).

Sleep quality showed no significant effect in either the parametric test ($p=0.269$) or the bootstrap test (95% CI including zero), rejecting the third hypothesis (H3). There are several alternative explanations worth considering, not all of which are purely theoretical. First, there is the possibility of an indirect relationship, mediated by emotion regulation or executive function, such that it is not detected in a direct regression model consistent with (Wang, et al., 2025), who found that sleep quality did not directly predict digital addiction when negative affect and impulsivity variables were included in the model. The effect of sleep quality only became significant when mediated by increased psychological stress and decreased self-control (Wang, et al., 2025).

Theoretically, this pattern is consistent with the self-regulation theory framework, in which online gambling can function as a mechanism of emotional escape, particularly among individuals unable to manage

their emotions adaptively. When internal emotion regulation strategies are inadequate, individuals tend to seek instant external regulation, one form of which is online gambling, which provides a temporary sensation of euphoria. (Baumeister & Vohs, 2004)

Notwithstanding these findings, this study has several methodological limitations that warrant critical examination. The very limited sample size ($N=30$), combined with the normality assumption violations found in two key variables, reduced the study's statistical power and the reliability of the regression coefficient estimates, as demonstrated by the discrepancy between the parametric and bootstrap test results for the emotion regulation variable. Third, all data were collected via self-report at a single point in time, making the study susceptible to common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). This vulnerability is compounded by the sensitive and illegal nature of the research topic, as prior studies have shown that respondents tend to inaccurately report the frequency and intensity of their gambling involvement due to social desirability bias (Goldstein et al., 2017).

Overall, this study confirms that emotion regulation plays a far more central role than sleep quality in influencing online gambling addiction among youth in Kediri Regency. Personal, intrapsychic psychological factors proved more dominant than basic physiological factors such as sleep quality. Nevertheless, the moderate R-square value indicates that online gambling addiction is a multidimensional phenomenon, so future research needs to explore other variables such as impulsivity, self-control, economic pressure, and social support, as well as consider possible mediation or moderation models to gain a more comprehensive understanding.

Conclusion

This study confirms that emotion regulation plays a significant role in online gambling addiction among youth in Kediri Regency. Individuals with better emotion regulation skills exhibit lower levels of online gambling addiction, with emotion regulation contributing as the dominant predictor in the model. In contrast, sleep quality did not show a significant contribution to online gambling addiction, either bivariate or in the multiple regression model. These findings must be interpreted with caution given substantial methodological limitations, particularly the very limited sample size ($N = 30$), violations of the normality assumption for two main variables, and the modest proportion of variance explained by the model. These limitations reduce the power of statistical inference and the generalizability of findings. Nevertheless, this study provides preliminary evidence regarding the importance of emotion regulation in the context of online gambling addiction among youth. Based on these findings, several recommendations can be made. For practitioners and policymakers, the development of preventive and curative intervention programs should prioritize emotion regulation skills training as a core component. Such programs can be integrated into educational or community settings as a primary prevention effort against online gambling addiction among youth. However, given the limited proportion of variance explained by the model, interventions should not be limited to emotion regulation alone but must also consider other risk factors.

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