

# A Structural Model for Reducing Online Gambling Addiction Based on the *Sigalovada Sutta* and *Visuddhimagga*

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## Abstract

**Keywords:**  
reduction Online gambling addiction; meditation; self-control (*sīla*); social association; *Sigalovada Sutta*; *Visuddhimagga*

*This study investigates the effects of meditation, social association, and self-control (*sīla*) on Online Gambling Addiction Reduction in the digital era, drawing upon principles from the *Sigalovada Sutta* and the *Visuddhimagga*. A structural equation modeling approach is employed to examine the relationships among these variables. The findings indicate that meditation has a significant positive effect on Online Gambling Addiction Reduction, as reflected by a high beta coefficient. Furthermore, self-control serves as a strong mediating variable in the relationship between meditation and the reduction of gambling addiction, while social association also contributes positively, albeit to a lesser extent. These results support key Buddhist teachings that emphasize moral discipline and the importance of supportive social environments in mitigating addictive behaviors. Notably, the findings suggest that internal mechanisms particularly self-awareness and emotional regulation developed through meditation play a more critical role in resisting gambling impulses than external influences alone. Overall, this study highlights meditation and self-control as central pillars in Online Gambling Addiction Reduction and offers important theoretical and practical implications for developing more effective intervention strategies in the context of behavioral addiction.*

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## Introduction

Human life in the contemporary digital era has become increasingly complex, characterized by various challenges arising from shifts in moral values toward materialistic and individualistic orientations. Many individuals devote substantial time to pursuing pleasure and fulfilling worldly desires, while values of moral integrity and ethical conduct are often marginalized in favor of short-term interests. This distorted lifestyle contributes to the weakening of interpersonal relationships, as communal values such as kinship and mutual cooperation gradually lose their significance. Consequently, the ideal of achieving social harmony becomes increasingly difficult, as individuals tend to prioritize personal interests. This condition is further intensified by rapid technological advancement and increasingly stable internet connectivity, which have accelerated social transformation.

These social changes have contributed to various forms of deviant behavior, including the rise of gambling practices, which have become a growing concern in society. One of the negative impacts of gambling is its potential to disrupt individuals' economic stability and psychological well-being. In the digital era, gambling practices have become more sophisticated, extending beyond conventional offline forms to online platforms. Conceptually, online gambling refers to games involving monetary stakes, in which the rules and betting amounts are determined by the participants, conducted through electronic media and internet access (Jadidah et al., 2023).

According to Article 303 paragraph (3) of the Indonesian Criminal Code (*Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Pidana*), gambling is defined as any game in which the possibility of gaining profit largely depends on chance, although it may also involve elements of skill or expertise. This definition encompasses all forms of betting related to competitions or other games not organized by the participants themselves, as well as all other forms of wagering.

More specifically, online gambling is regulated under Law No. 19 of 2016 concerning Amendments to Law No. 11 of 2008 on Electronic Information and Transactions (the ITE Law). It stipulates that: "Any person who intentionally and without authorization distributes, transmits, and/or makes accessible Electronic Information or Electronic Documents containing gambling content shall be subject to legal sanctions." The penalties for such violations are outlined in Article 45 paragraph (2) of the ITE Law, which states that offenders may be subject to imprisonment for a maximum of six years and/or a fine of up to IDR 1 billion, as referred to in Article 27 paragraph (2).

There are several significant differences between offline and online gambling. One of the primary distinctions is that online gambling can be conducted anytime and anywhere, as long as individuals have leisure time, sufficient funds available in their bank accounts, and access to a computer or smartphone with an internet connection (Jadidah et al., 2023). In line with technological advancements, various forms of online gambling have emerged, including online poker, lottery-based gambling (*toto gelap* or *togel*), and slot games, which utilize machine-based systems to generate random outcomes for players.

The wide variety of online gambling games has become a major factor attracting individuals to participate. For instance, a single online gambling platform can offer up to approximately 15 slot game providers, including Pragmatic Play, Habanero, CQ9 Gaming, Joker, PG Soft, Microgaming, Red Tiger, Real Time Gaming, Funky Games, Yggdrasil, Gamatron, Play'n GO, Quickspin, NetEnt, and World Match. In addition to slot games, online gambling in the form of poker also offers a diverse range of game variations.

This diversity of gaming options significantly increases public interest in online gambling. A study by Ardhan et al., (2023) indicates that adolescents are actively involved in online gambling, particularly in easily accessible game types, with the primary motivation of obtaining substantial financial gains. Furthermore, data reported by the Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs (*Menko Polhukam*), Hadi Tjahjanto, reveal that approximately 4 million individuals in Indonesia have been identified as engaging in online gambling. The age range of online gamblers is broad, spanning from children to older adults (<https://databoks.katadata.co.id/>).

The ease of access to gambling platforms has led to a significant increase in participation across various demographic groups, thereby exacerbating the complexity of the problem (Dewi et al., 2024). Online gambling practices can lead to destructive addiction, disrupt the

financial stability of individuals and families, and damage social relationships (Sitanggang et al., 2023). Furthermore, gambling not only undermines interpersonal relationships but also poses serious risks to family stability and mental health (Price, 2022; Rafiqah & Rasyid, 2023; Sidiq & binti Abdullah Suhaimi, 2024).

Gambling addiction, particularly in its online form, has become an increasingly alarming phenomenon in modern society. With rapid technological advancements and widespread internet accessibility, gambling activities that were once considered exclusive can now be conducted anytime and anywhere. According to a report by CNN Indonesia titled “*Judi Online Jerat 2,7 Juta Warga RI, Mayoritas Anak Muda*” (April 19, 2024), at least four suicide cases in 2024 have been linked to online gambling, prompting it to become a priority issue for the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology.

A growing body of research indicates that individuals trapped in cycles of online gambling addiction often experience prolonged stress, anxiety, and depression, which may lead to more severe consequences, including legal problems and interpersonal conflicts. Gambling has also been associated with severe mental health disorders, including depression and anxiety, with more than 90% of individuals diagnosed with gambling disorder (GD) also exhibiting comorbid mental health conditions (Blaszczynski & Nower, 2006; Price, 2022; Vijayakumar & Vijayakumar, 2023) Vijayakumar further highlights that gambling contributes to family dysfunction, homelessness, and increased suicide rates, particularly among younger gamblers. Adolescents are especially vulnerable to gambling addiction (Ayu et al., 2024), as factors such as peer pressure and lack of parental supervision increase the likelihood of their involvement in gambling activities (Sidiq & binti Abdullah Suhaimi, 2024). Given the serious risks associated with gambling, the role of religion becomes critically important in providing ethical guidance and preventive frameworks.

In Buddhist teachings, gambling, including online gambling, is regarded as a practice that contradicts the moral and spiritual principles taught by the Buddha. This perspective is grounded in the Five Precepts (*Pañca-sīla*), which serve as fundamental ethical guidelines for lay Buddhists in their daily lives. Gambling is driven by the desire for rapid financial gain, which fosters greed and attachment, two mental states that are fundamentally opposed to the Buddhist path of liberation from suffering.

Furthermore, online gambling can lead to self-destruction, as well as harm to family members and others. Individuals engaged in gambling are at risk of losing wealth, time, and social relationships, all of which are essential for a harmonious life. Online gambling also undermines personal well-being and inner peace, as it can induce stress, anxiety, and mental confusion due to dependency and the compulsive urge to continue gambling. In Buddhism, mental tranquility and wisdom are essential for attaining enlightenment. Gambling, however, tends to lead individuals toward delusion (*moha*), which stands in direct opposition to the cultivation of wisdom and moral integrity.

Buddhist teachings offer a profound framework for understanding and addressing gambling addiction. In this context, three key principles, namely *sīla* (ethical conduct), social association (the quality of interpersonal relationships), and meditation (self-regulation), can serve as effective intervention strategies to break the cycle of online gambling addiction. *Sīla* encourages individuals to uphold moral discipline and avoid harmful behaviors, while positive social relationships provide support systems that enhance mental and spiritual resilience (Dhammavisarada, 1997; Susanto, 2020). Meanwhile, meditation and mindfulness practices, which are integral components of Buddhist teachings, function to enhance self-

awareness and emotional regulation (Burmansah et al., 2019, 2020; Cullen, n.d.; Hawley et al., 2014), both of which are crucial in resisting the temptations of gambling.

Based on this background, this study aims to explore the relationship between moral principles (X1), social interactions (X2), and meditation (X3) on the reduction of online gambling addiction (Y). This study not only examines the direct effects among the variables but also develops a structural model that includes indirect relationships (mediation). Specifically, this study adopts a partial mediation model in which self-control (*sīla*) functions both as an independent variable with a direct effect on online gambling addiction reduction and as a mediating variable influencing the relationships between meditation and social interactions and the outcome.

This study is expected to provide meaningful insights for individuals, particularly those in communities vulnerable to the negative effects of gambling in the digital age. The hypotheses proposed in this study are: (1) *Sila* (X1) has a positive effect on Online Gambling Addiction Reduction (Y), (2) Social Interaction (X2) has a positive effect on Online Gambling Addiction Reduction (Y), and (3) Meditation (X3) has a positive effect on Online Gambling Addiction Reduction (Y), (4) *Sila* (X1) has a positive effect on social interactions (X2), and (5) *Sila* (X1) has a positive effect on meditation (X3). Through the understanding and application of Buddhist principles, it is hoped that a healthier and more supportive environment can be created, enabling individuals to develop self-control and steer clear of addictive behaviors such as online gambling.

### **Self-Control (*Sīla*) and Online Gambling Addiction Reduction**

Gambling refers to games that involve tools or stakes in the form of money (Tim Penyusun, 2015). Gambling activities that utilize instruments such as cards or dice give rise to various forms of gameplay. Currently, gambling has become a pressing social issue (Currie et al., 2009), particularly within rural communities. This activity has expanded significantly, involving individuals across different social strata, from lower to higher socioeconomic groups, through both traditional and more exclusive forms of gambling (Greer et al., 2023; Macía et al., 2023). The extent of harm caused by gambling is substantial and often difficult to quantify (Langham et al., 2016). Modern life, shaped by globalization across multiple domains, frequently compels individuals to confront unfavorable realities (Emond & Griffiths, 2020; Macía et al., 2023). Socioeconomic inequality between the rich and the poor creates stark and distressing disparities. Individuals lacking wisdom tend to fall into heedlessness, whereas the wise remain vigilant, safeguarding their lives as something of utmost value (Greer et al., 2023). This perspective aligns with the teaching found in the *Dhammapada* (Chapter II, verse 26), which emphasizes the importance of mindfulness and vigilance in daily life (Dhp, II:26).

Shifts in social values within modern society, driven by rapid urban development, have significantly influenced behavioral patterns. Technological advancements across various sectors accelerate value transformation, shaping preferences and lifestyles that often prioritize materialism, individualism, and pride. Consequently, many individuals experience psychological distress, including stress and anxiety. In parallel, marketing and consumerist strategies have become deeply embedded in everyday life. However, individuals who lack gratitude and contentment will never feel satisfied, even if they possess abundant material wealth (Ja.I.322).

*Sīla* teaches moral discipline and self-control, aiming to prevent actions that harm oneself or others (Susanto, 2020; Untung et al., 2023). The Buddha emphasized that individuals who are able to regulate their thoughts, speech, and actions can eliminate mental defilements and attain peace in this life. By maintaining control over these three domains, individuals can avoid harmful behaviors that negatively impact both themselves and others. The principles of *hiri* (moral shame) and *ottappa* (moral fear) serve as essential foundations for fostering a peaceful and harmonious life. These principles encourage individuals to act with caution, refrain from wrongdoing, and cultivate wholesome actions. Transformations in thought and behavior, as emphasized in the *Dīgha Nikāya* (David, 1997; Giri Manggala Publication, 2009; Thānissaro, n.d.), are crucial for overcoming mental defilements, which are often the root causes of suffering.

Within Buddhist teachings, *sīla* refers to moral discipline that forms the foundation of self-control over destructive thoughts, speech, and actions. Self-control developed through *sīla* enables individuals to prevent addictive and destructive behaviors, such as online gambling addiction. Individuals with strong moral discipline are better equipped to regulate gambling impulses, as they are more aware of the negative consequences of such actions. Previous studies have demonstrated that strong self-control can reduce individuals' susceptibility to addictive behaviors, including gambling. In the context of online gambling addiction, self-control cultivated through *sīla* is considered a key factor in helping individuals overcome such dependency. Individuals who consistently practice *sīla* are more capable of avoiding impulsive behaviors that lead to online gambling.

Hypothesis<sub>1</sub> (H<sub>1</sub>): Self-control through *sīla* (X<sub>1</sub>) has a positive and significant effect on Online Gambling Addiction Reduction (Y). Higher levels of self-control through *sīla* are associated with lower levels of online gambling addiction.

### **Social Association and Online Gambling Addiction Reduction**

Social association refers to a network of positive and constructive social support that helps individuals avoid destructive behaviors. Friendships can serve as a determining factor in directing individuals toward either positive or negative paths (Ratna Sari et al., 2024). The Buddha strongly emphasized the importance of maintaining wholesome relationships in social life, particularly with family members and friends. According to his teachings, those who associate with immoral individuals are likely to face rapid decline, whereas those who associate with wise and virtuous individuals will experience progress.

Friendship with virtuous individuals, or *kalyāṇamitta*, is regarded as a crucial factor in achieving a better life (Ratna Sari et al., 2024). The Buddha asserted that no other factor is more supportive of spiritual growth than good friendship, as expressed in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (A.I.125) and the *Itivuttaka* (It.10). In line with this highlight that *kalyāṇamitta* encourages individuals to become more disciplined and to cultivate positive behavior. Such discipline and positivity naturally guide individuals away from harmful activities, including gambling (Sutiyono et al., 2023).

Buddhist teachings also caution against associating with individuals of poor moral conduct, such as those lacking ethical discipline, engaging in gambling, consuming intoxicants, frequenting inappropriate entertainment venues, or habitually engaging in unwholesome activities. Such associations do not contribute to well-being or prosperity but instead lead to suffering and decline. Therefore, individuals are advised to avoid such social environments and instead cultivate relationships with virtuous companions.

The Buddha further taught that a layperson should associate with friends who possess faith, virtue, generosity, and wisdom, regardless of age or cultural background (An. VIII. 54). Four types of friends are particularly emphasized: (1) the sincere friend (*suhada*), who provides selfless support; (2) the helpful friend (*upakāro mitto*), who offers protection without expecting reward; (3) the companion in both joy and sorrow (*samanasukha-dukkha mitto*), who shares happiness and hardship and remains loyal; and (4) the well-wishing friend (*atthakāya mitta*), who offers guidance toward wholesome actions (D.III.31; D.III.188). The presence of such friendships plays a vital role in transforming negative behaviors into positive ones, fostering personal growth and well-being. In this regard, association with wholesome companions serves as a protective factor against harmful behaviors such as gambling (David, 1997; Giri Manggala Publication, 2009; Thānissaro, 2014). Individuals who orient themselves toward wholesome actions and right view will experience a decline in unwholesome states (*akusala dhamma*) and the development of wholesome states (*kusala dhamma*) (M.1.6).

The social environment, particularly peer relationships, plays a crucial role in shaping individual behavior, including gambling tendencies. According to Buddhist teachings, association with wise and virtuous individuals helps prevent engagement in harmful habits, including gambling addiction. Empirical studies have also demonstrated that positive social support is effective in reducing the risk of addictive behaviors, including gambling. Conversely, association with peers who engage in gambling increases the likelihood of addiction, reinforcing the cycle of dependency. Therefore, the quality of social association is an important variable in understanding how individuals become trapped in or overcome online gambling addiction.

Hypothesis<sub>2</sub> (H<sub>2</sub>): Social association (X<sub>2</sub>) has a positive and significant effect on Online Gambling Addiction Reduction (Y). More positive social association is associated with lower levels of online gambling addiction.

### **Meditation and Online Gambling Addiction Reduction**

Meditation practices that emphasize self-regulation, mindfulness, and inner calm can help individuals become more aware of negative impulses (Burmansah et al., 2020) such as the urge to engage in gambling. Through regular meditation practice, individuals can develop stronger self-control. Human dissatisfaction is often rooted in unwholesome desires, including the pursuit of material pleasures, the craving for power over others, and the longing for permanence. Attachment to worldly objects can foster egoistic tendencies. In the *Itivuttaka* (*Duka Nipāta, Vagga II*), the Buddha taught that individuals, especially the younger generation, should be equipped with two protective virtues: *hiri* (moral shame) and *ottappa* (moral fear), which function as safeguards against unwholesome actions. These qualities encourage individuals to live ethically and to act with right thought, speech, and conduct (Anggarwati, 2009; I.B Hoener, 1989). Furthermore, the practice of *silānussati* (recollection of moral conduct) involves reflecting on one's virtuous behavior as unbroken, untarnished, and praised by the wise, which supports the development of mental concentration and moral confidence (Sn.II.70). Individuals who engage in *silānussati* are motivated to cultivate moral discipline, leading to a life characterized by purity and freedom from fear of blame.

Meditation is a central practice in Buddhist teachings aimed at cultivating self-awareness, mental tranquility, and emotional regulation (Gunaratana, 2002). It enables individuals to

recognize and regulate negative impulses, including the desire to gamble. Through consistent meditation practice, individuals can enhance their ability to observe and release impulsive tendencies, which is essential for breaking the cycle of gambling addiction (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). Empirical studies have demonstrated that meditation not only reduces stress and anxiety but also enhances self-control, a critical factor in overcoming addictive behaviors (Piet & Hougaard, 2011). In the context of online gambling addiction, meditation functions as an effective tool for regulating gambling urges and redirecting attention toward more constructive activities.

Hypothesis<sub>3</sub> (H<sub>3</sub>): Meditation (X<sub>3</sub>) has a positive and significant effect on Online Gambling Addiction Reduction (Y). Higher levels of mindfulness are associated with lower levels of online gambling addiction.

### **Social Association and Self-Control**

Social association and self-control are two interrelated aspects that significantly influence individual behavior, particularly in how individuals interact with others and regulate themselves. Jung and Kim (2023) highlight that lower levels of self-control are associated with increased gambling problems, indicating a potential relationship between self-control and behavioral patterns shaped by social environments, including gambling-related interactions.

Social association refers to the network of interactions and environments in which individuals engage, such as family, peers, and the broader community. These social environments play a crucial role in shaping individuals' cognitive patterns, habits, and decision-making processes (Jung & Kim, 2023). Individuals embedded in positive social environments that uphold moral and ethical values are more likely to adopt healthy and constructive behaviors. Conversely, negative social environments may encourage maladaptive behaviors (Sena et al., 2021), including harmful habits such as substance abuse and online gambling. Positive social associations contribute to the development of emotional maturity, which in turn enhances self-control and reduces susceptibility to negative behaviors (Febrianti & Indrawati, 2023; Gailliot, 2005; Salsa et al., 2023), including harmful habits such as substance abuse and online gambling. Positive social associations contribute to the development of emotional maturity, which in turn enhances self-control and reduces susceptibility to negative behaviors (Febrianti & Indrawati, 2023; Sena et al., 2021).

According to Chaplin, (2001) and Chaplin & Chaplin, (1986), self-control is defined as an individual's capacity to regulate behavior and restrain impulsive tendencies. Fundamentally, self-control represents a form of self-mastery that enables individuals to maintain focus on long-term goals. (Werner & Ford, 2023) further explains that self-control is influenced by both internal factors, originating within the individual, and external factors, derived from the surrounding environment.

The social environment plays a vital role in personal development, particularly among millennials who are exposed to diverse influences. Positive environments, access to education, and beneficial information from technology and social media can support individuals in regulating their behavior and fostering positive conduct (Asmuni, 2019). By choosing supportive social networks and utilizing technology wisely, individuals can better adapt to societal changes and maintain behavior aligned with moral values, analogous to the application of *sīla* in Buddhist teachings.

Hypothesis<sub>4</sub> (H<sub>4</sub>): Positive social association has a significant effect on enhancing self-control.

### Social Association and Mindfulness (Meditation)

The physical and social environment plays a crucial role in supporting meditation experiences and individual self-development. A conducive environment can facilitate mental calmness and enhance concentration during meditation, whereas environments characterized by distraction or negative influences may hinder the process. In the context of the relationship between social association and mindfulness (meditation), these two factors interact in several significant ways (Sanat Maitreya, 2008).

Social association encompasses an individual's interactions with others within family, peer groups, and broader community contexts. A positive social environment, characterized by moral support, constructive values, and harmonious relationships, can strengthen an individual's motivation to engage in meditation practice. Within a healthy social context, individuals are more likely to maintain emotional stability and avoid negative mental states such as anger, jealousy, and resentment, thereby supporting inner peace and psychological balance.

Conversely, negative social environments, marked by conflict, social pressure, or maladaptive behaviors, may increase emotional disturbances. Such conditions can exacerbate mental instability and make it more difficult for individuals to achieve calmness during meditation. Therefore, the quality of social association and the surrounding environment significantly influence an individual's mental state, which in turn affects the quality of their meditation practice.

Hypothesis<sub>5</sub> (H<sub>5</sub>): Positive social association is positively associated with meditation.

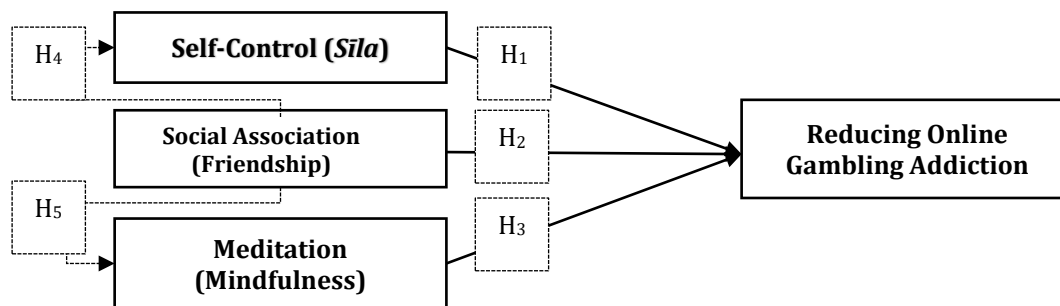


Figure 1. Research Model

### Method

This study uses a quantitative approach (Cresswel, 2013; Sugiyono, 2013) using path analysis to measure the influence of three independent variables (Hair et al., 2014), namely the Sila Scale (X1), the Social Interaction Index (X2), and the Meditation Scale (X3) as independent variables, and the Online Gambling Addiction Reduction Index (Y) as the dependent variable (Gondang, 2019). The population consists of individuals who have experience with or have been involved in online gambling in Lampung (Neuman, 2011). The instrument used was a structured questionnaire, designed based on previous literature reviews and tested for reliability and validity. The questionnaire measures levels of moral discipline (Sila Scale), the quality of social interactions and community support (Social Interaction Index), and the frequency and intensity of meditation practices (Meditation

Scale). The Online Gambling Addiction Reduction Index was used to measure the level of addiction and compulsive behaviors related to online gambling.

The data collection procedure began with the development of a questionnaire based on relevant items from previous research (Arikunto, 2010). Irrelevant or ambiguous items were removed, while relevant items were adapted for this study. A total of 16 items were used to measure the research variables. The study sample was selected using stratified random sampling, involving 150 individuals with experience in online gambling. The data were then analyzed using path analysis with the assistance of Smart PLS software, version 3 (Hair et al., 2019a, 2019b; Vinzi, V. E., Trinchera, L., & Amato, 2010). Partial Least Squares (PLS) Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) was used to test the structural model and analyze the relationships among the research variables. The data in this study were collected via a questionnaire using a Likert scale with ratings ranging from 5 to 1. The indicators for the variables used in this study are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Measurement Indicators

| Variable                            | Dimension  | Indicator  | Item Code |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|-----------|
| Sila (Ethics)                       | Building the Determination to Put the Principles into Practice | The level of individual commitment to applying the principles in daily life            | S.X1      |
|                                     | Moral Understanding and Awareness                              | An individual's level of understanding of the meaning and importance of the principles | S.X2      |
|                                     | The Practice of the Principles and Their Impact                | The frequency with which individuals practice the precepts in social situations        | S.X3      |
|                                     | The Purpose and Benefits of the Principles                     | Individual perceptions of the social benefits of practicing the principles             | S.X4      |
| Social Life                         | Positive Friendship  | Choosing Good Friends  | P.X21     |
|                                     | Emotional Support  | Availability in Difficult Times  | P.X22     |
|                                     | Group Activities   | Participation in Positive Activities   | P.X23     |
|                                     | Avoiding Negative Influences                                   | Avoiding Friends Who Behave Badly  | P.X24     |
| Meditation                          | Focus in Meditation  | The ability to stay focused  | M.X31     |
|                                     | Emotional Peace  | Emotional Management   | M.X32     |
|                                     | Raising Awareness  | Self-Awareness   | M.X33     |
|                                     | Policy Development   | Reflection   | M.X34     |
| Online Gambling Addiction Reduction | Reduction in behavioral intensity                              | Reduced frequency of gambling  | K.Y1      |
|                                     | Restoration of social functioning                              | Increased social interaction   | K.Y2      |
|                                     | Emotional stability  | Emotional stability regarding gambling   | K.Y3      |
|                                     | Financial recovery   | Improved financial situation   | K.Y4      |

Source: researcher data 2024

## Result and Discussion

### Result

To ensure the reliability and validity of the measurement model used, we tested the correlations among the variables using Smart-PLS. As suggested by Hair et al. (2019), Smart-PLS is an effective analytical tool for handling complex models and large sample sizes. First, convergent validity was evaluated using factor loadings, average variance extracted (AVE), and composite reliability (CR). All factor loadings exceeded the 0.70 threshold, indicating that the indicators have a strong association with the latent constructs being measured. The AVE values for all constructs are also above 0.50, indicating that the proportion of indicator variance explained by the construct is quite high.

**Table 2.** Convergent Validity

| Construct                           | Indicator | Cronbach's Alpha | rho_A | Composite Reliability | (AVE) | F. Loadings |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|-------------|
| Self-Control (Sila)                 | S.X1      | 0,864            | 1,126 | 0,873                 | 0,633 | 0,814       |
|                                     | S.X2      |                  |       |                       |       | 0,791       |
|                                     | S.X3      |                  |       |                       |       | 0,799       |
|                                     | S.X4      |                  |       |                       |       | 0,778       |
| Social Life                         | P.X21     | 0,982            | 0,983 | 0,987                 | 0,949 | 0,961       |
|                                     | P.X22     |                  |       |                       |       | 0,983       |
|                                     | P.X23     |                  |       |                       |       | 0,975       |
|                                     | P.X24     |                  |       |                       |       | 0,978       |
| Meditation                          | M.X31     | 0,986            | 0,987 | 0,990                 | 0,960 | 0,982       |
|                                     | M.X32     |                  |       |                       |       | 0,972       |
|                                     | M.X33     |                  |       |                       |       | 0,970       |
|                                     | M.X34     |                  |       |                       |       | 0,994       |
| Online Gambling Addiction Reduction | K.Y1      | 0,915            | 0,947 | 0,942                 | 0,805 | 0,937       |
|                                     | K.Y2      |                  |       |                       |       | 0,697       |
|                                     | K.Y3      |                  |       |                       |       | 0,969       |
|                                     | K.Y4      |                  |       |                       |       | 0,959       |

Source: output Smart PLS 3 2024

To examine item reliability and validity, this study utilized Smart-PLS as an analytical tool to achieve these objectives and to test correlations among variables. Smart-PLS is an appropriate choice for obtaining more accurate results, even in the context of complex and large sample sizes, and is therefore considered an optimal estimation tool for primary data. Smart-PLS enables the evaluation of the validity and reliability of measurement models. To assess reliability, Smart-PLS provides factor loadings and average variance extracted (AVE) to determine convergent validity. Additionally, composite reliability (CR) is used to assess reliability, while Cronbach's alpha is used to evaluate internal consistency. Discriminant validity is assessed through measures such as Fornell-Larcker, cross-loading, and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT). Smart-PLS also supports structural model evaluation, correlation checks, testing of direct and indirect paths, as well as mediation and moderation effect analysis.

The analysis results presented in Table 2 show that all factor loadings are greater than 0.70, indicating good convergent validity. For example, the self-control construct (*Sila*) has a

Cronbach's alpha of 0.864, an AVE of 0.633, and a CR of 0.873. The Social Interaction construct shows a Cronbach's alpha of 0.982, an AVE of 0.949, and a CR of 0.987. For the Meditation construct, the Cronbach's alpha is 0.986, with an AVE of 0.960 and a CR of 0.990. Meanwhile, the Online Gambling Addiction Reduction construct obtained a Cronbach's alpha of 0.915, an AVE of 0.805, and a CR of 0.942. These values confirm high internal consistency among items and minimal measurement error. These findings indicate that the measurement model used has high reliability, supporting the validity of the constructs being measured.

**Table 3.** Validity Fornell-Larcker Criterion

|  | <b>Online Gambling<br/>Addiction Reduction</b> | <b>Meditation</b> | <b>Social<br/>Interactions</b> | <b>Self-<br/>Control<br/>(Sila)</b> |
|--|--|-------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Online Gambling<br/>Addiction<br/>Reduction</b> | 0,897  |                   |                                |                                     |
| <b>Meditation</b>                                  | 0,958  | 0,980             |                                |                                     |
| <b>Social Interactions</b>                         | 0,337  | 0,250             | 0,974                          |                                     |
| <b>Self-Control (Sila)</b>                         | 0,795  | 0,795             | 0,224                          | 0,797                               |

Source: Smart PLS 3 2024 output

**Table 4.** Cross-Loadings Results

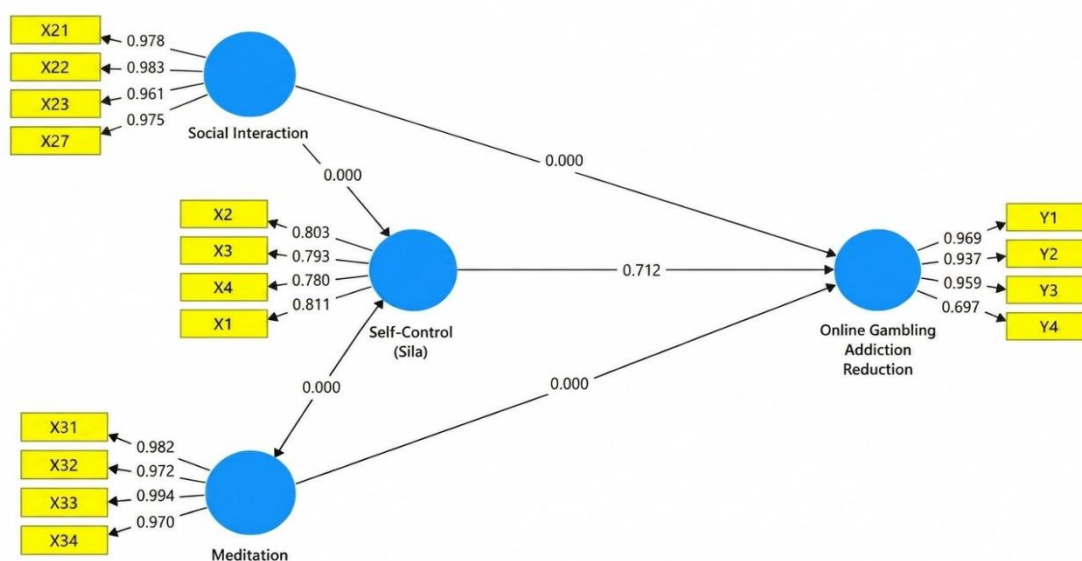
|                                       | <b>Online Gambling<br/>Addiction<br/>Reduction</b> | <b>Meditation</b> | <b>Social<br/>Interactions</b> | <b>Self-<br/>Control<br/>(Sila)</b> |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Shared Activities                     | 0,321  | 0,244             | 0,961                          | 0,231                               |
| Financial Impact                      | 0,937  | 0,882             | 0,221                          | 0,732                               |
| Social Impact                         | 0,697  | 0,565             | 0,622                          | 0,488                               |
| Emotional Support                     | 0,340  | 0,247             | 0,983                          | 0,212                               |
| Focus                                 | 0,956  | 0,982             | 0,260                          | 0,815                               |
| Frequency                             | 0,969  | 0,955             | 0,237                          | 0,800                               |
| Emotional Peace                       | 0,916  | 0,972             | 0,259                          | 0,752                               |
| Determination to<br>Practice the Sila | 0,958  | 0,956             | 0,247                          | 0,811                               |
| Avoiding Negative<br>Things           | 0,321  | 0,232             | 0,975                          | 0,208                               |
| Practicing the Sila                   | 0,317  | 0,317             | 0,094                          | 0,793                               |
| Moral Awareness                       | 0,355  | 0,368             | 0,142                          | 0,803                               |
| Wisdom                                | 0,919  | 0,970             | 0,206                          | 0,743                               |
| Increased Awareness                   | 0,963  | 0,994             | 0,255                          | 0,803                               |
| Positive Friendships                  | 0,329  | 0,251             | 0,978                          | 0,224                               |
| Emotional Change                      | 0,959  | 0,973             | 0,251                          | 0,787                               |
| Purpose and Benefits<br>of the Sila   | 0,321  | 0,313             | 0,107                          | 0,780                               |

Source: Smart PLS 3 2024 output

**Table 5.** Results of the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Test

|   | Online Gambling<br>Addiction Reduction | Meditation | Social<br>Interactions | Self-Control<br>( <i>Sila</i> ) |
|---|--|------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Online Gambling<br>Addiction<br>Reduction |  |            |                        |                                 |
| Meditation                                | <b>0,995</b>                           |            |                        |                                 |
| Social Interactions                       | 0,393                                  | 0,254      |                        |                                 |
| Self-Control ( <i>Sila</i> )              | 0,646                                  | 0,628      | 0,190                  |                                 |

Source: Smart PLS 3 Output 2024



**Figure 2.** Results of the Outer Model Coefficients for the Measurement Model

### Structural Model Testing

A structural equation model was used to evaluate the relationships among the dependent, independent, and mediator variables in this study (see Figure 3). The results of the analysis presented in Table 6 reveal that meditation has a significant positive effect on Online Gambling Addiction Reduction, with a beta coefficient of 0.867. The resulting T-value is 23.640 with a p-value of 0.000. The confidence interval (LL: 0.773; UL: 0.923) does not cross the zero line, indicating acceptance of the hypothesis that meditation has a significant effect on Online Gambling Addiction Reduction. Furthermore, social interaction also contributes positively to Online Gambling Addiction Reduction, with a beta coefficient of 0.101. The T-value is 4.351, and the p-value indicates a highly significant result (0.000), with a confidence interval (LL: 0.060; UL: 0.151) that does not include zero. This supports the hypothesis that social interactions influence Online Gambling Addiction Reduction.

The effect of self-control (*Sila*) on Online Gambling Addiction Reduction was also found to be significant, with a beta coefficient of 0.084, a T-value of 2.148, and a p-value of 0.032. The confidence interval (LL: 0.019; UL: 0.168) indicates that self-control has a fairly significant positive impact on Online Gambling Addiction Reduction. On the other hand, self-control (*Sila*) functions as a strong mediator, exerting a significant influence on meditation with a beta coefficient of 0.795. The T-value reached 37.256 with a highly significant p-value

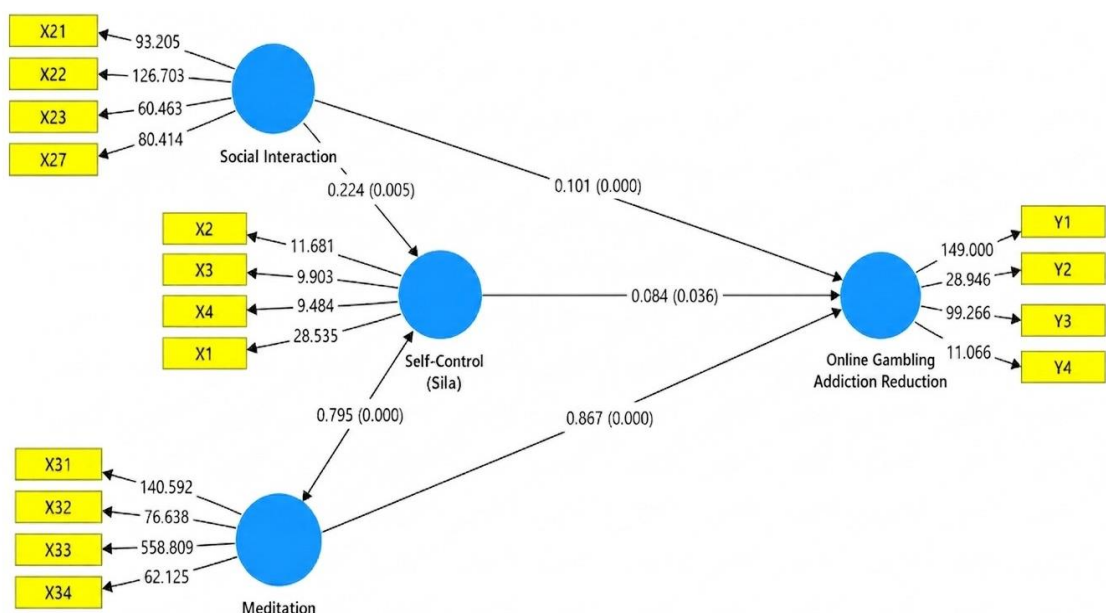
(0.000), and the confidence interval (LL: 0.766; UL: 0.852) did not cross the zero line, indicating acceptance of the hypothesis that self-control has a positive effect on meditation.

In addition, self-control also had a positive effect on social interactions, with a beta coefficient of 0.224, a T-value of 2.701, and a p-value of 0.007. The confidence interval (LL: 0.063; UL: 0.384) indicates that self-control significantly influences social interactions, supporting the proposed hypothesis. Overall, the results of this analysis indicate that meditation, social interactions, and self-control (*Sila*) have a significant relationship in influencing Online Gambling Addiction Reduction, with self-control acting as a strong mediator in this model.

**Table 6.** Direct path coefficient, mean, STDEV, t-values and p-values

|   | Original Sample (O) | Sample Mean (M) | Standard Deviation (STDEV) | T Statistics ( O/STDEV ) | P Values | LL    | UL    |
|---|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------|-------|-------|
| Meditation -> Online Gambling Addiction Reduction                   | 0,867               | 0,864           | 0,037                      | 23,640                   | 0,000    | 0,773 | 0,923 |
| Social Interactions -> Online Gambling Addiction Reduction          | 0,101               | 0,102           | 0,023                      | 4,351                    | 0,000    | 0,060 | 0,151 |
| Self-Control ( <i>Sila</i> ) -> Online Gambling Addiction Reduction | 0,084               | 0,085           | 0,039                      | 2,148                    | 0,032    | 0,019 | 0,168 |
| Self-Control ( <i>Sila</i> ) -> Meditation                          | 0,795               | 0,799           | 0,021                      | 37,256                   | 0,000    | 0,766 | 0,852 |
| Self-Control ( <i>Sila</i> ) -> Social Interactions                 | 0,224               | 0,232           | 0,083                      | 2,701                    | 0,007    | 0,063 | 0,384 |

Source: output Smart PLS 3 2024



**Figure 3.** Structural Model Analysis Illustrating Direct, Indirect, and Moderation Effects with Regression Coefficients

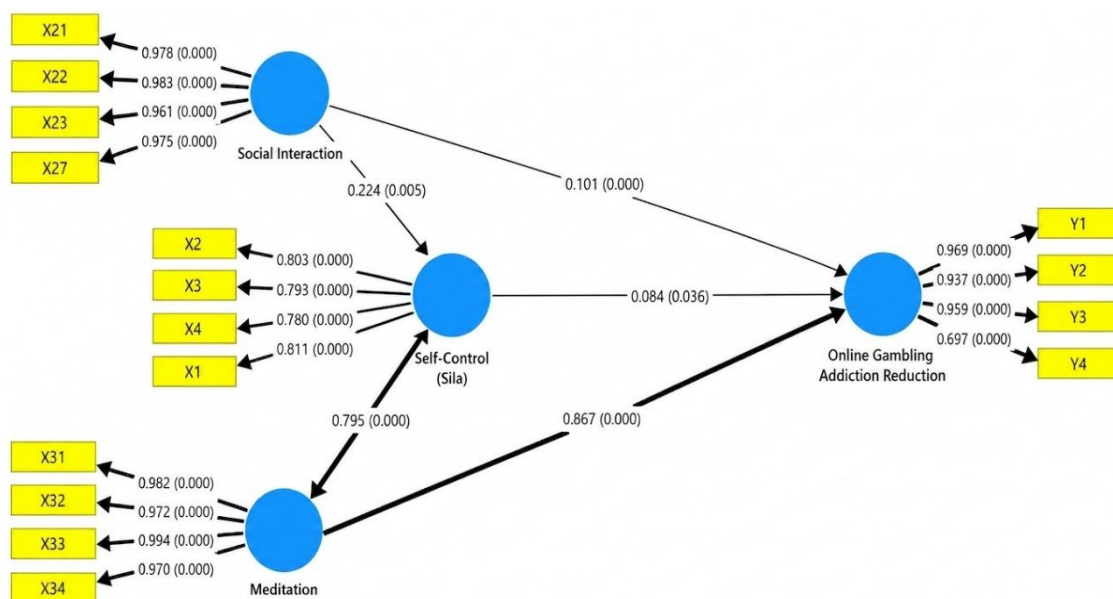
The results of the mediation analysis indicate a significant relationship between self-control (*Sīla*), meditation, and Online Gambling Addiction Reduction. Based on the data presented in Table 8, meditation functions as a positive mediator in the relationship between self-control (*Sīla*) and Online Gambling Addiction Reduction, with a regression coefficient of Beta = 0.689, a T-value of 23.613, and P = 0.000, as well as a confidence interval that does not cross zero (LL = 0.632, UL = 0.745).

In contrast, the mediation path of self-control (*Sīla*) through social interactions regarding Online Gambling Addiction Reduction yielded non-significant results, with a regression coefficient Beta = 0.023, a T-value of 1.954, and P = 0.051. The confidence interval indicates that the value of zero falls within this range (LL = 0.005, UL = 0.051), so the mediating effect of social interaction on Online Gambling Addiction Reduction cannot be considered significant.

**Table 7.** Results of Several Basic Statistics and Indirect Path Coefficients

|  | Original Sample (O) | Sample Mean (M) | Standard Deviation (STDEV) | T Statistics ( O/STDEV ) | P Values | LL    | UL    |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------|-------|-------|
| Self-control ( <i>Sīla</i> ) -> Meditation -> Online Gambling Addiction Reduction          | 0,689               | 0,690           | 0,029                      | 23,613                   | 0,000    | 0,632 | 0,745 |
| Self-control ( <i>Sīla</i> ) -> Social Interactions -> Online Gambling Addiction Reduction | 0,023               | 0,024           | 0,012                      | 1,954                    | 0,051    | 0,005 | 0,051 |

Source: Smart PLS 3 2024 output



**Figure 4.** Structural Model Analysis Illustrating Direct, Indirect, and Moderation Effects with Regression Coefficients

## Discussion

The findings of this study align with Buddhist teachings that moral discipline, positive social support, and meditation can help overcome addiction. *Sīla* teaches the fundamental principle of self-control, which plays a significant role in reducing the urge to gamble. Additionally, support from a positive social environment can help individuals avoid isolation and obtain the necessary assistance when they face the temptation of online gambling. Meditation, with its mindfulness and emotional regulation approaches, has a profound influence in helping individuals develop greater self-awareness regarding the temptations and urges to gamble. The research findings, which demonstrate a significant relationship between meditation, social connections, and self-control (*Sīla*) regarding Online Gambling Addiction Reduction, highlight several points that can be clarified to provide a deeper perspective.

The effect of meditation on Online Gambling Addiction Reduction the results indicate that meditation has the most significant effect on Online Gambling Addiction Reduction. With a high beta coefficient (0.867), meditation appears to be a key element in helping individuals resist the temptation to gamble. Specifically, the practice of mindfulness in meditation helps a person become more aware of internal urges and detach from impulsive desires. In Buddhist teachings, meditation serves as a tool for understanding the nature of thoughts and feelings, which ultimately leads to inner peace and better control over destructive habits, such as addiction.

This finding is consistent with previous research highlighting the role of meditation in reducing addictive tendencies by increasing self-awareness and the ability to cope with stress (Tang et al., 2019). In addition, meditation helps strengthen self-control (*sīla*), which is essentially the cornerstone of Buddhist spiritual practice.

The Role of Social Circles and Their Influence on Addiction The research findings also indicate that social circles make a significant contribution (beta coefficient 0.101) to Online Gambling Addiction Reduction. This underscores the importance of the social environment in shaping individual behavior. In the context of Buddhist teachings, having a supportive community or social environment (*sangha*) is considered essential for maintaining disciplined practice and meditation (Kuyken et al., n.d.; Sanat Maitreya, 2008). Conversely, negative social influences can exacerbate addictive behavior, as evidenced by the findings of this study. Therefore, reinforcing moral values and providing community support are essential for those striving to overcome online gambling addiction.

Although social circles play an important role, the mediating effect of social circles on the relationship between self-control and addiction is not significant, as indicated by a p-value that is close to the significance threshold (0.051). This may suggest that while social circles play an important role, they may not function as the primary mediator in the relationship between self-control and addiction. This emphasizes that behavioral change is more influenced by internal factors, such as meditation and self-control, rather than relying solely on the social environment.

*Sīla* as Self-Control and Mediator Self-control (*sīla*) plays a strong role as a mediator in this model. *Sīla*, which is one of the moral foundations of Buddhist teachings, has been shown to have a significant influence on meditation and social interactions. With a beta coefficient of 0.795 between *sīla* and meditation, these results emphasize that good self-control can enhance the effectiveness of meditation in helping individuals overcome addiction. This

suggests that *sīla*, as an ethical foundation, helps prepare individuals to achieve full awareness through meditation, which ultimately contributes to reducing addictive behavior.

However, the mediating effect of social interactions between moral discipline and addiction was not significant, suggesting that while social interactions play an important role, they do not function as the primary mediator. The roles of moral discipline and meditation are stronger in addressing addiction than external social influences. Overall, this study supports Buddhist teachings that emphasize the importance of meditation and self-control in overcoming addiction. Although social interactions also play a role, internal factors such as meditation and moral discipline (*sīla*) have a greater influence in Online Gambling Addiction Reduction. Therefore, intervention programs focused on strengthening moral discipline (*sīla*) and meditation can be effective strategies in helping individuals overcome online gambling addiction in the digital age.

## Conclusion

This study shows that meditation, social interactions, and self-control (*sīla*) have a significant relationship in influencing Online Gambling Addiction Reduction. Meditation plays a very important role, exerting the greatest influence in helping individuals develop self-awareness regarding the temptation to gamble. *Sīla*, as a moral foundation, reinforces the effects of meditation, while social interactions have an influence, albeit not as strong as meditation and *sīla*. These results confirm that internal approaches through self-awareness and moral discipline are more effective than external factors such as the social environment in overcoming addiction. Furthermore, self-control (*sīla*) functions as a strong mediator, enhancing the effectiveness of meditation in Online Gambling Addiction Reduction. Although social interaction has a positive impact, its influence is not as strong as that of meditation and *sīla*, nor does it function as a significant mediator in the relationship between self-control and addiction. Overall, this study supports Buddhist strategies for addressing addiction, with meditation and self-control as the two main pillars effective in breaking the cycle of online gambling addiction.

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