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Sports gambling among youths: The role of demographic factors and prevalence

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Abstract

Sports' betting is the most popular form of gambling among youths and it has strong appeal across classes, gender, sexuality, races and other social categorization. This study, therefore examined sports betting prevalence and its relationship with demographic variables of gender, age, education level and income level among youths in Ilorin, Kwara State, North Central, Nigeria. Cross-sectional survey research design was adopted for the research; the population of the study was all 339,225 youths from the three local government area of Ilorin, Kwara State. Multistage random sampling technique was used to select 470 youths. The instrument for data collection was a researcher-designed questionnaire, validated by experts and the reliability coefficient was .70. Frequency and percentage were used for answering the research questions, while logistic regression was used to test the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The findings of the study indicated that higher proportion of youths with monthly income (69.5%) reported engaging in sports betting, likewise, higher proportion of youths with no formal education (69.2%) reported engaging in sports betting more than other categories and there was high proportion of youths (58.7%) that engage in sports betting. Furthermore, the demographic factors of age (OR = 1.67; p = .12), education (OR = 0.37; p = .23), and monthly income (OR = 1.22; p = .51) were not significantly associated with sports betting among youths, since the p-value is greater than .05 level of significance. It was concluded that monthly income was not a predictor of sports betting among youths. Furthermore, age and education level were not significant predictor of sports betting among youths. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that public health educators should embark on an informative campaign to reduce the degree to which youths overrate sports betting as an avenue for money making.

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***Key words**: Gambling, Sports betting, Youth, Income, Education*

Introduction

Gambling is an ancient social activity which has been in existence for a huge number of years in man's history. It was discovered that betting is a global phenomenon which can be traced thousands of years ago. Case in point, Chinese gambling can be traced back to more than 4000 years ago. Excavation at Ur (2000BC), Crete (1800BC), Egypt (1600BC) and India (1000BC) have unearthed dice and gaming boards, betting on horse racing was also common among the Hittites (4000BC) (McMiller, 2005). Nigeria betting behavior was influence by the British.

Sports is more like work than play as it provides numerous career opportunities (Joel & Dominic, 2021). Commercialization has place great value on sport and has transformed it completely from being considered as a past time activity into a wealth generating avenue and a multi-billion dollar business (Nzama, 2018). One of the commercialization assigned to sports is through sports betting.

Sports' betting is the most popular form of gambling among youths and it has strong appeal across classes, gender, sexuality, races and other social categorization. Ayandele, Popoola and Obosi (2019) state that prediction and wager on the outcome of games/matches are known as sports betting. Sports betting refers to the act of placing money or other valuables as a wager on a sporting contest with the sole aim of making profit financially. Sports betting growth have been fastest across Africa, where financial institutions are often weak and other part of the world (Ahaibwe, Corti, Miriam & Joseph, 2016; Gainsbury, Russell, Hing, Wood, Lubman, & Blasczynski, 2013). A survey evaluating mobile gambling-related activities among 3879 youths in some African countries found that Kenya has the highest number of youths who had previously participated in gambling or betting at 76% followed by Uganda at 57% while Ghana has the lowest number at 42% (GeoPoll, 2017).

Sports betting have steadily risen as a worthwhile practice, exploiting Nigeria's massive football culture. Most Nigeria youths are fanatical towards European football leagues, hence, they have the opportunity to earn from what they love (Ayandele, Popoola & Obosi, 2019; Ayandele & Aramide, 2019). It was reported by News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) (2018) that youths in Nigeria spent up to N1.8 billion on sports betting daily with an average spending of N3, 000 per day. It was also reported by Business day (2020) that Nigerian invested about $5.5 million into sports

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betting daily, which total $2billion annually and it is now recognized as the second largest online gambling market in Africa, after South Africa. The influence of sport has made betting in sport more attractive to youths.

Youths engage in sports betting for different purposes, these include unemployment, ego, recreational, financial gains, adherence to social network (Ayub, Johnson, Alexander & Wakabala 2016; Olayinka & Fageyinbo, 2015; George & Uyaga, 2014; Oyebisi, Alao, & Popoola, 2012; Fortune, MacKillop, Miller, Campbell, Clifton, & Goodie, 2013; Nwingwe, Yusuf, & Okoruwa, 2012). Gbemi, Bimbo and Ekpenyong (2020) reported The National Lottery Regulation Commission (NLRC) survey, which revealed that 77% of Nigeria youths established the raise in patronage of betting games in their resident. The survey also showed that 92% and 91% prevalence rate of youth's engagement in the South-West and South-South regions respectively.

Brune (2016) evaluating gambling-related activities in 3,879 youths aged between 17 and 35 (based on the Africa Youths Charter) in Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, Ghana and Nigeria found that 54% of youths have engaged in some form of wagering activity. Most youths are engrossed in sports betting that they cannot help but become active participants, regardless of its negative impacts as observed by Delfabbro, Winefield, & Anderson (2009) that betting among the youth has it negative consequences, such as truancy, reduced educational performance, aggressive, risk-taking behaviors, lying, poorer psychosocial adjustment, higher rates of irritation, frequent borrowing, alcohol consumption, illicit drug use and more serious criminal behaviors, such as stealing.

Ayub, Johnson, Alexander and Wakabala (2016) observed that there are many reasons why youths play bet with social and monetary reward expectations as predominating factors. Economic factors of sports betting are factors derived from economic pursue such as income-earning, gainful employment, Tax revenue among others. Williams and Rehm (2011) summarized gambling economic as increased government revenue, increased public service, moderate regulating costs and positive or negative impacts on sports betting. In addition, SiweiXu (2011) revealed that economic pursuit has increased sport betting activities which played a vital role in the changes in the betting sectors. Bruce and Johnson (2006) observed that poverty is a key motivator that has led youths in sourcing their livelihood on the betting centers.

Studies on sports betting among youth have generally gotten scanty attention in Nigeria as

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such; there are few scholastic writings on sports betting among youths. Nonetheless, youths are engrossing in sports betting. Therefore, this study aims to examine sports betting prevalence and its relationship with demographic variables of gender, age, education and income level among youths in Ilorin, Kwara State, North Central, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional survey was carried out in the three Local Government Areas (LGAs) which comprises of Ilorin East, Ilorin West and Ilorin South in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. The study participants comprised youths in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. Multistage random sampling technique was used to select 470 youths. The study included female (20.7%)) and male (79.3%) youths with mean age (M = 26.50). Over two-thirds of the sample (75.5%) was aged between 18 and 29 years, with the most common age group being 18 – 23 years (58.4%). Multistage random sampling technique was used to select 470 youths. A self-developed and validated questionnaire was used to elicit information from the respondents. The questionnaire was titled “Sports Gambling among Youths Prevalence Questionnaire (SGYPQ)” which was used to gather data from respondents. This instrument was subjected to reliability test with the use of Cronbach Alpha and Spearman Rank methods; which yielded a reliability value of .07. Cronbach Alpha and Spearman Rank methods were used in order to establish the internal consistency of each of the question items. All the instruments administered were returned, which gave 100% return rate. Out of the 470 copies of the questionnaires returned, 20 were not properly filled out, hence, they were discarded. Only 450 copies of the questionnaires were properly filled out and

were used for the study analyses.

The collected data was analyzed using frequency and percentage for participants’ socio-demographic variables and to answer structured statement on Sports Gambling among Youths Prevalence. In scoring for Sports Gambling among Youths Prevalence, the following criteria were used: 0-29% = low proportion; 30-49% = moderate proportion; 40-69% = high proportion 70% and above = very high proportion. The predictive capacity of sports betting profile on their covariates (gender, age, education level and monthly income) was assessed by binary logistics regression analyses. All the tests were 2-tailed, and the probability values less than 0.05 ($p<0.05$) were considered significant, except age.

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RESULTS

Table 1 show that high proportion 58.7 percent of youths in Ilorin engaged in sports betting.

Table 1. Proportion of youths who engage in sports betting in Ilorin, Kwara State (*n*=450)

Items	Yes f (%)	No f (%)
1. Have you ever bet on sports?	289(64.2)	161(35.8)
2. Have you ever won anything from your sports bet?	254(56.4)	196(43.6)
3. Do you get involved in sports bet weekly?	192(42.7)	258(57.3)
4. I visit sports betting shops or online site to place bet weekly.	215(47.8)	235(52.2)
5. I always look forward to win a sports bet.	292(64.9)	158(35.1)
Overall %	264(58.7)	186(41.3)

Table 2 shows that higher proportion of male youths (79.3%) reported engaging in sports betting more than female youths (20.7%).

Table 2. Frequency and percentage response of proportion of youths who engage in sports betting based on gender (*n*=450)3333

S/N	Items	Male (n=357) Yes f (%)	Female (n=93) Yes f(%)
1.	Have you ever bet on sports?	253(70.9)	36(38.7)
2.	Have you ever won anything from your sports bet?	224((62.7)	30(32.3)
3.	Do you get involved in sports bet weekly?	165(46.2)	27(29.0)
4.	I visit sports betting shops or online site to place bet weekly.	185(51.8)	30(32.3)
5.	I always look forward to win a sports bet.	248(69.5)	44(47.3)
	Cluster %	79.3	20.7

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Table 3 shows that very high proportion of youths within the age of 36- 40 years (73.9%) reported participate in sports betting more than other categories of age bracket, below 18years (51.7), 18-23 years (57.8), 24- 29years (61.0) and 30- 35years (63.0%).

Table 3. Frequency and percentage response of proportion of youths who engage in sports betting based on age (*n*=450)

S/N	Items	Below18y (n=60) Yes f(%)	18-23yr (n=263) Yes f(%)	24-29yr (n=77) Yes f(%)	30-35yr (n=27) Yes f(%)	36-40yr (n=23) Yes f(%)
1.	Have you ever bet on sports?	34(56.7)	116(63.1)	53(68.8)	18(66.7)	18(78.3)
2.	Have you ever won anything from your sports bet?	30(50.0)	143(54.4)	50(64.9)	16(59.3)	15(65.2)
3.	Do you get involved in sports bet weekly?	27(45.0)	101(38.4)	33(42.9)	14(51.9)	17(73.9)
4.	I visit sports betting shops/ online site to place bet.	26(43.3)	122(46.4)	37(48.1)	15(55.6)	15(65.2)
5.	I always look forward to win a sports bet.	42(70.0)	166(63.1)	50(64.9)	18(66.7)	16(69.6)
Overall' %		51.7	57.8	61.0	63.0	73.9

Table 4 shows that higher proportion of youths with no formal education (69.2%) reported engaging in sports betting more than other categories, primary education (65.0%), secondary education (59.0%), while tertiary education (57.8%).

Table 4. Proportion of youths who engage in sports betting based on education level {No Formal Education (NF Edu), Primary Education (P Edu), Secondary Education (S Edu) & Tertiary Education (T Edu)}in Ilorin, Kwara State (*n*=450)

S/N	Items	NF Edu (n=13) Yes f(%)	P Edu (n=20) Yes f(%)	S Edu (n=78) Yes f(%)	T Edu (n=339) Yes
1.	Have you ever bet on sports?	7(53.8)	14(70.0)	49(62.8)	219(64.6)
2.	Have you ever won anything from your sports bet?	6(46.2)	12(60.0)	42(53.8)	194(57.2)

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3.	Do you get involved in sports bet weekly?	7(53.8)	13(65.0)	37(47.4)	135(39.8)
4.	I visit sports betting shops/ online site to place bet.	6(46.2)	13(65.0)	39(50.0)	157(46.3)
5.	I always look forward to win a sports bet.	8(61.5)	14(70.0)	57(73.1)	213(62.8)
Overall %		69.2	65.0	59.0	57.8

Table 5 shows that higher proportion of youths with income above 15,000 (69.5%) reported engaging in sports betting more than other categories, 11,000- 15,000 (64.1%), 5,000-10,000(55.3%), while below 5,000 (45.9%).

Table 5. Proportion of youths who engage in sports betting based on income (per month) in Ilorin, Kwara State (*n*=450)

S/N	Items	Below N5K (n=146) Yes f(%)	N5K-10K (n=76) Yes f(%)	N11K-15K (n=64) Yes f(%)	Above N15K (n=164) Yes f(%)
1.	Have you ever bet on sports?	79(54.1)	44(57.9)	46(71.9)	120(73.2)
2.	Have you ever won anything from your sports bet?	70(47.9)	38(50.0)	40(62.5)	106(64.6)
3.	Do you get involved in sports bet weekly?	44(30.1)	28(36.8)	33(51.6)	87(53.0)
4.	I visit sports betting shops/ online site to place bet.	51(34.9)	38(50.0)	31(48.4)	95(57.9)
5.	I always look forward to win a sports bet.	82(56.2)	47(61.8)	41(64.1)	122(74.4)
Overall %		45.9	55.3		64.1
69.5					

Note: The "K" means thousand, while N means Naira

Table 6 shows that a test of the full constant only model on the association between demographic factors and sports betting was statistically significant, indicating that the demographic factors have a significant effect and reliably distinguished between observed and model predicted value, X^2 (8) = 18.560, p = .017 < .05. Nagelkerke R^2 of .255 indicated a modest relationship (variation or change) of 25.5% between the demographic factors and the dependent variable (sports betting). Finding shows that gender (P<.05) was statistically significantly associated with sports betting while age, education level and monthly income (P >.05) was not significantly associated

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with sports betting. Female youths were 74.8 per cent less likely to engage in sports betting than male (OR = .252. 95% CI [.151- .420], P = .010 < .05). This implies that besides gender, demographic factors of age, education level and monthly income did not influence youth's engagement in sports betting.

Table 6. Binary Logistics Regression Identifying Demographic Variables Predicting Sports Betting among Youths (n = 450)

Factors	B	S.E.	Wald	Df	*p*-value	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for E Lower	Upper
Gender								
Male								
Female	**-1.379**	**.261**	**27.931**	**1**	**.000**	**.252**	**.151**	**.420**
Age Category			**3.447**	**4**	**.486**			
< 18years								
18-23years	**.514**	**.332**	**2 .401**	**1**	**.121**	**1.671**	**.873**	**3.201**
24-29years	**.340**	**.396**	**.736**	**1**	**.391**	**1.404**	**.646**	**3.052**
30-35years	**.075**	**.542**	**.019**	**1**	**.890**	**1.078**	**.372**	**3.122**
36-40years	**.702**	**.590**	**1.417**	**1**	**.234**	**2.018**	**.635**	**6.416**
Education Level			**2.970**	**3**	**.396**			
No Formal Education								
Primary Education	**-1.006**	**.850**	**1.402**	**1**	**.236**	**.366**	**.069**	**1.934**
Secondary Education	**-1.241**	**.743**	**2.791**	**1**	**.095**	**.289**	**.067**	**1.240**
Tertiary Education	**-1.198**	**.719**	**2.776**	**1**	**.096**	**.302**	**.074**	**1.235**
Employment								
Income Level			**7.718**	**3**	**.052**			
< 5,0000 Per Month								
5,000-10,000 Per Month	**.201**	**.306**	**.433**	**1**	**.511**	**1.223**	**.671**	**2.227**
11,000-15,000 Per Month	**.639**	**.333**	**3.688**	**1**	**.055**	**1.894**	**.987**	**3.636**
Above 15,000 Per Month	**.715**	**.285**	**6.294**	**1**	**.012**	**2.044**	**1.169**	**3.572**
Constant	**1.530**	**.717**	**4.558**	**1**	**.033**	**4.620**		
Nagelkerke R^2 = .255								
X^2 (8) = 18.560, P = .017 < .05								

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Odd Ratio (OR) = Exp (B)

Ref Group: Gender = Male; Age = <18years; Education Level = No Formal Education; Income = < 5000 Per Month

DISCUSSION

Studies has showed that most youths have uphold sports betting as a lifestyle. The purpose of the current study was to examine sports betting prevalence and its relationship with demographic variables of gender, age, education level and monthly income among youths in Ilorin, Kwara State, North Central, Nigeria. Firstly, the finding indicated that high proportion of youths engaged in sports betting. This finding could be justified by the unemployment rate in Nigeria which stand at 33. 3 per cent and underemployment rate at 22. 8, of which majority are youths (National Bureau of Statistic (NBS), 2023). This result was consistent with prior studies which noted that youths frequently engaged in sports betting (Brune , 2016; Gbemi, Bimbo & Ekpenyong, 2020; Hing, Li, Vitartas & Russell, 2017; Ayandele, Popoola & Obosi, 2019; Mwadime, 2017).

Secondly, the findings from the demographic variables examined, that is, gender, age, monthly income and education level, have a significant relationship with sports betting prevalence. The finding showed that male participate frequently more than female in sports betting. The finding could be explained due to the fact that females were considered to be more risk adverse compare to male as sports betting is an act of risk taking. This confirmed earlier studies which revealed that male are positive than female towards sports betting engagement (Ahaibwe, Corti, Miriam & Joseph, 2016; Ayandele & Aramide, 2019; Mwadime, 2017; Ayandele, Oguntayo & Olapegba, 2021; Marchica, Zhao, Derevensky & Ivoska, 2017; Mustapha & Enilolobo, 2019). While, very high proportion of older youths participate more in sports betting than younger youths. This finding could be as a result of more financial demand of older youths. This result was in agreement with previous studies of Mustapha and Enilolobo (2019); Ayandele, Popoola and Obosi (2019); Ayandela and Aramide (2019) which observed that older youths participate frequently in sports betting compare to younger youths. On education level, the finding indicated that higher proportion of youths with no formal education participated in sports betting than other categories. This finding is in line with earlier study that participation in gambling is influenced by educational attainment (Mustapha & Enilolobo, 2019).

Lastly, youths with higher monthly income participated more than other categories. This is

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not surprising because betting is related with money staking, which mean that participant will use part of their income to bet. Though, this finding is not congruence with previous studies which asserted that lower income earners participated more than higher income earners. (Mustapha & Enilolobo, 2019; Nwingwe, Yusuf, & Okoruwa, 2012). The reason for the finding in this study could be as a result that the youths with higher income has more money to stake and wish to earn more income (Olaore, Adejare & Udofia, 2021), also the different in location with previous studies.

Conclusion

From the outcome of the study, it was concluded that monthly income was not a predictor of sports betting among youths. Furthermore, age and education level were not significant predictor of sports betting among youths. Furthermore, the youths had positive notion towards sports betting.

Recommendation

In the light of the findings, it was recommended among others that public health educators should embark on an informative campaign to reduce the degree to which youths overrate sports betting as an avenue for money making. Parents, educators, gambling regulatory bodies, ministry of youth and sports and Non-Government Organizations (NGO) should design appropriate program to educate the youths not to rely on sports betting as a source of income. Further, government should provide job opportunities for youths with better income for remuneration.

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