

## INFLUENCE OF ONLINE GAMBLING ADVERTISEMENTS ON UNDERGRADUATES OF A SELECTED NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY

Omoniyi Felix Akinkoya<sup>1</sup>, Adesola Olufunmi Bello<sup>2</sup>, Abimbola Adekemi Oluyemi<sup>3</sup> & Adeleke Olaoluwa Adeniyi<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Mass Communication, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State, Nigeria, E-mail: [akinkoya.omoniyi@oouagoiwoye.edu.ng](mailto:akinkoya.omoniyi@oouagoiwoye.edu.ng), +2348066308248

<sup>2</sup> Department of Mass Communication, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State, Nigeria, E-mail: [bello.ao@oouagoiwoye.edu.ng](mailto:bello.ao@oouagoiwoye.edu.ng), +2348079231983

<sup>3</sup> Department of Mass Communication, Crawford University, Igbesa, Ogun State, Nigeria, E-mail: [rotbinks2000@yahoo.com](mailto:rotbinks2000@yahoo.com), +2348037444561

<sup>4</sup> Department of Mass Communication, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye Ogun State, E-mail: [adeniyileke@yahoo.com](mailto:adeniyileke@yahoo.com), +2348032840918

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### ABSTRACT

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This study investigated the influence of online gambling advertisements on undergraduates in Nigeria focusing on students of Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye. Anchored on the propositions of social learning and cognizance theories, it adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised of full-time students having 19,740 enrollments as at 2021/2022 academic years. The sample size was 395 respondents selected through simple random technique. Findings showed that peer pressure arising from colleagues' winnings influenced the addictive gambling habits of respondents. Besides, online gambling also had negative economic consequence on the respondents because of the addictive nature of gambling which kept luring them to re-invest their winnings. The study equally found out that online gambling was more prominent among male students than females. Based on these findings, the study concluded that undergraduates in Olabisi Onabanjo University are exposed to online advertisements on betting which lure undergraduates to place more bets; and ultimately influences the betting habits of students. It therefore recommended that university management should include counseling against gambling and betting in the orientation programme of prospective students. Parents and guardians should also monitor and guard their children and wards against the addiction of online gambling.

**Key words:** Online gambling, Advertisement, Youth, Social Learning, Influence

## INTRODUCTION

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Gambling is the wagering of money or something of value (referred to as “the stakes”) on an event with an uncertain outcome with the primary intent of winning money or materials goods. It also involves the betting or staking of something of value, with consciousness of risk and hope of gain, on the outcome of a game, a contest, or an uncertain event whose result may be determined by chance or accident or have an unexpected result by reason of the bettors miscalculation. Gambling thus requires the three elements be present: consideration, chance and prize (Rose, Nelson, Loeb & Robert, 1998). The outcomes of gambling games may be determined by chance alone, as in the purely random activity of a tossed pair of dice or of the ball on a roulette wheel, or by physical skill, training, or prowess in athletic contests, or by a combination of strategy and chance. The rules by which gambling games are played sometimes serve to confuse the relationship between the components of the game, which depend on skill and chance, so that some players may be able to manipulate the game to serve their own interests. Thus, knowledge of the game is useful for playing poker or betting on horseracing but is of very little use for purchasing lottery tickets or playing slot machines.

Currently, sport betting is the most patronized form of gambling globally; one for which participation rate has increased during the last decade, particularly among youths (Derevensky, Sklar, Gupta & Messerlian, 2010; Hing, 2014). Sports’ betting is the activity of predicting sports results and placing a wager on the outcome. The frequency of sports bet upon varies by culture, with the vast majority of bets being placed on association football, American football, basketball, baseball, hockey, track cycling, auto racing, mixed martial arts, and boxing at both the amateur and professional levels. Some of the online sport betting platforms are Betway, 1xbet, Wazobet, Bet365, Bet9ja, Betking, 22Bet, Sportybet, Parimatch and so on. Sports betting is currently the most popular form of gambling in the country. A 2014 poll indicated that thirty per cent of the Nigeria population engages in sports betting, spending about \$2 billion on sports betting (Tribune, March 2022). Their increasing participation in gambling is raising concerns among scholars across the world (Hing, 2014) who shared the view that media advertisements of gambling are disseminating messages of normalization and prematurely exposing vulnerable people to engage in them; especially children, adolescents, young men, and problem gamblers this in turn lead to serious problems to the individuals, their families, and communities. These concerns, therefore, warrant the need to investigate sports bet advertising online and its influence on betting participation among youths with the view to ascertain the state.

Gambling in Nigeria is regulated by the National lottery regulatory commission. Lottery was legalized with the National lottery Act, 2005 and gambling is defined by chapter 22 of the criminal code Act enacted in 1990. The legal games are lottery, land-based casino, and sports betting. Roulette, dice games, and non-skilled card games are illegal. The law regulates slot machine activity and only licensed operators can provide slot machine gambling. Clearly studying chapter

22 of criminal code, it can be seen that it addresses the physical gambling houses such as Betting houses and gaming houses as well as offences relating to lotteries.

Online gambling also known as internet gambling refers to any kind of gambling that takes place over the internet. This includes virtual poker, casinos and sports betting. The first online gambling venue that was opened to the general public, was ticketing for the Liechtenstein International Lottery in October 1994. Today the market is worth around \$40 billion globally each year, according to various estimates. Many countries restrict or ban online gambling. However it is legal in some states of the United States, some provinces in Canada, most countries of the European Union and several nations in the Caribbean.

Online gambling in Nigeria is regulated by the National lottery commission. The National Lottery Regulatory Commission is the body that regulates lottery activities in Nigeria. The commission was established through the National Lottery Act of 2005. Lanre Gbajabiamila is the Director General of the Commission. All bookmakers must obtain a license from gaming commission before operating in Nigeria. Nigerian law does not mention online space and there is no restriction for the people to reach local or foreign gambling sites. Although internet space is not mentioned exactly in the law, the companies are obliged to follow the regulations and laws as it is for the land-based casinos. All types of online games are available except those that are illegal. The country's gambling landscape began to change in the late 1990s, with the passing of new policies and laws to better govern and regulate gambling in Nigeria. These included the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999), Taxes and Levies Act (1998), Casino and Gambling Law of Lagos State (2004), the National Lottery Regulatory Commission (2007). These new laws and policies also paved the way for the privatization of certain gambling sectors in the nation. These new laws and policies also paved the way for the privatization of certain gambling sectors in the nation.

Advertising is a veritable tool for entertainment but, more importantly, the idea of entertainment must be geared towards securing the attention of the consumer and arousing his interest in the advertised product to compel desired action. According to Arens (2004) Advertising is the structured and composed non personal communication, usually paid for and usually persuasive nature about products (goods, services and ideas) by identified sponsors through various media. It consists of non-personal forms of communication conducted through paid sponsorship, it is used for long-term building of the organization 's image (institutional advertising) long term build-up of a particular brand (brand advertising), information dissemination about sale service or evident (classified advertising), announcement of a special sale (sale advertising) and advocacy of a particular cause (advocacy advertising).

Gambling advertising is ubiquitous today: insistent exhortation to participate in various forms of gambling are common in virtually all kinds of media. It is therefore relevant to ask what the impact on problem gambling might be. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to assess how many

people gamble excessively because of direct or indirect influence from advertising. Part of the difficulty of measuring the impact of advertising on problem gambling is that it is, in general, most probably relatively small.

However, the nature and mechanisms of the impact of gambling advertising, as well as other aspect of it-such as its volume and the ethical questions that it raises - are possible to study in a variety of ways. Thus while absolute extent of impact is difficult to access, it is possible to study the relative impact on various groups of people by different forms of advertising. Such research results are valuable for harm by prevention and responsible marketing as they differentiate between relatively risky advertising.

The role of advertising as a possible stimulus of gambling and contributor to problem gambling has been the subject of a great deal of speculation in recent years. There are claims from various lobby groups that advertising has both contributed to a widespread cultural acceptance of gambling and that it creates unrealistic hopes of winning that may trigger a gambling addiction (griffiths, 2005). Despite concerns, new laws to deregulate the advertising of the gambling industry came into effect in September 2007. These position gambling and gaming as a part of leisure activity (Powell & Tapp, 2009) and for the first time permit gambling operators to advertise on television. The early adverts appearing after deregulation positioned gambling as a social norm, highlighting it as both popular and fun. In recognition of the potential detrimental consequence of gambling liberalization, this paper seeks to investigate the current advertising practices in the gambling industry and the message and images, contained with them, key into the motivational factors known to perpetuate problem gambling. A review if the extant empirical documenting the role of advertising on gambling behaviors is included, with a special focus on the impact on pathological and youth gambling.

Consensus among researchers is that certain personality traits, such as sensation seeking and impulsivity, may act as risk factors for the development of pathological gambling. In addition, evidence suggests that irrational thinking plays a significant role, with gamblers holding a set of false and erroneous beliefs that help to maintain their gambling behaviors despite heavy losses.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Evidence of high rates of gambling and associated problems amongst youth indicate that the issue of youth gambling must be addressed to minimise harm (Parke, 2015; Mwadime, 2017). Although most jurisdictions have legislation regulating gambling, the opportunities to put it in check are falling out of hand. The youth are increasingly being expose to advertisement messages from a broad range of media which advocate gambling (Johns, Dale, Alam & Keating, 2017).

Gambling has been seen to have a serious problem on the current generation young as well as the older people. School absenteeism, drop outs, depression, family break-ups among others have been cited as the issues arising from irresponsible gambling (Betting Control and Licensing Board, 2018). Due to the adverse financial hiccups that University students always meet, many

upon the exposure to the idea of betting quickly immerse themselves into it in hope of making extra cash to cushion their survival in Campuses. They then become too much obsessed and become irresponsible in their betting behaviour due to 'greed' (Mugalo, 2018). A related study conducted by NOIPolls (2019) in Nigeria, showed that 30% of the people who engaged in gambling attributed it to a quest for quick money; 21% to unemployment, and 15% to greed. Other reasons as contained in the study include cushioning the effect of economic hardship at 12%; poverty at 10%; for the fun of it at 5% passion for sports at 5% and peer group influence at 2%. In 2016, a university student hanged himself after losing on a bet. In addition, more than five suicides and lots of cases of bankruptcy, domestic violence and evictions have been reported. Another study from 2016 estimated that 78% of university students are problem gamblers. Students misappropriate their school fees while betting in bid to multiply the money (BCLB, 2017). The abuse of drugs and related substances as well as other forms of illicit activities like involvement in prostitution has also been linked to gambling with many students in universities and colleges recording a decline in their academic progress as a result of irresponsible gambling (Mwadime, 2017).

Thomas, Allen and Phillips (2009) focus on young people's awareness of the timing and placement of gambling advertising on traditional and social media platforms thus presenting a contextual gap. Mugalo (2018) looked into the impact of habitual betting enterprise on Christian youth in the light of Jesus 'liberating pedagogy but failed to look specifically at the betting advertisements thus presenting a contextual gap. Thus, it is evident that within betting advertisements, there still remains insufficient research to identify some of the behavioural changes that are brought by betting advertisements. Therefore, it is against these backgrounds that the current study sought to establish influence of online gambling advertisements on the gambling behaviour of undergraduate of Olabisi Onabanjo university students.

### Objectives of the Study

- 1) To find out how often youths are exposed to gambling adverts.
- 2) To examine the social media platforms on which youths are mostly exposed to gambling advert.
- 3) To determine the types of gambling advert interest the youths.
- 4) To evaluate the factors influencing the youths' gambling behaviour.

### Overview on Gambling

Gambling is understood as the established practice of staking money or other valuables on games or events of an uncertain outcome. The origin of gambling is dated back to 200BC in Ancient China where tiles were used as a form of lottery game. During this period, funds generated from lottery were used for civic purposes including the building of Great Wall of China. Other parts of the world such as Europe, America and Africa have long participated in gambling (Thompson,

2001). Australians are reported to be the biggest gamblers worldwide, with the highest gambling expenditure and loss per person (Williams, Volberg, & Stevens, 2012).

People of all ages engage in gambling, though young people including university students are considered a high risk group for gambling today. They engage in a wide range of gambling behaviours, including playing the lottery, poker/cards for money, casino games (i.e. slots/poker machines), horse racing, betting on sports and internet gambling. Common to Nigerian youths are online betting outfits such as NairaBet, NaijaBet, Winners goldenbet, Baba Ijebu, and a whole lot of others. It is estimated that =N=1.8 billion is currently spent daily on sports betting in Nigeria, with an average of =N=3,000 individual bets being placed on a daily basis (The Nation Newspaper 2014).

According to Chinyere, Mirian, Aguocha, Sanju and George (2020), gambling has always existed in Nigeria but in the past it was viewed as an antisocial activity and was actively discouraged by the church, which warned against the quest for quick wealth. In the late 1990s, in Chapter 22, section 236 of the Criminal Code Act, the Nigerian government legalised certain forms of gambling in an attempt to generate tax revenues. This has made gam more acceptable to the public, especially to the under aged. The most popular forms of gambling in present-day Nigeria are online sports betting (e.g. football league promotions and the pools), the lottery and slot machines. Many Nigerians view gambling as a harmless leisure activity: a recent study of the Nigerian general population found that 36% of adult respondents had gambled and 53% of these people were daily gamblers.

However, some argue that problem gambling in Nigeria, in the near future, will be a greater public health problem than substance misuse. Illegal gambling, especially betting on football, is extremely popular in Nigeria, although its precise scale is unknown. It is surprising that, despite the nature and scale of this problem, gambling and its related harms have not been adequately researched in Nigeria.

### **Attitudes toward Gambling among Youth**

Public perceptions of gambling are often equivocal. On the one hand, People are usually aware that gambling poses serious risks to those who are predisposed to gamble excessively. However, on the other hand, it is also acknowledged that gambling can have positive consequences for communities (e.g. via providing a source of revenue for sporting clubs or humanitarian causes) and can be an enjoyable pastime for individuals (Abbott & Cramer, 1993; Vong, 2009). The balance of such negative and positive views very likely affects the attitudes that individuals hold toward gambling and ultimately influences their decisions to engage in gambling (Gainsbury, Wood, Russell, Hing, & Blaszczynski, 2012). There is ample that people's attitudes toward gambling are evidence showing good predictors of how much people gamble and how likely they are to experience gambling related problems.

Authors who have applied this theoretical framework to gambling behavior (Cummings & Corney, 1987) as well as more general, health risk-taking behaviors (Fishbein & Cappella, 2006) suggest that attitudes are affected by broader demographic, personality and other individual-level factors. However, in connection with attitudes toward gambling, little is known about the relative importance of the different background influences. As the prevalence rates for problem gambling are higher for adolescents than for adults (Gupta, 2013; Nowak & Aloe, 2013), focusing on factors related to attitudes toward gambling for the former group is particularly important, both in terms of prevention and treatment. The prevalence of problem gambling among adolescents in Norway appears to be lower compared to international studies (Brunborg, Hansen & Froyland, 2013; Hans, 2014).

However, when one also considers the proportion that could be classified as at-risk gamblers, the overall percentage of adolescents reporting some problems with gambling becomes more considerable. In general, the results of previous studies of adolescent gambling share many similarities with those involving adults. Attitudes toward gambling tend to be mixed (Moore & Ohtsuka, 1997; Wood & Griffiths, 2007), but are generally reliable predictors of whether individuals engage in gambling (Wood & Griffiths, 2007) and experience gambling-related problems (Hans, 2014). For example, as in adult studies (Chiu & Storm, 2010; Smith, 2011; Taormina, 2009), young males are typically found to hold more positive attitudes than women about gambling (e.g. that gambling is morally unproblematic; that it is acceptable to legalize gambling) (Jackson, Dowling, Thomas, Bond, & Patton, 2008; Moore & Ohtsuka, 1997; Wood & Griffiths, 2007). People with more positive attitudes also tend to share certain beliefs about gambling. Those, for example, who are convinced that the development of the gambling industry has positive consequences for the economy, tend to hold more positive attitudes (Vong, 2009). There is also evidence that feeling in control over the outcomes of gambling is positively associated with gambling attitudes (Taormina, 2009).

Evidence in support of the view that gambling-related knowledge and beliefs are related to gambling attitudes was observed in an intervention study among prison inmates: Those who took part in a programme that informed about problem gambling, possible negative consequences and common misperceptions showed afterwards improved recognition of cognitive errors related to gambling and held less positive attitudes toward gambling (Nixon, Leigh, Nowatzki, 2006). A similar intervention was effective in producing less positive attitudes toward the economic profitability of gambling in a sample of high school students (Donati, Primi, & Chiesi, 2013).

Another important individual-level factor is personality. Research has shown that Neuroticism and Gregariousness (a sub-dimension of Extraversion) predicted gambling attitudes (positive relation) in a multiple regression analysis together with other variables, such as demographics and values. When bivariate correlations were analyzed, attitudes were significantly associated with Gregariousness but not with Neuroticism (Taormina, 2009). Other studies investigated

Impulsivity and Sensation Seeking (Zuckerman, Kuhlman, Joireman, Teta & Kraft, 1993) and found that those with higher scores on those traits had more positive attitudes toward gambling compared to those with lower scores on the corresponding traits (Breen & Zuckerman, 1999; Lee, 2013; McDaniel & Zuckerman, 2003).

Several studies using adult and adolescent samples provide empirical support for the view that social influences are important for understanding an individual's gambling behavior. For example, believing that one's family and friends approve of gambling and participate in gambling activities (i.e. perceived positive social norms regarding gambling) has been found to be predictive of gambling frequency (Larimer & Neighbors, 2003; Moore, Ohtsuka, 1999). Moreover, increased parental monitoring was associated with lower levels of adolescent gambling (Magoon & Ingersoll, 2006). Gambling attitudes also appear to be influenced by social factors, including family gambling history and peer relationships. In relation to family gambling history, it appears that the relationship with gambling attitudes may depend on whether or not relevant others experience problems in connection with their gambling. One study reported that adolescents whose parents gambled regularly held fewer negative attitudes toward gambling compared to those whose parents gambled less frequently. However, those with parents or relatives who had experienced gambling-related problems held more negative attitudes (Orford, 2009).

### **Gambling and Social Learning Theory**

The social learning model of gambling proposes that gambling is a form of behaviour that is highly subjected to reinforcement and reward. The theory proposes that as individual engage in gambling and such gambling brings high return in term of money, such individual is motivated and reinforce to participate more in this behavior. This reinforcement tends to strengthen the relationship between gambling and outcome of such gambling (reward). The theory posits that this reinforcement creates a sense of physiological arousal which serves as motivation or enforcement for an individual to engage in gambling in other to gain more profit. In other words, as level for return from gambling is encouraging, such individual are engage more in gambling and may eventually experience gambling addiction at the end. The theory suggests a strong association between reward and gambling predisposes individual in more gambling related activities. Meanwhile, (Skinner, 1953) justifies the claim above when he claimed that the level of individual participation in gambling related activities is a function or reinforcement history. The reinforcement history can be explained base on the fact that whether such individual has been making profit from gambling or not.

In other word the level of success in the previous gambling go along way on predicting whether such individual will engage more in gambling at future time. Further, Custer (1982) also explained that early big reward or win from gambling predisposes individual to gambling in future tome. Win serves as motivation which improve individual attitude toward gambling. However, in the case of problem gambling where people still engage in gambling without despite the fact that



they are losing, the explanation forth is based on the fact that the first reward from gambling create a great and very strong reinforcement which last long till the person get addicted to gambling. From the social learning theory explanation, (Brown,1987) suggested that there are six major mechanism which predisposes people to gambling addiction; they are i- Felling of anxiety or depression ii-cognitive distortion concerning gambling behavior iii- reinforcement schedule iv- Opportunity and availability of gambling spot v- attitude of socio-cultural context toward gambling vi- internal relationship. Furthermore, (Brown,1987) reiterated that an individual is predisposes to gambling if he/she is residing in a culture which permit gambling and the attitude of the people toward gambling is positive. In other word, an individual living in an environment where people are engaging in gambling, such individual is also expected to join the group and participate in such act. (Brown, 1987) also suggested that physiological arousal also motivate an individual to engage in gambling, Brown claim that internal reinforcement improve the vulnerability of individual to gambling. The internal urge to gamble according to Brown predisposes individual to engage in gambling. Gambling availability in Nigeria according to this theory is one of the reasons while some people may experience gambling and eventually develop a gambling addiction.

### **Gambling and Cognitive Theory Assumptions**

Theory of cognitive development was proposed by Jean Piaget (1896-1980). The theory deals with the nature of knowledge itself and humans gradually come to acquire, construct, and use it. To Piaget, cognitive development was a progressive reorganization of mental processes resulting from biological maturation and environment experience. Cognitive theory is based upon an information processing, problem solving and reasoning approach to human behavior. Individuals use information that has been generated by external sources such as advertisement and internal sources such as memory. This information is given thought, processed, transferred into meanings or patterns and then combined to form judgments about behavior (Conner, 2012) marketing communications context, strategies and application.

Problem solving is a daily preoccupation of consumers; information about products and services may be obtain either deliberately (planned) or accidentally (incidental). Knowledge of products or services tends to be gained principally as the result of incidental learning through the reception and retention of advertising message. After reception, advertising message may be assimilated and stored with other experiences which help to form general attitude toward the advertised products or brand. At some later time, an event may cause individual to recall the information which they have accidentally learned and provided they have the means and opportunity to purchase, they may buy the products and services advertised. Consumer may also acquire knowledge about products on a planned basis. The qualities of competing products are carefully studied and such information is regarded as highly reliable and objective. The information gathered from this form of deliberate learning is then added to the existing store of knowledge

acquired from past experience and or from viewing advertisements. This new information may reinforce existing knowledge and so strengthen prevailing attitude or possibly it may cause some dissonance (Chisnall, 1994).

The cognitive theory contributes to the study of advertising and consumer purchase decision in the sense that, information through advertising is thought to remain in short-term memory only briefly and then is either forgotten or is transferred into long-term memory. The mechanism for 'writing' information from short-term into long-term is thought to be rehearsal, an active cognitive process in which the encoded information is mentally reviewed. Each exposure due to advertising repetition may partially elicit or cause rehearsal, which, after multiple exposures, 'moves' the information into the long-term memory. Due to situational distractions or because of the complexity of the message, a number of repetitions may be required before the information communicated through the advertising is fully and accurately encoded in a cognitive form by the audience.

### Research Design

This study adopted the descriptive research design. The major source of data is the primary source which made use of the distribution of questionnaire items to elicit response from the population of this study in accordance to the research questions. The population for the study consists of undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University. This university was chosen because of proximity to the researcher, and accessibility of respondents, materials and data. Student population estimate at Olabisi Onabanjo University as at the 2021/2022 academic session was 19,740 comprising of students in 6 faculties of the university (University Academic Planning Unit, 2022) and this figure formed the population of this study.

The value of 395 as the sample size from the population of this study which is 19,740 was determined 19,740 by using Yamane (1967) formula on sample size determination. The computation details are presented below:

$$n = \frac{N}{[1 + N (0.05)^2]}$$

Where:

n = sample size

N= Population size (the universe)

e = Sampling error (0.05)

^ = raised to the power of 2

Therefore:

$$n = \frac{19,740}{[1 + 19,740(0.05)^2]} = 394.8$$

Approximately 395

This implies a minimum of 395 samples are required to get valid responses.

### Method of Data Analysis

This study employs the descriptive statistics method for the purpose analysis by subjecting the responses from the respondents were subjected to simple percentage frequency count in order to make inferences out of the collected data. The data were collected from the primary sources in form of questionnaire. The responses to the questionnaires were presented in tabular form and statistically analyzed using the simple percentage that is taking the number of respondents in each option divided by the sample size and multiplied by 100 percent.

### Presentation of Results

**Objective One:** To find out how often youths are exposed to gambling adverts.

**Table 1: Exposure of the youth to gambling advertisement**

S/N	STATEMENTS	YES (%)	U (%)	NO (%)
	How often are the youths exposed to gambling adverts?			
1.	The number of adverts I am exposed to daily is alarming	387 (96.5)	6(1.5)	8(2)
2.	I find it difficult to skip online adverts when they play.	377 (95.5)	10(2.2)	8(2)
3.	Gambling Advert always come up daily	361 (91.5)	14(3.5)	16(5)
4	Gambling Advert are always creative and eye catchy	353 (89.5)	12(3)	20(7.5)
5.	I relate and I engage with the gambling advert	359 (91)	14(3.5)	22(5.5)

Source: Author's field work, 2023

Table one shows the responses to a series of questions that determines the outcome of research question one. The table shows that 96.5 percent of respondents agree that the rate of adverts they receive on a daily basis is alarming. These adverts are difficult to skip online as one must spend some time watching it as also agreed by 95.5 percent of the sampled respondents. Furthermore, 91.5 percent of respondents agree that gambling advert always pop up on a daily basis. While 89.5 percent agree that these adverts are catchy and entertaining to watch, they make it easy for viewers to easily relate and engage with the call to action of the gambling advert as agreed by 91 percent of respondents.

**Table 2: Frequency of how undergraduates visit gambling sites.**

Gambling Sites Visit	Frequency	Percent
Daily	150	37.9
2-4 times a week	50	12.6
Once a week	32	8
Monthly	15	3.79
Sparingly	23	5.82
Never	125	31.64
Total	395	100

Source: Author's field work, 2023

Table two presents the frequency of visits to online sites. 150 respondents (37.5%) visit gambling sites daily, while 12.5 percent visit 2 - 4 times a week and 8 percent once a week. From the table, 3.75 percent and 5.75 percent of respondents gambles monthly and sparingly respectively. However, 32.5 percent claim to never gamble or visit gambling sites.

**Objective Two:** To examine the social media platforms on which youths are mostly exposed to gambling advert.

**Table 3: Determining which media platform exposes students to gambling advert**

Media Platform	Frequency	Percent
Social media	190	48
Print Media	45	11.39
Radio	30	7.5
Television	120	30.37
Outdoor advert	10	2.5
Total	395	100

Source: Author's field work, 2023

Table three shows the media platforms attributed to being top influencers of student to gambling via online adverts. From the table, the social media platforms have been identified to be the top influencer of students as 48 percent of respondents chose social media followed by television with 30.37 percent, print media, radio and outdoor advert having 11.39, 7.5 and 2.5 percent respectively.

**Table 4: Determining which social media platform got the most average daily gambling advert**

Social Media Platform	Frequency	Percent
Facebook	145	36.7
YouTube	15	3.79
Instagram	140	35.44
Tik Tok	20	5
Twitter	50	12.6
Others	25	6.3
Total	395	100

Source: Author's field work, 2023

From table four above, 41.25 percent of respondents identified Instagram as the top social media platform with the most daily gambling advert followed by Facebook with 35.44 percent of respondents Twitter with 12.5 percent, Tiktok has 5 percent respondents and YouTube has 3.79 percent.

**Objective Three:** To determine the types of gambling advert interest the youths.

**Table 5: Frequency of gambling advert which interest undergraduates**

Mode of Gambling	Frequency	Percent
None	130	32.9
Played lottery	75	18.98
Bet on a sporting event	150	37.9
Playing cards	16	4
Played video games	6	1.5
Betting on some events	10	3.5
Others	8	2
Total	395	100

Source: Author's fieldwork, 2023

From table five, the type of adverts that interest undergraduates are shown based on the different gambling options available. It shows that 37.9 percent will prefer adverts about sporting events, 32.9 per cent will rather not see any gambling adverts and 21% are more interested in lottery. While 4 percent are interested in playing cards advert, 1.5 percent prefers video games and 3.5 percent would rather bet on some events

**Table 6: Determining the major medium of online gambling**

Medium	Frequency	Percent
Smartphones/tablets	120	30.37
Laptop	24	6
Betting Shop	121	30.63
None	130	32.9
Total	395	100

Source: Author's field work, 2023

Table 6 shows that respondents are more likely to use their mobile phones to gamble or visit betting shops than use a laptop. 32.5 percent of respondents do not gamble but 31.5 percent indicated that they visit betting shops and 30 percent via Smartphone with 6 percent of respondents using their laptop.

**Objective Four:** To evaluate the factors influencing the youths' gambling behaviour.

**Table 7: Determining the factors that influence gambling behaviour**

S/N	STATEMENTS	YES(%)	U(%)	NO(%)
	What factors influence their gambling behaviour?			
1.	The advert of a new gambling company/product increase desire to gamble?	379(96)	6(1.5)	11(2.5)
2.	Winnings by friends/family	377(95.5)	8(2)	11(2.5)

3.	Unemployment	451(90)	14(3.5)	26(6.5)
4	Need for extra income	491(99.5)	10(2.5)	9(8)
5.	Need for leisure	364(91)	14(3.5)	22(5.5)
6	Need for Pass time	379(96)	6(1.5)	10(2.5)
7	Promotion in Sport Betting Ads	355(90)	12(3)	12(5)
8	Reinforcement of Willingness to Bet	375(95)	10(2.5)	4(2.5)
9	Gambling therapy	353(89.5)	6(1.5)	26(9)

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2023

From table seven above, 96 percent of respondents agree that that the advert of a new gambling company or a product influences gambling behavior. More so, 95.5 percent agree that winnings of families and friends that also influence gambling behavior. 90 percent agree that unemployment influences gambling behavior just like the need for extra income, leisure and to pass time have over 90 percent of respondents agree to them. Other factors that influence gambling behaviour are promotion in sport betting ads, Reinforcement of willingness to bet and gambling therapy all have 90 percent, 95 percent and 89.5 percent of respondents agree to them respectively.

### Discussion of the Findings

Several studies conducted on gambling behaviour among students have found out that age, peer influence, religion, educational status are significant predictor to gambling. Furthermore, when it also comes to problem associated with gambling behaviour, Ede (2019) also suggest that male exhibit significant higher level of gambling addition than their counterparts that are female.

The findings from this study shows that 67.5% of the students of Olabisi Onabanjo University engage in gambling, out of which 73.4% are male and 26.5% are female. This indicates that male is more involved in gambling than females in the study. Importantly, the research revealed that there were larger percentage of students of Olabisi Onabanjo University who engage in gambling, either the legalized form of gambling like the casino and the online sport bet, or the illegal forms of gambling which includes playing of cards. The study also revealed that a large percentage of the students who gambles are Christians (59.4%). Also, 33.1% of the students who ever gambled are in Social Sciences department, and they constitute the majority of students who engage in gambling. The study also confirmed that the age groups 20-24 have the majority of students who gamble (53.1%). Also, 41% of the students who gamble are in 300 level, making them have the majority of gambling students. We could conclude that peer influence is a major factor influencing gambling among students of Olabisi Onabanjo University, this is line with the findings of Donate, Chiesi and Primi (2013).

From the analysis, it is shown that advertisement remains a part of daily life. Every day brands and businesses are finding ways to make their products obvious to consumers including gambling suppliers. 74 percent of respondents are alarmed at the rate of advertisement daily. More so,

the rate at which online adverts tend to make it less easy to be skipped has increased. And the same can be said for Gambling adverts which the study has found to significant influencer and determinant of gambling behaviour. Hence, youth are daily exposed to gambling adverts. This was in line with the findings of Korn, Reynolds, and Tim, (2015) which also found that gambling adverts are determinate of gambling behaviour. The study also revealed that while the traditional media still serve as a tool of exposure of gambling adverts to youths as seen from the survey that television still influences 30.37% of youths, a larger bulk is on the social media with 48% of youths are influenced via social media and particularly on Instagram and Facebook. Similar research conducted by Danladi (2013) revealed that youths are mostly influenced by social media.

This study showed that amongst others, sports betting still has the highest demand and show of interest, adverts on them continues to remain catchy with respect to played lottery which have 18.98 percent interest from undergraduates. The results showed that 49.36% of undergraduates spend more than one hour daily on gambling. The impact of advertisement is then seen as 30.37% of undergraduates react and engage this advertisement from the comfort of their smart phones and tablets.

Finally, the fourth research question focused on the factors that influence gambling behaviour. The finding of this study show that most importantly deterministic factors and influencer of gambling are advert of a new gambling company/product, winnings by friends/family, unemployment, need for extra income, need for leisure, need for pass time, promotion in Sport Betting Ads, Reinforcement of Willingness to Bet and gambling therapy. It was strongly agreed and agreed that all these factors were deterministic factors that influences gambling behaviour.

## Conclusion

The gambling industry is one of the service providers that explore the windows of opportunity made available through advertising, to expose youths to the act of gambling. Since adverts give credence to products available, services provided, services and ideas canvassed; youths in recent times see gambling in general and football betting in particular as a credible activity. These explain one of the reasons why football betting is regarded as normal and harmless; and appear so popular among youths in Nigeria. This popularity seems to have increased because of growing accessibility to betting centres, level of education and exposure of youths to online betting advertisements. This situation seems to be compounded by the role that technology is playing in the gambling industry, which makes youths to be exposed to gambling advertisements at an increased rate through social media, websites, mobile apps and blogs. This results in convenience, ease of access and use that characterize gambling as a result of the application of technology which brings advertisements and gambling closer to youths. Consequently, youths engage in football betting as a result of increased exposure to football betting advertisements. This has the tendency to result in addicted gambling behaviours among youths as a result of extreme football betting involvement.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- 1) There is a need to regulate the use of online platforms as medium of advertisement placements in Nigeria. This is because internet accessibility in terms of website visitation is unrestricted; and the use of smartphone is unregulated. Undergraduates use internet and smartphone indiscriminately, through which they get swayed easily; by unsolicited messages received advertisements. It is therefore recommended that messages which warn prospective bettors of the age limit (which is 18 years) and the potential danger of developing addiction to betting should be mandatory on such adverts displayed. The National Lottery Regulatory Commission should be empowered to sanction erring companies that do not obey the laws regulating football betting advertisements.
- 2) Online advertisements are equally unregulated in terms of time, which is crucial in broadcast media. There are regulated time that certain adverts are permitted to run in the broadcast media; especially when it comes to potential harmful or abusive products and services. The idea is to protect children and adolescents from exposure to such products and services. Football betting has the tendency of making a prospective bettor to become an addictive one over time. That is why such advertisements online should be regulated. Presently, any smartphone user who visits any of the social platforms will encounter pop-up messages and advertisements that various football betting operators at any time of the day. Therefore, adequate regulations should be put in place whereby different media channels will have limited time for football betting advertisements in order to reduce its effect on football betting involvement.
- 3) Management of tertiary institutions in Nigeria should include counseling against gambling and betting in their students' orientation programmes and regularly organise seminars and other channels of sensitisation on the implications of gambling on youths' behaviour, finance and general wellbeing.
- 4) The parents and guardians should be enlightened on the significance of continued parenting on youths. This will help in the collaborative efforts to identify possible gambling related behaviour and problems among youths and provide appropriate cautioning and help.

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