

Influence of Online Sports Events on Betting among Nigerian Youth

B. O. Diyaolu

Abstract—The opportunity provided by advances in technology as regard to sports betting is so numerous. Nigerian youth are not left out especially with the use of phones and visit to sports betting outlets. Today, it is more difficult to differentiate a true fan as there are quite a number of them that became fans as a result of betting on live games. This study investigated the influence of online sports events on betting among Nigerian youth. A descriptive survey research design was used and the population consists of all Nigerian youth that engages in betting and lives within the southwest zone of Nigeria. A simple random sampling technique was used to pick three states from the southwest zone of Nigeria. 2500 respondents comprising of males and females were sampled from the three states. A structured questionnaire on Online Sports Event Contribution to Sports Betting (OSECSB) was used. The instrument consists of three sections. Section A seeks information on the demographic data of the respondents. Section B seeks information on online sports events while section C was used to extract information on sports betting. The modified instrument which consists of 14 items has a reliability coefficient of 0.74. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 significance level. The completed questionnaire was collated, coded, and analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentage and pie chart, and inferential statistics of multiple regressions. The findings of this study revealed that online sports betting is a significant predictor of an increase in sports betting among Nigerian youth. The media and television, as well as globalization and the internet, coupled with social media and various online platforms, have all contributed to the immense increase in sports betting. The increase in the advertisement of the betting platform during live matches, especially football, is becoming more alarming. In most organized international events, the media attention, as well as sponsorship rights, are now been given to one or two betting platforms. There is a need for all stakeholders to put in place school-based intervention programs to reorientate our youth about the consequences of addiction to betting. Such programs must include meta-analyses and emotional control towards sports betting.

Keywords—Betting platform, Nigerian fans, Nigerian youth, sports betting.

I. INTRODUCTION

SPORTS betting has a long history with sports and over the years has developed with sports. Sports betting usually take place at a precise venue where bets on the final outcome of such sports can be observed and just like any other betting, the winner goes home happy. Recently, most of those that take part in sports betting do not go to the venue of the games but view either the game or result online or through a live broadcast on television. The advent of beaming live sports either on television or the internet gave room for more sports betting platforms to go online and this attracted a lot of customers.

Babajide Diyaolu is with the Afe Babalola University, Nigeria (e-mail: diyaolub@abuad.edu.ng).

Reference [1] attributed much of gambling and problem gambling's growth to the popularity and ease of the internet. They also showed the recent commercialization of gambling in the media (e.g., ESPN and Bravo Channel) which has helped strengthen this activity while large payouts, celebrities, and entertaining production make it an attractive and credible activity.

Some Nigerians have gone to the level of downloading the betting site application on their phone and in their leisure time, they conveniently take part in betting. Average youth living within the main city has a phone to browse with and get updated with the latest results online. This is to ascertain the fact that there are a lot of changes in the betting world compared to a decade ago. Via the internet and with the use of phones, a lot of new forms of gambling are being introduced to youths [2]. Added to this, the truly global nature of the World Wide Web means that there is a sporting event or outcome available anywhere in the world, at any time of the day or night, for an individual to place a bet on.

Some of these betting platforms have several ways of attracting the youth, this includes offering 100% bonuses for new customers, giving bonuses for long time customers, allowing withdrawal of funds the moment the individual requested for it as well as having an application that can be downloaded for use on their phone. Nowadays, students are even encouraged to bet with the availability of several short loans that are also available on the internet.

Technology transcends national borders, creating an international market for gambling, and for sports betting more particularly [3]. An overview of the changes in the gambling world due to online technologies, with several modes of wagering which are more interactive, the activity is becoming more asocial [4]. A key observation is that gambling has moved out of more traditional "social" environments (such as the pub) and into the home and workplace where it can be undertaken in isolation. The increase in the number of sports betting shops and agents has made it easier to participate in betting. This research work is concerned with the influence of online sports events on sports betting among Nigerian Youth.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several discussions on sports betting are usually based on its social and economic contribution. A lot of researchers have reported the economies and regional benefits of betting [5], [6]. Research on sports betting is growing gradually especially in

the area of cost and benefits, also identified internationally are betting-related sports promotion [7]. Recently, online betting is getting more attention as well; it has had the largest growth within the last decade. The global nature of the internet provides the opportunity for the promotion of online betting. The well-known electronic gaming machine is losing customers while there is an increase in sports betting [8]. Out of 2,522,299 bets placed on a betting platform, 96.1% is the majority of the bettors engage in online betting, and most of the bets are on popular events like football, and cricket matches with the intention of following up the matches as it progresses [9].

The growth of sports betting over the world happens to fall within a category of people. They are usually male, youth, or young adult, most times they have a regular income either through paid salary or personal business and they also have access to the internet either on their phone or laptop [9]. These regular income at times are quite high and also the age range usually fall between 20 and 30 years [10]. During an online survey among large participants of sports betting, it was observed that most of the participants were male income earners [11]. They usually play cards and poker whenever they are free but they are not the usual fans or supporters. Most of the researchers had one point of agreement as most of them reported males getting involved more than females. Young adults between the age of 20 and 30 years gamble regularly and are more habitual than young females [12]. Young male adults are the risk-takers when it comes to gambling in sports and they display a lot of enthusiasm and addiction. The interest of females in sports betting is so low when compared to males [13]. As regard to intervention and awareness, the online betting platform's target audience is young males who can easily move around to take care of their health, if the need arises [14]. The research was also carried out on the reason why young adults engage in betting [15]. They discovered that several social and economic variables have an impact on youth sports betting. This all starts with the early exposure of children to money, risk and savings. As they grow to become adolescents, the interest is already developing.

A survey was carried out with the intention of finding out reasons why young adults get involved in betting [16]. They discovered that most of them believe that with their knowledge and experience it is an easy way of making money. These also affect the amount they are willing to bet with. As long as they see themselves as experts in a sport, they are willing the bet with a large sum of money. In a research work carried out on the US National Football League, it was discovered that sentiment is usually attached to football betting [17]. Youth who are emotionally attached to a club tend to bet in support of such club while fewer bets are placed on the clubs to which they are not emotionally attached. It was also discovered that there is a relationship between motivation and passion when it comes to betting [18]. They found that some youth use betting as a sign of passion and motivation towards their clubs and they are ready to do it all over again. At this stage, the amount involved does not matter because they are blinded by the love they have for their club. This implies that some fans' engagement in betting is not about the money, some young fans use sports betting as a

way of showing support to their club [19]. Knowledge and experience are not a criterion for these young bettors as they are motivated to bet for their club not minding the opposition. This set of youth finds it fascinating when it comes to betting and is encouraged by advertisements from several media groups that continue to publicize gambling like it is part of sporting events [20]. This is a potentially identified risk for young men as there are now more advertisement and promotional packages from several betting platforms also the fact that gambling has now been normalized also put them at risk [19]. Although sports betting has continued to generate a lot of debate among researchers, the available data on current issues and the effect of online gambling on youth are limited.

Hypothesis: There is no significant relative contribution of online sporting events on sports betting among Nigerian youth.

III. METHODOLOGY

The design of the study was descriptive survey research. The population consists of Nigerian youths who engage in betting and live within the southwest zone of Nigeria. 2,500 respondents comprising males and females were sampled. The instruments were administered at various sports betting outlets in the cities across the southwest zone of Nigeria with the help of 10 research assistants. The sports betting outlet usually has access to the internet and most of their customers patronize them daily, while others monitor the results online as well. We employed a multi-stage sampling procedure in choosing the respondents for the study.

At the first sampling stage, a simple random sampling technique (fishbowl without replacement) was used to pick three states (Ekiti, Lagos, and Oyo State) from the southwest zone of Nigeria. The second stage involved the use of a purposive sampling technique to select 40 sports betting outlets from each selected state. Only those outlets within the cities were considered. Those living in remote areas may not have access to regular electricity power and online betting might be difficult for them. At the final stage, a convenient sampling technique was used to pick the respondents at each sports betting outlet. An average of 20 instruments was administered in each sports betting outlet.

Instrument

A self-developed and structured questionnaire on OSECSB was used. The instrument consists of three sections. Section A seeks information on the demographic data of the respondents. Section B seeks information on online sports events and is divided into eight items while Section C was used to extract information on sports betting with only six items. All the items were straightforward and concise considering the nature of the environment where the instrument will be filled.

Procedure

The instrument was administered at sports betting outlets across the selected State. Most of the agents in charge of the outlets refused at first, but they were made to understand that the research will also promote their product because it will be seen all over the internet. With the help of the agents, the

questionnaire was filled out at various sports betting outlets in the selected cities. The questionnaire was retrieved as soon as the respondents finished filling it out.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages, and pie-chart were used for the demographic characteristics of the respondents while inferential statistics of multiple regressions was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha levels. Out of the 2,500 administered instruments, only 2,036 were analyzed.

IV. PRESENTATION OF RESULT

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

TABLE I
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE

Age Range	Frequency	Percent
18-23 Years	682	33.50
24-29 Years	907	44.55
30-36 Years	425	20.87
37 Years & Above	22	1.08
Total	2036	100.0

Findings as shown in Table I revealed that respondents within the age bracket of 18-23 and 24-29 years accounted for the largest proportion of the respondents with a sum total frequency of 1,589 which added up to 78.05%. Respondents within the rest of the group can only account for a total of 447 frequency which represent only 21.95% of the total respondents.

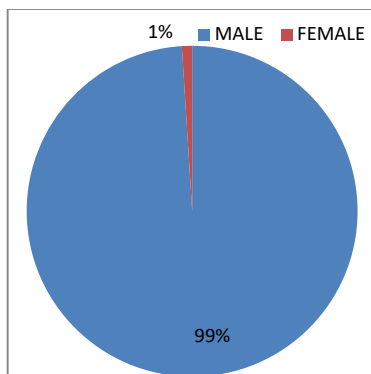


Fig. 1 Distribution of Respondents by Gender

The result of the study as shown in Fig. 1 indicated that male respondents accounted for the largest proportion at 99% with their female counterparts making up the remaining 1%.

TABLE II
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY OCCUPATION

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Students	475	23.33
Civil Servant	426	20.92
Private Sector	445	21.86
Artisan	354	17.39
Self Employed	220	10.81
Unemployed	116	5.70
Total	2036	100.0

Findings in Table II showed that students accounted for the largest proportion at 23.33% followed by those in the private sector with 21.86% while those unemployed, made up the least proportion at 5.70%.

TABLE III
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY FAVORITE BETTING SITE

Platform	Frequency	Percent
Bet9ja	313	15.37
Betking	139	6.83
Merrybet	252	12.38
Nairabet	281	13.80
Sportybet	290	14.24
Surebet	263	12.92
Winnergoldenbet	259	12.72
Others	239	11.74
Total	2726	100.0

Findings in Table III showed that Bet9ja platform has the highest number of respondents, they accounted for 15.37% of the sample and are immediately followed by Sportybet and Nairabet which accounted for 14.24% and 13.80% of the population respectively while Betking had the least respondents with 6.83%.

Hypothesis

There is no significant relative contribution of Online sporting events on sports betting among Nigerian youth.

TABLE IV
RELATIVE CONTRIBUTION OF ONLINE SPORTING EVENT ON SPORTS BETTING RESULT

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	33.274	1.382	.034	26.492	.000
Online Sporting Events	1.072	.070	0.43	14.783	

a. Dependent Variable: Sports Betting

Findings as presented in Table IV showed that the b-value of online sporting events is 1.072 also the standard regression coefficient (Beta) is 0.43. The $t = 14.783$ is statistically significant at $p = .000$. This reveals a significant relative contribution of online sporting events on sports betting among Nigerian youth.

V. DISCUSSIONS

With access to the internet on the phone, a lot of youth are able to carry out several things even without having knowledge of it. Online betting has increased over the years and several factors may be responsible for it. This study examined the contribution of Online sporting events on sports betting among Nigerian youth. Results on the demographic characteristic of the respondents revealed that the majority of the respondents were male. They also belong to the category of youth and young adults whose ages range from 18-29. This is similar to the findings of [9], they discover that majority of those that take part in sports betting are usually male youth that is educated and employed and has access to the internet. Reference [10] also agreed that young adults engage more in sports betting, they

found out that most of them also have regular income and are between ages 20 and 30 years. Young male income earners participate in betting regularly [11].

The finding of the hypothesis as shown in Table IV indicated that online sports betting is a significant predictor of sports betting among Nigeria youth. The advent of live professional games on the internet has paved way for more online betting platforms. In the last decade, very few online betting platforms existed in Nigeria mostly foreign ones, and are less than ten but recently they are more than twenty. Nigerian youth does not need to go to England before putting a bet on English Premier League matches. It is so convenient nowadays that some can even place the bet in their homes. The increase is a result of several advertisement and marketing strategies used by these platforms. At times the advert does not even allow the innocent fans to enjoy the game and those that are not sure of its side effect gradually get tempted with betting until they eventually get addicted to it. Reference [14] discovered that South Australian stakeholders were ready to ban excessive advert on sports betting during sporting events based on the fact that they believe it will raise a generation of children that will accept sports betting as being normal and part of a sporting event. Reference [21] also found out that it is very difficult to enjoy sporting events on tablets or phones without experiencing adverts and sports betting promotions. Many of these adverts have been integrated into a lot of mobile application which makes it also convenient for young viewers to fall victim. Some of these betting platforms even gained access to sponsorships of sporting event and in the process, they are also promoting their product. Sports betting has now become more technologically advanced and accessible to youth as it is now part of sporting events appearing everywhere on social media and the internet [22].

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Sports events and gambling have been together for quite a decade, development in relation to technology has now made it possible to participate as both fans and gamblers at one's convenience even without leaving one's apartment. Several factors have contributed to the increase in the number of those that take part in sports betting. The level of technology and advancement of some of the betting platforms can afford an opportunity to bet in multiple variations on a single game. A lot of enticing gifts as well as a welcome bonus have also contributed to the number of gamblers. It was also observed that some students and unemployed youth fall victim as a result of looking for fast money and gradually they get addicted to it. There is a need to checkmate gambling advertisement rules in order to reduce its adverse effect on youth. The government and stakeholders must ensure that wrong messages and attitudes are not being promoted, as some youth no longer believe that gambling is not a good habit, and instead, they see it as an opportunity to make and exercise their love for the game. At times it is difficult to differentiate a gambler from a fan, as some fans are now more addicted to gambling especially when their team is playing. Sports is different from betting and some young fans need to be given proper orientation so as not to be misled

into the world of gamblers.

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