

Sports Betting and Nigerian Youths: A Study of Sports Betting In Edo State

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Abstract: *The study examined sport betting among Nigerian youths in Edo State. The specific objectives of the study were to examine various sport youths take bet on in Edo State, how often youths take bet on various sport, reasons why youths of Edo State engage in sport betting, perceived social-economic contributions of sport betting in the society. This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The study covered one hundred and eighty-two (182) youths drawn from selected 5 region of Edo State namely: Ekpoma, Auchi, Oredo, Uromi and Ubiaja. Data were sourced from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was sourced from questionnaire while secondary data were collected from newspapers, textbooks, electronic journals, and the online publications obtained via the internet. The research instrument to be used for the study was a questionnaire. Data collected was analyzed with frequency count and percentages (%). The result showed that majority of the youths noted that high youth unemployment, high tendency for risk taking among the youths, increased passion for sports among others are the factors responsible for their involvement in sport betting. It was recommended that the youths do not see the negative social and economic implication of gambling and perhaps that is why the gambling (sports betting) sector is growing at a very high speed in Edo State.*

Keywords: *Sports Betting and Nigerian Youths and Sports Betting*

I. Introduction

Sports are social activities that mean various things to different people. According to Omobowale (2009), sports are usually aimed at entertainment and leisure, but their meaning varies among different cultures and people. The complexity, nature, purpose, and essence of sport has however, always varied over time and across societies. Similarly, Tade (2014) noted that sports serve both social and therapeutic purposes across social contexts, including male and female relations in the context of home. This shows that sports, for instance football, have diverse appeals and are multi-contextual in purposes and manifestations (Armstrong & Giulianotti, 2004).

In general, national and global terms, sports have the capacity to contribute to development if well-practiced and understood. Human growth, progress and development are at the core of social relations and societal existences, and sports play a part here. Bearing that in mind, it is important to engage the implications of sport through its manifestations and implications for human development especially in developing societies. Sport is increasingly becoming boundless to the extent that it impacts technological, physical, socially, economically, psychologically on humans in Africa globally (Armstrong & Giulianotti, 2004).

Sports today like golf, basketball, football are largely capitalistic. There is a large scale subliminal aggressive infusion of capital accumulation into football, particularly in football betting, which is the case in broadcasting and related interests. As football makes incursion into homes and societies, including very remote societies in Africa and Asia, it propagates capitalism in some ways. And many unconsciously embrace capitalism, and its ancillaries, through football. As people are entertained through various sport like football, baseball, basketball and many others, they gradually become involved in capitalist profit motivated practices like betting (Vidacs, 2006; Nauright, 2004).

“Sports betting” is, at its simplest, placing a financial wager on the outcome of a sporting match, as well as on events that occur within the larger match or fixture. The growth of sports betting and gambling promotion during sporting events is a relatively recent phenomenon. Whereas, historically, sports betting were confined to an individual physically placing a wager on the outcome of a horse (or greyhound) race, two important changes occurred in the mid-1990s. First, some bookmakers moved beyond horse and greyhound racing and started taking bets on the outcome of team sports. Second, in Victoria, some bookmakers began

taking bets over the telephone and then the internet, and in 2008, telephone and Internet sports betting became possible in all Australian states and territories following a High Court ruling that found prohibitions imposed by some states were anticompetitive (State of Victoria, Department of Justice 2013).

Sport betting is the game of gambling whereby individuals make gains from sport by successfully predicting the outcome of various sport events in a competition, tournament or league (Tade, 2014). For instance, Football betting, in most societies where it is practiced, is fast becoming a popular space for resources exchange within the capitalist remit. This is so since fans take their “fandom” further through expressive economy for gains and loss in the context of Marxian survival of the fittest in the capitalists’ moderated settings.

Football betting games has taken a new turn in Nigeria and other nations. In Nigeria, the popular most youths are engaged with include: Naira Bet, Bet 9ja, Sure Bet, Winners Golden Bet, 1960 Bet, Merry Bet, Bet Colony, Stakers Den while the foreign betting games include but are not limited to: Bet 360, Bet 365, 1x Bet, 24H Bet, 368 Bet, Apollo Bet, Bet-at-Home. Typically all the aforementioned betting companies create an open platform for interested persons to predict the outcome of a game – Football, Basketball, Car race, Hockey, Dog race, Virtual among others. Fans that predict correctly are rewarded and those whose predictions were wrong lose their monies. This is fast becoming the order in Nigeria, as fans that are “fans enough” go a step further to “stake” on the higher level of fandom and expertise in the football understanding (Tade, 2014).

Youths in Nigeria gamble for different purposes. These include ego, recreation and relaxation, resource accumulation, therapeutic purposes, such as showing adherence to group norms to avoid sanction, or demonstrating addiction. Gambling is a big business globally to the extent that it is now taxable and regulated as a legitimate business (Requirement of Online Sports Betting in Lagos 2015; National Sport Policy of Nigeria 2009). For instance, according to Statistical Portal (2015), even though it may be difficult to accurately estimate the total value of global sports betting, due to the inconsistency in the regulatory and financing environments, responsible surveys estimate the value of sports betting industry at around 700 billion U.S. dollars and 1.000 billion U.S. dollars, while in fact the illegal betting only might be as high as 500 billion U.S. dollars. Some bookmakers even believe that sports betting are now worth over one trillion U.S. dollars.

It is worth noting that any figure on the process of betting is only an indicative of the official gambling. Most gambling activities are undocumented and operate on the informal levels among friends, colleagues, spouses, relatives, and even enemies, and can be as much as billions of U.S. dollars globally. Generally, online gambling is a fast growing business with an estimated annual growth rate of 12%, according to Global Betting and Gaming Consultants (2011), and this is driven by globalization and technology. Online betting and football betting particularly are best seen as an ancillary of westernization and globalization (Akanle 2011; Akanle, Olutayo 2010). Football has become not only a recreational engagement, but also a social and economic activity with a strong appeal across classes, genders, races, sexuality and other social categorization, especially in Africa and beyond (Anderson 2005, 2007; Cooky 2009;) with continuously huge potential for growth. What most fans do not know or do not care to know is the capitalist base of the football betting wrapped with recreational norms and values. Majority of football fans in Nigeria are fans of foreign European football leagues.

Football betting in Nigeria is consequently organized around major European leagues. These major European Leagues are mostly in order of popularity among the Nigerian fans: English Premiership, Spanish *La Liga*, Italian *Seria A* and German *Bundesliga*. English Premier Clubs gain the greatest number of fans, Spanish *La Liga* is in the second place, and the Italian *Seria A* in the third. The most widely supported clubs, in order of the number of fans, are: Manchester United, Chelsea, Arsenal, Barcelona, Real Madrid and Liverpool (Tade, 2014; Ifeduba, 2011; Omobowale, 2009). It must, however, be noted that the “wide fan base” of the clubs is not rigid in Nigeria, but fluid, depending on the overall performance of the clubs over time.

In Nigeria commercial nerve centre, Lagos, shanty wooden structure with a number of benches, a television or more and a satellite dish are common sites. These venues, popularly called viewing centres offer a bulk of the football-mad population in the city a chance to watch the European leagues games usually for less than a dollar (N100) or (N50) depending on the location. As the popularity of these matches grew in the early 20s so did this presents of these viewing centres.

On match days, these places are usually packed with passionate fans, sporting replica jerseys and rooting for their favourite teams but more recently, a keen observe might notice fans at viewing centres clutching a white piece of paper – a “ticket”. Ticket are printed copies of selected games on which bets are placed and since last 2012, they have become more prominent in the Nigeria football landscape as sport betting is now very popular. Despite the notion that sport betting kicked off in Nigeria only recently, the earliest sport betting firms recorded their first entry into the market in 2007.

Generally, sporting betting involve punters predicting the outcome of matches and getting their bet to correspondence with the stakes. If the prediction are correct, the bet are rewarded with stipulated winnings. In Nigeria, where there are millions of incredible passionate football fans, sport betting has found it proverbial home.

Intimately, fans began to explore the real possibility of not just watching football match but also making money from this games played thousand of miles away. For fans who watch football as a leisurely past time, the ability to make money out it has presented an opportunity too good to pass up. Typically fans are used to hosting heated discussions on the monstrous weekly wages of their favourite footballers but sport betting has turned that conversation off its head. Football fans now discuss their earnings from bet as the sport has become a viable source of income, every other weekend betting company announce big winnings from bet placed with amount as low as N100.

The possibility of ranking in millions from meager amount is enough motivation for punters across the country to bet on a daily basis and as a result, betting companies record hugely impressive numbers. Bet9ja a leading betting company in Edo, Lagos and other parts of the country projects that daily stakers run into billions of naira. Currently, we believe daily bet have reach N5 billion, cumulatively across all the betting companies. Punters in the country are currently seeing this as a source daily bread and it is not uncommon to see people appropriating a certain amount for betting daily. Despite Nigeria's high level of poverty and unemployment punters cut across various demographics regardless of earnings powers. Low income earners spend between N100 to N200 on bet while high income earners which are tag big ticket customers spend thousands more, although these big ticket customers are firmly in the minority.

In recent years, as Nigeria has become thriving market sport betting firms have sought to latch on and capture market shares to various degrees of success. The default business model sees the companies set up shop in a central working office while seeking to establish a wide network of affiliate agents who open bricks and mortar shops where customers can come in to place bet. For their part in the business trends, affiliate shops owners or agents as they are formally known earn commissions on the bet placed in their shops. While the off line components thrive, sport betting company also operates an online business model exploiting Nigeria's internet penetration. Recently, the Nigeria communication commission announces that internet users in the country had reached 97 million with more than half of the country on line, betting companies recognized the need to established viable online operations. For this purpose, websites are set up for punters to open personal accounts from which they conduct transaction ranging from depositing funds into an online wallet, placing bet and transferring winnings earned from bet to their bank accounts. While some companies explore both models aggressively others like Nairabet simply choose to remain predominantly online models thus, side stepping the financial and logistical implications of setting up and running a large scale off line model.

As various sports become popular and generate huge interests in Nigeria, capitalists have developed huge economic interests and built businesses around it. These businesses are thriving – for instance in football betting. The strength of these businesses lies in the football fandom that is still on the increase especially in European and Champions League (Tade 2014; Sport Accord 2011; SiweiXu 2011; Omobowale 2009). The popularity of the European football is connected with the introduction of Digital Satellite Television (DSTV), Eurosport, and other sports channels on the platform of cable and satellite technology in Nigeria in the 1990s (Ifeduba, 2011; UEFA Guiding Principles, 2009) and this marked the beginning of a speedy decline in the fan base of local clubs (Omobowale, 2009).

Before the introduction of DSTV, Eurosport, and other satellite televisions, local football clubs like Stationeries Stores, IICC Shooting Stars, Rangers International and E1 Kanemi Warriors, among others, controlled a huge fan base. In contemporary terms, the fan base of the local clubs is nearly non-existent, as European clubs mop up the fan base, and football betting among other sports such as golf, basketball, volleyball, polo, rugby, thrives in the gambling and betting game.

Although, recent studies have been conducted on sport betting in Nigeria (Tade, 2014; Ifeduba, 2011; Omobowale, 2009), all the studies examined the acceptance of sport betting, gambling behaviour of youths and the proliferation of football betting among youths in Nigeria as a whole. Also, many of the studies were mere theoretical discussion papers which did not collect data from any specific local government or state to determine the perceived benefit of sport betting among the youths. Hence, a knowledge gap exists on sport betting among youths in a state like Edo. Consequently, this study will be undertaken to fill this gap by investigating sport betting among Nigerian youths in Edo State.

II. Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to examine sport betting among Nigerian youths in Edo State. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. examine the various sports youths take bet on in Edo State
2. find out how often youths take bet on various sports in Edo State
3. identify the reasons why youths of Edo State engage in sport betting
4. determine the factors responsible for the acceptance of sport betting among youths in Edo State
5. determine the perceived social-economic contributions of sport betting to the society
6. proffer suggestions on the basis of findings in the study

III. Research Questions

The following research questions are raised to guide the study:

1. What are the various sports youths take bet on in Edo State?
2. How often do youths take bet on various sports in Edo State?
3. What are the reasons why youths of Edo State engage in sport betting?
4. What are the perceived social-economic contributions of sport betting to the society?
5. What factors are responsible for the acceptance of sport betting among youths in Edo State?

IV. Literature Review

“Sports betting” in its primordial form connotes the placement of a financial wager on the outcome of a sporting match, as well as on symbolic events that occur within the larger match or fixture. The trajectory of sports betting and gambling during sporting events is a relatively nascent phenomenon. Whereas, historically, sports betting were confined to an individual physically placing a wager on the outcome of a horse (or greyhound) race, two important changes occurred in the mid-1990s. First, some bookmakers moved beyond horse and greyhound racing and started taking bets on the outcome of team sports. Secondly, bookmakers took advantage of technological breakthrough by placing sport bets over the telephone.

Two additional changes occurred that have further, and more fundamentally, shifted the nature and parameters of sports betting:

- the rise and expansion of the Internet and associated media platforms and
- technologies (i.e. phone and tablet “apps”) led to sports betting shifting more and more on-line;
- the nature of betting itself has shifted from betting simply on the end result of a race or an event to “micro-betting”, “in play betting” and betting “in-the-run”, where consumers can place a bet on a range of possible outcomes both after the game has commenced and, as they occur during a game.

In addition to betting on sporting results and outcomes, “sports betting” can also refer to betting on other events such as the outcome of a political election or a reality television program. For the purpose of this report, the review focuses on placing a wager on *sporting* events via the Internet. While sports betting is legal in Australia, “in-play” betting via the Internet is illegal under Commonwealth Law (it is legal if the bet is placed in person or over the telephone), yet there remains a range of illegal gambling activities that are accessible via the Internet (Interactive Gambling Act, 2001, p.61). The clandestine nature of these activities means that there is little research evidence into these forms of sports betting and are outside the scope of this report.

The rise of on-line betting on sport, and its promotion, has been greeted with considerable levels of public concern, in which the relationship between gambling exposure and participation is seen to pose several implications for sport, health and wellbeing and social policy. In 2013, concern over the accessibility of the technology, and the increasing presence of the televised promotion of live-odds betting during broadcasts of football and cricket matches (particularly during weekend day time television slots) led to a Joint Parliamentary Select Committee review into the advertising and promotion of gambling in sport. The report suggested that a precautionary approach should be adopted, during which time more research could be undertaken into the effects of gambling advertising on children (Joint Committee 2013, p.17). Alongside this, financial and other counselors have warned of an increase in problems associated with on-line sports betting, particularly among young men. In 2013, the Australia Crime Commission released their *Organised Crime and Drugs in Sport* report. Along with doping and match fixing, sports betting was identified as a “soft target” through which organised crime groups could undermine the integrity of sport, in both Australia and abroad.

Nonetheless, Dodds (2013) notes that the sports betting industry is a global one, yet regulation (with the exception of New Zealand) has been targeted at provincial or state levels; arguing that there are few national gambling regulators and no international regulatory structures. Dodds (2013) contends that the global industry is way ahead of the regulators, and advocates the licensing of on-line sports (and other internet gambling) with strict regulations (especially governing checks on the age of on-line gamblers) with regular disclosure to the Australian regulator. The author suggests establishing an industry-funded Gambling and Wagering Ombudsman and advocates the establishment of regulatory and compliance protocols and standards with other governments, achieved through multi-lateral partnerships like G20, ASEAN, CHOGM and a National Sports Integrity Commission to work with sporting codes and their emerging integrity processes (Dodds, 2013).

Following on from this, many of the concerns raised that the saturation marketing of sports betting-related promotions has highlighted “unhealthy” behaviours within sport extend to wider concerns with issues of corruption and integrity in professional sport. At the time of writing, a number of controversies relating to cheating in sport were in the public eye (e.g. the on-going saga relating to the Essendon football club and allegations of performance enhancing drugs, along with the fallout from the Lance Armstrong/Tour de France doping controversies), which have, arguably, fuelled debates about ethics and sport, in which the ethics of closely aligning sport and sports betting have been questioned.

Research by Hume (2013) on match-fixing and illegal sports betting discusses the relationship between professional sports and the gambling industries, noting that in recent years the relationship between the two sectors has become closer and more complex; that betting agencies are now major sponsors of a number of sporting teams and individual athletes and the gambling industry is a major financial contributor to grassroots sporting clubs throughout Australia. Hume's (2013) research also highlights the role that technology has played in eroding national boundaries and creating an international marketplace for gambling products.

Research, both in Australia and internationally (Hume 2013; Kelly; 2011, Rodenberg and Kaburakis, 2013), make several key points about the vulnerability of professional sports to the infiltration of organised criminal groups in relation to sports betting. Their work discusses the susceptibility of sports to match-fixing and/or organised crime infiltration. For example, the global nature of sport means that Australian sports and athletes are no longer protected by geographic isolation, thus exposing sports, athletes, officials and the public to potential ethical breaches that take place in an international arena. In terms of sports betting specifically, a principal threat to the integrity of professional sports is the use of inside information, where an individual might have knowledge of whether a team's star player is injured, and placing a large wager on the team losing the match before the injury is made public (Forest, 2012, Lord, 2013).

In terms of current literature, this is perhaps the great unknown, with the research often contradictory and speculative. On the one hand, the research suggests that certain sections of the population are more heavily represented, and present with greater risk factors, and these may also have a propensity towards or indications of problematic relationships to sports betting (young men in particular). On the other, a body of research suggests that, of those "at-risk" groups already represented in problematic gambling statistics (e.g. women and Indigenous peoples), there is little evidence to suggest that these are or will also be problematic on-line gamblers/sports betters as well. What the early research does suggest however, is that as new forms of gambling are introduced, promoted and delivered via the Internet, mobile phones and related devices, these may expose some groups of people to greater risks (Abbott, Romild and Volberg, 2013). While the research on sports betting and at-risk groups is in its infancy, there is a limited body of literature that has linked issues of mental health and substance abuse with *prospective* studies of on-line gambling that have relevance in terms of *building* a research profile of sports betting, problem gambling and at-risk population groups (McCormack, Shorter and Griffiths 2013).

LaBire, Kaplan, LaPlante, et al, (2007) argue for a need for longitudinal data, gathered over time that can build a better understanding of some of the "trigger factors" for problematic Internet sports gambling behaviour. Later research (LaBrie and Shaffer, 2011), argues for the importance of gathering reliable data that can help identify behavioural markers of disordered Internet sports gambling. Recent preliminary evidence also suggests that on-line gamblers may be at a greater risk of some substance use and mental health problems, relative to non-online gamblers.

Scholes-Balog and Hemphill (2012) for example, in their review of literature on the relationships between on-line gambling, mental health, and substance use note that online gambling, particularly problematic gambling, was found to be associated with poor mental health and issues of substance misuse. Similarly, findings from the 2007 British Gambling Prevalence Survey link smoking and alcohol use with Internet gambling (not sports betting per se) (Griffiths, Wardle, Orford et al, 2011), that may also be useful for building better understandings of potential cohorts of problem sports betting gamblers. What this limited literature suggests is that the research into the relationship between sports betting and problematic gambling is underdone, relative to the literature discussed earlier on advertising and promotion, changes in the nature of gambling and motivations for betting on sport. In terms of the need for interventions and prevention, the relationships between issues of mental health and substance use and on-line sports betting need to be better explored.

There is, however, early research among American college students that suggests that excessive alcohol consumption may contribute to higher rates of sports betting among young people. Bhullar, Simons, Joshi and Amoroso (2012) looked at the relationships among drinking games, binge drinking and gambling activities in college students. Their study reviewed the results of college students (n=293) who were surveyed about binge drinking and gambling activities. Students who played the lottery once a week had lower binge drinking scores compared to students who played the lottery more than once a week and those students who never played the lottery. Similar patterns were also detected for students who engaged in sports betting, card playing and games of skill. Students who met the criteria for binge drinking were likely to engage in sports-betting, video gaming and regular poker, office pools, and other games of skill compared to students who did not meet the criteria for binge drinking.

Derevensky, Dickson and Gupta (2008) examined age and gender differences in adolescents' attitudes toward gambling among 1,408 students in elementary and secondary schools. Participants ranging in age from 8 to 20 in Quebec and Ontario, Canada completed the Attitudes and Gambling Activities Questionnaire (AGAQ). The relationship between adolescents' attitudes toward gambling, their perceived levels of skill and luck inherent in various gambling activities, as well as their frequency of gambling was explored. The need for

problem gambling prevention initiatives was identified. Youth who reported a greater number of accepting/tolerant attitudes demonstrated greater misperceptions about the degree of skill involved in gambling than youth holding nonaccepting/ intolerant attitudes toward gambling. Youth attitudes toward gambling were found to be moderately associated with gambling behavior.

As opportunities to gamble have increased in the 21st Century, so has gambling research. Shaffer et al. (2006) used new strategies, methods, and technology to examine citation trends and the growth of knowledge in the field of gambling studies. They examine 2,246 citations that were published between 1903 and 2003. By using multiple keywords to classify each citation into distinct topic areas, their study yielded a more comprehensive analysis than was previously available. Their results reveal that gambling-related research has grown at an exponential rate. The most prevalent topics explored within gambling studies citations have been pathology, risk-taking, decision-making, and addiction. Between 1999 and 2003, studies addressing epidemiology, drug abuse, comorbidity, and neuroscience became increasingly prevalent.

Mallach (2010) and Gambling and Addictions Research Center (2012), have examined the socioeconomic impact of gambling. Gambling today is a multi-billion-dollar industry with global influence. For example, it is a prominent part of culture and a major financial contributor to society in Finland and many other countries where governments own, license, and regulate gambling enterprises. Most people in Western societies have some experience of gambling, and many buy a lottery ticket, play slot machines, or bet on sports as a regular part of their leisure activities (Raento, 2011).

Tepperman (2009) develops a sociological alternative focusing on problem gamblers' gambling activities and the effects of these activities on their relationships. What is it like to live with a problem gambler? What are the day to day concerns that family members must contend with? How do they interpret and construct gambling activities? Furthermore, Tepperman (2009) provides firsthand accounts of the problem gambling lifestyle from respondents. These include amongst other things, money problems, time issues, increasing separation from family activities, and the predominance of negative emotional responses to increased gambling. These contrast not only with psychological portrayals, but also with media images, advertisements, and promotions that represent gambling as fun and glamorous. He notes the "sizeable gap" between the promotional illusions and the harsh circumstances inflicted on families by gambling problems.

V. Research Methodology

This chapter deals with the research methodology used by the researcher in this study. The quality of any research work depends on the researcher's ability to utilize the appropriate methodology for the purpose of achieving the objectives for which research project is undertaken (Sekaran, 2013). The research methodology is further divided into: Scope of the Study, Sample Size, Sampling Method, Technique of Data Collection, Technique of Data Analysis, and Theoretical Framework. This study is covered sport betting among Nigerian youths in Edo State. The geographical coverage is restricted to youths in five (5) selected regions of Edo State. The names of the selected communities are: Ekpoma, Auchi, Oredo, Uromi and Ubiaja. A sample of 40 youths from the selected regions in Edo State would be drawn.

The simple random sampling technique will be used as the method of sampling. The sampling technique will be used to select 40 youths from the five regions – Ekpoma, Auchi, Oredo, Uromi and Ubiaja. This will give a total of 200 youths using the above described sampling method. A structured questionnaire will be designed to collect data in the study area. The questionnaire will be structured into close ended questions, having two major parts of Section A and B. Part A will deal with personal profile of the respondents such as: sex, age, marital status, educational qualification, and years of experience while the Section B part of the questionnaire will contained data regarding the core research problems which the study aimed at providing data for the test of hypotheses. Data will be collected from youths at various sport betting centres such as Bet9ja, Bet360, Nairabet and Surebet among others in the selected regions of target. The questionnaires will be distributed by the researcher along with two other research assistants. Data collected will be analysed with frequency count and percentages (%). The simple percentage (%) will be used to analyze the social characteristics of the respondents and the questions on the questionnaire. The choice of the percentage (%) was informed by the fact that it is a simple and appropriate in describe data collected from field surveys. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM SPSS®) would be used to analyse data collected.

This study is based on the Social Exchange Theory and Marx's view of capitalism. In the order provided by George Homans in his work *Social Behavior as Exchange*, exchange of activity, tangible or intangible, are more or less rewarding or costly, between at least two people or groups (Homans 1958, 1961). This view was also supported by later orders of Peter M. Blau and Richard M. Emerson (Blau, 1964; Emerson 1976). Human exchanges are dyadic and have sociological and anthropological appeals as involving both small and large groups within kinship and larger society, as in the case of global and national football betters. Social Exchange Theory hinges on three basic propositions of success, stimulus, and deprivation-satiation. According to the success proposition, when individuals relating with others are rewarded for their actions, they tend to

repeat the action. According to the stimulus proposition, the more often a given stimulus has resulted in a reward in the past, the more likely a person will respond to it. According to deprivation-satiation proposition, the more often in the recent past a person has received a particular reward, the less valuable any further unit of that reward becomes. The tenants of the Social Exchange Theory are as follows:

1. Most gratification among humans comes from others,
2. People have access to information about social, economic, and psychological aspects of their interactions that allows them to consider alternative, more profitable situations relative to their present situation,
3. People are goal oriented in a freely competitive system,
4. Exchange operates within cultural norms,
5. Social credit is preferred over social indebtedness,
6. The more deprived the individual feels in terms of an act, the more value the person will assign to it,
7. People are rational and calculate the best possible means to compete in rewarding situations (Homans 1958).

The same is true about punishment avoidance situations. Namely, humans as rational actors will engage and continue to engage in rewarding actions, especially if they meet their social, cultural, psychological and economic goals. It is, however, important to note that within capitalist social models not all actors are benevolent in their exchange activities. Many are exploitative and will engage in actions and encourage others to engage in actions that bring small capitalist interest of surplus value. Within Homans' and Blau's social exchange, exchanges should be covered by reciprocity of further social and kinship interests. This is, however, not the case with the western value of actions, driven by globalization. Capitalists of nowadays (and the future) do not function within reciprocal dictates, but within exploitative dictates. People who are involved in the exchange interactions in capitalist societies are rationally seeking to maximize their profits.

Football is supposedly a recreational action. It has, however, become an exchange and capitalistic action through betting. Through betting in football, exchanges occur as betting platforms where operators give better spaces to bet and betters satisfy their betting desires. It must, however, be noted that these exchanges are capitalistic. Platforms' owners seek profit. They get commission on betting and recycle gains. Even European leagues are business companies. They are worth billions of U.S. dollars. Football teams are multi-billion dollars business empires. As football matches are displayed, rights are sold and bought in manners of exchange and some people become richer, while others become poorer due to viewing and betting within capitalistic exploitative tendencies. Football fandom and football betting are therefore not mere recreational activities and reciprocal exchanges, as many in the social web and space might think of them, but huge capitalist, western, globalised, and commoditized exchange processes with extreme implications for social relations, national and international human development. In relation to this, the Social Exchange Theory and Marx's view of capitalism will be used to explain sport betting among Nigerian youths in Edo State.

VI. Result

Data Presentation

This study made use of questionnaires in gathering data for this study. In this chapter, the data collected from the respondents regarding the basic issues involved in the research work are presented and analyzed. A total of two hundred (200) questionnaires were distributed and one hundred and eighty-two (182) were recovered, thus giving a response rate of 91%. For a study of this nature, such a percentage is very high thereby indicating the willingness of the respondents to co-operate. The analyses and subsequent conclusion were based on the outcome of the one hundred (182) questionnaires that were collected and accepted, which for the purpose of this study constitute ninety-one (91%). The summary of the response rate is presented on the Table 4.1 below.

Data Analyses

The social characteristics of respondents are provided in Table 4.2

Table 4.2: Showing the Demographic profile of the respondents (n = 182)

Social characteristics	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	170	93.4
	Female	12	6.6
	Total	182	100
Age	20-29yrs	53	29.1
	30-39yrs	70	38.5
	40-49yrs	40	22.0
	50-59yrs	19	10.4
	Total	182	100

Occupation	Student	98	53.8
	Trader	34	18.7
	Artisan	19	10.4
	Civil servant	11	6.0
	Public servant	14	7.7
	Others	6	3.3
Educational qualification	Total	182	100
	Ordinary/HND	37	20.3
	Bachelor degree	84	46.2
	Postgraduate degree	40	22.0
	Others	21	11.5
Religion	Total	182	100
	Christian	120	65.9
	Muslim	46	25.3
	Others	16	8.8
Total		182	100

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Results in Table 4.2 showed that 170 of the respondents representing 93.4% are males while 12(6.6%) are females. This showed that majority of the respondents in this study are males. This also indicates that males are more involved in sport betting than the females. This may be as a result of the natural inclination in most men to be involved in activities based endeavor's like sporting. The few women involved in sport betting in this study perhaps represent the female minority that are passive sport betters or individuals that take on sport betting once in a while.

In regard to their ages, result showed that 53 of the respondent representing 29.1% are below 20-29year, 70(38.5%) are 30 -39years, 40(22.0%) are 40-49years while 19(10.4) are 50-59years. This shows that majority of the respondents in this study are 30-39years. This clearly indicates that majority of those involved in sport betting are youths. This may be as a result of the increased interest of youths in the game and business of sport. Due to the rise in virtual games and sport betting in Nigeria, many are youths have taken on to sport betting for various personal reasons. This often goes with social and emotional attachment implications which perhaps accounts for widespread involvement of the youths in the sport betting.

Result in Table 4.1 on the occupation distribution of respondents showed that 98 representing (53.8) are students, 34(18.7) are traders, 19(10.4) are artisan, 11(6.0%) are civil servant, 14(7.7%) are public servant while 6(3.3%) are others. This shows that majority of the respondents are students. This clearly indicates that majority of those involved in sport betting are students and traders in Edo State. This may be as a result of widespread youth unemployment that has left many youths jobless, idle and unproductive after several years of graduation from school. Consequently, many of the youths may have been left with the options of resorting to sport betting as a means of livelihood.

The distribution of participants by educational qualification showed that 37 of the respondent representing (20.3) are ordinary/HND holders, 84(46.2%) are Bachelor degrees holders, 40(22.0%) are Postgraduate degree holders while 21(11.5%) have other qualifications. This shows that majority of respondents are Bachelor degree holders. This clearly indicates that youth with first degree are more involved in sport betting. This may be as a result of wide spread youth unemployment and a quest for a means of livelihood. Furthermore, Edo State is known to have several public and private secondary schools and higher institutions of learning with fewer large scale industries that can employ graduates. Consequently, the need to stay self-employed may have made many youths take the risk of putting their meager resources into sport betting to raise capital for business startup.

In regards to religion of respondents, result showed that 120 of the respondent representing (65.9%) are Christians, 46(25.3%) are Muslim while 16(8.8%) have other religions. This shows that majority of the respondents Christians. This clearly indicates that Christians are more involved in sport betting. This further the people of Edo State are predominantly Christians. This may be as a result of increase in the growth of churches around Edo State that has given birth to more Christian faithful's.

VII. Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question 1: What are the various sports youths take bet on in Edo State?

Table 1: Descriptive summary analysis of various sports youth take bet on in Edo State

Results from the analysis are presented below

s/n	Items	Agree	Disagree
1.	Bet9ja	148 81.3%	34 18.7%
2.	Nairabet	141 77.5%	41 22.5%
3.	WinnersGoldenBet	149 81.9%	33 18.1%
4.	SureBet	137 75.3%	45 24.7%
5.	EbonyBet	138 75.8%	44 24.2%
6.	Bet360	73 40.1%	109 59.9%
7.	Bet1960	78 42.9%	104 57.1%
8.	All of the above	57 31.3%	125 68.7%

Table 1 showed that majority of the respondent (N=148) representing 81.3% take sport bet with Bet9ja. 141 (77.5%) take bet with Nairabet, 149 (81.9%) take bet with WinnersGoldenBet, 137 (75.3%) take bet with SureBet and 138 (75.8%) take bet with EbonyBet while 109 (59.9%) and 104 (57.1%) do not take sport bet with Bet360 and Bet1960 respectively. This indicates that majority of the respondents in this study take bet with Bet9ja, Nairabet, WinnersGoldenBet, SureBet and EbonyBet. Bet9ja, Nairabet and WinnersGoldenBet are therefore the three most popular sport betting companies that youths take bet with in Edo State. The popularity of these sport betting companies may be as a result of the large branch coverage across Edo State, the number of virtual games provided by the companies and the accessible of the betting site for placing their stakes from the smartphones or personal computers.

Question 2: How often do youths take sport bet in Edo State?

Table 2: Analysis on frequency of sports bet taking among youths in Edo State

Options	Several times	Once every day	Once every week	Once in a month
Bet9ja	24 13.2%	129 70.9%	15 8.2%	14 7.7%
Nairabet	24 13.2%	129 70.9%	6 3.3%	23 12.6%
winnersGoldenBet	26 14.3%	129 70.9%	4 2.2%	23 12.6%
Surebet	18 9.9%	127 69.8%	4 2.2%	33 18.1%
EbonyBet	18 9.9%	133 73.1%	10 5.5%	21 11.5%
Bet360	18 9.9%	116 63.7%	15 8.2%	33 18.1%
Bet1960	18 9.9%	116 63.7%	7 3.8%	41 22.5%
All of the above	26 14.3%	20 11.0%	100 54.9%	36 19.8%

Source: Field Work, 2017

Result in Table 2 shows that majority of the respondent (N=129) representing 70.9% take sport bet with Bet9ja once every day. 129 (70.9%) take bet with Nairabet once every day. 129 (70.9%) take bet with WinnersGoldenBet once every day, 127(69.8%) take bet with SureBet once every day; 133(73.1%) take bet

with EbonyBet once every day, 116 (63.7%) take sport bet with Bet360 once every day while 116 (63.7%) take sport bet with Bet1960 once every day. This indicates that majority of the respondents in this study take bet with Bet9ja, Nairabet, WinnersGoldenBet, SureBet and EbonyBet once every day. This clearly shows that majority of the youth daily take bet on various sports of their interest. This may be due to the addictive nature of sport betting which makes youths so emotionally attached to predicting the outcome of games in return for “economic rewards” or money.

Question 3: What are the reasons why youths of Edo state engage in sport betting?

Table 3: Analysis on reasons youths engage in sport betting in Edo State

Options	Agree	Disagree
To get some income	146 80.2%	36 19.8%
To get fun	81 44.5%	101 55.5%
To engage themselves with social activities	125 68.7%	57 31.3%
To know more about sports	118 64.8%	64 35.2%
Others	87 47.8%	95 52.2%

Source: Field Work, 2017

Result in Table 3 shows that majority of the respondent (N=146) representing 80.2% engage in sport betting to get some income. 101(55.5%) do not take sport betting for fun, 125 (68.7%) take sport betting for social activities, 118(64.8%) engaged in sporting betting to know more about sports while 95(52.2%) engaged in sport betting for several other reasons. This indicates that majority of the respondents in this study engaged in sport betting to get some income, for social activities, to know more about sports while majority do not engaged in sport betting for fun and for other several reasons respectively. This outcome is quite expected because many youths involved in sport betting do so primarily to get money to take care of their basic needs of clothing, food and shelter among others. Many also for social benefits engage in it as a pastime and for the reason of sharing information about sport.

Question 4: What are factors responsible for the acceptance of sport betting among youths in Edo State?

Table 4: Analysis on factors responsible for the acceptance of sport betting among youths in Edo State

Options	Agree	Disagree
High youth unemployment	165 90.7%	17 9.3%
Boredom	70 38.5%	112 61.5%
High tendency for risk taking among the youths	118 64.8%	64 35.2%
Increased passion for sports	141 77.5%	41 22.5%
Others	136 74.7%	46 25.3%

Source: Field Work, 2017

Result in Table 4 shows that majority of the respondent (N=165) representing 90.7% accept that high youth unemployment is responsible for sport betting among youths. 112 (61.5%) disagreed that boredom is responsible for sporting betting among youths, 141 (77.5%) accept that it increase passion for sports while 136 (74.7%) other several factors are responsible for sporting betting among youths. This indicates that majority of the respondents in this study accepted that high youth unemployment, high tendency for risk taking among the youths, increased passion for sports and other are factors responsible for sport betting among youths. Furthermore, the widespread unemployment of youths has made many seek for other income generating alternatives aside a gainful job employment in Nigeria. Consequently, many may have become more desperate to indulge in risk taking endeavour’s as a means of livelihood.

Question 5: What are the perceived socio-economics contributions of sport betting to the society?

Table 5: Analysis on perceived socio-economics contributions of sporting betting to the society

Options	Agree	Disagree (%)
Increase in employment generation	171 94.0%	11 6.0%
Increase in income	165 90.7%	17 9.3%
Increase in social interaction among the youths	129 70.9%	53 29.1%
Others	62 34.1%	120 65.9%

Source: Field Work, 2017

Result in Table 5 shows that majority of the respondent (N=171) representing 94.0% perceived that increase in employment generation contributed to sport betting. 165 (90.7%) perceived that increase in income contribute to sport betting, 129 (70.9%) perceived that sport betting increased social interaction among the youths while 120 (65.9%) disagreed that sport betting contribute in other areas. This indicates that majority of the respondents in this study perceived that increase in employment generation, income and socio-interaction among the youths are socio-economic benefits of sport betting. Due to the lack of gainful employment in Edo State, many youths consider sport betting as an avenue to stay busy and make some income for themself.

VIII. Conclusion

The proliferation of sport betting among youths in Edo State is on the increase. Many of them take bet with various sport betting companies such as Bet9ja, Nairabet, WinnersGoldenBet, SureBet and EbonyBet. This is due to high youth unemployment and quest for a means of livelihood. Although, sport betting has economic and social benefits such as increase income potential and employment benefits to those that participate in the activity. The social and economic benefits of sport betting as perceived by majority of the youths is mainly income driven and this may be as a result of sport betting being a relatively new phenomenon in Nigeria. Despite the lack of public awareness, sport betting among the youths may be a serious problem. This generation of youths are the first that will have grown up in an environment where gambling is perceived to be a harmless recreational, entertaining, and socially acceptable pastime activity. Consequently, the incidence of gambling-related problems such as borrowing, indebtedness, anxiety, and emotional worries in event of loss of money placed on stakes amongst youth may be heightened through the glamour and exciting appeal of sport betting portrayed in the media including television shows and films.

IX. Recommendations

The following recommendations are made on the study:

1. The youths do not see the negative social and economic implication of gambling and perhaps that is why the gambling (sports betting) sector is growing at a very high speed in Edo State.
2. There is need for the Edo State parliament to enact strict laws that ensure that gambling companies operate within a given a set of rules. Otherwise the current state of affairs provides for anyone to open a gambling business. Also the National Lotteries Board should collaborate with community law enforcement agencies to identify illegal gambling activities.
3. There is need for social awareness, civil society organizations should work with communities in pointing out the dangers of gambling especially among the youths by using appropriate media.
4. There is also need to liaise with gambling operators to regulate on advertising and also deregister all those operators who encourage child gambling.

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