



# Forms of Betting and its Effect on Educational Attainment: Case of Basic School Students in Sene East District, Ghana

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**Abstract.** The study aimed to investigate the forms of betting and its effect on educational attainment of basic school students in the Sene East District in the Bono East Region, Ghana. A qualitative approach was utilised in this study by the researcher. The target population was 7,689 students drawn from 76 basic schools (54 primary schools and 22 junior high schools) in the Sene East District (Ghana Education Directorate Report, Sene East District, 2018). Ten (10) participants were sampled, which comprised seven (7) males and three (3) females. A snowball sampling technique was used to select participants in this study. This study used an interview guide (semi-structured) and report cards to gather data. Hence, the instruments used for the study were the interview guide and results for the 2022–2023 academic year in Mathematics, English Language, and Integrated Science. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data gathered. The study's findings reveal that Public basic school students in the Sene East District were engaged in three different betting systems. They were bookmakers, pari-mutuel, and exchange betting systems. Also, Betting negatively influenced the educational attainment of basic school students in the Sene East District.

**Index Terms-** Betting, Educational Attainment, Students, Forms, Effect.

## I. Introduction

Gambling, which is also known as betting, has been generally defined as gaming or wagering money or something of value on an event that has an uncertain outcome with the possibility of winning money or materials (Adu, 2023; Korn & Shaffer, 1999). Traditionally, gambling includes activities such as wagering at casinos (casino games) and on lotteries, including video lottery, animal racing, card games, sporting events, and Internet cards (Evans, Bowman & Turnbull, 2005). However, gambling may include everyday activities that might not usually be associated with connotations of the word gambling, such as raffles sponsored by communities or organisations, bingo, or childhood board games. Adult gambling is one of the most prevalent gambling practices in the United States (U.S.).



The prevalence of adult gambling in the United States (U.S.) has been estimated at 86% (Potenza, Wareham, Steinberg, Rugle, Cavallo, Krishnan-Sarin & Desai, 2011). In the U.S., the prevalence of adult "lifetime" problem gamblers has been estimated at 3.8%, and "past year" problem gamblers have been estimated at 2.8% (Potenza et al., 2011). "Lifetime" and "past year" pathological adult gamblers in the U.S. have been estimated at 1.1% to 1.6%, respectively (Potenza et al., 2011). A meta-analysis compared 39 studies conducted in the U.S. and several other countries, using different measures and modes to examine adult problems and pathological gambling. The meta-analysis showed that problem gambling prevalence in general adult populations ranged from 0.1% to 4.5% (Ladouceur, Bouchard, Rhéaume, Jacques, Ferland, LeBlond & Walker, 2000).

A big review of 15 studies on college gambling found that between 3% to 24% of college students might have gambling problems. Over the last 15 years, research has shown that gambling, especially problem gambling, is becoming more common among college students, and it's becoming a big deal for public health.

College students might gamble more because they're in a stage of life where they're becoming more independent but still don't have all the responsibilities of adults. This period is called "emerging adulthood," and during this time, people might be more interested in taking risks and seeking excitement, which could lead to more gambling.

In many parts of Africa, sports betting is getting really popular. Big global companies are getting into the African sports betting market because the laws on betting are not very strict there. Also, the rise of mobile betting sites is a big reason for this.

Ghana is one of the African countries where the laws on gambling are not very strict. This means people have lots of options for gambling, like lotteries, casinos, and sports betting. Sports betting is especially popular, and people can do it in person at sports books or online or even over the phone. Even though online gambling is allowed, many people in Ghana can't afford computers or internet, but those who can have no trouble accessing legal Ghana online casinos and other sites that accept Ghanaians.

On March 9th, 2012, a Legislative Instrument (LI 2091) gave the mandate to create the Sene East District out of the then Sene District. The Inauguration was held on June 28th, 2012, at Kajaji, its District Capital. Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) 2021.

MTN, Vodafone, and Tigo are cellular telecommunications networks available in the District. Vodafone and MTN are primary network services mainly patronised in the district (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021). Students patronised betting through these telecommunication networks.

Quality education is one of the objectives of the government and the District Assembly. The educational sector takes advantage of a percentage of the Assembly's



budget annually compared to other sectors. Notwithstanding that, many schools are not something to write home about. The district schools comprise 54 primary schools, 22 junior high schools, and two senior high schools. Facilities in the schools are not up to standard (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021). The question is, can't these inadequate school facilities give students an advantage to absent themselves from school and patronise betting? Betting centres (especially sports betting) are common in Sene East District and Bono East Region. It is estimated that in every ten communities selected, about six have betting centres. Students visit these centres during and after school.

Students are a unique sub-population due to various factors, including their developmental stage, living situations, participation in social networks, and new financial responsibilities. Preventing these students from visiting these centres would help them channel their energies towards their books and academic work. However, there is a lack of data in Ghana about betting and its effects on students' educational attainment. This, therefore, suggests that few studies have specifically addressed this phenomenon. Therefore, this study needs to be conducted on the forms of betting engaged and its effect on educational attainment of basic school students in the Sene East District in the Bono East Region, Ghana.

## **II. A Review of Related Literature**

### **1. The Theoretical Framework for the Study**

The study was based on the Social Exchange Theory and Marx's view of capitalism. According to Homans George classification in his book *Social Behaviour as Exchange*, an exchange of activity, tangible or intangible, that is more or less rewarding or costly occurs between at least two people or groups (Homans 1958). This view was also supported by (Blau 1964; Emerson 1976). Human exchanges are dyadic and have sociological and anthropological appeals involving small and large groups within kinship and the larger society, as in the case of global and national football.

According to Social Exchange Theory: 1. Most human gratification comes from others; 2. People have access to information about social, economic, and psychological aspects of their interactions, allowing 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. People are rational and calculate the best possible means to compete in rewarding situations (Homans 1958). 7. People are rational and calculate the best possible means to compete in rewarding situations.

Football is supposedly a recreational activity. It has, however, become a means of exchange and capitalistic action through betting. Through betting in football, exchanges occur as betting platforms where operators give better spaces to bet and better satisfy their betting desires. It must, however, be noted that these exchanges are capitalistic. Platform owners seek profit. They get a commission on betting and recycling gains. Even European leagues are business companies. They are worth billions of United States dollars. Football teams are multi-billion dollar business empires.



### **III. The Concept of Sustainable Development Goals**

Joe Colombano, who advises the U.N. Secretary-General, said it's really important for our generation to make a deal because we're the first ones who could get rid of poverty and the last ones who can deal with climate change. The new goals, called the SDGs, are meant to replace the old ones called the MDGs, which did a great job of reducing poverty worldwide. The new goals aim to end poverty and hunger, improve education, make sure men and women are treated equally, make cities better, improve energy and water, fight climate change and inequality, and get countries to work together better. Basically, the U.N.'s plan for 2030 is the biggest plan ever for the whole world's future.

China thinks the new goals shouldn't include peace and human rights because they say it's not really about helping countries develop, and it goes against the idea of countries having control over their own affairs. Most countries, though, agree that peace and human rights should be part of the goals.

There's still a lot we need to learn about how businesses affect people's rights. The European Union wants countries to have systems where everyone, especially people who are usually left out, can have a say in making decisions. Governments should also make sure people can get information easily, have media that can say what they want, and have access to the internet without restrictions.

The SDGs have some problems with being too divided, not having enough legal power, and not including enough people in the decision-making process. This study shows that the reasons for development problems are more complex than what the goals cover. We need to make the goals part of the law and make sure everyone can have a say, especially those who are usually ignored. The big issues with the SDGs show we need to work harder to make them better and do more research. Overall, the U.N.'s plan for 2030 gives us a picture of what the world could be like, but we still need to fix its problems.

#### **The Concept of Betting**

Gambling means putting money on games where luck plays a big part in deciding who wins. There are different types of gambling like sports betting, casino games, poker, bingo, and lotteries. This study focuses on betting, which is about guessing the outcome of sports events and trading money on it.

Gambling is a huge industry worldwide, and it's so big now that it's taxed and regulated like any other business. For example, in Lagos, Nigeria, there are rules for online sports betting, and Nigeria has a sports policy. Even though it's hard to know exactly how much money is in global sports betting because the rules and money systems are different everywhere, surveys guess it's around \$700 billion to \$1 trillion, and illegal betting might be as high as \$500 billion. Some people who take bets think it's worth even more than \$1 trillion.



It's important to know that the numbers we have only count the betting that's official. Most gambling happens off the books between friends, family, and even enemies, and it could be as much as billions of dollars worldwide. Online gambling, especially betting on football, is growing really fast, about 12% each year, because of how connected the world is and because of technology.

#### **Reasons for Participation in Betting**

The question of why people gamble, irrespective of the negative expected return characteristic of gambling products, has generally been given two different explanations: the wealth-maximising and pleasure-seeking explanations. The former views gamblers as economic agents who invest money in gambling purely aimed at maximising wealth. These agents are assumed to make decisions under risk and uncertainty within the expected utility theory (EUT) framework, proposed initially by Demir, Danis, & Rigoni (2012). After Neumann and Morgenstern developed the EUT, the wealth-maximising explanation for sports betting dominated the research agenda (Direr, 2013). In horse racing, for example, betting behaviours are modelled and explained using the EUT by (Adu, 2023; Finnigan & Nordsted, 2010). These studies consider bettors to be risk seekers with a convex utility function.

However, under the EUT, the assumption of the homogeneity of bettors fails to account for the heterogeneity of motivations that might be present among them (Deschamps & Gergaud, 2007). The latter explanation, often ignored in the economic literature, argues that betting is at least partly motivated by the pleasure of participation instead of being purely wealth-oriented. Given that betting is a negative sum game, Franck, Verbeek & Nüesch (2010), ponder whether risk-preferable people are the only people willing to bet and whether bettors are homogeneous to risk attitudes. They suggest that betting could be considered a hobby for a representative consumer, like going to the opera or owning a boat. In this case, the pleasure of participation would enter the utility function directly; even though it would still be possible that it is convex in wealth, it is no longer a requirement for such rational bettors.

#### **IV. The Concept of Educational Attainment of Students in Ghana**

Long before the arrival of the colonial masters, the people of Ghana had their traditional forms of education from which they were employed afterwards. The young men were trained mainly by their fathers at a teenage age. They usually followed the line of occupation of their fathers, so they became farmers, hunters, or fishermen just like their fathers. Young women were also mainly trained by their mothers and ended up mostly in their mothers' occupations, mainly trading, sewing, and many others (Adu, 2023; Anum-Odoom, 2009).

The arrival of the Europeans, especially the British, significantly influenced the country's education system. They first came as Christian missionaries and soon realised they needed well-educated local assistants to spread the word of God. An educational network was, therefore, quickly established, which paved the way for the acceptability of formal education.



A committee was set up by the then president of the Republic of Ghana, President John Kofi Agyekum Kuffour, in January 2002 to review the entire country's education system with the view to arriving at decisions that would make the system responsive to the challenges of the Twenty-First Century (Ghana Education Service (GES), 2004). The view of the President of the Education Review was that "the philosophy underlying the education system in Ghana should be the creation of well-balanced (intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and physically) individuals with the requisite knowledge, skills, values, and aptitudes for self-actualisation and the socio-economic and political transformation of the nation." The Committee recommended short-, medium-, and long-term curricula reviews at all levels and the structure and content of basic, secondary, and tertiary education (GES, 2004).

### **The Effects of Betting on Bettors and Society**

However, it is essential to note that betting affects the bettors and society. Psychologically, football betting results may lead to stress and anxiety, whether fans win or lose. According to Adu (2023) and Shaffer (2003) stress from gambling often leads to depression, anxiety, impulsivity, and suicide, especially when debts reach extreme levels (Derevensky, Gupta & Winters, 2003; Derevensky & Gupta 2000). There have also been attempts to divide the effects of gambling according to socio-demographics. This is because people's socio-demographic parameters influence how they react to issues and social realities, including football betting. Also, although people of different socio-economic and demographic statuses may appear within the football context, these factors may affect exposures, practices, and outcomes.

Research on adolescence and gambling is conclusive in its submissions. For instance, it was found that between 60% and 80% of young people between the ages of 13 and 17 gamble at least once a year, and around 3–5% of young people report behaviours indicative of pathological gambling with activities such as sports-betting (Derevensky & Gupta, 2000; Derevensky, Gupta & Winters 2003; LaBrie, 2003). Gambling, especially among the youth, has negative consequences such as truancy, reduced educational performance, aggressive risk-taking behaviours, lying, poorer psychosocial adjustment, higher rates of irritation, frequent borrowing, alcohol consumption, illicit drug use, and more severe criminal behaviours, such as stealing (Delfabbro, Winefield & Anderson, 2009; Kessler, 2008).

### **Research Objectives**

- Ascertain the forms of betting engaged in by students in Sene East District.
- Discover the influence of betting on the academic performance of basic school students in Sene East District.

### **V. Methodology**

Research design is "the logic that links the data to be collected and the conclusions to be drawn to the initial questions of the study" (Yin, 2013, p. 19). Regarding social science research, the major research methodologies include experiments, case studies, histories, surveys, and the analysis of archival information. Each of the above methods has its advantages and disadvantages. In order to choose a suitable research method, it is necessary to consider these three main aspects: "(1) the type of research question posed, (2) the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioural events, and (3) the degree of focus on contemporary (current) as opposed to historical phe-



nomena" (Yin, 2013, p. 5). A qualitative approach was utilised in this study by the researcher. The target population was 7,689 students drawn from 76 basic schools (54 primary schools and 22 junior high schools). From the accessible population of 667 students, Ten (10) participants were sampled, which comprised seven (7) males and three (3) females. A snowball sampling technique was used to select participants in this study. An interview guide (semi-structured) is used to gather data in this study. The interview guide included both open-ended and closed-ended questions. The researchers developed the interview guide by research objectives. The instrument had two sections: Section "A" and Section "B". Section 'A' focused on the demographic information of participants (for example, gender, age, class, and so on), while Section 'B' dealt with issues that helped to address the research questions. The interviews lasted between 15–20 minutes for each of the interviewees. Furthermore, report cards were used to gather data in this study.

The third-term results of the 2022/2023 academic year of students in core subjects (Mathematics, English Language, and Integrated Science) from each school formed the dependent variable. The data included students' class exercises, tests, homework, and terminal exams. The average of students' performance in the core subjects was computed, and it was scaled as 1 = low performance (0–49), 2 = moderate performance (50–74), and 3 = high (75–100). The researchers determined this by putting the class scores into three different groups. Data on students' academic performance, a dependent variable, was used to compare with other independent variables such as student factors, teacher factors, and home factors. It was also used as a criterion variable to establish which predictor variables predicted it. The data was analysed thematically. In analysing the interview data, the researchers coded the data according to patterns. All the data related to the classified patterns were identified, the data was further examined, and emergent themes were highlighted. By piecing together the themes that emerged from the participants' stories, the researchers could present a comprehensive picture of their collective experiences. Finally, themes derived from the interview data were presented in tables.

### **Data Presentation and Discussion**

The paper focuses on data presentation and discussion, which are discussed in sections One and Two. Section One discusses participants' demographic information, and Section two discusses data presentation and discussion.

#### **Section One**

##### **Demographic Information of Participants**

This section presents the demographic information of participants. Under Section One, items 1–5 on the interview guide for students were used to gather data on participants' demographic information. Table 1 displays the results of the demographic information of students.

From Table 1, most (7) students were males, compared to females (3). The results show that the study used more male than female students. However, the results show that male and female students were given equal opportunities in the study. The results further show that the majority of the students (5) were between the ages of 11–15 years, followed by 16 years and above (3) and 6–10 years (2). The results show that the majority of them were in the early adolescent stage. The data presented shows that



since these students have started betting at this early stage if no proper measures are implemented, it could adversely influence their educational attainments.

Table 1: Distribution of Demographic Information on Students

		Frequencies
Gender	Male	7
	Female	3
Age	6-10 years	2
	11-15 years	5
	16 and above	3
Class	BS 4	0
	BS 5	1
	BS 6	1
	JHS 1	1
	JHS 2	3
	JHS 3	4
Times visiting the Centre	1-3	2
	4-6	5
	7-9	3
	10 and above	0
Hours Spent at the Centre	1-2	2
	3-4	3
	5-6	4
	7 and above	1

The results also show that the majority (4) of the students were in JHS 3, followed by JHS 2, (3), JHS 1, (1), basic 6 (1), and basic 5 (1). The findings indicate that final-year students who were supposed to be in class regularly visited betting shops. Likewise, JHS 2 students who were also supposed to be at school while preparing for their final examination visited the betting centres.

Moreover, the results show that most students visited the centre 4–5 times, 7–9 times (3), and 1–3 times (2). The results show that these students were likely to have missed classes. The data presented could also infer that parents of these children were likely not to have taken their parents' responsibilities seriously. The data presented could also connote that teachers and head teachers, in a way, were also not likely to have carried out their duties as expected.

Furthermore, the results indicate that the majority of the students spent between 5–6 hours at the centre, followed by 3–4 hours (3), 1–2 hours (2), and 1–2 hours (2). The data presented shows that these students were likely to have missed classes. The data





presented could also infer that parents of these children were likely not to have taken up their parents' responsibilities seriously. The data presented could also connote that teachers and head teachers, in a way, were not likely to have carried out their duties as expected. The data presented could indicate that these students were truants. The data presented could infer that the more hours spent at the centre, the more likely they missed classes.

## Section Two

### Data Presentation and Discussion

The students' identities were hidden by representing them with codes for confidentiality's sake. For example, S.D. = student 1 to S.D. = student 10. Next were the themes that emerged after the data was presented and discussed.

**Research Objective One:** Ascertain the forms of betting engaged in by students in Sene East District

This objective sought to ascertain the forms of betting engaged in by students in Sene East District. Statement 2 under section B of the interview guide was used to gather data to address this question. The theme of students practising three betting systems was obtained after the discussion.

**Theme One:** The students practise three systems of betting.

Students were asked to describe the system of betting they usually engage in. Responses from them show that they engaged in three systems of betting. For example,

I go in for betting to beat my opponent. Thus, at the beginning of the match, I predict the score. So, if at the end of the game, the score ends at my prediction, then I have won the bet [SD: 1].

#### Another Student Said Something Similar.

Before the start of the game, we are permitted to predict the score. If my score comes to pass at the end of the game, it means I have won the bet [SD: 1].

Another student was of a different view when he said:

As for me, when it comes to betting on football, I always take part. I will bet on different games. So, at the end of the day, all the bets I won will be put together, and I will be given the money multiple predictions [SD: 10].

Similarly, a student said,

There are different forms of betting. However, I engage myself more in football matches, where all my winning bets will be put together at the end of the day, and the money will be paid into my SIM number account, then I will transfer it into my mobile money account [SD: 8].

Additionally, one student said,



As for me, I like horse racing. Because of that, I always bet whenever I hear about horse race competitions. After the competition, a draw will be made based on all the competitions I won, and the money will be paid into my SIM number account [SD: 5].

Moreover, a student expressed a different view when she said:

I always go in for another bet different from what others go in for. Most of the time, I bet against what other bettors have done. If a better says the score for a match will be 3-5, Then I will say this score (3-5) will not come to pass. When the game is over, and the score appears as predicted by the first person, then I have won [SD: 4].

Again, one student said:

I like betting, which I have been doing for some time now. I usually go in for the betting where I will not say the outcome of the match, but rather, when someone says the outcome, I will say that that outcome will not come to pass [SD: 3].

These comments suggest that students were involved in betting. The comments could also imply that students were engaged in different betting systems in the study area. For example, if some do the prediction and their predictions come through, it suggests they have won the bet. Others would have to predict the opposite score of what others have predicted to win the bet. From these comments, it could be realised that students purchased three different betting systems. They were bookmakers, pari-mutuel, and exchange betting systems.

### **Findings**

Based on these comments, it was concluded that public basic school students in the Sene East District were engaged in three different betting systems. They were bookmakers, pari-mutuel, and exchange betting systems.

The findings correspond with the findings of Dixon & Pope (2004) and Vlastakis (2009). These researchers found that the bookmaker system is the most popular form of organising sports betting markets. In this system, fixed betting odds are unilaterally determined by bookmakers, i.e., gaming companies employing odds compilers with exceptional knowledge of specific sports to estimate the actual probabilities of events. Bookmakers usually publish their odds a few days before the start of an event. Bettors can then choose their bets at these odds, while bookmakers act as market makers and automatically take the opposite position, thereby carrying counterparty risk.

Franck (2013) discovered that, while bookmakers may theoretically accept unlimited betting volume at the odds they publish, in practice, some of them include stake and/or maximum winning limits in their terms and conditions as well as in their regular customer analytics processes. In addition, even though bookmakers have the right to adjust their odds after a market has opened, they rarely adjust them significantly. Either way, the size of a bettor's claim is always tied to the initially chosen odds, so the size of conceivable cash flows is known when the bet is placed.

In furtherance, Franck (2013) found that in the pari-mutuel system, betting volumes on all possible outcomes of a sporting event are aggregated and then distributed to the winners according to their relative stakes. The odds fluctuate freely, and the



claim of an individual bettor is not fixed ex-ante but depends on all the incoming betting volumes until the market is closed before the start of the event. Thus, compared to the bookmaker system, the conceivable cash flows of a bet are not yet determined when placing the bet. In addition, as bettors are effectively competing against each other and the organiser of pari-mutuel betting takes a margin out of the win pool before delivering payouts to winners, the system is risk-free for the operator, which is not the case in sports betting.

This is necessarily the case in bookmaker betting. Even though the pari-mutuel system for betting is still standard in horse racing, it is becoming less important than the bookmaker and betting exchange systems. In any case, a significant part of earlier academic research on the efficiency of betting markets has focused on pari-mutuel betting.

Aside from these, Laffey (2005) found that exchange betting has recently emerged as a novel betting market system. Inspired initially by electronic financial exchanges, developments in ICT, and the arrival of online betting, betting exchanges have marked a revolution in the industry. These exchanges are order-driven markets for fixed odds betting where odds are determined in a continuous double auction process that matches demand and supply, allowing bettors to bet directly with each other and thereby disintermediating bookmakers.

In the two traditional betting market settings, bettors can only buy bets (i.e., bet on a given outcome to occur). In the exchange setting, they can also sell bets (i.e., bet against a given outcome to occur). Betting exchanges do not carry any counterparty risk; they act only as middlemen and charge a small commission. Exchange betting has been naturally considered an attractive research area in recent years. Out of all the betting exchanges in the world, Betfair is by far the largest one, processing around seven million trades daily.

The findings confirm those of other studies. For example, the prevalence of adult gambling in the United States (U.S.) has been estimated at 86% (Potenza et al., 2002). In the U.S., the prevalence of adult "lifetime" problem gamblers has been estimated at 3.8%, and "past year" problem gamblers have been estimated at 2.8% (Potenza et al., 2011). "Lifetime" and "past year" pathological adult gamblers in the U.S. have been estimated at 1.1% to 1.6%, respectively (LaBrie, Shaffer, LaPlante & Wechsler, 2003; Potenza et al., 2011). A meta-analysis compared 39 studies conducted in the U.S. and several other countries, using different measures and modes to examine adult problems and pathological gambling. The meta-analysis showed that problem gambling prevalence in general adult populations ranged from 0.1% to 4.5% (Ladouceur, Bouchar, Rhéaume, Jacques, Ferland, LeBlond & Walker, 2000).

Moreover, Forrest (2005), found the population of problem gamblers is estimated at 3.2% of the U.S. population, using data from 31 state studies of gambling prevalence. A state-specific survey conducted in 2011 by the Center for Social and Behavioral Research (CSBR) at the University of Northern Iowa examined the prevalence of gambling in Iowa in the general population. Results suggested that 69% of adults had participated in one or more gambling activities in the past 12 months, and 91% had participated in one or more gambling activities in their lifetime. In the previous



12 months, only 2.0% of the sample was identified as a problem or pathological gambler (Gonnerman & Lutz, 2011). Among respondents ages 18–34, 67% had gambled in the past month, and 2.7% were problem or pathological gamblers in the past 12 months (Gonnerman & Lutz, 2011).

Studies specifically of students also suggest that gambling is not an uncommon activity. Approximately 80% of students have gambled in school (Korn & Shaffer, 1999). Ladouceur et al. (2000) found that problem gambling is more common among students than among adults or adolescents; the results showed problem gambling rates of 1.71% among adults, 4.25% among adolescents, and 5.05% among college students (18–25).

**Research Objective Two:** Discover the influence of betting on the academic performance of basic school students in Sene East District.

This objective sought to discover the influence of betting on the academic performance of basic school students in Sene East District. Statements 4 and 5 under section B of the interview guide were used to gather data to address this question. The theme of students having varied reasons for patronising betting was obtained after the discussion.

**Theme Two:** Betting Negatively Influences Students' Educational Attainment

It was evident from the comments given to the students that betting adversely influenced their educational attainment. For example, one student said,

Sometimes I miss classes for the whole week. In this sense, I cannot catch up with whatever they learn. Therefore, I cannot perform well during examinations [SD: 4].

Another student said

My grade was nearly repeated because of my poor academic performance last term. This came about because I was not going to school regularly. Instead, I was spending most of my time at the betting centres [SD: 10].

Furthermore, a student said,

I am not happy when I go to school. Meanwhile, when I get to the betting centre, I feel happy. However, this is affecting my performance in school. I want to stop going to the betting centre, but I cannot [SD: 6].

Likewise, one student said,

My parents are not happy anytime I go to the betting centre. They have worn me down several times, but I can't stop going there. This has affected my academic performance of late [SD: 3].

More so, one student said:



I was very clever when I started this school. But, as soon as I started visiting the betting centres, I began to experience poor academic performance [SD: 1].

Again, one student said:

I know that my betting engagement has negatively affected my academic performance [SD: 7].

However, one student was of a different view:

As for me, I don't see betting negatively influencing my educational attainment. This is because I know the time I use for studying and the time I have to go to the betting centre. This has helped me maintain my academic performance [SD: 1].

From these comments, it could be realised that students perceive that their patronage of betting negatively affects their academic performance. The results also indicate that students spent part of their learning time at the betting centres. This could infer that they missed classes and, for that reason, could not participate in the lesson taught. The results indicate that visiting betting centres negatively affected their academic performance.

### **Findings**

Based on these results, it was concluded that betting negatively influenced the educational attainment of basic school students in the Sene East District.

Croxson & Reade (2014) found that 23.6% of male college students at the University of Windsor in Canada were identified as problem gamblers. In addition to methodological or measurement differences, gambling policy differences between the U.S. and Canada may account for the wide range of prevalence rates. In addition, differences in the sample (impacting variability of results) between the two studies may also be a factor in the wide range of prevalence rates ( $n = 1,361$  in Minnesota compared to  $n = 144$  in Canada). A meta-analysis comparing 15 college gambling studies estimated that the prevalence of problem gambling among college students could range from as low as 3% to as high as 24% (Blinn-Pike, Worthy, & Jonkman, 2007). Research from the past 15 years presents gambling and, in particular, problem gambling among college students as an increasing public health problem and an important issue to be addressed.

While gambling has, at times, been considered socially deviant or immoral behaviour in some cultures and throughout history, the American Psychiatric Association only first defined it as a medically diagnosable health problem in 1980 in the 3rd version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (Korn & Shaffer, 1999). When gambling behaviour results in behavioural, emotional, relationship, or financial problems, it may develop into a diagnosable condition known as problem or pathological gambling.

The higher prevalence of problem betting among students may be explained, in part, by their psychological developmental stage. A theory proposed by Jeffery Arnett (2000) places students in "emerging adulthood," a transitory period in which they



experience independence for the first time yet have fewer responsibilities than adults. Emerging adulthood is associated with sensation-seeking and risk-taking behaviour, which may contribute to and partially explain increased gambling participation among college students (Slutske, Moffit, Poulton & Caspi, 2012).

## VI. Conclusion

Based on these findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

Students in the Sene East District were found to be involved in betting. The data presented shows that students were engaged in three different betting systems. It included bookmakers, pari-mutuel and exchange betting systems. The results show that students engaged in different betting systems.

Public elementary school students' engagement in betting negatively impacted their educational attainment. The data also shows that students' academic performance was negatively affected when they engaged in betting.

It is hoped that the findings of this study will help stakeholders in education to find mechanisms to curb the effects of betting and educational attainment on students.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made:

- Parents should guide their children on betting and its effects on their educational attainment. Through that, students would have a better understanding of the adverse effects of betting.
- Guidance coordinators should organise programs for teachers and parents that would sanitise them on how to check students' school attendance. This could enlighten parents on what they are expected to do to keep their children away from betting. Also, teachers would be equipped with best teaching practices that could help children find the school environment more enjoyable. This could help them stay at school and also prevent them from engaging in betting.

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