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## Pre-University Students Attitude towards Sport Betting

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### **Abstract:**

*This study deployed sociological, anthropological and psychological theories to assess Pre-university Student's attitude towards Sport Betting in the Kumasi Metropolis of Ghana. The sampling technique used was. Quantitative research design was employed for the study. Convenient sampling technique was used to select 120 respondents. Data for the study were gathered from primary and secondary sources. Structured questionnaire was the main instrument used in eliciting primary data. The analyses were conducted using statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft excel. The study revealed that the students anonymously (100%) consider racing and sport including football soccer, dog racing etc. as gambling. 60% of the students consider pokies as form of gambling, 80% of the students consider lottery as a gambling. Majority (65.8%) of the respondents asserted that, they betting is good source of entertainment. Other reasons for betting include the perceived winning, experience of wining, social interactions, killing boredom and sometimes because others are doing it. The external factors influencing betting were revealed as family and friends, marketing promotions through advertisement, and social media platforms. Most of the respondents are much more knowledgeable about the legal age for betting and gambling although some of the respondents were below the acceptable legal age. The study conclude that these findings are so important to be ignored by politicians, policy makers, educational leaders, religious bodies and other stakeholders in our society to manage the betting scourge.*

**Keywords:** Pre-University, students, attitude, betting, gambling Ghana

### **1. Introduction**

The term Betting has been difficult to define due to geographical variations in the interpretation. Scholars (See Richard, 2001; Peter, 2008; Pete, 2004) have conterminously defined Sport Betting as the activity or event of predicting sport outcome or result and placing wager on the outcome. In most part of the world this kind of activity is considered illegal. For instance in the United State of America is illegal to operate a betting scheme albeit it is allowed in Nevada, Oregon, Delaware and Montana. Perhaps this maybe as a result of the 1919, sport scandal facilitated by Joseph Sullivan as Chicago white faced Cincinnati red in the World Series. Joseph Sullivan is reportedly paid eight members of the white sox (The players involved were Oscar Felsch, Arnold Gandil, Shoeless Joe Jackson, Fred McMullin, Charles Risberg, George Weaver, and Claude Williams) an estimated amount of 10,000 dollars each to fix the world series. The players were all banned from partaking in any sport event throughout their lifetime yet legalizing betting had hitherto not been given consideration by many nations (William, 2001; Kier 1981 Richard, 2001; Peter, 2008; Pete, 2004).

In euro the situation is quite different. Professionals who accept sport betting wager are rather regulated instead of incriminating them. Sequel to the above, the incidence of betting is on the increase. The advancement in the information and communication technology has also catalyzed the process. Many studies (see for example Delfabbro & Winefield, 1996; Hayatabakhsh et al., 2006; Productivity Commission, 1999; Shaffer, Hall & Vanderbilt 1997; Sullivan, 2005; Williams & Connolly, 2006) have indicated that there are several factors which in motivating the young people to embrace betting and other forms of gambling. These are multidimensional factors incorporating bio-psycho-social determinants such as familial, social, cultural, environmental, emotional, personality and cognitive factors.

Previous studies (see Blaszczynski, 2000; Gupta, Derevensky & Marget, 2004; Hardoon & Derevensky, 2002) further posit that the most affected youth are those below 25 years. The outcome of these behaviours threaten academic success, national cooperation, grow and development. Aside, the national association of student personal administrators has emphasized that these young people develop health and psychological relating problem due to constant perceived wining which never materialized. This path of the gambling unlike the recreational gambling had not been much explored particularly in Ghana and Kumasi metropolis.

### 1.1. Problem Statement

Sports betting have come to stay in Ghana like any other sport loving countries. It is not uncommon to find cluster of the adolescents gathering at the betting agencies and match centers to watch their favorite team play. Majority of these spectators consider the sporting event an economic activity. Hence these bettors place wagers on the outcome of most of the sporting games with the intention to win an odd a situation Karl Max called an unfair system- the strong rich keep on exploiting the weak poor.

A cursory survey on the topic revealed that participants place bets on both local and international sporting games. Although the latter dominates in demand over the former. The expectations, anxiety, euphoria as well as the dramatic scene created before, during and after the games leaves much to be desired. Of greater concern is that most of these participants are not wage workers and rely on their parents and guardian for their basic need (food, cloth and shelter). Based on these revelations the researcher is motivated to assess pre-university students' attitude towards sport betting by emphasizing on their knowledge on kinds of gambling, factors that influence their decisions to bet, reasons for betting and legality issues.

### 1.2. Objectives of the Study

- To assess pre-university students' knowledge on kinds of betting
- To assess pre-university students' motivation for sport betting
- To examine factors that influence pre-university students to bet
- To assess pre-university students' knowledge on legal age to bet

### 1.3. Theoretical Review of the Study

This study had adopted theories and models from sociology, psychology and anthropological sources to enable the researcher explain better pre-university students' attitude towards betting with emphasis on sport betting the most influential among them. These theories are need theory, social learning theory and social conflict theory.

### 1.4. Social Learning Theory

Albert Bandura's theory of social learning illustrates a cognitive process which occurs under social context. These can occur through vicarious cycles that is learning due to occur through observation and punishments. Relating this theory to the present study, pre-university students would be attracted towards sport betting environment due to the outcome of such actions. These who are able to do this are recognised, approved and accepted among both influential peers (Allen et al., 2008). Hardoon & Derevensky, (2001) also argue that the mostly adolescents perceived gambling as a rite of passage into adulthood similar to the way and manner in which smoking and drinking are understood by the adolescents. From the above the significance of the social learning theory to this study has been immense. Hence social learning theory can be used to explain pre-university students' attitude towards betting with emphasis on sport betting.

### 1.5. The Needs Theory

The needs theory is a motivational mode which was propounded by David McClelland in the 1960s after Maslow's Hierarchical Theory of need which dominated in the 1940s. McClelland posits that our individual actions are affected by three cardinal needs. Namely; need for power, needs for achievement and needs for affiliation. McClelland further asserted that we have these three types of motivations regardless of sex, gender, race and culture. Relating this theory to the present study the pre-university students would go to betting due to the fact that they want to establish relationships and create more acquaintances. They want to enjoy social interactions from people of all walks of life hence based on this need for affiliation the pre-university students are most likely to go in to sport betting.

Moreover, the pre-university student usually needs recognition among their colleagues. These categories of students want to enjoy status recognition, winning arguments, competition, and exercise control and influence. Hence pre-university students are most likely to go join sport betting just to impress their contemporaries that they have the capability. Finally, to win an odd through betting is considered an accomplishment moreover, not everybody has the ability and the skills to do this. For that matter pre-university students are most likely to go into betting due to need for achievement.

### 1.6. Social Conflict Theory

The social conflict theory was propounded by one of the legends in history called Karl Max. Accordingly, Karl Max posited that our society is in perpetual completion apropos the limited resources as such social order is maintained through power and dominance rather than consensus and conformity. The theory further argues that groups within the capitalist's society behave in a manner which do not promote social integration. Hence the human society is in conflict as a result of the strong rich continuing to exploit the weak poor (Marx, 1971).

Applying this theory into the current study, it can be deduced that the betting company's predominantly strong rich are using this platform to exploit and worsen the plight of these weak poor. In this study it was found that most of the respondents share apartments with their parents, friend or a partner. Moreover, the pre-university students' motive for joining betting including making money to acquire the most basic things in life. To this end it can be said that the betting companies continue to exploit these helpless candidates by enlarging the inequality gap between the rich and the poor. This theory had justified its relevancy in the present study.

## 2. Methodology

Quantitative research method is the main research design adopted to explore the attitude of pre-university students towards sport betting in the Kumasi metropolis of Ghana. The main target group in this study covers all senior high school graduates who are currently on awaiting admission to enter the main stream university. Non-probability sampling method was used. The sampling technique used was convenient sampling technique. Overall, 120 sample size were considered. This was due to lack of sponsorship for the study. Data for the study were gathered from primary and secondary sources. Structured questionnaire was the main instrument used in eliciting primary data. The analyses were conducted using statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft excel. The content of the study was explained to the respondents before administering the questionnaires. Moreover, respondents were made to understand that they can redraw from the study at any time if they so wish.

### 2.1. Analyses and Findings

Demographics				
Demographics	Frequency		Percentage	Cumulative percent
<b>Age</b>				
>12	14		11.7	11.7
13-17	41		34.2	45.8
18-22	38		31.7	77.5
23>	27		22.5	100.0
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	105		87.5	87.5
Female	15		12.5	100.0
<b>Religion</b>				
Christian	94		78.3	78.3
Muslim	26		21.7	100.0
<b>Income sources</b>				
Wages from work	42		35.0	35.0
Pocket money from home	42		35.0	70.0
Gift of money from friends	12		10.0	80.0
Other	24		20.0	100.0
<b>Dream Career</b>				
Medical Doctor	23		19.1	
Politician	28		23.3	
Engineer	15		12.5	
Lecture	18		15	
Trader	24		20	
Farmer	7		5.8	
Other	5		4.2	

Table 1

Source: Field survey, 2016

The study explores the engagement of pre-university students and sporting betting or gambling in the Asokwa sub-metro under the umbrella of Kumasi metropolis. Overall, 100 sample were selected which revealed 87.5% males and 12.5% females. Surprisingly, majority (78.3%) of the students were Christians albeit, 21.7% were Muslims. Interestingly it is hypocrisy of a higher standard since both Christians and Muslims frown or condemns such practice. In the Age category it was discovered that, 54.1% were 18years and above, however, 45.9% were astonishingly below 18years who patronized gambling in the Asokwa sub-metro. The study further disclose that, 35% of the students get their money from wages work and parent respectively for gambling, again, 10% of the students get their money from Gifts from friends while as, 20% of the students get their money from other source for gambling. The respondents were also quizzed on their dream careers in the approaching future. Majority (23.3%) would like to be in politics, 20% would like be trade as business men and women, 19.1% would like to be in the health sector as medical doctors. Moreover, 12.5% would like to become engineers, 5.8% would like to be in farming. Finally, 4.2% did not disclose what they really wish to become.

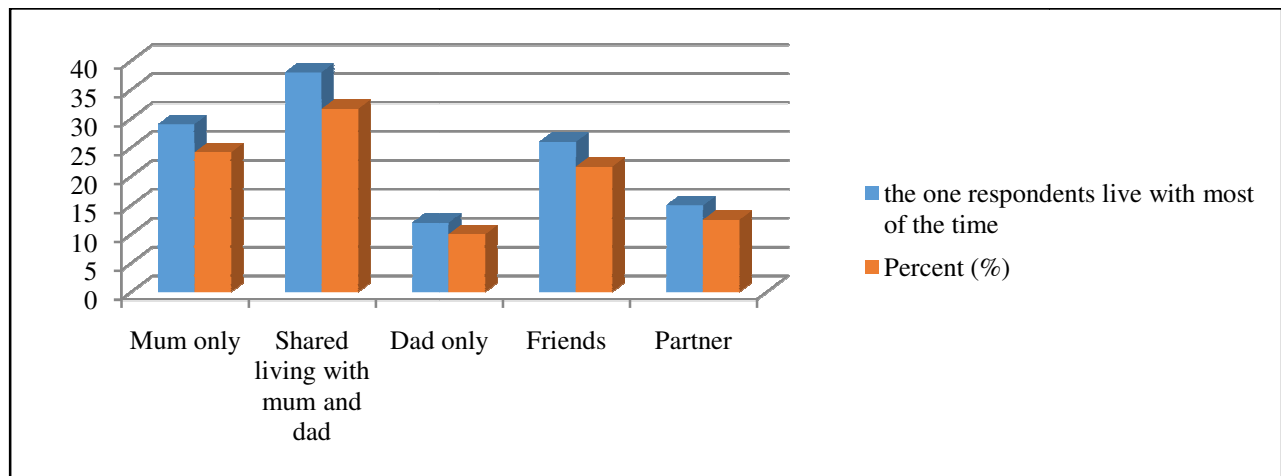


Figure 1: Place of staying  
Source: Field survey, 2016

Regarding students place of abode, it was shown that, 31.7% of the students live with their biological parents, 24.2% live with their mums only, 10% lives with their dads only meanwhile 21.7% and 12.5% live with friends and partners respectively.

Items	Responses (N)	Percent of cases
Pokies	72	60.0%
Lottery	96	80.0%
Racing and sport e.g. football soccer dog racing	120	100.0%
Card games	84	70.0%
Video Games	105	87.5%
Mobile phone betting	92	76.7%
Internet betting	40	33.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>507.5%</b>

Table 2: Knowledge on available kinds of betting  
Source: Field survey, 2016 609>n due to multiple response

Majority (60%) of the students consider pokies as form of gambling meanwhile 40% disclaim that fact. 80% of the students consider lottery as a gambling however, other 20% do not consider it to be gambling. The students anonymously (100%) consider racing and sport that is, football soccer, dog racing etc. as gambling. Majority (70%) of the students consider card games as gambling in the Asokwa Sub-Metro, notwithstanding, 30% do not consider card games as gambling. Merely 12.5% of the pre-university students did not consider video games as gambling, although majority (87.5%) considered video games as gambling. Predominate (76.7%) of the students considers mobile phone betting as gambling while as 23.3% do not consider this to be gambling. Interestingly, 66.7% of the students consider internet betting not to be gambling, however, merely 33.3% on the other hand consider internet betting as gambling.

Items	Scale		
	Yes	Sometimes	No
Is a good entertainment	65.8	34.2	0
It reduces boredom	65.8	34.2	0
Excitement winning	44.2	45.8	10.0
Experience winning	56.7	43.3	0
Is a way to make money	90.0	10.0	0
It promote Social interactions	68.3	31.7	0
It makes you feel better	31.7	58.3	10.0
It okay as well as you don't overdo it	10.0	56.7	33.3

Table 3: Reasons for betting money or possessions  
Source: Field survey, 2016

Majority (65.8%) of the respondents supported that; they gamble with money and possession and is good entertainment however, 34.2% do not gamble with money and possession. Majority (65.8%) of the students gamble with their money and possession because it reduces boredom, moreover, 34.25% on the other hand think contrary. 45.8% of the students sometimes gamble with money and possession since it gives them excitement after they have won the game. Another 44.2% of the students actually gamble with money and possession because of it excitement winning meanwhile, other 10% do not gamble at all with their money and possession.

Majority (56.7%) of the students gamble for winning experience, however, 43.3% sometimes also gamble for winning experience. Major (90%) group of the students gamble as a way of making money, some also sometimes gamble to make money as well. Majority (68.3%) gamble with money and possession to promote social interaction. Meanwhile others sometimes gamble with money and possession for social interaction as well. Merely (10%) of the students don't gamble with money and possession to make them feel better, other 58.3% of the students sometimes gamble to feel better in life however, 31.7% of the students actually gamble to feel better in the society they live. Majority (56.7%) of the students sometimes feel ok in gambling as long as they do not overdo it, other, 33.3% do not feel ok in gambling at all, meanwhile merely 10% of the students feel ok in gambling as long as they don't overdo it.

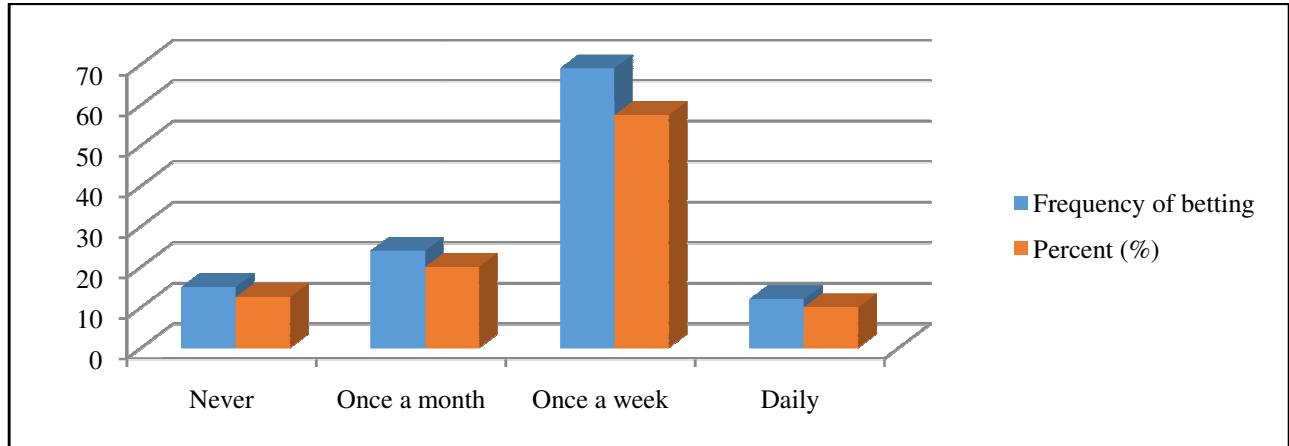


Figure 2: Frequency of betting  
Source: Field survey, 2016

Majority (57.5%) of the students gamble averagely once a week and other 20% of the students gamble averagely once a month. Moreover, 10% averagely gamble daily while as 12.5% have never gambled before.

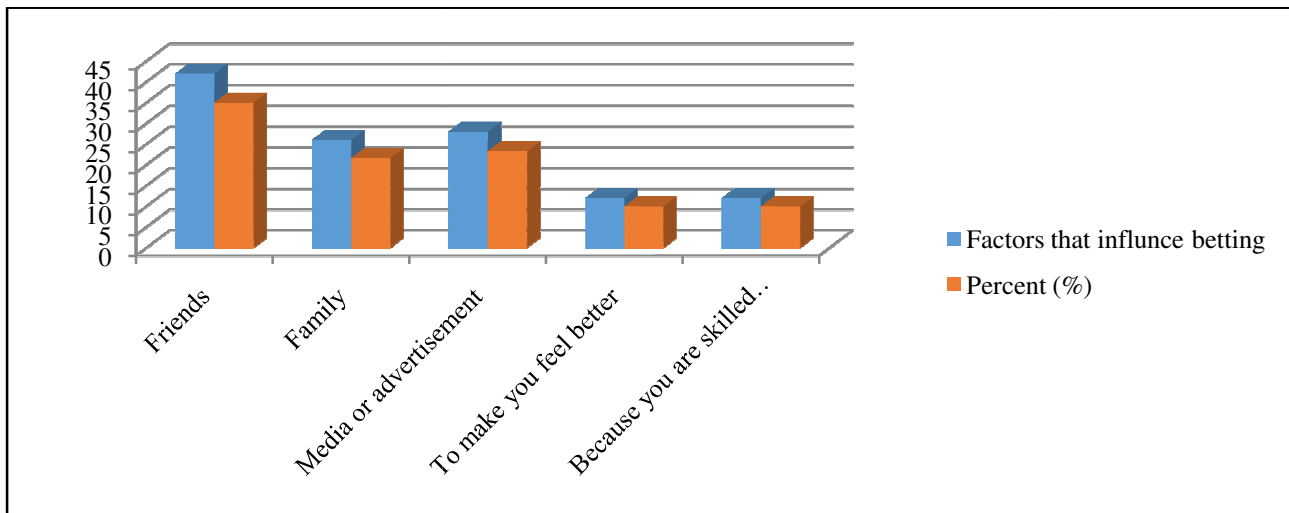


Figure 3: Factors that influence betting  
Source: Field survey, 2016

Majority (35%) of the students were influenced by their peers to engage in sport betting. Other 23.3% were influence to gambling by the social media and also through advertisement, surprisingly, 21.7% of the students were introduced to gamble by family members. Meanwhile, only 10% were respectively influence to gambling because they were skilled in gambling and feel better when they gamble.

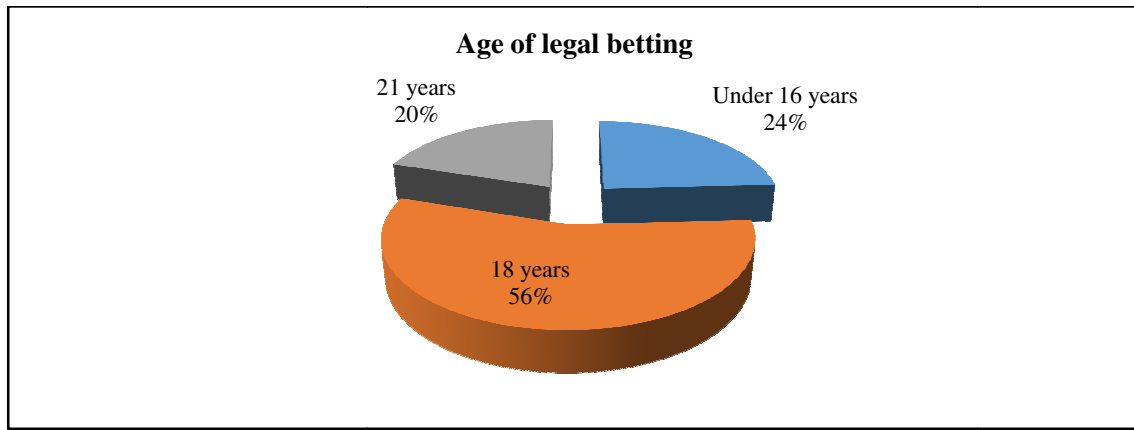


Figure 4: Age of legal betting  
Source: Field survey, 2016

Majority (55%) of the students think that at age 18 it is legal for students to gamble or bet. Other 24.2% of the students think that, at age 16 and below it is legal for students bet however, only, 20% on the other hand believe that gambling should be legalized at the age 21.

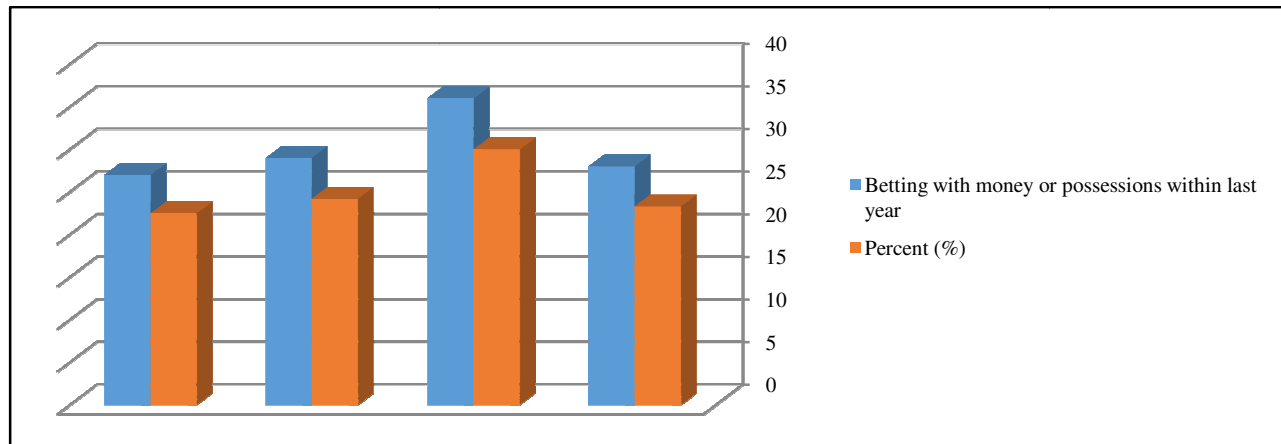


Figure 5: Betting with money or possessions within last year  
Source: Field survey, 2016

Last year 30% of the students spent their money and possession on Racing or sports; that is football, soccer, horse and dog racing, and others. Other, 24.2% spent their money on lottery; that is scratches, lotto, keno and others. However, 23.3% of the students spent their money on Mobile phone betting as well Card games 22.5%.

### 3. Discussions and Conclusions

#### 3.1. Knowledge on Kinds of Betting/Gambling

Majority (60%) of the students consider pokies as form of gambling meanwhile 40% disclaim that fact. 80% of the students consider lottery as a gambling however, other 20% do not consider it to be gambling. The students anonymously (100%) consider racing and sport that is, football soccer, dog racing etc. as gambling. Majority (70%) of the students consider card games as gambling in the Asokwa Sub-Metro, notwithstanding, 30% do not consider card games as gambling. Merely 12.5% of the pre-university students did not consider video games as gambling, although majority (87.5%) considered video games as gambling. Predominate (76.7%) of the students considers mobile phone betting as gambling while as 23.3% do not consider this to be gambling. Interestingly, 66.7% of the students consider internet betting not to be gambling, however, merely 33.3% on the other hand consider internet betting as gambling.

#### 3.2. Reasons for Betting /Gambling

Majority (65.8%) of the respondents asserted that, they gamble with money and possession and is good entertainment however, 34.2% do not gamble with money and possession. Majority (65.8%) of the students gamble with their money and possession because it reduces boredom, moreover, 34.25% on the other hand think contrary. 45.8% of the students sometimes gamble with money and possession since it gives them excitement after they have won the game. Another 44.2% of the students actually gamble with money and possession because of it excitement winning meanwhile, other 10% do not gamble at all with their money and possession.

Majority (56.7%) of the students gamble for winning experience, however, 43.3% sometimes also gamble for winning experience. Major (90%) group of the students gamble as a way of making money, some also sometimes gamble to make money as well. Majority (68.3%) gamble with money and possession to promote social interaction. Meanwhile others sometimes gamble with money and possession for social interaction as well. Merely (10%) of the students don't gamble with money and possession to make them feel better, other 58.3% of the students sometimes gamble to feel better in life however, 31.7% of the students actually gamble to feel better in the society they live. Majority (56.7%) of the students sometimes feel ok in gambling as long as they do not overdo it, other, 33.3% do not feel ok in gambling at all, meanwhile merely 10% of the students feel ok in gambling as long as they don't overdo it. Majority (57.5%) of the students gamble averagely once a week and other 20% of the students gamble averagely once a month. Moreover, 10% averagely gamble daily while as 12.5% have never gambled before.

### 3.3. External Influence Factors

Majority (35%) of the students were influenced by their peers to engage in gambling. Other 23.3% were influence to gambling by the social media and also through advertisement, surprisingly, 21.7% of the students were introduced to gamble by family members. Meanwhile, only 10% were respectively influence to gambling because they were skilled in gambling and feel better when they gamble.

### 3.4. Knowledge of Legal Age of Betting

Majority (55%) of the students think that at age 18 it is legal for students to gamble or bet. Other 24.2% of the students think that, at age 16 and below it is legal for students bet however, only, 20% on the other hand believe that gambling should be legalized at the age 21. Last year 30% of the students spent their money and possession on Racing or sports; that is football, soccer, horse and dog racing, and others. Other, 24.2% spent their money on lottery; that is scratches, lotto, keno and others. However, 23.3% of the students spent their money on Mobile phone betting as well Card games 22.5%.

## 4. Conclusions

This study was set to investigate into why pre-university students attitude towards betting with emphasis on sport betting. Most of the respondents are knowledgeable about kinds of betting and gambling in general. The respondents reasons for betting include the perceived wining, experience of wining, source of entertainment, social interactions, killing boredom and sometimes because others are doing it. The external factors influencing betting were revealed as family and friends, marketing promotions through advertisement, and social media platforms. Most of the respondents are much more knowledgeable about the legal age for betting and gambling although some of the respondents were below the acceptable legal age. These conclusions are so important to be ignored by politicians, policy makers, educational leaders, religious bodies and other stakeholders in our society.

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