

## The link between Internet Usage and Addiction to Online Gambling Among Undergraduate Students in Kenya

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### ABSTRACT:

The study sought to examine the role of problematic internet usage in the risk of addiction to online gambling among undergraduate students in universities in Kenya. The study utilized Behaviourist Theory and Social Learning Theory. *Ex-post facto* research design was used for this study. The target population for the study was 97284 comprising all the undergraduate students in four universities and the accessible population was 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students comprising of 18911. The sample size comprised of 391 undergraduate students, 16 peer counsellors and four (4) student counsellors making a total of 411 participants. Data was collected by use of a questionnaire, an in-depth interview schedule and focus group discussion. Each focus group discussion comprised of four participants. Purposive sampling was used to select the universities of study. Purposive and simple random sampling was used to select the respondents. One university with similar characteristics with the sampled universities was purposively selected for piloting to ensure reliability of the research instruments. Descriptive statistics of frequencies, percentages and means were used to analyse data. Chi square was used to test the null hypotheses while t-test was used to compare the study variables. Quantitative data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 23. Qualitative data was coded and thematically analysed. The pre-test was administered to and the instruments were modified accordingly. According to the study findings, problematic internet usage was significant to online gambling the reliability coefficient of problematic internet usage was 0.829, online gambling was 0.875.

**Key terms:** Online gambling, internet, problematic, risk, undergraduate student

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## Introduction

Internet usage has risen globally; currently, it is used in numerous communications such as e-mails, WhatsApp, web browsing, movies and social media communications. Secondly, internet usage is being incorporated in learning organizations towards enhancement of research and educational work (Deusen, et al. 2015). Although internet is very significant in the modern day, studies conducted indicate that problematic internet usage may lead to addiction risks such as online gambling. The provision of the unrestricted, limitless and unmonitored internet allows the students to stay online for long periods of time. Again, due to freedom and independence by university students, there is a likelihood of forming the compulsive behaviour of spending long periods of time online, which could predispose them to addiction risks of online gambling.

Explaining how spending long periods on the internet could predispose undergraduate students to psychological problems, Bahadir (2017) acknowledged that problematic internet usage might trigger anxiety and discomfort in daily life. The researcher argued that spending many hours online could result to the risk of being addicted to gambling as a way of overcoming anxiety and discomfort. Internet gambling consists of activities such as online sports betting, horse/dog race and games. The researcher further maintained that gambling activities had increased over the years and included betting with peers on video games for money and sports betting depending on the availability of gambling outlets. According to Abdi, Ruitter and Adal (2015), people visited gambling sites for excitement and entertainment, to earn money, to relieve boredom and be busy, to escape from loneliness, to feel powerful after winning, to make friends and fit in social situations.

Internet connectivity and technology have increased tremendously throughout the world in the recent past.

Advancement in technology has aided problematic internet usage among the university undergraduate students and predisposed them to the addiction risks. Although, internet connectivity is a vital aspect of a university student's life, provision of free and limitless internet to students in institutions of higher learning globally, including Kenya increases the likelihood to use it for other purposes than for the intended purpose of accessing information for academic use and research work. The availability of smartphones has deepened penetration and access of internet services at all time and everywhere. Increase in technological use, marketing and advertisement of online activities have led to a rise in internet usage among the young people. The demand to use internet by undergraduate students in Kenyan universities introduces them to several websites, some of which may predispose them to the risk of developing addictions. Studies by other researchers in Kenya have indicated the psychological and social effects of problematic internet usage among university students. Undergraduate students have a likelihood of developing problematic internet usage, which could lead to risk of addiction to online gambling. The relationship between problematic internet usage and addiction risks, needed to be ascertained through a study. This study therefore, attempted to cover the gap by researching on the role of problematic internet usage in addiction risks related to gambling among undergraduate students in universities in the counties of Nairobi and Meru, Kenya.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Gambling is a social activity which involves placing a bet on a game in order to win money. Young people engaged in gambling to be entertained, for leisure and to win money (Gainsbury, 2015). The researcher did a study to investigate the association between compulsive gambling and online gambling and noted that, internet gambling comprised of

getting into internet websites to bet on chance-based proceedings aimed at earning money. Moreover, young people accessed internet gambling easily due to the reduction in prices. The researcher further affirmed that internet gambling could cause psychosocial problems if it was not controlled and when the gambler causes suffering to oneself or other people. Furthermore, the researcher affirmed that, young people who became internet gamblers could encounter psychosocial problems such as depression, high risk of suicide and suicide attempts as well as feelings of shame and trouble in social relationships. The researcher further argued that the young person could steal money to use in gambling or incur some debts, which could lead to financial distress. The options used for internet gambling are baccarat, roulette, blackjack, online poker, online casinos, online bingo, sports betting and online lotteries (Binde et al., 2017). The researchers did a study to establish gambling problems, gambling involvement and types of gambling: proof from a Swedish residents' study. The findings indicated that individuals who engaged in online gambling had a greater risk of developing an addiction. Further, availability of gaming outlets and connections lead to a growth in the number of people engaging in gambling. The study failed to indicate whether the risk of addiction to online gambling occurred attributable to problematic internet usage. The current study covered the gap in analysing the role of problematic internet usage in the risk of addiction to online gambling among university students in the counties of Nairobi and Meru, Kenya.

According to Kuss (2013), problematic internet usage could cause addiction to gambling as it offers a way of coping with issues that could cause stress. The researcher posited that in order for an individual to be diagnosed with gambling problem, they could have indicators such as being preoccupied with gambling and planning where to get the money to use in gambling, as they used great amounts of money even if unsuccessful in winning and

could gamble even after losing the money to gambling. The researcher further highlighted that when one is involved in gambling; they could lie to people close to them to conceal the habit and could withdraw from the social cycles which could impact negatively on one-on-one relationships. The findings of research by Fulton (2018) to investigate the effects of gambling on society and individuals in Ireland showed that young people became addicted to gambling as they tried to escape from stressful situations and everyday problems and due to their poor coping skills, they could result to gambling as a way of coping with difficulties. The researcher continued to argue that addiction to gambling was related to low levels of parental monitoring and insufficient disciplinary actions towards the young person. According to the researcher, addiction to gambling occurred due to availability and accessibility of gambling opportunities such as free and limitless internet technology. There was need to investigate whether the assertions of the researcher that the presence of gambling opportunities, exposure and ease of access predisposed the university students to the risk of addiction to online gambling in a Kenyan perceptive.

Charotta (2015) sought out to investigate adolescents gaming and gambling in relation to negative social consequences and health and found out that there were several factors required to be considered before ascertaining that there was an addiction to gambling. The factors included; developmental behaviours of the gamblers, risk factors involved, availability of gambling resources, awareness and prevention programmes. The researcher further acknowledged that the young people who suffered addiction to gambling might also abuse drugs and other substances. The addicts were also likely to be depressed, attempt suicide and perform poorly in academics. This study, therefore, sought to investigate whether risk of addiction to gambling occurred as a consequence of problematic internet usage. Internet gambling disorder was included in the DSM-V in the year

2013 under the class of disorders requiring more research (Belanger, 2015). The researcher argued that internet gaming disorder research was incompatible in the assessment and definition of the disorder. Nevertheless, it was compared to problem gambling as the only other behavioural addiction in the DSM V. The comorbid symptoms identified were, beliefs about illusion of control, temperament and personality attributes, and actions of welfare.

Moreover, internet gaming disorder was distinct disorder from gaming although there was no clarification of psychological profile of internet gaming disorder individuals. In accordance with the American Psychiatric Association, in DSM – V, gambling disorder has been classified under impulse-control disorders (APA, 2013). Impulse control disorders are explained as incapability to resist a drive. An individual feels a heightened pressure to engage in the act and then experiences relief in the course of the action and/or guilt afterwards. In DSM V, pathological gambling occurs when an individual becomes pre-occupied with gambling which continues despite frequent efforts to stop the behaviour. Individuals become pathological gamblers while seeking ways of excitement, to make money and to relieve stress. Further, pathological gambling could increase due to availability of gambling points and the duration one takes while gambling. Moreover, problem gambling starts in adolescents and may continue even in adulthood. The criteria used to diagnose problematic gambling are an indication that undergraduate students could be at a possibility of developing addiction to online gambling. The diagnoses categorises adolescents and college students at a greater risk of being addicted since they engage more in gambling activities than other groups of people. University students fall under the category of college students and therefore, it was important to investigate whether problematic internet usage brought about the risks of addiction to internet gambling in a Kenyan perspective.

A study to give an apprehension of how problematic internet usage was similar to pathological gambling by Rash and Petry (2014) examined psychological treatment for gambling disorders and assumed that problem gambling and problematic internet usage could be positively associated with depression, amongst other factors, in a class of university students. The depression subscale of the Depression Anxiety Subscale was utilized to assess the degrees of depression of the students and reported that only problematic internet usage results were linked to depression, not gamble outcomes. This was not compatible with the later studies and therefore, a need to ascertain the situation from a Kenyan perspective by examining whether problematic internet usage caused risk of addiction to online gambling among undergraduate university students. In the course of an extensive research, Walther et al. (2012) carried out a research to investigate the particular designs of associated personality traits between gambling, substance utilization, and video and computer gaming in a large sample of undergraduate students. Their application of a depression scale and questionnaires customized from Kandel and Davies (1982) demonstrated that depression was not only linked to video and computer gaming, but also not linked to gambling. This could have been due to the use of samples in the study from students who did not show notable gambling conducts. Therefore, considering that gambling is common among the young people where the highest number of undergraduate students fall, the current study sought to ascertain the propositions among students in Kenyan universities.

Prior research have revealed the co-occurrence of symptoms of problematic gambling and depression in like student populations (Charotta, 2015), as well as depression symptoms and problematic internet usage. An examination on the effects of problematic internet usage on life engagement and life satisfaction in youth done by Shahnaz



and Karim (2014), sampled 210 undergraduate students and found that internet usage was associated with online discussion, adult chatting, online gaming, cyber affair and watching pornography. Correlations of different aspects of excessive internet usage with major variables indicated significant and positive correlations. Moreover, the students were not questioned about any clinical examination of depression. These conflicting findings called for a study in a Kenyan context. The current study, therefore, sought to determine whether the researchers' assertions were comparable in a Kenyan perspective by examining the role of problematic internet usage in the risk of addiction to online gambling among university students.

Seeking to establish the relationship between disordered gambling and internet gambling Gainsbury (2015) carried out a study on internet gambling addiction and established that among the major changes in the gambling environment previously was the expanded availability of online gambling technology, as well as mobile phones. The researcher further acknowledged that online gambling was the most rapidly developing way of gambling and was altering the manner in which gamblers take part in gambling activity. The study concluded that the ease at which cash could be spent and earned through internet gambling, immersive interface and high accessibility level, could result in elevated rates of disordered gambling. The study findings showed that online gambling did not bring about gambling problems as such but was more frequent among greatly involved gamblers, which contributed significantly to problem gambling. Further, online gamblers varied from a range of individual, social and environmental variables moderated the effect of the manner of access to gambling problems (Binde et al., 2017). The study further pointed out that as internet gambling continued to change and involvement increased, mainly amongst young persons who were greatly acquainted to online commerce and internet technology, it was possible that associated difficulties would occur. Thus, considering that university

students are familiar with internet technology as they are expected to use it on a regularly, there was need to examine whether problematic internet usage lead to the risk of addiction to online gambling among undergraduate students in universities in the counties of Nairobi and Meru, Kenya.

Individuals with pathological gambling had extensively shown to exhibit similar forms of cortical stimulation as substance addicts. Gmel et al. (2017) compared addiction to gambling like that of substance abuse and affirmed that presently, gambling condition is the only acknowledged behavioural addiction in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5 (DSM 5). Medicating by means of opiate antagonist naltrexone had alleviated problematic gambling behaviour in some persons in addition to management by means of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors ensured partly effective. Nevertheless, there was added likelihood that the material on the internet, such as interactive games, chatting or online gambling could stimulate the reward structures, relatively than just engagement on the internet activities. Thus, in order to ascertain the propositions of the researchers, there was a need for a study to be done.

DSM-5 recognizes digital game addiction as diagnosis criteria with the characteristics mainly: preoccupation, tolerance, withdrawal symptoms, continuity, replacement, continuous excessive internet usage, deception, escape and conflict. This is an indication that problematic internet usage could result into the risk of being addicted to online gambling. The more university students stay online for longer hours, the more they start feeling comfortable with online browsing and the more engage in online activities such as online gambling. Further, they become more irritable when they withdraw from gaming and could try unsuccessfully to stop the behaviour, which they have already acquired. Moreover, online gambling could also be

used as a way of escaping from negative emotions and could lead to psychological problems and academic drop.

The findings of a study done in Australia to investigate use of social media and latent messages conveyed by gambling operators maintained that, the social media platforms mostly used to advertise gambling activities were the Facebook and twitter. Betting had the highest number of participants followed by lottery (Gainsbury et al., 2016). The messages portrayed on the social media displayed gambling as exciting and emphasized winning which encouraged people to participate more. Griffiths (2015) reported that the availability and accessibility of gambling facilities eased the engagement in gambling activities among the young people and could lead to the risk of an addiction. The researcher argued that continued advertisements and promotions of gambling lottery created more interest in accessing gambling activities. He further maintained that youth who are addicted to gambling due to problematic internet usage could be predisposed to emotional difficulties such as lack of self-confidence, suicidal ideations and low self-esteem. The researcher affirmed that psychological and social problems could occur among the gamblers and could result to serious consequences such as suicide when one fails to win a bet they placed on a game.

A study done by Mwadime (2017) to investigate the implications of sports betting in Kenya indicated that young people were predisposed to being addicted to online gambling due to easy access of online sports betting which could be done at all time and everywhere. The researcher continued to maintain that young people gamble to earn money. Furthermore, young people incurred debts because they sometimes borrowed money to bet. The researcher concluded that young people in Kenya are susceptible to addiction to online gambling due to availability of internet connectivity and technologies. The findings of a study by Korros (2016) to investigate how

betting affects the behaviour of students in universities in Kenyan affirmed that although mass media helps in educating people positively, it could also predispose young people to internet gambling. Highlighting and advertisement enables the gamblers to discover the available sites of internet gambling. Highlighting encourages people to gamble with a hope to earn money and when they lose could become hopeless and isolated which could influence negatively on the social relations.

This study therefore intended to answer the question whether online gambling behaviour was attributed to problematic internet usage among students in Kenyan universities. Macharia (2018) posited that university students accessed and used internet for social interaction and gambling activities. In a study to explore implications of hole-in-the-wallet phenomenon and paratoxic behaviour among university students in Kenya, the researcher maintained that undergraduate students were motivated to gamble by the anticipation of earning more money, a belief that led to a financial hardship. Therefore, the current research sought to examine the role of problematic internet usage in the risk of addiction to online gambling among undergraduate students in universities in Kenya. It was also in the view of this study that due to the acquired freedom by undergraduate university students, where their activities online were not monitored, they could be predisposed to risk of being addicted to online gambling. Previously, the students' activities online were monitored and limited by parents and guardians which was not the case when they joined the universities.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

The study sought to examine the role of problematic internet usage in the risk of addiction to online gambling among undergraduate students in universities in the counties of Meru and Nairobi, Kenya. Results are displayed in Table 1

**Problematic internet usage is not statistically significant in risk of addiction to online gambling**

		Risk of Addiction to Online Gambling		Total
		Low Risk	High Risk	
Non Problematic Internet Use	F	79	58	137
	%	56.0%	33.0%	43.2%
Problematic Internet Use	F	62	118	180
	%	44.0%	67.0%	56.8%
Total	F	141	176	317
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 1 illustrates that 67.0% of the respondents exhibiting high risk of addiction to online gambling had problematic internet usage while only 44.0% of respondents with low risk of addiction to online gambling had problematic internet usage. Hence, the proportion of the respondents

displaying high risk of addiction to online gambling that had problematic internet use was higher than the proportion of the respondents exhibiting low risk of addiction to online gambling that had problematic internet usage.

	Value	df	P – Value
Pearson Chi-Square	16.984 <sup>a</sup>	1	.000
Likelihood Ratio	17.074	1	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	16.930	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	317		

Table 2 displays a chi square test, which was performed to examine the relationship between problematic internet usage and risk of addiction to online gambling. The relationship between problematic internet usage and risk

of addiction to online gambling was significant,  $\chi^2(1, N = 317) = 16.984, p < .000$ . Hence, the null hypothesis - problematic internet usage is not statistically significant in risk of addiction to online gambling was rejected.

**Table 3**  
**Problematic Internet Use and Risk of Addiction to Online Gambling Comparison Analysis**

Internet Use	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Non Problematic Internet Use	137	13.7	6.4	0.54
Problematic Internet Use	180	16.9	5.6	0.42

A T-test was performed to determine whether different results could be arrived at concerning the relationship between problematic internet usage and risk of addiction to online gambling. Results illustrated in Table 3 showed that the mean risk of addiction to online gambling score for respondents exhibiting problematic internet usage was 16.9 (SD = 5.6) while the score of their counterparts with

non-problematic internet usage was 13.7 (SD = 6.4). The results implied that the scores for risk of addiction to online gambling for respondents exhibiting problematic internet usage were higher than the risk of addiction to online gambling scores for their counterparts with non-problematic internet usage.

**Table 4**  
**Problematic Internet Use and Risk of Addiction to Online Gambling Independent Samples Test**

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	t	Df	P - Value	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	8.205	.004	-4.832	315	.000	-3.256	0.674
Equal variances not assumed			-4.751	272.4	.000	-3.256	0.685

An independent-samples t-test indicated that the scores for risk of addiction to online gambling were significantly higher for respondents exhibiting problematic internet usage ( $M = 16.9$ ,  $SD = 5.6$ ) than for their counterparts with non-problematic internet usage ( $M = 13.7$ ,  $SD = 6.4$ ),  $t(315) = 4.832$ ,  $p < .001$  as displayed in table 4. Hence, the study established a significant relationship between problematic internet usage and risk of addiction to online gambling. Therefore, the null hypothesis – problematic internet usage is not statistically significant in risk of addiction to online gambling was rejected.



**Table 5**  
**The Role of Problematic Internet Usage in the Risk of Addiction to Online Gambling**

Risk of addiction to Online Gambling	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Low Scores		High Scores	
				F	%	F	%
				I always feel exited winning money after placing bets	317	3.37	1.57
I usually feel distressed because of being unable to engage in gambling activities	317	3.21	1.49	164	51.7	153	48.3
I often gamble on the internet	317	3.13	1.56	167	52.7	150	47.3
I feel an urge to continue gambling even after losing great amounts of money	317	3.02	1.46	189	59.6	128	40.4
I feel restless trying to stop the gambling behaviour	317	2.80	1.44	210	66.2	107	33.8

The five items on risk of addiction to online gambling were measured using a Likert scale of 1-5 in which, 1 inferred the least and 5 highest. Thus, a mean of 2.5 to 5.0 signified high extent involvement while a mean less than 2.5 inferred involvement to a low extent. Results in table 26 indicate that the five items on risk of addiction to online gambling enumerated means ranging from 2.80 and 3.37 implying that on average, the respondents had a considerable risk of addiction to online gambling since each posted a score greater than 2.5. Specifically, item one on risk of addiction to online gambling - I always feel exited winning money after placing bets registered a score of 3.37 (SD = 1.57), item two - I usually feel distressed because of being unable to engage in gambling activities recorded a mean of 3.21 (SD = 1.49) and item three - I often gamble on the internet enumerated a mean of 3.13 (SD = 1.56). Besides, item four - I feel an urge to continue gambling even after losing great amounts of money posted a mean of 3.02 (SD = 1.46) while

item five - I feel restless trying to stop the gambling behaviour had a mean of 2.80 (SD = 1.44). The results implied that to a large extent, the respondents always felt exited winning money after placing bets, usually felt distressed because of being unable to engage in gambling activities and often gambled on the internet. Moreover, the respondents felt an urge to continue gambling even after losing great amounts of money and regularly felt restless trying to stop the gambling behaviour. Hence, the respondents had a high risk of getting addicted to online gambling.

The respondents were further categorized into two in respect to the responses availed on the item - risk of addiction to online gambling. In this respect, scores of either 4 or 5 were classified as high scores while scores of 1, 2 or 3 were classified as low scores. It was established that 55.5% always felt exited winning money after placing bets,

48.3% usually felt distressed because of being unable to engage in gambling activities, 47.3% often gamble on the internet, and 40.4% felt an urge to continue gambling even after losing great amounts of money, while 33.8% feel restless trying to stop the gambling behaviour. The results indicated that the respondents had a high risk of getting addicted to online gambling since more than a third posted high scores for all the five items.

Gainsbury (2015) acknowledged that young people engaged on online gambling to earn money, for entertainment and for leisure. In line with this, the current study found out that a great number of undergraduate students engaged in online gambling to earn money. The students visited several gambling sites provided on the internet. The findings also affirmed that undergraduate students engaged in sports betting to compete with peers and get wealthy. Mwadime (2017) who acknowledged that young people engaged in sports betting to gain quick money and to improve financial status supports this. Furthermore, sports betting sites were accessible at all time and from everywhere.

The study findings concurred with Falton (2015) who argued that problematic internet usage occurred when individuals had minimal monitoring on what they did on the internet. The current research found out that majority of the university undergraduate students used the internet frequently. Spending long periods on the internet predisposed the students to the risk of being addicted to online gambling. The results indicated that 118 (67%) of the respondents were engaged in problematic internet usage and were at a risk of being addicted to online gambling. This agreed with the study by Kuss (2013) that addiction to online gambling was because of problematic internet usage. Moreover, involvement in online gambling had a negative effect on the psychological and social wellbeing of the person. Those involved in online gambling were

isolated from family and friends as they withdrew from the social circles.

The findings of this study established that problematic internet usage lead to the risk of addiction to online gambling which was contrarily to a research by (Shahnaz, & Karim, 2014). The researchers indicated that internet usage among university students involved other activities other than online gambling such as online discussion, adult chatting, online gaming, cyber affair and pornography watching. The results of this research established that although university students engaged in other activities, online gambling was a significant factor in problematic internet usage. Availability of gambling points, free internet connectivity and persuasive media motivated the students to gamble. Availability of internet technology and connectivity allowed people to engage in online gambling (Gainsbury, 2015). This assertion agreed with the findings of the current study, which showed that majority of university undergraduate students, used mobile phones to gamble online. The students who participated in the study indicated having stayed awake late at night to gamble and a number of them also indicated having gambled during class time. A high number of students reported that they were not able to control their gambling habits, which was an indication of an addiction. Some of the problems that undergraduate students experienced due to gambling behaviour were psychological, social, financial and academic drop. This was in agreement with Griffiths (2015) that addiction to online gambling led to psychological and social problems.

Through the in-depth interview schedule, the students' counsellors pointed out that undergraduate students engage in online gambling because of the expectation that they would win quick money and a desire to have quick wealth by placing bets. Further, a great number of undergraduate students gambled due to peer pressure while some engaged in online gambling as a way of dealing

with financial constraints. Students' counsellors highlighted that engagement in online gambling involved placing bets online hoping to earn more money after winning. This predisposed the students to developing addiction to online gambling because of the many trials in which essentially they ended up losing. One student counselor said that;

*'Undergraduate students place bets on games because of media advertisements promising them to win money if their predictions were correct which, does not happen most of the time. This leads to loss of money and more engagement in the gambling activity, which becomes an addiction.'*

The findings from the in-depth interviews showed that undergraduate students enjoyed online gambling on smartphones any time because it was quick and automatic to participate. They could one game and continue to another immediately or later or at all times.

Peer counsellors were asked to indicate the nature of problematic internet usage in relation to online gambling. The results indicated that the process of registering to engage in online gambling was done on the internet. This was an indication that the undergraduate students who engaged in problematic internet usage had a higher chance of being addicted to online gambling. The students engaged in online gambling with the hope of winning money where they kept on making predictions with the hope of winning even after several trials without success. The results implied that problematic internet usage was a significant factor in online gambling. The activities and events that occurred concerning online gambling required the students to be on the internet for long hours predisposing them to problematic internet usage, which could lead to addiction to online gambling. Two focus group discussion participants commented that;

*'Undergraduate students who engage in online gambling usually register online at all times and from anywhere even when they are attending lectures,*

*they keep on checking the progress of the game to see if they have won.'*

*'Many undergraduate students engage in online gambling because they want to win easy money and upgrade their livelihood. A number of them make several trials in predicting the outcome of an activity with the hope of winning money which does not always happen as anticipated.'*

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

### Conclusion

The study findings revealed that problematic internet usage was a significant factor in the risk of addiction to online gambling. Out of the sampled students, 118 (67%) of the respondents engaged in problematic internet usage and were predisposed to the risk of addiction to online gambling. The study findings established that problematic internet usage could lead to the risk of addiction to online gambling with a mean of between 2.80 and 3.37 on the measured items indicating a mean higher than 2.50. From the qualitative data, it was found out that problematic internet usage disposed the students to the risk of addiction to online gambling because of engaging excessively on gambling activities on the internet. Undergraduate students gambled online for various reasons mainly; to overcome boredom, to earn money, to socialize and to feel important by competing and winning bets. The study established that undergraduate students who developed problematic internet usage spent a great amount of time gambling. The students indicated that, they were motivated to gamble by the advertisements on media showing people winning and were influenced by the peers. This implied that the longer undergraduate students stayed on the internet, the more they accessed gambling points and the higher the chances of developing addiction to online gambling. The study findings indicated that undergraduate students engaged in problematic internet usage, which led to the addiction to online gambling. Students engaged in online gambling for different reasons

mainly; to earn money in order to upgrade their financial status, to compete with peers as a way of socializing especially in sports betting, earn quick money and get wealthy and as a way of overcoming boredom. The research showed that availability of gambling points and technology, accessibility; free internet connectivity and persuasive media were some of the motivating factors that facilitated online gambling.

#### Recommendations

The study established that problematic internet usage was related to the risk of developing addiction to online gambling. Therefore, it was recommended that the government to develop preventative measures that will limit the internet sites that could be easily accessed by the university undergraduate students. This would ensure that online gambling was minimal and limited hence, controlling engagement by university students.

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