

International Journal of Communication and Public Relations (IJCPR)

Betting Menace: Riddle of Television Advertising and University Students Betting Behaviour

Nicholas Ochieng Oduor, Professor Hellen Mberia and Dr. John Ndavula



Betting Menace: Riddle of Television Advertising and University Students Betting Behaviour



¹*Nicholas Ochieng Oduor

PhD Candidate: School of Communication & Development Studies:

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology, Kenya.

²* Professor Hellen Mberia

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology, Kenya.

³*Dr. John Ndavula,

Murang'a University of Technology, Kenya.

Article History

Received 28th March 2023

Received in Revised Form 10th April 2023

Accepted 24th April 2023



Abstract

Purpose: To establish the influence of television's testimonial advertisement technique on sports betting among the university students in Kenya.

Methodology: The study used a mixed method design. In this case a convergent parallel mixed methods design was used to ascertain the relationship between testimonial advertising and sports betting among the university students in Kenya. Piloting was done to check on validity and reliability of the data collected. This was then followed by data collection where the collected data was subjected to diagnostic test to check if the data were normally distributed. Descriptive survey and inferential statistics were used in the analysis. The regression model was used to find out the correlation between testimonial advertising technique and sports betting among university students in Kenya.

Findings: This study found out that there was a positive influence of testimonial advertising on sports betting among university students in Kenya.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: This study was grounded on elaboration likelihood model (ELM). This model was developed by Petty et al. (1983). The core assumption of the model is that in communication, there are two routes namely; central route and peripheral route (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986). The study thus recommends that proper policies should be enacted to regulate betting advertisements in Kenya. On its contribution to practice, the study calls on the universities to come up with alternative activities that the students can engage in during leisure time to prevent them from sports betting. In addition, policy makers should consider implementing laws to control betting activities in the country. Consequently, the advertisers should remind the public that betting can be additive thus they should bet responsively.

Keywords: *Testimonial, Television, Advertisements, University Students, Betting, Gambling*

©2023 by the Authors. This Article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

INTRODUCTION

Gambling industry which is also known as betting industry has grown rapidly in the recent years. Technological advancements and globalization have largely contributed to the growth of this controversial industry. According to Shaikh, Malik, Akram and Chakrabarti (2015), globalization, the media and technology have reduced the world into a small entity. Technology has thus converted the world into a single market, breaking the geographical barriers in the use of merchandises, notions, technology and innovation. The driving force for betting industry arguably is to make profit. Some, however, argue that most forms of betting firms are meant to provide a negative return to players, that is, a relative benefit to gambling operator (Rickwood, *et. al*, 2010). Gambling, as business, has since become a global phenomenon. A good number of countries around the world are practicing it. Betting activities is not limited to sports only. It ranges from sports betting to internet websites and casinos (Lindridge, Beatty & Northington, 2018).

Traditionally, television is arguably the major means of entertainment and information dissemination in many households, the advertisers have taken this advantage to market their products and services. Advertising industry has thus played a key role in promoting gambling activities. The pervasive nature of advertisements makes information to reach the intended audience within the shortest time possible. As a way of marketing goods and services, advertisers do express a fundamental change in morals, beliefs, behaviour and purchasing patterns of the consumers that influence their lifestyles (Usman, Hussain & Qureshi, 2010). It is majorly through advertisements that consumers get to know a new product or service in the market. Tellis (2004) argues that advertisers often maintain a constant reminder of what to purchase from the time an individual wakes up until the time they go to bed.

Problem Statement

According to Geo-poll (2019), Kenya is reported to have the highest number of youths who participate in betting in Sub-Saharan Africa. The report shows that, football betting has become the most common form of gambling in Kenya. As such, sports betting has become a common activity among the youths in Kenya. Serious concerns have, however, been raised by various policy makers concerning the growth of betting industry in the country. The major concerns have been in relation to the health implications associated with addictive betting and the amount of money and time spent by the unemployed youths in gambling.

While those who participate in betting believe that it is a leisure and a way of getting money, those opposed to it believe that sports betting has a significant side effect. The country has thus experienced cases of students sinking into depression after losing huge amount of money meant for tuition fees on betting. Some have moved to the extent of committing suicide.

As a way of controlling gambling activities, some countries have come up with legislations to caution the youths from engaging in the activity. Hancock, Ralph and Martino (2018) posit that despite the regulations, there has been a widespread concern on the question of the age limits to those who should participate in gambling. Due to lack of proper legislations, Manthorpe, Bramley and Norrie, (2017) argue that when it comes to advertisements, the perpetrators of harm often take advantage of trust they receive from their customers to exploit them in order to make them stick

to betting activities. Like any other company, the advertisers strive to maximize profits, and as such they use different persuasive strategies to convince consumers in order to remain relevant in the market (Hellman, Örnberg & Livingstone (2017). Technological advancements, nevertheless, has led to the production of advanced advertising formats (Hellemans, Lievens & Valcke, 2016). This has led to the use various forms of communication by industrial players in advertising their products and services. Such products or services are often packaged in a manner that is meant to persuade, inform or remind individuals about their products or services (D'Souza & Tay 2016). It is out of these serious concerns that the study sought to fill the knowledge gap between testimonial advertisement and sports betting among university students in Kenya.

Theoretical Review

This study was embedded on Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM). The model was developed by Petty et al. (1983). ELM indicates that there are two routes in communication process. These are; the central route and the peripheral route (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986). In central route the individual who receives the information vigorously processes it before being convinced by the logic behind the arguments. The peripheral route is where the recipient of the information does not expend the cognitive energy to evaluate the arguments, the receiver does not go deep into thoughts but is rather guided more by peripheral cues. These could include attributes such as source credibility, the style and the format of the message and the mood of the receiver (Akpan, Nda & Nketa, 2015).

Central route can be equated to those who analyse advertising messages before making decision on whether to buy the product/service or not. Peripheral route in this study would be those who believe in advertising messages at face value. They are those who do not evaluate arguments. They receive them as presented to them. Petty et al (1986) maintain that when consumers actively process information with a strong argument, they are generally biased toward generating favourable ideas. Consequently, when consumers process messages with a weak argument, they will eventually generate irrational ideas (Chou, Wang, Lai, Tung, Yang & Tsai, 2020). When consumers rationally interpret argument with the focus on the key message (strong argument), they tend to make judgement on the basis of the argument displayed in the message (Chou, Wang, Lai, Tung, Yang & Tsai, 2020).

If individuals view a message as intrinsically interesting or personally relevant, they demonstrate high issue involvement, which to some extent generates the motivation individuals requires to process information through the central route (Browning, Gogo & Kimmel, 2018). An integral part of the model, and a necessary addition to motivation, is a person's ability to comprehend and attend to the message. Ability relates directly to the complexity of arguments presented, which is subjectively determined by the audience (Browning, Gogo & Kimmel, 2018).

Testimonial Advertising

Testimonial advertising involves the use of experts, satisfied consumers or celebrities in advertisements to openly acknowledge the effectiveness of a good product or service. This may depend on the level of experience one has with the product or service. (Akpan, Nda & Nketa, 2015). Yeshin (2006) describes testimonial advertising as a form of marketing where a person speaks on behalf of the brand describing his or her personal experience of using it. Some studies

suggest that the effectiveness of testimonial is derived from informational influence as determined by scopes such as perceived similarity (Brett, Wentzel & Torsten, 2008). Shimp, Wood, and Smarandescu (2005) agree that consumer goods marketers often feature testimonials as the center piece of their advertising or promotions efforts.

According to Brett, Wentzel and Torsten (2008), testimonial insights is built by looking at differences in how prone individuals are to social influence, and how this susceptibility (or lack of it) affects the manner in which they evaluate and process advertisements containing testimonial and product attribute information.

Testimonial Advertisement and Consumer Perception

Reece (2000) posits that testimonials possess three features namely; exact benefits of the products and services, it should come from someone with whom the audience can relate and lastly, it should be credible. As for specific benefits of the products and services, Reece (2000) further stipulates that the goal of a testimonial advertisement is to build confidence in a manner that can convince the consumers to act. Consumers cannot take action if the communication is not clear, rather, they only act if they see a particular benefit of the product or service which is useful to them based on their expectations. Individuals sharing their experience with the product will convince the undecided consumers that the product or service is genuine. Secondly, testimonial should be shared by someone who the consumers can relate with. This could be an expert, a loyal consumer or a well-known individual (celebrity).

Testimonial advertisement provides the consumers with information about the benefits of the product. These may include; the cost benefit, availability in the market, effectiveness of the product and the unique selling point among others. The satisfied consumers will showcase the benefits of the product or service to convince the consumers to purchase it. The genuine testimonial where a satisfied customer attests to the effectiveness of the product (Akpan, Nda & Nketa, 2015).

The concept underlying the testimonial advertising is the fact that the prospective customer will be logically influenced to try a product when it is praise by an individual who is believed to have tried it before. This is not just limited to celebrities, in betting, the advertisers often bring winners to testify about their winning and convince the consumers that winning a bet is real. Akpan, Nda & Nketa, (2015) posits that the logic behind testimonial is that if someone testifies that he has used a product and that the product satisfied them, another person would likely be willing to try the product or service.

Research Gaps

There is limited study on the relationship between television's testimonial advertisement and sports betting activities. This has therefore created a significant knowledge gap about relationship between testimonial advertisements and sports gambling activities. In addition, there is scarcity of literature in this area. This therefore, calls for more studies to be conducted in order to contribute to the body of knowledge. This study thus sought to fill the conceptual gap by providing the strength of relationship between testimonial advertisement and sports betting behaviour among university students in Kenya. The study further sought to fill contextual gap by conducting the study in Kenya. This is because most of the studies in relation to this subject were conducted outside the Kenya thus making it difficult to infer the results in Kenya given the nature of

environment and social economic status of the respondents in Kenya. Further, the study sought to fill the methodological gap by using mixed method design as opposed to using single method as used by the previous studies.

METHODOLOGY

Research Method

This study employed mixed method design. A convergent parallel mixed methods design was used to determine the influence of television's testimonial advertisement on sports gambling behaviour among university students in Kenya. The data collection instruments were questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Descriptive survey strategy and inferential statistics were also used in this study. This study comprised of a population from students of all the four public universities within Nairobi County in Kenya. A sample of 400 respondents was picked from a population of 58,584 students using Yamane equation. This was calculated at a confidence level of 95%, the margin of error (e) was 0.05. Non-probability sampling was used to select the unit from the population. In this case the study employed purposive and snowball sampling. This was because the study was only interested in those who participate or have participated in sports betting. The study was also interested in respondents who had access to television. The data collected using questionnaires were analysed using statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS).

FINDINGS

Testimonial advertisement and Sports Betting

The objective of the study was to determine the influence of television's testimonial advertisement on sports betting among university students in Kenya. The respondents were thus, tasked to rate the level to which they agreed with some statements on testimonial advertisements. The responses were on a scale of 1-5, in the range of strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree respectively.

To start with, the respondents were asked to rate if their desire to gamble was informed by proofs given by the winners on TV advertisements, in this case, an average score of 4.18 was recorded with standard deviation of 1.067. This indicated that a majority of the respondent were in agreement that their desire to gamble was informed by proofs given by the winners on TV advertisements.

To establish the level to which the respondents agreed that brand ambassadors' messages on TV advertisements made them bet the most. The result suggested that a majority of the respondents were in agreement with the statement. This was presented by an average score of 4.14 with standard a deviation of 1.075.

To investigate the level to which respondents agreed or disagreed that their desire to sport betting was as a result of the trust they had on experts, the findings revealed that majority of the respondent were in agreement that their desire to sport betting was as a result of the trust they had on experts. This was supported by a mean score of 4.12 and standard deviation of 1.063.

To measure the level to which respondents agreed or disagreed with the statement that they were concerned about sport betting urge due to testimonials they saw on TV adverts, a mean score of

4.08 and standard deviation of 1.058 was obtained, an indication that the respondents were concerned about sport betting urge due to testimonials they saw on TV adverts.

The study subsequently sought to find out if testimonials given by the winners on TV advertisements made their choice of betting firm stand out from the rest, and the result showed that the respondents were in agreement that testimonials given by the winners on TV advertisements made their choice of betting firm stand out from the rest. This had a mean score of 4.05 with standard deviation of 1.188. Lastly, to confirm the extent to which respondent agreed that winning was real because they had witnessed it from the winners on television adverts, the findings obtained indicated that most of the respondents were in agreement with the statement. A mean score of 4.40 and standard deviation of 1.097 was obtained. The overall mean score for entire indicator variables was 4.164 and standard deviation of 1.091 was recorded demonstrating that the respondent was in agreement with all the items under consideration as far as testimonial advertisement was concerned. There was thus a preliminary indication that there was a relationship between testimonial advertising and sports betting among university students in Kenya. Table 1 shows the summary of the finding.

Table 1: Testimonial Advertisement and Sports Betting

Testimonial advertisement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
My desire to gamble is informed by the proofs given by the winners on TV adverts	4.18	1.067	325
Brand ambassadors' messages on TV adverts makes me bet the most.	4.14	1.075	325
My desire to sports betting is as a result of the trust i have on experts	4.12	1.063	325
I am concerned about sports betting urge due to testimonials I see on TV adverts	4.08	1.058	325
Testimonials given by the winners on Tv adverts make my choice of betting firm stand out from the rest	4.05	1.188	325
Winning is real because i have witnessed it from the winners on TV adverts	4.40	1.097	325
Total	4.164	1.091	325

Testimonial Advertisement Increases Chances of Winning

The respondents were asked to state if they thought testimonial advertising could increase chances of winning among the university students. In this case, a majority at 84.9% said yes while 15.1% said no. This was an indicator that students were generally in agreement with the statement that testimonial advertising could increase chances of winning among the university students.

The respondents who participated in the in-depth interviews were also asked the same question and the justification came in three-fold namely; wining, belief and persuasiveness. The respondents argued that the winners who are shown on television made students participate in betting so that they could win as well. There was also a belief that testimonials advertising made one to believe that betting was real thus they ended up participating in it. The other reason was the persuasive nature of advertisements. The respondents argued that those who had won the bet made the process of winning look very simple while in actual sense it was not. They described testimonial advertising as persuasive citing that this could lead students into addictive betting. In addition, testimonials gave hope to those who wished to bet. Akpan, Nda & Nketa (2015) posit that the notion underlying testimonial advertising is that the target consumer tends to be convinced to use product or service as a result of being praised by another successful consumer. This implies that if someone testifies that they have used the product or benefited from them, then the possibility of another consumer trying the product will be high.

Table 2: Testimonials in Adverts Can Increase Betting Activities among the University Students

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	276	84.9	84.9
No	49	15.1	100.0
Total	325	100.0	

Linearity Test for Testimonial Advertisement

A test of linear relationship between sports betting among the university students in Kenya and Testimonial advertisement was conducted by adopting Pearson moment's correlation coefficients. The results indicated that the variables Sports betting and Testimonial advertisement had a positive relationship as represented by a correlation coefficient of .417**.

Table 3: Testimonial Advertisement Correlations Coefficients

Variable		Sports Betting	Testimonial advertisement
Sports Betting	Pearson Correlation	1	.417**
	P-value (2-tailed)		.000
	N	325	325
Testimonial advertisement	Pearson Correlation	.417**	1
	P-value (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	325	325

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regression Analysis for Testimonial Advertisement and Sports Betting

The study was tested using hypothesis that; testimonial advertisement does not influence sports betting among university students in Kenya. Analysis using Pearson's product moment correlation statistic was applied to test the relationship between the testimonial advertisement and sports betting among the university students in Kenya. As a result, an R-squared value of 0.174 was recorded showing that (17.4%) of sports betting among the university students in Kenya was explained by testimonial advertisement. This therefore was an indication that testimonial among other factors that influenced sports betting activities among university students.

Table 4: Model Summary for Regression Analysis for Testimonial Advertisement and Sports Betting

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.417 ^a	.174	.171	.70981	1.251

The results of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) as shown in Table 5 below also suggest that models fitted to the data were good. This was supported by p-values 0.000 which were less than 0.05 and corresponding F-statistics values of 67.902. Statistically, the findings suggest that there was a relatively strong relationship between testimonial advertisement and Sports betting among the university students in Kenya.

Table 5: ANOVA for Testimonial Advertisement (X)

Model		Sum of Squares	Degree of freedom	Mean Square	F	P-value
	Regression	34.211	1	34.211	67.90	.000 ^b
1	Residual	162.739	323	.504		
	Total	196.950	324			

Based on the regression coefficient table, the model generated was $Y=3.945+0.398X$ demonstrating that in every unit of testimonial advertisement the value of sports betting among the university students in Kenya changes by 0.398. The corresponding p- values was 0.000 which was less than 0.05 significance level as shown on table 6.

The results therefore, showed that there was a positive influence of testimonial advertisement on sports betting among the university students in Kenya. The null hypothesis was thus rejected and the alternative hypothesis adopted. These findings were in line with Okorie and Aderogba (2011) who found out that the efficacy of a message depended on the expertness and trustworthiness of the source, namely the individual giving the testimonial. The main goal of advertising is the persuasive intent by the source; therefore, the winners will showcase the amount of money they have won in relation to the amount of money they have spent on betting.

Table 6: Coefficients for Testimonial Advertisement (X)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P-value
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	3.945	.205		19.253	.000
1	Testimonial advertisement	.398	.048	.417	8.240	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Sports Betting

Summary

To establish the influence of testimonial advertisement on sports betting among the university students in Kenya, a linearity test was conducted by adopting Pearson moment's correlation coefficients and the results shows that the variables sport betting and testimonial advertisement had a positive relationship as indicated by a correlation coefficient of .417^{**}. Analysis using Pearson's product moment correlation statistic to test the relationship between the Testimonial advertisement and sports betting among the university students in Kenya indicated that R-squared value of 0.174 was recorded showing that (17.4%) of sport betting among the university students

in Kenya was explained by Testimonial advertisement. The results of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) also suggested that models fitted to the data were good and this was supported with p-values 0.000 which were less than 0.05 and corresponding F-statistics values of 67.902. Statistically, the findings suggested that there was a positive relationship between Testimonial advertisement and Sports betting among the university students in Kenya.

Conclusion

After the analysis, the study arrived at a conclusion that there was a positive influence of Testimonial advertisement on sports betting among university students in Kenya. The null hypothesis was thus rejected and the alternative hypothesis adopted.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the study came up with the following recommendations;

The government:

1. The government should come up with proper mechanism to regulate betting activities in the country.

The Universities

1. Proper sensitisation programs should be made available in the universities to prevent the students from addictive sports betting.
2. The university should come up with alternative activities that the students can engage in during leisure time to prevent them from sports betting.

Advertising Agencies

1. Advertising agencies should reduce the frequencies for airing betting ads on television.
2. Advertisers should remind the consumers about the dangers associated with betting.

REFERENCES

- Akpan, U. U., Nda, I., & Nkenta, I. P. (2015). Testimonials In Television Advertising and Consumer Patronage of Select Antiseptic Products In Uyo Urban, Akwa Ibom State Of Nigeria. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 3, 8.
- Bramley, S., Norrie, C., & Manthorpe, J. (2018). Gambling-related harms and homelessness: findings from a scoping review. *Housing, Care and Support*, vol 21(1), 26-39.
- Brett A. S. M., Wentzel, D., & Torsten, T. (2008). Effects of Susceptibility to Normative Influence and Type of Testimonial on Attitudes toward Print Advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 37(1), 29-43.
- Browning, N., Gogo, O., & Kimmel, M. (2018). Comprehending CSR messages: applying the elaboration likelihood model. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 23(1), 17-34.
- Chou, F., Wang, C., Lai, M., Tung, C., Yang, Y., & Tsai, K. (2020). Persuasiveness of organic agricultural products Argument strength, health consciousness, self- reference, health risk, and perceived fear. *British Food Journal*. Vol.122 (4), 1289-1304.
- D'Souza, C. & Tay, R. (2016). Advertising implications and design of messages. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*. 34(4), 504-522. doi:10.1108/MIP-03-2015-0069.
- Hancock, L., Ralph, N., & Martino, F. P. (2018). Applying Corporate Political Activity (CPA) analysis to Australian gambling industry submissions against regulation of television sports betting advertising. *Vol. 13(10)*.
- Hellemans, L., Lievens, E., & Valcke, P. (2016). Playing hide-and-see? A legal perspective on the complex distinction between commercial and editorial content in hybrid advertising formats. Emerald Group Publishing Limited. 17(6), 19-34. doi:10.1108/info-05-2015-0026.
- Hellman, M., Örnberg, J. C., & Livingstone, C. (2017). Gambling policy studies: a field that is growing in size and complexity, *Addiction Research & Theory*, vol 25(6), 433-435.
- Lindridge, A., Beatty, S. E., & Northington, M. W. (2018). Do gambling game choices reflect a recreational gambler's motivations? *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, vol. 21(3), 296-315.
- Manthorpe, J., Bramley, S., & Norrie, C. (2017). Gambling and adult safeguarding: connections and evidence, 19(6), 333-344. doi:10.1108/JAP-03-2017-0014.
- Okorie, N., & Aderogba, A. (2011). The Role of Celebrity Advertising on Brand Patronage. *International journal of research in computer application and management* 1(1), 27-34.
- Petty, R. E., Cacioppo, J. T., & Schumann, D. (1986). Central and Peripheral Route to Advertising Effectiveness, the Moderating Role of Involvement. *Journal of consumer Research*, 10, 34-46.

- Rickwood, D., Blaszczynski, A., Delfabbro, P., & Dowling, K. H. (2010). The Psychology of Gambling; *APS final review paper*.
- Reece, T. (2000). Using Testimonials to Increase Sales. Retrieved from <http://www.sitepoint.com/article/testimonials-increase-sales> on 21st June, 2020.
- Shaikh, S., Malik, A., Akram, M. S., & Chakrabarti, R. (2015). Do luxury brands successfully entice consumers? The role of bandwagon effect. Retrieved from: www.emeraldinsight.com/0265-1335.htm.
- Shimp, T. A., Wood, S. & Smarandescu, L. (2005). Consumer Testimonials as Self-Generated Advertisements: Evaluative Reconstruction Following Product Usage. *MSI Reports*, 2(05-109), 91-113.
- Tellis, J. G. (2004). *Effective Advertising: Understanding When, How and Why Advertising Works*. London: Sage Publications.
- Usman, M., Ilyas, S., Hussain, M. F., & Qureshi, T. M. (2010). General attitude towards advertising: cultural influence in Pakistan. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 2(2), 124-34.
- Wang, C., Chen, Y., Nie, P., & Wang, X., H. (2020). Effects of celebrity endorsement on firms' competition: from industrial organisation perspective, *Economic Research-Ekonomska Istraživanja*, 32(1), 3230-3252. doi:10.1080/1331677X.2019.1661002.
- Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistics. An Introductory analysis (2nd.ed.)*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Yeshin, T. (2006). *Advertising*. London: Thomson Publishers.