

# INFLUENCE OF FOREIGN FOOTBALL LEAGUE MATCHES ON ONLINE GAME BETTING IN OBIARUKU DELTA STATE

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## Abstract

The study investigated the influence of foreign football league matches on online game betting in Delta State. The people of Obiaruku were used as the study area. The play theory proposed by William Stephen was adopted as a theoretical framework. The survey research method, multistage and purposive sampling techniques were used to sample the opinions of 381 respondents using Krejcie and Morgan table for sample size determination in Delta State. The study objective was to find out the influence of foreign football league matches on online game betting. The result showed that, foreign football matches influences respondents online game betting. The findings also revealed that the respondents are exposed to foreign league matches. The findings further revealed that majority of the respondents, 310 (81%), agree that support for team, to win money and unemployment are the reasons why people place bets on matches. In view of the above findings, the researcher recommended amongst others that the government should create employment opportunities to enable individuals have a better means of income and enforce legislation to ban people under 18 years of age (underage bettors) from game betting. This will help to tilt the mind of underage into more productive and resourceful areas of life.

**Keywords:** Influence, Foreign football, league, online, game betting.

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## Introduction

The advancement in technological use has created a wide space wherein people of different social setting converge for a common purpose without necessarily occupying the same space or seeing one another. Marshall McLuhan predicted the coming of the global village, perhaps few people ever thought of the realization of the prediction and the extent of its impact on the world (Baran and David 2004). The scholars are of the view that major changes in human society would occur with the emergence of information and communication technology. These plenty opportunities provided by the emergence of information and communication technology has engulf many areas of our life (Obe, Odetoyinbo, Alegbe and Dokunmu 2005) they posits that, ICTS have become a way of life, affects how and where man does everything, live, work, play, socialize, entertain, serve, study, rest, heal, and protect. The World Wide Web (www), satellite communication, the internet etc are among the visible technologies that have change the way we conduct our

activities. Ulmonen in Ayankojo (2001) opines that “if there was a medium that fulfilled our rights to express ourselves absolutely, it would have to be the internet. Continuing he says, “No other medium allows information to flow so freely, no other medium required so few resources to reach out to so many of recent, information and communication technology championed by the internet has changed the face of human existence”. The concept of globalization is as result of the presence of these information and communication technologies (ICTs) which enable global communication and activities to be possible. In the view of Izowogu, Nwosu, and Soola (2006) “globalization and information communication technology are two sides of the same coin, to them, each of the two concepts cannot be discussed in isolation of the other”. These two have changed the way people interact; conduct their affairs all over the world.

Nationality, patriotism, one Nigerian, these are concepts that have found genuine expression in one area of sports especially in the round leather game

called football.” Nigerians, the youths, the aged men and women, etc demonstrates a sense of oneness, passion, fun etc whenever the game of soccer is played by the clubs at the domestic league or by the other national teams, the golden eaglets, the dream team the super falcons or the super eagles of Nigeria. It is not out of place to say that no other sport has touched the heart and soul of Nigerians as football.

What this meant therefore is that football is most popular game in the world and is a meeting point for Nigerians to showcase their love for one another and their nation in general. The era between the 1970s and toward the end of the 1990s the domestic league and the national challenge cup competition created so much excitement, fun, and followership among football fans in the country. This era paraded clubs like, New Nigerian bank football club of Benin (NNB) captained by late Stephen Okechkwuku Keshi, and his colleagues, Henry Nwosu (M.O.N), Bright Omokara (Aka) 10, 10, Humphrey Odobor, etc, also making waves then was Bendel insurance football club also of Benin. Rangers international of Enugu, where the likes of Christian Chukwu (chairman) Alysious Atuegbu, Sylvanus Okpala among others held sway, Abiola babes of Abeokuta, Raccah Rovers of calabar, Stationary stores football clubs of Lagos, Spartans of Owerri, IICC shooting stars of Ibadan where the likes of Shegun Odegbami, Mudal Lawal, Felix Owolabi, held sway in the world of Nigeria domestic league soccer. These clubs and others made the Nigerians league competitive, exciting, and gave room for the youths to express their delight for the round leather game by trooping to the stadium to cheer their teams whenever there was football match. “However, by the turn of 1990s and the popularity of internet and emergence of globalization, the interest of Nigerian youths in the local football began to wane while satellite and cable television through the internet technology and digitalization brought football from other lands to Nigeria homes.” (Adeyemi, and Kola, 2017). The most prominent among the foreign leagues that graces the Nigerian screen are English premiership which is first on the list and had made the likes of Kanu Nwankwo (Aka) Papilo, Austin, Jay Jay, Okocha, Mikel Obi, Victor Moses, Osaze Odewinge amongst others household names in Nigeria. Other leagues are the Spanish Laliga, the German Bundesliga, the Italian Seria A, the French league I etc. another reason why the youth's interest in Nigerian football went down was because of the administrative lapse that gave room for many fights in the stadium during matches especially when visiting team win, plus fans attack on referees when certain decision did not go their way.

These issues with others made the game unappealing to the Nigerian youths. The youth's exposure to foreign football league due to internet technology as earlier observed, the beauty of foreign league, the exploits of our youths like, Kanu Kwankwo,

Austin, Jay Jay Okocha, Victor Ikpeba (Prince of Monaco) late Stephen Okechkwuku Keshi, Finidi George, Sunday Olise, Rashidi Yekini, Mikel Obi, Victor Moses, Ahmed Musa, Vincent Enyeama, Alex Iwobi and recently Victor Osimeh the past African footballer of the year. Another viable reason, canvassed for the followership of the foreign league by the Nigerian youths is that the sport apart from just having fun and excitement, one can place a wager on a game and win some money to enhance living condition. It is in this last regard that the study examines the influence of foreign league matches on online game betting among people in Obiaruku Delta State, Nigeria.

### **The Study Objectives**

The study objectives of this work are as follows:

1. To ascertain the respondents extent of exposure to foreign football league matches.
2. To ascertain the respondents' major source of watching foreign football league matches.
3. To determine whether foreign football league matches influence online game betting

### **Theoretical Framework**

In order to provide a solid foundation for this research work, it hinged on the play theory of mass communication. The play theory was proposed by William Stephen in 1967. The basic point of the theory is that people use mass communication more as play than work, more for pleasure and entertainment than for information and improvement. The play theory therefore implies people watch television; listen to radio, read newspapers or magazines for pleasure and entertainment than for work and information needs. Stephen posits that there are two situations in life, which are the play and the work situation. In the view of Anaeto, Onabanjo & Osifeso (2008) the play situation involves pleasure, relaxation, entertainment and self-development; improvement and productivity”. It means that the idea is used more for play than work “William Stephenson's play theory of mass communication is relevant to media studies that deals with the use of the media as channels of entertainment by the audience.”

The play theory of mass communication will help in this study to explain how the people of Obiaruku in Delta State uses mass media offering foreign football matches both for entertainment and for work i.e. economic purpose. This in effect explains how the respondents integrated the pleasure aspect of football matches effectively with the ability to derive income from the same offering simultaneously.

### **The Concept of Football**

The game of football is one of the most popular sports in the world. It is associated with important monetary transactions and financial sponsoring

(Maher Wilson, Signal Thomson 2006). Football, also known as soccer, is a game played by two opposing teams with eleven (11) players each on the field of play. The game is managed by a centre referee who has two lines men each running and overseeing proceedings at each side of the field as the game is played and also help to draw the attention of the centre referee to offence play like fouls, offside, penalty etc.

The game is played for ninety minutes and an extra time of three, four, five minutes etc. is deemed fit by the referee. Football is one of the most popular sports of today with many fans who derived different forms of benefits from the round leather game. Hence in the view of Omobowale (2009) "sports are usually aimed at entertainment and leisure, but their meaning varies among different cultures". In the same vein, Tade (2014) posits that football serve both social and therapeutic purposes across social contexts, including male and female relations in the context of home." The above gives an indication which suggests that sports, for instance football, have diverse appeal and is multi-contextual in purposes and manifestations (Armstrong and Liulianotti 2004). Football as at today presents another kind of cult followership such that the fan base permeates most age grade in Nigeria. Satellite and digitalization of television is the major driving force that has made football available to the people even in the remotest parts of the world, thus making the fan base wider (Cooky, 2005; Anderson, 2007). Just the same way the names and knowledge of foreign football clubs, foreign football league, foreign football players, stars, coaches match fixtures etc permeates the homes of football loving Nigerians.

Hence it is not surprising to find that in a home where football is loved and followed, you might find that everyone in such a home has their various clubs of interest where their support and loyalty is pledged. Most of the football fans may know quite a little about the Nigerian professional football league (NPFL), the clubs, the players, stars, coaches, match fixture etc. but it is not so with the foreign football league, top on the list of leagues are English premier league (EPL) Spanish Laliga, Italian Seria A, German Bundesliga, France League I.

The most widely supported clubs, in order of the number of fan base, are Manchester United, Chelsea, Arsenal, Barcelona, Real Madrid and Liverpool (Olayinka and Fageyinbo, 2015). As observed earlier, while the fan base of local clubs like Enugu Rangers, Elkanemi Warriors, Shooting Stars, Enyimba football club, Kano Pillars, Plateau United etc are going down gradually, the foreign clubs' fan base increases by the day. Majority of football fans in Nigeria are fans of foreign European football leagues, (Olayinka, and Kolade, 2015). This growing popularity of foreign clubs among Nigerians is as a result of the introduction of digital satellite television D.S.T.V, Euro sport, and other

sport channels on the platform of cable and satellite technology in Nigeria (Ifeduba, 2011). As noted above, most football fans in Nigeria are followers of foreign clubs through which football betting takes place all over our cities and towns where football fans are domiciled. Football as it were promoting different appeal, from entertainment, fun, excitement and now the idea of having all the above and little earnings from wagers on football games to support the income of football fans (Armstrong and Galiansti 2004). This later motive is perhaps the reason for the practice of football or soccer betting. Viewing centre are now established where foreign football enthusiast and fans watch foreign league matches. Presently these viewing centres are at every major city and town in the country. This phenomenon has continued to grow in leap and bounds and the fans continue to patronize them (Ezea, 2017).

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

The game of football is also known as soccer in this study. Football commands large followership to the extent it now has a cult status. Football provides fun, excitement, entertainment, leisure, and relaxation for the individuals who decide which area of life he/she wants to satisfy.

Football betting is another item now in the offering for football fans in Nigeria. It is gambling redefined and repackaged to reach people of all walks of life. In a report by News Agency of Nigeria (NAN, 2015), about 60 million Nigerians between the ages of 18 and 40 years may be spending up to N1.8 billion on sports betting daily. The reports further went on to say that "the age group invests an average of N3,000,000.00 on sports sweepstake daily." Today, football betting is so popular in Nigeria that tax is paid by operators, and the activities are regulated by (National Sport Policy of Nigeria, 2009).

The high rate of unemployment in Nigeria has been responsible for the wide spread of sports betting in Nigeria, with so many youths pouring their money into it to get returns on investment. Continuing the paper reports, "it is a two-way thing, others may have lost out but a lot of them have made huge cash and it has put food on the tables of many as well". (NL, talkative, 2016). Sport betting is not only a question of chance, but far from it. "To place your bet efficiently, you must learn about football as a sport and follow a minimum of its championships". (Khazaol, Charton, Cochand, jenman, Oslek, Bondoff and Zullinc, 2008). The relation between gamblers' skills and betting outcomes has been rarely studied. Studies that evaluated gambling skills rather than the role of expertise in sports for betting activities showed that monetary gains from gambling skills were not significantly higher than would have occurred by chance (Ladoeceur, Giraoux, Jacques 1998).

Bettors place their bets or wagers before matches are played and in some instance during matches before the games are over. A win or loss is determined by the outcome of the result and how the bettors place either for a win, draw or lose of any of the team wherein their support lies as a fan or as a bettor. Generally, against all the football betting platforms online and offline, the odds offered by bookmakers are based on probability assessments or forecasts on matches which attract a wide support of the fan base. (Siwer xu 2011). Football fans place their bets or wagers online using internet facilities such as laptops, Smartphones etc. that are internet connected. Generally, online gambling is a fast-growing business with an estimated annual growth rate of 12% according to global betting and gambling consultants (2011). The rise of these gambles is becoming so obvious via the way the media now advertise betting. One of the catchy messages being used to attract the attention of young people to Gambling is “how to become a bill gates' in a day” (Abitat 2015). In the same vein “as football becomes popular and generates huge interest in Nigeria, Capitalists have developed huge economic interest and built business around it.” (Olayinka and fageyinbo, 2015).

These foreign leagues and clubs present beautiful football competitions that have become so infectious to Nigeria people. To the extent that its activities are on a daily routine as those who place bets or wagers flock around bet stations to either place new bets, improved on previous by increasing their wager or by redirecting the focus of a new wager so that either way they can recoup their investment. Dotu, (2015) says “sport betting may be risky but is also rewarding. Continuing he says “Nigerians place bets on different matches daily across the country and most unemployed youths have taken to betting in order to make a living”. Meanwhile as the fan base and activities expands, viewing centres, betting stations are also on the increase to compliment and fast track the whole process. This expansion of the fan base which has increase football betting is also propelled by technological improvements as Cooky, (2005), puts it “satellite and digitalization of television is the major driving force that has made football available to the people even in the remotest parts of the world, thus making the fan base wider.” Advanced technology has turned betting into 24-hours a day, 7-days a week, and national pastime for many fans” (Akhidenor, 2017)

**Method**

The population of study constitutes the betters in Obiaruku which are about fifty-five thousand (55,000) wagers. This figure is from bet stations domiciled in different streets of Obiaruku the Local Government headquarters of Ukwuani. The survey research method, multi-stage and purposive sampling

techniques were used to sample the opinion of 381 respondents using Krejice and Morgan table for sample size determination. The bet stations are Merry bet which has the highest bet station of Ninety-Five (95) in Obiaruku, closely followed by Bet 9ja with seventy (70) bet stations, while Bet King has fifty (50) bet stations, Bet colony has forty (40) bet stations and Sure-bet has twenty (20) bet stations respectively making a total of Two hundred and seventy-five thousand (275) bet stations.

Merry Bet	95
Bet 9ja	70
Bet King	50
Bet Colony	40
Sure Bet	20
<b>Total:</b>	<b>275</b>

*Source: Head Office Merry bet leading bet station in Obiaruku*

The best stations have an average of about 200 people, this will give a figure of 55,000 which is the total population of study. The Krejice and Morgan table for sample size determination was used to determine the sample studied which is 381. The table agrees that a population of 55,000 and above should present a sample size of 381 as deem fit for the study, while the purposive sampling technique was used to select the bet stations where questionnaires were distributed to the respondents (bettors).

**Data Presentation and Analysis**

The study objectives were used as guidelines in analyzing data collected for the research. Of the three hundred and eighty-one (381) copies of questionnaires distributed, one (1) was found invalid. Hence, only three hundred and eighty (380) copies of the questionnaires were properly filled and returned safe. This gives a response rate of 99% which is seen as very good. The raw data gathered for the study were manually counted and presented in a table of simple frequency distribution and analysis.

**Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents**

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents		
Items	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	345	90
Female	35	10
Total	380	100
<b>Age</b>		
14-20years	70	18
21-30years	190	50
31-40	80	21
41 above	40	11
Total	380	100

Education		
FSLC/SSCE	65	17
ND/NCE	185	49
HND/BSC	100	26
MSC/Above	30	8
Total	380	100
Occupation		
Self employed	190	50
Civil servant	60	16
Private sector	30	8
Unemployed	100	26
Total	380	100
Marital Status		
Single	195	51
Married	155	41
Divorced	30	08
Widow	-	-
Widower	-	-
Total	380	100

Source: Field Survey: 2025

The data in the demographic table above shows that out of the 380 respondents, 345 were males representing 90% while 35 were females representing 10%. The table also shows that 190 representing (50%) were within the age bracket of 21-30 years are in the majority, this is followed by 80 respondents representing 21% who were within the age bracket of 31-40 years. This is followed by 70 respondents (18%) who were within the age of 14-20 years and 40 respondents (11%) who were within the age bracket of 41 years above. The table also shows the education status of respondents, as 185 (49%) are ND/NCE holders who were in majority followed by 100 respondents (26%) who were HND/BSC holders, while 65 respondents (17%) are FSLC/SSCE holders in the same vein 30 respondents (8%) were holders of MSC and above degree respectively.

The table also shows the occupation of respondents with 190 (50%) who were self-employed while 100 respondents (26%) who were unemployed followed by 60 respondents (16%) who were civil servants while 30 respondents (8%) who were private sector employed respectively.

The table also indicates the marital status of respondents as 195 (51%) were single, while 155 (41%) were married, in the same vein 30 respondents (8%) who were divorced.

Table 2: an assessment of the respondents' extent of exposure to foreign football league matches.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Very high	230	60
High	100	26
Undecided	15	4
Very low	15	4
Low	20	6
Total	380	100

Source: field survey 2025.

Analysis of the data above shows that two hundred and thirty (230) respondents, representing 60%, were very highly exposed to foreign football league matches. In the same vein, hundred (100) respondents representing 26% were highly exposed to foreign football league matches. Moreso, 15 respondents representing 4% were undecided on their extent of exposure, while 15 respondents representing 4% were having very low exposure, in the same vein 20 respondents representing 6% were having low exposure. From the analysis above, it becomes safe to say that the majority of two hundred and thirty (230) respondents representing 60% were very highly exposed to foreign football league matches.

Table 3: An assessment of respondents' foreign league matches years of awareness

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
10 years - above	30	8
5 years above	190	50
3 years above	100	26
Can't say	60	16
Total	380	100

Source: Field survey 2025.

The data above shows that one hundred and ninety (190) respondents representing 50% have knowledge of foreign football league matches over the past five years, while 100 respondents representing 26% have knowledge of foreign football over the past (3) years. Similarly, thirty (30) respondents, representing 8% say they have over ten (10) years' knowledge of foreign football league matches. While sixty (60) respondents, representing 16% can't say. This means that the majority (50%) are aware of foreign football league matches for over five years.

Table 4: Responses on the medium where foreign matches were watched by respondents

Responses	Frequency	Percentages
Viewing center	200	52
Home	80	22
Friends place	30	7.5
Neighbours' house	40	11
Handset	30	7.5
Total	380	100

Source: field survey 2025

Table 4 shows the responses on the medium where foreign matches are watched. Out of the 380 respondents, two hundred (200) representing 52% ticked viewing center, while eighty respondents (80) representing (22%) ticked at home. This is followed by forty respondents (40) representing (11%) who ticked neighbours house and thirty respondents (30) representing 7.5% who ticked friends place while another 30 respondent representing 7.5% ticked

handset respectively. The analysis above showed that majority of the respondents (200) watched foreign matches at viewing center.

Table 5: Response on reasons for watching foreign football league matches.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Entertainment	30	8
Love of the game	80	21
For betting purpose	40	11
All of the above	230	60
Total	380	100

Source: field survey 2025.

The data on the above shows that out of 380 respondents, 230 representing 60% ticked all of the above, while 80 respondents representing 21% ticked love of the game, in the same vein, 40 respondents representing 8% ticket entertainment. The data above showed that the respondents who watched the game for all of the reasons above are in majority with 230 of them representing 60%.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Beauty of the game	100	26
Business opportunity	70	19
Administration	25	06
All of the above	185	49
Total	380	100

Source: field survey 2025.

The data above shows that out of 380 respondents, 185 representing 49% ticked all of the above, while 100 respondents, representing 26% ticked beauty of the game. Similarly, 70 respondents, representing 19% ticked business opportunity, while 25 respondents, representing 06% ticked administration. Therefore, the data showed that the respondents who are attracted to foreign football by all of the above are in majority 185 representing 49%

Table 7: Responses on whether foreign football league matches influence respondents game betting?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	380	100
No	Nil	-
Can't say	Nil	-
Total	380	100

Source: field survey 2025

In the above table, all the 380 respondents representing 100% agreed that foreign league matches influence game betting. This therefore means that foreign league matches influence the people to place bet on games.

Table 8: Response on reasons for placing bets on matches

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Support for team	15	04
To win money	10	03
Unemployment	45	12
All of the above	310	81
Total	380	100

Source: field survey 2025.

The data on the above shows that out of 380 respondents, 310 representing 81%, ticked all of the above. While 15 respondents representing 0.4% ticked, support for team. In the same vein, 10 respondents representing 03% ticked to win money while 45 respondents representing 12% ticked unemployment. This therefore means that majority of the respondents placed bets on matches because of all of the above respectively.

Table 9: Response on winning through experience

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	100	26
No	200	52
Can't say	80	22
Total	380	100

Source: Field survey 2025

The data above shows that one hundred respondents representing 26% said yes, that winning comes through experience, while two hundred respondents, representing 52% said no that winning does not come through experience but by chance. While eighty respondents representing 22% cannot say whether winning is by experience or by chance. Those who said no are in the majority two hundred respondents representing 52%.

Table 10: Response on whether people are making a living through betting

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	290	75
No	80	22
Can't say	10	03
Total	380	100

Source: Field survey 2025

The above shows that two hundred and ninety respondents representing (75%) agreed that people are making a living through betting while eighty respondents representing 22% said no. in the same vein, ten respondents representing (3%) said they can't say. The majority (75%) said yes.

Table 11: Response on methods for placing bets on online games

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Laptops	70	19
Smartphones	95	25
Bet stations	190	50
Viewing centres	25	06
Total	380	100

Source: Field survey 2025

The data in the above table shows that one hundred and ninety (190) respondents representing 50% went to bet stations to wager. While ninety-five (95) respondents represent 25% wager on their smartphones. In the same vein, seventy (70) respondents representing 19% wager on their laptops while twenty-five (25) respondents representing 06% go to viewing centres to wager.

Table 12: Response on how foreign football matches influenced respondents into online game betting

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Through advertising on Tv & Radio	90	24
Through football popularity	30	08
Through watching matches at viewing centres	60	16
Through fellow bettors	200	52
Total	380	100

Source: Field survey 2025

The data shows that ninety (90) respondents representing 24% were influenced by online foreign league match betting through advertising heard via radio and television while thirty (30) respondents representing 8% were influenced via the popularity of football. Meanwhile sixty (60) respondents representing 16% were influenced via watching foreign league matches at viewing centres. The majority of respondents, two hundred (200) representing 52%, were influenced by their fellow bettors who have been indulging in the betting business over a period of time.

Table 13: Response on how often bettors' wager

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	220	56
Weekly	100	26
Bi-Weekly	40	12
Monthly	20	06
Total	380	100

Source: Field survey 2025

Table 13 reveals how often foreign league matches influences bettors toward online game betting with two hundred and twenty respondents (220) representing 56% agrees that they wager on a daily basis, while one hundred respondents (100) representing 26% says that they wager weekly. In the same vein forty (40) respondents representing 12% agrees that they wager Bi-Weekly i.e. every two weeks, while twenty (20)

respondents representing (6%) says that they are influenced to place wager monthly.

### Result and Discussion of Findings

Findings in Table 1, discusses the age of bettors and shows that children of between ages of 14 -20 are involved in online game betting. This is affirmed by News Agency of Nigeria (NAN, 2015) which reported that “about sixty million Nigerians between the ages of 18-40 years may be spending up to 1.8 billion Naira on sports betting daily. This is quite disturbing, the implication is that apart from the presence of underage bettors, if such huge funds are invested in more productive ventures could become more beneficial to them and the society in the nearest future. The table also gives an insight into those influenced by foreign football league matches into involving in game betting. The table shows clearly that game betting is not gender biased, which means that both males and females are involved in the act this is supported by Tade (2014) who says that “Football serves both social and therapeutic purposes across social contexts, including male and female relations in the context of Home”. The table reveals commendable women participation in online game betting this is another disturbing trend apart from underage bettors that should draw the attention of well-meaning Nigerians. Women who are supposed to be home builders as acclaimed globally have become home gamblers. It won't be surprising that some of them could be using the monthly house keep money for online game betting an act that negates the principle of good housekeeping and the features of a good housewife and mother.

The findings shows that foreign league matches actually influences the people to place wager on games while entertaining them simultaneously this is seen in table 7. Adeyemi and Kola (2017) observes that “by the turn of 1990s and the popularity of internet and emergence of globalization, the interest of Nigeria youths in local football began to wane, while satellite and cable television through internet technology and digitalization brought football from other lands to Nigeria Homes”. Hence some scholars affirms that other viable reason muted for the followership of foreign football league by the Nigerian youths is that apart from just following the sport for the fun and excitement it presents to them, they can also place bets on games and win some money to enhance their income and better their living conditions.

This is quite evident in the higher number of respondents who answered in the affirmative 380 representing 100%. Since all the respondents agreed that foreign league matches encourage football betting. The findings tally with that of Olayinka and Kolade (2015) who found that majority of football fans in Nigeria are fans of foreign football league and

football betting in Nigeria is consequently organized around major European leagues.

Findings further shows that viewing centers are the major places where foreign football matches are been watched. This is seen in table 4 the above implies that, majority of respondents stays out of their homes creating a disconnect with the family to watch foreign football league at the viewing centers (52%). This is in agreement with the view of Ezea, (2017) which says, "then came the establishment of viewing centers where foreign football enthusiasts and fans converge to watch foreign league matches, today these viewing centers are now at every nook and cranny of major cities and towns in the country, this phenomenon has continued to grow in leap and bounds as the fans continue to patronize them." More so, the table provides a significant relationship between the medium where foreign football matches were watched by respondents and technological advancement in communication. Viewing centers are said to be the places where majority of the respondents watched foreign football league matches. This is affirmed by Cooky (2005) when he said "satellite and digitalization of television is the major driving force that has made football available to the people even in the remotest part of the world, thus making the fan base wider".

More so, the findings showed that the respondents are exposed to foreign football league matches. This is clear in table 2 where majority of the respondents agreed on the extent of their exposure, that they are exposed to foreign football matches 60%. This means that foreign football matches are available for the respondents. Cooky (2004) and Aderson (2007) "affirms that satellite and digitalization of television is the major driving force that has made foreign football available to the people even in the remotest part of the world, thus making the fan base wider." The findings in table 3 is also supported by the above when 190 respondents (50%) agrees that they have over five years foreign league matches awareness, which might as well translate to over five years betting experience.

Findings show reasons for placing wagers on matches, the majority of respondent 81% choose all of the above. The reasons as shown in Table 8 are support for team, to win money and unemployment's this is in line with NL, Talkative, (2016) that writes "the high rate of unemployment in Nigeria has been responsible for the wide spread of sports betting in Nigeria, with so many youths pouring their money into it to get return on investment. Continuing the paper reports "it is a two-way thing others may have lost out but a lot of them have made huge cash and it has put food on the table of many as well". The implication here is that unemployment may have create room for people to indulge in dangerous habits such as online game betting which can be seen as gambling a habit that can result in unstable lifestyle and poverty.

Furthermore, the findings on table 5 shows reasons for watching foreign football matches, the majority, 230% representing 60%, choose all the above which include entertainment, love of the game for betting purpose. This result aligned with our study theory, played by William Steven, which posits that people rely on media offering for play i.e. entertainment to relief boredom as well as economic purpose. Findings also show that the beauty of the game, business opportunity as well as good administration are the major appeals of the game, this can be seen in table 6 where a majority of 185 respondents (49%) agrees on all of the above. This is supported by Armstrong and Liulianotti; (2004) when they said football has diverse appeals and is multi-contextual in purpose and manifestations.

Moreover, the finding also shows that football watching experience and skills do not influence bet winnings. This is seen in table 9 where majority of the respondents said no, that watching experience skills do not influence bet winning 52%. This also agrees with the study of Ladouceur, Giroux and Jacques (1998) that says "the relation between gamblers' skills and betting outcomes has been rarely studied. Studies that evaluated gambling skills rather than gambling experience were not significantly higher than would have occurred by chance."

Disagreeing with the above assertion is the study put forward by Khazool, Chalton, Cochand, Jermann, Oslek, Bondaff, and Zullinc, (2008) on the quality of Web-based information on pathological gambling" the study observes that sport is not only a question of chance, far from it. To place your bet efficiently you must learn about football as a sport and follow a minimum of its championship". This in essence means that even though as earlier agreed that chance is what results in bets winning, experience, skills in watching also counts in the betting process which result in wins.

Finding further shows that people are making a living through football betting in Nigeria. This is evident in table 10 where majority of the respondents, 290, representing 75%, agree that people are making a living through football, 76%. The implication of this is that unemployment has led people into football betting which now serve as a source of alternative income to enable them eke a living. The above affirms the work of Dotu, (2015) which says, "sports betting may be risky, but it is also rewarding, continuing he says "Nigerians" place bets on different matches daily across the country, most unemployed youths have taken to betting in order to make a living". Findings on table 11 captures explicitly methods used by bettors to place their wagers online, which are laptops, smartphones as well as bet stations which are where majority of bettors 190 representing 50% uses. Literature supports the above when Siwer Xu (2011)



affirms that “football fans place their bet or wagers online using internet facilities such as laptops, smartphones etc”. The implication here is that gambling has become so demystify that respondents gamble directly from the comfort of their living homes.

Table 12 reveals succinctly how foreign football matches influenced respondents into online game betting, majority 200 respondents, representing 52% say that fellow bettors are responsible for their indulgence in online game betting while 90 respondents representing 24% says they were influenced through messages on radio and television advertisement. This is captured in our literature when Abitat (2015) affirms that “the rise of these gambling is becoming so obvious the way the media now advertise betting, one of the catchy messages being used to attract the attention of young people into gambling is, “how to become a Bill Gate in a day” the above aligns with global opinion on how media messages permeates the minds of the people and influences them either positively or negatively. Again, Olayinka and Fageyinbo (2015) also supports the influence football’s popularity has on game betting when they said, “as football becomes popular and generates huge interest in Nigeria, Capitalist have developed huge economic interest and built business around it”. These business manifest in the form of football betting (gambling) which has also berth other business-like viewing centers, drinking parlors etc.

Table 13 shows how often bettors wagers are, with a majority of 220 respondents representing 56% agrees to placing wagers on a daily basis while 100 respondents representing 26% wagers weekly. Literature on the subject suggests that “Nigerians place bets on different matches daily across the country (Dotu, 2015). This is also affirmed by News Agency of Nigeria (NAN, 2015) which reports that “about 60 million Nigerians between the ages of 18-40 may be spending up to 18 billion Naira on sports betting daily”. The report went further to say that “the age group invest and average of N3,000,000,00 on sports sweepstake daily” findings contribute insights into foreign football league matches viz-a-viz it's influence on online game betting in Obiaruku Delta State, aligning with existing literatures.

## **Conclusion**

Support for teams, to win money and unemployment are seen as reasons why bettors' place wagers on matchers. More so, match watching, experience, skills and expertise do not significantly result to winning bets even though they may assist in the betting process and the activities that result in bettors forecast directions. Therefore, the rate of unemployment among the working age group coupled with the fact that people can make a living out of placing bets on matches are reasons why bettors

engage in betting and betting activities. These assertions are supported by existing literature on the subject matter which enables the study to put forth the following recommendations.

## **Recommendations**

1. Government should create employment opportunities for people to have a better means of income.
2. Government should pass legislation against underage betting and impose a fine of five years imprisonment or as deem fit on bet stations that does not obey the law.
3. Government should impose income tax on bet winnings of up to 40%, This will have a way of discouraging bettors as it will seem that they are working for government who has no investment to lose if the wager fails.
4. A second category of tax should be imposed by the government called bettors tax, on all stakes i.e win or loss. All bettors should pay 30% of his stake to the government, this will serve as a deterrent to bettors.
5. Government should enforce these laws by sending disguised agents to visit bet stations who may pretend as bettors from there apprehend those bet stations that still accommodate underage bettors and the underage bettors who still flout the law.

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