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# INFLUENCE OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS ON STUDENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN SPORTS BETTING: A CASE OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MUMIAS-EAST SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

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## ABSTRACT

Effective curriculum delivery can be impeded in an environment where other factors such as sports betting also compete for the learner's attention. This quantitative study was conducted with the aim of examining the effects of students' involvement in sports betting on learning process among secondary schools in Mumias-East Sub-County, Kenya. Based on the study, this paper presents and discusses the findings on the influence of demographic factors on students' involvement in sports betting. The study adopted a causal-comparative design, with respondents comprising of 369 students who were obtained by stratified random sampling technique. Data were collected using a questionnaire. Descriptive statistics used in analysis included frequencies, means and percentages. Chi Square was used to test hypotheses at  $\alpha = 0.05$ . The study established that; there was a relationship between gender and sports betting; there was a relationship between a student's class level and sports betting; there was a relationship between a student's age and sports betting; there was no relationship between socio-economic status and sports betting; and finally, there was no relationship between school location and sports betting. The study thus concluded that gender, age and student's class have influence on sports betting involvement, while socio-economic status and school location do not. The study recommended review of gambling regulations and legislation to include laws that prohibit school-going students from betting in spite of age; that enforcement of gambling legislation that bars the under aged from betting should be strengthened; that intervention measures should be put in place by schools and society to help the boy-child, who is more engrossed in betting than the female counterpart.

**Keywords:** Demographic Factors, Influence, Sports Betting, Secondary Schools

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Betting is a form of gambling. Productivity Commission (2010) explained that gambling is a broader concept that includes diverse commercial activities such as lotteries, slot machines, racing, sport betting and casino games. All these involve staking of money or property on an activity whose outcome is purely based on chance. Sports betting is the prediction of outcomes of sporting events, and placing of a financial stake on the probabilistic result (Palmer, 2013). In Kenya, betting is not illegal. It is however put in check by a

board in charge of licensing and control of betting. Laws regulating this industry in Kenya were promulgated in 1966 when betting was introduced. According to Betting Act 131, the age of participants was restricted to above 18 years, betting in public areas became illegal, and tax was to be levied on betting companies (The Republic of Kenya, 1966). This Act has been, however, almost obsolete having been ratified at a time prior to the era of internet technology and mobile phones. In 2017, it was revised. It however still had conspicuous lapses and loopholes, which are responsible for the current challenges being faced within the industry and its entire scope of impact (Mwadime, 2017). As opined by Yawe and Ssengooba (2014) most countries in Africa lack an adequate regulation and legislation that can protect those who are vulnerable and underage, ensuring fairness in the games, addressing matters of legal enforcement, and providing restrictions plus systems to prevent laundering of money. The prevalence reports of betting in Kenya are worrying. GeoPoll (2017) conducted a rapid survey involving young people aged between 17 years to 35 years in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, South Africa and Uganda. Kenya was found to be on the lead in number of youths who betted, followed by Uganda and Ghana at 76% and 57% respectively. Ghana scored the lowest (42%). Despite adolescent betting being an illegal activity, it is clear that youths are engaging in betting. Derevensky and Gupta (2000) found that the betting prevalence rate among adolescents was higher than adults. Apart from age, other demographic factors such as gender, socio-economic background, and geographical locality may also have influence on sports betting involvement.

In Nairobi city, Kenya, Mwadime (2017) examined the impact of the robust growth of the sports betting industry in Kenya. The study considered the effect of sports betting on the Kenyan people. The study was to answer the questions of how technology influences the level and nature of betting involvement, how betting affects users who are “vulnerable”, and the level of regulations and legislations on the practice. Stratified random sampling was employed to obtain 100 participants. Findings showed that majority of participants who were bettors were males aged below 40 years. Additionally, the greatest source of money used for sports betting was salaries. This was an indication that individuals in employment were more likely to bet than unemployed persons and entrepreneurs. Majority bettors placed their stakes online more than once per week. Social media also positively affected sports betting in by providing bettors with information. Most bettors had knowledge that betting was a type of gambling. They had belief that they had ability to start or stop betting behaviour at will and therefore persisted to engage in betting. The study also indicated that many who engaged in gambling knew risks associated with the same, such as addiction. Most bettors felt that the government was not doing enough to prevent the negative consequences of betting. Rather, the government focused more on making maximum revenues through taxes imposed on the companies. It was revealed that presence and access to mobile money transfer services greatly promoted betting among the Kenyan populace. Additionally, social media was the most commonly used wellspring of information and decisions on betting. Finally, the study observed that there needed to be a framework of policy to guide advertisements of betting activities and betting companies countrywide so as to reduce exposure to children who are underage. While this study had a business view of promotion by considering how betting companies could leverage on the prevailing circumstances for robust growth, the current study, had an educational view of how curriculum implementation is affected by student involvement in betting. While Mwadime (2017) study was done in Nairobi and focused majorly on adults, the current study was done in Mumias with a focus on secondary school students.

Ahaibwe, Lakuma, Katunze and Mawejje (2016) conducted a study in Kampala city, Uganda to investigate the socio-economic effects of gambling. This was due to the concern of rapid growth of gambling industry in the country. The study focused on answering three questions: extent of participation in gambling in Kampala; effects of gambling on societal economy as well as people’s welfare; effectiveness and adequacy of the existing regulations and legislation on gambling. Results of the survey indicated that about one out of four of all adults had gambled in one way or another during the previous one year prior to the study. Involvement in gambling was determined by gender, employment status, level of income and age. It was also found that the economically disadvantaged in society spent a higher proportion of their earnings to gamble than the rich did. In addition, there was evidence that most aspects of gambling legislation had become moribund, and could not address the changing approaches and exponential growth of the gambling industry. The study recommended that there should be protection of all and sundry from the adverse consequences of gambling by limiting gambling availability and accessibility. To the contrary, gambling is now more available, accessible and private due to increased ownership and access to phones and internet. In addition, while Ahaibwe, *et al* (2016) conducted the study in view of the perceived socio-economic benefits of gambling and used survey design, the current study was based on perceived effects on the learning process and used causal-comparative design.

Ayandele, Popoola, and Obosi (2019) investigated the influence of demographic and psychological factors on attitudes toward sport betting among young adults in southwest Nigeria. This was a cross-sectional survey that adopted *ex-post facto* design. A total of 749 students from a tertiary institution constituted the sample. The study examined the influence of gender, age, betting knowledge and peer-based gambling. Results revealed that attitudes towards sports betting were more positive in males than females, and in older participants than the younger. Sports betting knowledge and peer-based gambling were significant predictors of attitudes towards sports betting.

Aricak (2018) conducted a study on “Problematic online betting among Turkish adolescents”. This was necessitated by the concern that involvement of young people in online betting was prevalent, and much more pervasive than was being estimated. The study examined the degree of involvement in problematic betting, common traits among youths who were involved in betting, and to

determine how the nature of the family affected betting involvement amongst young people in Turkey. A total of 6116 adolescents of ages between 12 to 18 in Istanbul were surveyed to find out their extent of internet use for gambling. A total of 756 adolescents, that is, 12.4% indicated that they were involved in internet betting, while 176 participants, that is, 2.9% were found to be problematic online gamblers. Further data thus were obtained from the 176 problematic gamblers of whom 14.8% were female adolescents. Internet addiction was found to positively correlate with duration of which one betted. About 60% of those involved indicated that they had preference for internet betting. All participants knew someone who betted online. The study also found that participants from economically and socially unstable family backgrounds scored higher in internet addiction than those from stable families. Results also indicated that almost 25% of the participants began internet betting between ages 10 to 12 years. In addition to family background and age investigated by this study, the current study also considered gender, school location and level of learning (class).

In China, betting has grown to be a favorite indulgence among students in colleges and universities. This concern of increasing betting engagement among students led Kam, *et al* (2017) to conduct a study to investigate gambling behaviour among students in Macau universities and colleges and in China. In the study, 999 participants consisting of 370 male students and 629 female students were selected by convenience sampling. Questionnaires consisting of "Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI)" was utilized to collect data. The response rate was 64.5%. Results indicated three main reasons for gambling. These were: 18.7% sought entertainment, 12.5% betted to kill time while 11.1% were influenced by their peers. From the study, it was found that 32.3% (180 females, 143 males) of the students who responded had been involved in gambling. It was further found that the first gambling occurred at a mean age of 14.5 years. This finding informed the target selection of participants of the current study, since in Kenya, children join high school around the age of 14 to 15 years. Kam, *et al* (2017) used data which was collected by convenience sampling, and therefore the outcome of the study could not be used to provide a general opinion of the entire population. The current researcher used simple random sampling so as to enhance generalizability of the research findings.

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Research has shown that demand for sports betting among young people is on an uptick globally (Aflakpui&Oteng-Abayie, 2016). Some of these youths are school-going. Studies have also shown that sports betting is associated with many psychological, social and health effects whose ramifications may impede effective curriculum delivery among students (Fong, 2005). Cosenza and Nigro (2015) stated that such students are 'wagering their future'. With Kenya having the highest number of young people who engage in sports betting in Sub-Saharan Africa (GeoPoll, 2017), such youths if school-going, are faced with the challenge of balancing their attention between betting and the school work, thus hindering the overall curriculum delivery process. Guguyu(2016) expressed this concern as: "Your child may be gambling more than doing homework". There is thus a necessity for intervention, so that the learners' cognitive resources are not divided between learning and sport betting. However, little research has examined the demographics of students involved in sports betting with a view of informing appropriate intervention strategies. Therefore, this study investigated the influence of demographic factors on students' involvement in sports betting among public secondary schools in Mumias-Est sub-county. As Sangodoyin and Makgosa (2014) argued, demographics provide a sound understanding of behaviour, so as to wise up decision-making as well as decision-making styles.

## 3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Mumias East Sub-County in Kakamega County, Kenya. A causal-comparative design was employed. The study targeted 4936 students of Forms II, III and IV of all 22 public mixed day secondary schools in the Sub-County. The total target population was 4,936 participants. Stratified random sampling was applied to select schools from the sub-urban category of schools and from the rural category. This is because the target population had two mutually exclusive groups which comprised of schools in purely rural areas and some located in fairly urban settings. The sample comprised of 378 students. Data for the study was collected by use of questionnaire. The data was then coded and captured in a computer for analysing by use of SPSS version 21. Descriptive statistics used in data analysis included frequencies, means and percentages. Hypotheses were tested using Chi Square of independence

## 4. RESULTS

The demographic factors influencing student involvement in betting among secondary school students in Mumias East sub-county, Kenya were investigated. These factors included gender, age, class, school location, and socio-economic status.

A comparison of the students' demographic characteristics against the question; "Have you ever betted on sports?" produced results in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Students' demographic characteristics against the question; "Have you ever betted on sports?"

Demographic Factor	Category	Betted	Not betted	Total
Student's gender	Male	84	103	187
	Female	30	152	182
	Total	114	255	369
Student's class	Form II	26	84	110
	Form III	40	94	134
	Form IV	48	77	125
	Total	114	255	369
Student's age (Years)	14-17	32	178	210
	18-21	81	70	151
	22-25	1	7	8
	Total	114	255	369
Monthly income of parent/ guardian (KSh).	Below 5,000	34	74	108
	5,000 to 20,000	38	87	125
	20,000 to 100,000	35	76	111
	Above 100,000	7	15	22
	Total	114	252	366
School location	Rural	5	128	184
	Sub-urban	58	127	185
	Total	114	255	369

The results in this table are hereunder interpreted and discussed in five sub-sections.

### Relationship between Student's Gender and Sports Betting

This relationship was tested under the null hypothesis that:

$H_0$ : There is no significant relationship between student gender and involvement in sports betting.

A chi-square test for independence was used to test this hypothesis. The results of the test were as in Table 2.

**Table 1.** Relationship between Gender and Involvement in Betting

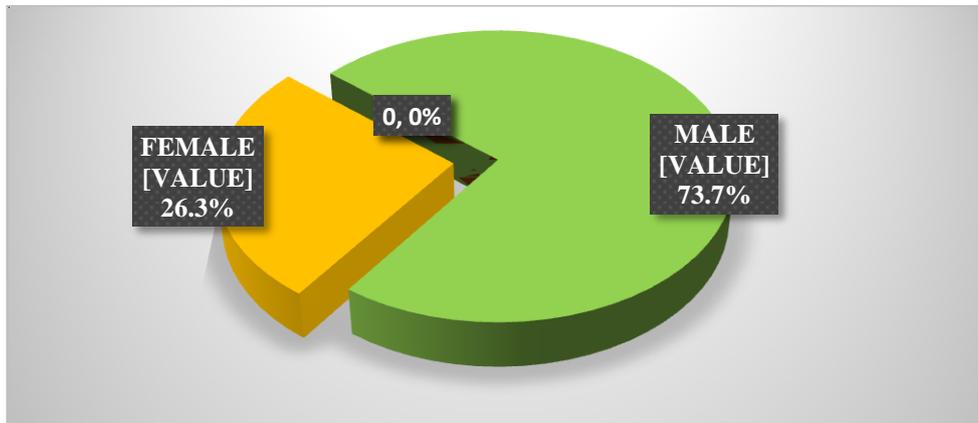
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34.933 <sup>a</sup>	1	.000		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	33.614	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	36.040	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test				.000	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	34.839	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	369				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 56.23.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

The test results revealed that there was a significant relationship between gender and involvement in sports betting, with  $X^2$  (df=1, N=369) = 33.614,  $p < 0.001$  at  $\alpha = 0.05$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and it was thus accepted that there is a relationship between student gender and involvement in sports betting.

The results revealed that there were more male students than female students involved in betting. Out of the 114 students who betted, 84 (73.7%) were male while 30 (26.3%) were female.



**Figure 1.** Students whose response was “Yes”, by gender, to the question “Have you ever betted on sports?”

This gender difference differs from what Kam, *et al* (2017) obtained, which indicated that more females (55.7%) than males (44.3%) gambled. The gender difference in Kam, *et al* (2017) study may, however, be because the number of female participants recruited in the study (629) was much greater than that of male participants (370), unlike the current study in which the number of male and female participants was almost equal (187 males and 182 females). However, it agrees with Aricak (2018) who found more male participants (85.2%) than females (14.8%) involved in gambling. This finding agrees with the assertion of Apicella, Crittenden and Tobolsky(2017), that “hunter-gatherer males are more risk-seeking than females”, because betting is basically risking of one’s money on an outcome of an event, which is based purely on chance. This gender difference could also be attributed to different levels of exposure to soccer, since boys go watching soccer games especially the European premier league, even at night, which is uncommon for girls.

### Relationship between Student’s Class level and Sports Betting

This relationship was tested under the null hypothesis that:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between student’s class and involvement in sports betting.

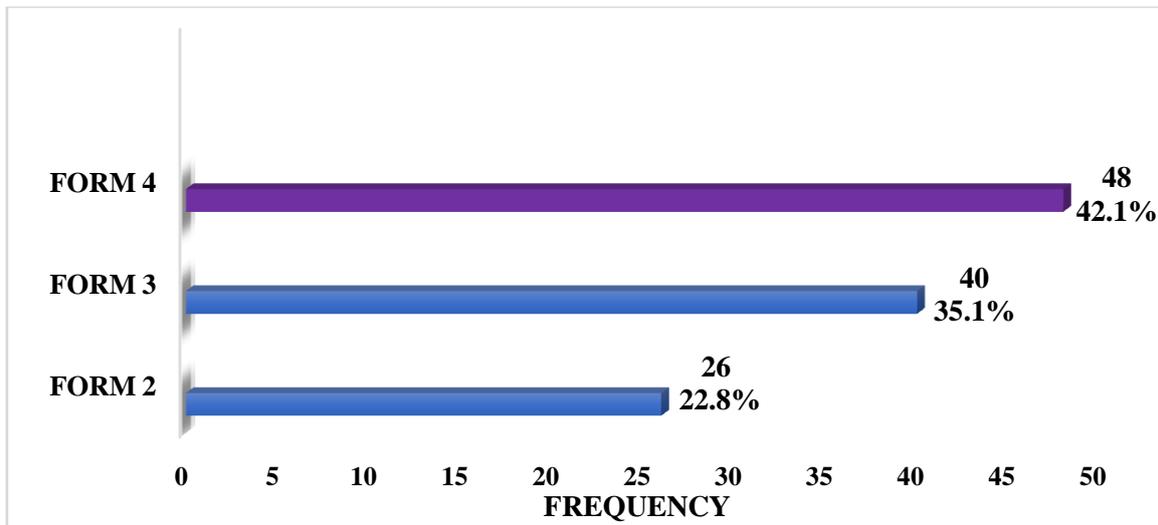
A chi-square test for independence was used to test this hypothesis at 0.05 significance level. The results of the test were as presented in Table 3.

**Table 2.**Relationship between Student’s Class and Betting Involvement

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.081 <sup>a</sup>	2	.048
Likelihood Ratio	6.094	2	.047
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.010	1	.014
N of Valid Cases	369		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 33.98.			

The test results revealed that there was a significant relationship between a student’s class (level of learning) and involvement in sports betting, with  $X^2$  (df= 2, N= 369) = 6.081,  $p= 0.048$  at  $\alpha= 0.05$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and it was thus accepted that there is a relationship between student’s class and involvement in sports betting.

The total number of students involved in betting per class was as shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Students whose response was “Yes”, by class, to the question “Have you ever betted on sports?”

The majority of students (42.1%) involved in betting were Form 4 students, followed by Form 3 (35.1%) and lastly Form 2 (22.8%). This is indicative of the fact that betting is a practice which learners get socialized into as they progress in their secondary school course, and as they advance in age. Brown (1988) argued that a person starts gambling as a result of determinants that are social and institutional in nature. Such social determinants, for example, peer-to-peer association take time to exert their influence, as the student progresses from Form 1 upto Form 4. Albert Bandura (1977) propounded that behaviours are learned socially through observation, imitation and modelling. Bandura’s theory perceives gambling as a behavior that is learned by imitation of a person’s peers or an admired personality. Similarly, as found by Kristiansen, Trabjerg and Reith (2015) gambling experiences among youths are both contrived and nurtured within a social medium. Nurture, in this respect connotes a time factor, which may explain why more Form 4 students betted than form 3, and Form 2 as they continue interacting with those within their social plexus.

### Relationship between Student’s Age and Sports Betting

This relationship was tested under the null hypothesis that:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between student’s age and involvement in sports betting.

A chi-square test for independence was used to test this hypothesis at 0.05 significance level. The results of the test were as presented in Table 4.

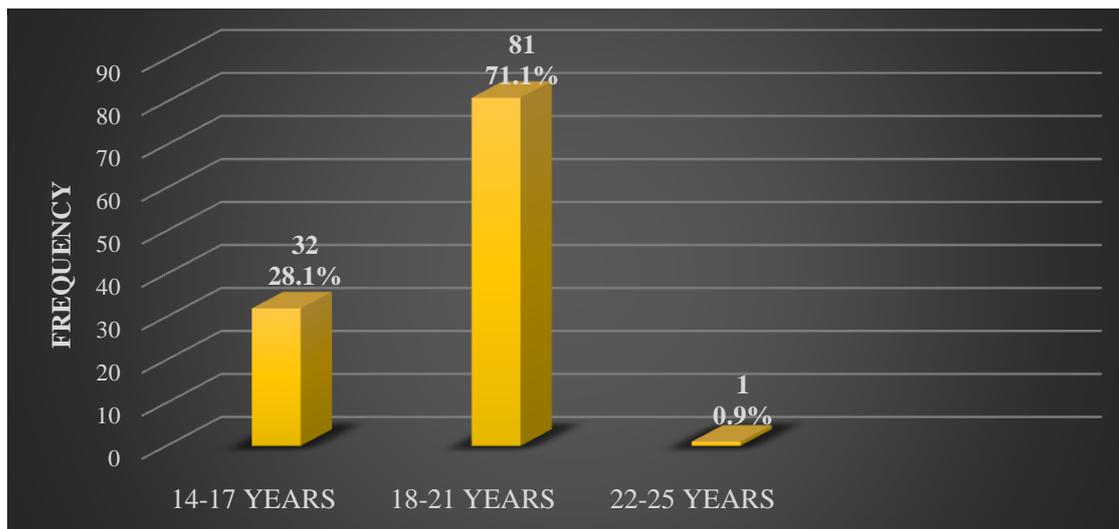
**Table 3.** Relationship between Student’s Age and Betting Involvement

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	61.977 <sup>a</sup>	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	62.450	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	42.893	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	369		

a. 1 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.47.

The study found that there was a statistically significant relationship between students’ age and sports betting, with  $X^2$  (df= 2, N= 369) = 61.977,  $p < 0.001$  at  $\alpha = 0.05$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and it was thus accepted that there is a relationship between student’s age and involvement in sports betting.

The betting-by-age distribution was as in Figure 3.



**Figure 3.** Students whose response was “Yes”, by age, to the question “Have you ever betted on sports?”

Students in the age bracket 18-21 years had the highest betting involvement (81, 71.0%), followed by 14-17 years (32, 28.1%) and lastly 22-25 years (1, 0.9%). A total of 82 (72%) of those who betted were above 18 years. This could be due to the fact that at 18 years, a Kenyan citizen is allowed to have a national identity card, hence can freely register and own a personal phone.

### Relationship between School Location and Sports Betting

This relationship was tested under the null hypothesis:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between school location and student involvement in betting.

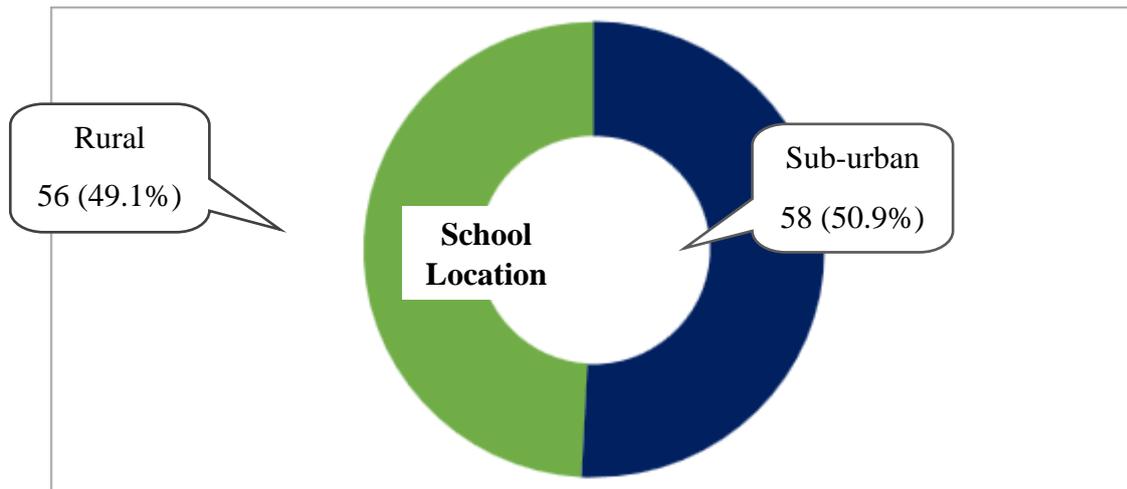
A chi-square test for independence was used to test this hypothesis at 0.05 significance level. The results of the test were as presented in Table 5.

**Table 4.** Relationship between School Location and Student involvement in Betting

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.036 <sup>a</sup>	1	.849		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	.006	1	.938		
Likelihood Ratio	.036	1	.849		
Fisher's Exact Test				.910	.469
Linear-by-Linear Association	.036	1	.849		
N of Valid Cases	369				
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 56.85.					
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table					

The results of the test revealed that there was no significant relationship between school location and student involvement in betting, with  $X^2$  (df= 1, N= 369) = 0.36,  $p= 0.849$  at  $\alpha= 0.05$ . The null hypothesis was thus not rejected, and it was therefore accepted that there was no significant relationship between school location and student involvement in sports betting.

The frequency and percentage distribution of student involvement in betting by school location was as in Figure 4.

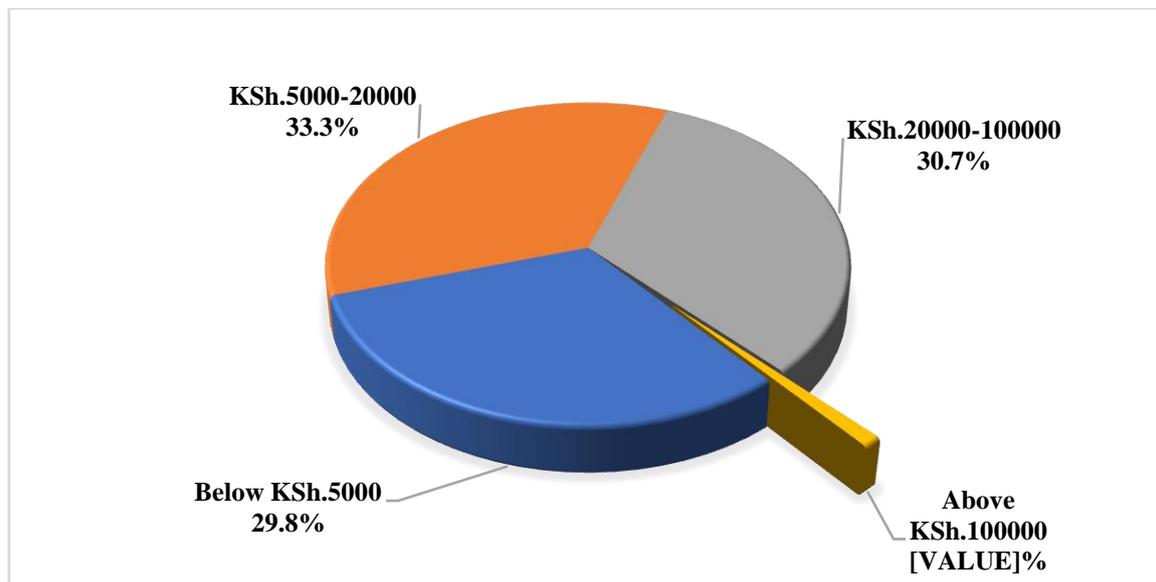


**Figure 4.** Students whose response was “Yes”, by school location, to the question “Have you ever betted on sports?”

Of those who betted, 49.1% were from schools in purely rural areas while 50.9% were from schools located in fairly urban areas. The study thus surprisingly revealed that school location did not have influence on involvement in betting, contrary to the expectations of the researcher, given that students from urban settings are socialized differently from those in the rural areas. But with availability of smartphones and internet in rural and urban areas alike, physical location least determines gambling accessibility (Enwereuzor, Ugwu, &Ugwu, 2016).

**Relationship between Socio-Economic Status and Sports Betting**

This was assessed by the students responding to the question “How would you rate your parents’ occupation in terms of monthly income?” Results were as in Figure 5.



**Figure 5.** Students’ responses to the question “How would you rate your parents’ occupation in terms of monthly income?”

The results showed that most students hailed from low-income families. Very few (1.2%) reported that their parents earned more than KSh.100,000 per month. The socio-economic status was then assessed against betting involvement, and the outcome was as summarized in Table 6.

**Table 5.** Students’ involvement in Betting against the Question “how would you rate your parent’s occupation in terms of monthly income?”

	Below Sh. 5,000	Sh.5,000 to 20,000	Sh.20,000 to 100,000	Above KSh.100,000	Total
<b>Betted</b>	34	38	35	7	114
<b>Not betted</b>	74	87	76	15	252
<b>Total</b>	108	125	111	22	366

Those whose parents/ guardians had monthly income below KSh. 5,000 were 108, out of whom 34 (31.5%) betted while 74 (68.5%) did not bet. Of those whose parents/ guardians had income of between KSh. 5,000 and 20,000, 38 (30.4%) betted while 76 (69.6%) did not bet. For those whose parents/ guardians had an income of twenty thousand to one hundred thousand, 35 (31.5%) betted while 76 (68.5%) did not bet. For those whose parents/ guardians had with high monthly income of over KSh. 100,000, 7 (31.8%) betted while 15 (68.2%) did not bet. These results showed that students were almost equally involved in betting irrespective of their socio-economic backgrounds.

This relationship was further tested under the null hypothesis that:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and student involvement in betting.

A chi-square test for independence was used to test this hypothesis at 0.05 significance level. The results of the test were as presented in Table 7.

**Table 6.** Relationship between Socio-economic Status and Involvement in Betting

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.050 <sup>a</sup>	3	.997
Likelihood Ratio	.051	3	.997
Linear-by-Linear Association	.002	1	.964
N of Valid Cases	366		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.85.			

The results of the test revealed that there was no significant relationship between socio-economic status and student involvement in betting, with  $X^2$  (df= 3, N= 366) = 0.50, p= 0.997 at  $\alpha$ = 0.05. The null hypothesis was thus not rejected. It was thus accepted that there was no significant relationship between socio-economic status and student involvement in sports betting. This is different from the findings of Ahaibwe, *et al* (2016), that those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds in society had a higher propensity for gambling than the rich. With money being the main motivation as found in this study, students from all economic strata of society are interested and in search for it through betting. This agrees with findings of Koross (2016) that people bet mainly with the intention to get money, the socio-economic backdrop notwithstanding.

### 5. CONCLUSION

This study sought to investigate the influence of demographic factors on students’ involvement in sports betting among secondary school students in Mumias-East sub-county, Kenya. The study found that there was a relationship between gender and betting involvement; there was a relationship between a student’s class and involvement in sports betting; there was a relationship between age and sports betting; there was no relationship between socio-economic status and involvement in sports betting; there was no relationship between school location and involvement in sports betting. The study thus concluded that gender, age and student’s class have influence on sports betting involvement, while socio-economic status and school location do not.

The study recommends that the Kenyan government should review gambling regulations and legislation to include laws that prohibit school-going students from betting, since most students who bet are aged 18 years and above, meaning that they enjoy legal protection albeit being school students; that the Kenyan government should strengthen enforcement of gambling legislation that bars the under aged from betting by collaboratively working with other arms of government; that intervention measures should be put in place by schools to help the boy-child, who is more engrossed in betting than the female counterpart. Further research needs to be done in different geographical locations to determine if the findings of this study hold. Future studies could use snowball sampling technique so as to only include respondents who are involved in betting for exclusivity and further depth.

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