

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

**SPORT MARKETING AND YOUTH PATRONAGE OF ONLINE SPORT BETTING IN AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA****Michael Okon Essien<sup>1\*</sup>, Okokon B. Attih<sup>2</sup>, Eno G. Ukpong<sup>3</sup>, Jane Michael Essien<sup>4</sup>**

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**Abstract:** This study investigated the relationship between sport marketing and youth patronage of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The survey Research design approach was used in the study. The Population of the study consisted of both operators of online betting shops and the young people between the ages of 18 to 50 years involved in online betting businesses in Akwa Ibom State. The sample size of 245 respondents was determined using Top man formula, since the population was unknown. The main sources of data used in this study were from primary sources, gathered with the use of a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire design. Respondents were selected using the convenience sampling technique. Data collected were analyzed using tables, frequency and percentage. Hypotheses were tested using simple and multiple linear regression model with the help of SPSS 24. Findings revealed that celebrity endorsement, sport promotion individually had positive significant influence on youth patronage. It was concluded that celebrity endorsement, and sport promotion were positive significant predictors of youth patronage online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended that sport companies should be critical in the selection of celebrities so as to have the right 'personality' of celebrities to emphasis credibility, trustworthiness, who are knowledgeable and whose physical appearances match with the idea that are being promoted and Sport betting companies should pay attention to the use of promotional strategies like public relations, publicity, and sales promotion that appeal to youths.

**Keyword:** *Sport marketing, Celebrity endorsement, Sport promotion, Youth patronage, Online sport betting.*

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**INTRODUCTION**

Sports have become not only a recreational engagement but also social and economic activities with a strong appeal across classes, genders, races, sex and other social activities, especially among youths in Nigeria. Sports are the activities involving creativity and skills, competition, strategy, and chance, which people engaged for entertainment, recreation, enjoyment, and satisfaction. (Adesoye *et. al.*, 2020) assert that sports provide personal gain such as income for the participants as well as recreational and entertainment for the spectators. According

to Ongong *et. al.*, (2019) the role of sport in shaping society at large and its contribution to the social and economic growth of society cannot be overemphasized. Sports form an integral part of every society. The number of youths who participate in sports betting is enormous, as a result of which the economy of individual and country are transformed.

Sport is gradually becoming boundless to the extent that it has effect on social, physical, economic and psychological of every citizen in Nigeria and globally (Olayinka and

Fageyinbo, 2018). Sport marketing as the way of planning, executing and showcasing standards of a sport and sport business to fulfill the wants of customers (Aina, 2018). It is the application of marketing principles to sport products and services to satisfy the need of sport spectator, participant or sponsor.

Anytime major sports events are fixed, especially football leagues across the world, fans apart from watching the game, bets on the results with intention to make financial gain, and social interaction among peers. Sports betting are a growing venture with viewing centers being established in various areas and serve as an important aspect of the social lifestyle of most youths for the main purpose of entertainment and recreation (Olayinka and Fageyinbo, 2018).

Online shopping has gained significant increase in recent years (Uford, *et. al.*, 2022), and online sport betting is not an exemption. Online sport betting has witnessed increasing phenomenal in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria as youths dedicating substantial time to betting games especially global football leagues. According to Allcock (2020), increased number of betting companies and the online innovation aided its patronage by the youths, creating alternative income for unemployed persons.

Sport marketing in form of aggressive advertisement, sponsorship and promotion are strategies used to appeal to the youth and target market to increase sales, and profit in the short and long term (Olaore and Kuye, 2019).

Betting game in Nigeria comes in various forms such as online betting games, sport games predictions, pool, lotteries and casino, while the popular betting companies in Nigeria are Bet9ja, Betking, Nairabet, Merrybet and Superbet (Olaore *et. al.*, 2020). Hence, this study seeks to determine the relationship between sport marketing-celebrity endorsement, sport promotion and youth patronage of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

### Statement of the Problem

Effective and efficient application of principles of marketing in sport management can help sport organizations to achieve its

objectives as well as attract patronage in terms of spectator and sponsorship.

It is pertinent to note that the use of promotional mix element of advertising to discourage the consumption of alcoholism, tobacco, junk food and drug abuse among youths in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria has been felt tremendously.

Patronage of online sport betting among youths has not been sufficiently addressed, thereby leaving this sector of the economy with fallacious ideology which looks at young bettors of 18years and above as second class citizens, judging from societal ethical point of view. This misconception had significantly impacted negatively on youth patronage of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria given the religious and societal norms in this part of the world that looks at gambling as unethical.

However, the Nigeria government had tried to address this issue by legalizing gambling which includes online sport betting with the introduction of National Lottery Regulation Commission in 2005 with laws and policies to guide the operations of gambling in Nigeria. It is therefore not enough to leave it just at that.

Hence, the motivation for this research in a bit to rewrite the narrative of online sport betting among youth. The researcher seeks to determine the relationship between sport marketing-celebrity endorsement, sport promotion and youth patronage of online sport betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

### Objectives of the Study

The major objective of this study was to determine the relationship between sport marketing and youth patronage of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The specific objectives were:

- To examine the relationship between celebrity endorsement and youth patronage of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- To ascertain relationship between sport promotion and youth patronage of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- To determine the relationship between celebrity endorsement, sport promotion and

youth patronage of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

### Research Questions

Based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions were raised:

- What is the relationship between celebrity endorsement and youth patronage of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria?
- To what extent does sport promotion relates to youth patronage of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria?
- What is the relationship between celebrity endorsement, sport promotion and youth patronage of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria?

### Hypotheses of the Study

Based on the objectives of the study, the following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between celebrity endorsement and youth patronage of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant relationship between sport promotion and youth patronage of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

H<sub>04</sub>: There is no significant relationship between celebrity endorsement, promotion and youth patronage of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

### Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would be beneficial to online sport betting business operators. It would help online sport betting business operators to identify the dimension of sport marketing that mostly influence youth patronage of online sport betting.

The findings of this study would add to the existing body of knowledge on sport marketing and youth patronage of online sport betting. It would also be useful to government in the formulation of policies and regulations of online sport betting in Nigeria. It would serve as a reference material for students, academia and researchers who want to carry out study on similar or related topic.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

### Sport Marketing

Sport marketing is the act of arranging and executing the hypothesis of valuing, advancement, and circulation of thoughts, products, and services on sports to make an exchange that satisfies individual and association targets (Fasan, 2020). Shank and Lyberger (2019) view sports marketing as the formal employment of marketing concepts and procedures to sports commodities and the promotion of non-sports products through sports collaborations.

Sports marketing as 'using sports to market products' (Kaser and Oelkers, 2020). It is a specific application of marketing principles and processes to sport products and services in order to achieve sport objectives.

### Dimensions of Sport Marketing

**Celebrity Endorsement:** refers to a claim by a celebrity or someone of authority that a product is good thereby certifying such product or service as a must have, celebrity endorsement is a strategy of persuasion where customers relate to person used or featured in an advert. Celebrity endorsement is most effectively used by companies when the endorser's personality matches up to that of the brand or product.

As suggested by Friedman and Friedman, a "celebrity endorser is an individual known by public for their area of achievement than the product class"; this makes most advertisers accent to the idea that the use of celebrity endorsement cannot only create a great deal of awareness, it can also positively affect consumers, making them feel safe about their brand or product (Okafor, 2013).

**Promotion:** According to Bamigboye (2016), promotion is any marketing effort whose function is to inform or persuade actual or potential customers about the merits of given product or service for the purpose of inducing a consumer either to start purchasing or to continue purchasing the firm's product or service. Promotion is the medium which is used by organization to communicate with consumer in order to create awareness about its product or service offering (Attih, 2013, 2019).

According to Attih (2014), promotion is the process of stimulating demand to company's goods and services.

To communicate with individuals, groups and organizations, several types of promotional methods can be used. The specific combination of promotional methods used are advertising, personal selling, sales promotion and publicity/public relations.

**Sponsorship:** According to Tanglang (2014), sponsorship is trade as well as out kind charge paid to an ownership as a by-product of access to the utilizable business potential related with that having a place or the action.

Sports sponsorship is an investment in brand image, as a means of managing corporate status and relationships with stakeholders, and as a component of social action (Urdangarin, 2017). Sports sponsorship occurs when a sporting organization, club, league, venue, cause or athlete is supported by a separate company (or person).

**Youth Patronage:** Attih (2019, 2020) describes consumer patronage as the act of an individual regularly buying a particular brand/product. Customer patronage is the acceptance or support provided by customers with respect to a particular product (Simons, 2016). Customer patronage delivers the foundation for an established and growing market share (Simons, 2016). Njelit and Anyasor (2020) view customer patronage as the purchase of goods and services from a particular vendor by a customer.

### Online Sport Betting

Online sport betting is a process of staking money on the outcome of a game. Playing betting game is usually on the assumptions of chance (Win or Loss). The outcome of these games is usually immediate, and the players will know either they win or otherwise (Agbala, 2016).

Palmer (2013) describes online sport betting as placing a financial bet on the result of a sport march, just as on occasions that happen inside the bigger match or fixture. According to Omobowale (2009), online sports betting is normally aimed for entertainment and recreation, nevertheless, their importance among various societies.

### Review of Empirical Studies

Etuk, Anyadighibe, James and Okpetim (2022) examined the influence of celebrity endorsement on consumer buying behaviour towards telecommunication services in

Calabar, Cross River State. Exploratory research design was adopted.

Primary data were obtained from 133 telecommunication service subscribers using a structured questionnaire. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression was adopted for hypotheses testing.

The study found that celebrity popularity ( $\beta = .430$ ;  $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ ) had the highest significant positive influence on consumer buying behaviour towards telecommunication services, followed by celebrity credibility ( $\beta = .357$ ;  $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ ) and celebrity attractiveness ( $\beta = .215$ ;  $p\text{-value} = 0.002 < 0.05$ ).

Therefore, it was concluded that celebrity endorsement has a significant positive influence on consumer buying behaviour in the context of telecommunication services. As a result, pertinent recommendations were made for possible implementation by industry practitioners.

Ajeegbe, (2021) conducted a study on the influence of sport marketing in the promotion of organization products and services in Ilorin metropolis. Descriptive survey design was used in this study. The population comprised 54 sport marketers and organizations that produce and sell sport products and services to consumers.

Data obtained for the study were analyzed using frequency, percentage and means score while the hypotheses were tested using independent T-test at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that there was no significant difference in the sport marketer perception of the influence of sport marketing strategy on the promotion of organization products as well as to produce. It was recommended that sport organizations should strengthen their marketing strategies in order to promote products.

Sedky, Kortam and AbouAish (2020) investigated on the role of sports marketing in attracting audiences towards less popular sports. A total of 22 interviews were conducted first to explore the opinions of sports professionals about how audiences can be attracted towards less popular sports. Total of 479 responses to an online questionnaire were collected.



The online questionnaire includes a pre- test- post -test experiment in which each respondent has watched a video.

Hypotheses were tested using confirmatory factor analysis, reliability test and hierarchical regression analysis. Findings showed that the elements of sports marketing that can help to attract audiences towards less popular sports are sports media, sports advertising, star athlete and sports sponsorship. The performance of national teams moderates the relationship between sports advertising and attraction towards less popular sports.

Adejare *et. al.*, (2020) carried out a study on the nexus between the increasing patronage of youth in betting games and unemployment: The simple random and stratified sampling techniques were used to select participants for the study. Three hypotheses were tested using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation model (SEM).

Findings of the study showed that playing betting games provides another source of income to the youth, who are already engaged in one form of work or another. Also, youth patronage in betting games has created awareness regarding different sports in the world, while contributing to Nigeria's economy.

Griths, Estevez, Guerrero-Solé and Lopez-Gonzalez (2018) examined sports betting marketing and advertising: A brief overview. An in-depth analysis of papers on British and Spanish sports betting television adverts (N=135) from 2014 to 2016 were done. The main objective was to understand how bettors and betting are being represented. In one of the studies using content analysis, 31

different variables grouped into seven broad categories were assessed, including general information about the advert, the characters and situations represented, the identification of the characters with sports, the use of online betting, the core presentation of gambling along other risky behaviours such as eating junk food and drinking alcohol, the amount of money wagered, and other variables such as the representation of free bets, humour, and celebrities.

The results showed a male-dominant betting representation with no interaction between women. The researchers found that bettors were typically depicted surrounded by people but isolated in their betting, emphasising the individual consumption practice that mobile betting promotes. In-play betting was observed in almost half of the adverts.

We also found some evidence of betting while watching sport in betting adverts being associated with emotionally charged situations such as celebrations and/or alcohol drinking. Bettors were typically depicted staking small amounts of money with large potential returns, implying high risk bets. Based on this, it can be concluded that many factors for betting behaviour exist, but this study focused more on some of the contemporary areas in the marketing and advertising of sports betting.

The product innovations as a result of the internet have greatly changed the essence of sports betting activity. The study raises awareness about the issues and challenges that might lie ahead as our societies continue collecting more data concerning the long-term consequences of the commercialisation strategies of betting brands.

Deans, Thomas, Derevensky and Daube (2017) investigated the influence of marketing on the sports betting attitudes and consumption behaviours of young men: implications for harm reduction and prevention strategies in Australia. The research used qualitative, semi-structured interviews with 50 Australian men (aged 20–37 years) who gambled on sports.

The study also explored their attitudes and opinions regarding sports betting marketing, the embedding of marketing within sports and other non-gambling community environments, and the implications this had for the normalisation of betting.

The findings indicate that most of the environments in which participants reported seeing or hearing betting advertisements were not in environments specifically designed for betting. Participants described that the saturation of marketing for betting products, including through sports-based commentary and sports programming, normalised betting.

Participants described that the inducements offered by the industry were effective marketing strategies in getting themselves and other young men to bet on sports. It was concluded that marketing plays a strong role in the normalisation of gambling in sports.

Ibok (2013) investigated factors determining the effectiveness of celebrity endorsed advertisements in Nigerian Telecommunication Industry, Akwa Ibom State. This study empirically examined factors which are critical to celebrities' effectiveness within the context of the Nigerian telecommunication industry.

A survey of 120 consumers was conducted and the results indicated that perceived expertise and credibility were the two most important factors determining celebrities' effectiveness. Other factors were trustworthiness and attractiveness. Based on these results, it was concluded that celebrity's public image should be taken very seriously when adopting celebrities in product advertisement.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section focuses on the methods used in collecting and analyzing data for the study. It covers the research design, population/sample size, conceptual specification of model, sampling technique, reliability of research instrument and methods of data analysis.

#### Research Design

The survey research was used in the study. According to Mfon and Uford (2022), it involves obtaining the primary data from the respondents through the use of a structural questionnaire.

### Population/Sample Size

The population of this study comprised of both operators of online betting shops and the young people between the ages of 18 to 50 years who are actively involved in online betting businesses in Akwa Ibom State. A sample size of 246 betting operators and bettors that participated in the study was determined using Topman formula for infinite population as follows:

Topman formula;  $n = Z^2 Pq / e^2$

Where n= sample size

Z= standard deviation for desired test of confidence (1.96)

P= probability of positive response (80% or 0.80)

Q= probability of negative response (20% or 0.20)

E= 5% limit error (0.05)

Therefore,  $n = 1.96^2(0.80 * 0.20) / 0.05^2$

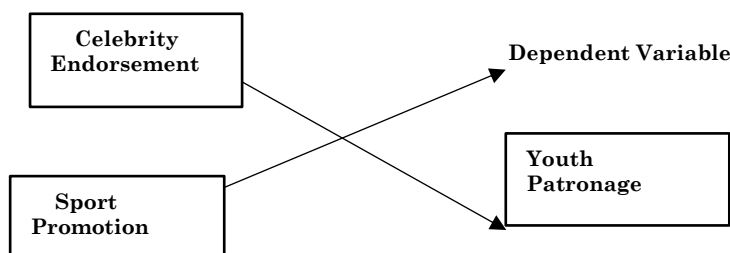
$$\frac{3.8416 (0.16)}{0.0025} = \frac{0.614656}{0.0025} = 245.86$$

Therefore, the sample size of this study is 246 respondents. It consists of 100 online betting operators and 146 youths.

### Conceptual Specification of Model

Based on the research hypotheses, conceptual model was developed to determine the relationship between sport marketing-celebrity endorsement and sport promotion as independent variables and youth patronage of online betting as dependent variable. The model specifies that youth patronage of online betting is influenced by celebrity endorsement and sport promotion.

Independent Variable



Source: Researcher's Construct (2023).

### Sampling Technique

Convenience sampling technique was used to select respondents. This technique allows the researcher to select respondents that are easy, accessible or convenient to approach

### Reliability of the Research Instrument

The reliability of the research instrument was assessed using Cronbach’s Alpha reliability methods. Result of coefficients obtained for each of the sport marketing subscales is as follows: .732 for celebrity endorsement and .724 for sport promotion. For the dependent variable, youth patronage, Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient of .821. Result reveals that the reliability coefficients are all above 0.70 which justified the reliability of the instrument as recommended by (Uford, 2017).

### Methods of Data Analysis

Data obtained for the study were analyzed using tables, frequency and percentage while hypotheses were tested using simple and multiple linear regression model. All hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance with p-value <0.05 indicates statistical significance. Data analyses were facilitated using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 24.0).

### DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This section focuses on data presentation, data analysis, test of hypotheses and discussion of results.

**Table 1 : Questionnaire distribution**

Item	No. of Questionnaire	Percentage
Useable Questionnaire	229	93
Un-useable Questionnaire	17	7
Total	246	100

Source: Field Survey (2023).

Table 1 shows that out of 246 copies of questionnaire administered to the respondents, 229 representing 93% were

returned in useable form while 17 copies of questionnaire representing 7% were not properly filled or returned.

**Table 2: Distribution of the respondents by age**

Age/Year	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
18-24 years	51	22.3
25-34years	108	47.2
35-44years	40	17.5
45 years and above	30	13.1
Total	229	100

Source: Field Survey (2023).Table 2 indicates that 51 respondents representing 22.3% were between the age bracket of 18-24 years, 108 respondents representing 47.2% were between 25-34 years and 40 respondents representing 17.5% were between the age range of 35-44 years while 30 respondents representing 13.1% were 45 years and above.

**Table 3: Distribution of the respondents by gender**

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	205	89.5
Female	24	10.5
Total	229	100

Source: Field Survey (2023).

Table 3 shows that 205 respondents representing 89.5% were male while 24 respondents representing 10.5% were female.

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between celebrity endorsement and youth patronage of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

**Table 4: Summary of Simple Linear Regression showing the relationship between celebrity endorsement and youth patronage of online betting**

	B <sub>1</sub>	SE	B <sub>2</sub>	t-value	Significant (2 tailed)
Constant	0.837	0.278		3.006	0.003
Celebrity Endorsement (X <sub>1</sub> )	0.929	0.024	0.933	38.998	0.000
Dependent Variable: Youth Patronage					
R =	0.933				
R <sup>2</sup> =	0.870				
Adjusted R-Square =	0.870				
Std. Error of estimate =	0.83859				
F-statistics =	520.813				
Probability (Significant p-value) =	0.000				

\*significantly related at 5% (p<0.05). B<sub>1</sub>= unstandardized beta, B<sub>2</sub>= standardized beta, SE= standard error.

Table 3 shows a regression coefficient of R<sup>2</sup> = 0.870 which means that the independent variable; Celebrity Endorsement (X<sub>1</sub>) accounted for 87% of the variation independent variable, youth patronage of online betting. In addition, the significant F-ratio at F= 520.813 and p-value = 0.000 suggests that the results of the regression model could not have occurred by chance and that Celebrity Endorsement as an indicator

of Sport Marketing significantly predicted youth patronage of online betting. This indicates a positive significant relationship with youth patronage of online betting.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant relationship between sport promotion and youth patronage of online of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

**Table 5: Summary of Simple Linear Regression showing the relationship between Sport Promotion and youth patronage of online betting**

	B <sub>1</sub>	SE	B <sub>2</sub>	t-value	Significant (2 tailed)
Constant	4.145	0.324		12.776	0.000
Sport Promotion (X <sub>2</sub> )	0.664	0.028	0.841	23.377	0.000
Dependent Variable: Youth Patronage					
R =	0.841				
R <sup>2</sup> =	0.707				
Adjusted R-Square =	0.705				
Std. Error of estimate =	1.26060				
F-statistics =	546.466				
Probability (Significant p-value) =	0.000				

\*significantly related at 5% (p<0.05). B<sub>1</sub>= unstandardized beta, B<sub>2</sub>= standardized beta, SE= standard error.

Table 4 shows a regression coefficient of R<sup>2</sup> = 0.707 which means that the independent variable; Sport Promotion (X<sub>2</sub>) accounted for approximately 71% of the variation independent variable, youth patronage of online betting. In addition, the significant F-ratio at F = 546.466 and p-value = 0.000 suggests that the results

of the regression model could not have occurred by chance and that Sport Promotion as an indicator of Sport Marketing significantly predicted youth patronage of online betting. This finding can be interpreted that every unit change in Sport Promotion will result to a 0.664 increase in youth patronage of online betting.

**Table 6: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for the joint relationship between celebrity endorsement, promotion and youth patronage of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria**

	B <sub>1</sub>	SE	B <sub>2</sub>	t-value	Significant (2 tailed)
Constant	0.727	0.243		2.989	0.003
Celebrity	0.712	0.037	0.715	19.318	0.000
Promotion	0.057	0.033	0.072	1.708	0.089
Dependent Variable: Youth Patronage					



R =	0.951				
R <sup>2</sup> =	0.905				
Adjusted R-Square =	0.904				
Std. Error of estimate =	0.71936				
F-statistics =	716.742				
Probability (Significant p-value) =	0.000 <sup>b</sup>				

*\*significantly related at 5% (p<0.05). B<sub>1</sub>= unstandardized beta, B<sub>2</sub>= standardized beta, SE= standard error.*

Table 6 shows a regression coefficient of R<sup>2</sup>= 0.905, which indicates that the independent variables; celebrity endorsement and sport promotion collectively explained approximately 91% of the variation in dependent variable; youth patronage of online betting.

This means that the independent variables (celebrity endorsement and sport promotion) when collectively applied as sport marketing indicators were collectively accountable for 91% of the changes in youth patronage of online betting, while 9% of the changes in the dependent variable could be attributed to factors not considered in the study’s model.

Results on the table also indicates that the joint influence of the independent variables in the model and the dependent variable was very strong at R= 0.951. According to the coefficient of determination R<sup>2</sup>= 0.905 and the adjusted coefficient of determination; adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.904, the regression model of this study is said to have a very strong explanatory power of the dependent variable.

In addition, the F-ratio = 716.742 and p-value < 0.000 on the ANOVA suggest that the results of the regression model could not have occurred by chance and that celebrity endorsement and sport promotion significantly predicted the changes in the dependent variable (youth patronage of online betting).

To assess the relative contribution and significant relationship of each independent variable on the dependent variable, the coefficients are provided on the Table. Accordingly, the two sport marketing indicators which were jointly measured against youth patronage of online betting, results showed a positive significant relationship. The multiple regression analysis result showed the multiple regression Coefficients of each of the four variables as:

Celebrity ( $\beta_{x_1} C_e = 0.712$ , S.E = 0.037, t= 19.318, p-value = 0.000) and Sport Promotion ( $\beta_{x_2} P_m = 0.057$ , S.E = 0.033, t= 1.708, p-value = 0.089). These findings as presented on the model table, can be interpreted that every unit change in any of the independent variables will lead to an increase in the dependent variable, according to the positive values of their unstandardized coefficients as represented in the resulting multiple regression model.

From the result, the unstandardized coefficient revealed that the relative combination of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable. Evidently, celebrity endorsement contributed more to the youth patronage of online betting when considered collectively. This was followed by promotion; all other factors were held constant. The proposed multiple regression model was:

$$Y = a_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 \dots + e$$

$$Y_p = a_0 + \beta_1 C_e + \beta_2 P_m \dots + e$$

Thus, the resulting multiple regression model is as presented below:

$$Y_p = 0.727 + 0.712 C_e + 0.057 P_m \text{ Equation 4.4}$$

When the p-values on the multiple regression coefficient table is considered, celebrity sufficiently contributed to youth patronage of online betting (with; p-value= 0.000 <0.05, but the contribution of Sport promotion was not sufficient (with the p-value= 0.089 >0.05). Thus the decision is reached based on the collective contribution of the independent variables with the result of significant P-value = 0.000 < 0.05 in the ANOVA.

With reference to the stated decision rule, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. It is therefore concluded that celebrity endorsement and promotion have a joint

significant positive relationship on youth patronage of online betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

### IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

This study revealed that sport marketing has a significant positive relationship with youth patronage of online sport betting in Akwa Ibom State. This implies that for online sport vendor marketers to enjoy competitive advantage and continuous existing and patronage, they need to adapt some sport marketing strategies. Also, strategies such as celebrity's endorsement and sport promotion are critical for the success of online sport betting.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study was on sport marketing and youth patronage of online sport betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The results revealed that celebrity endorsement and sport promotion have significant positive relationship with youth patronage of online sport betting in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

The findings revealed that celebrity endorsement has most significant predictor of youth patronage of online sport betting. Hence, it is concluded that sport marketing-celebrity endorsement and sport promotion play significant role in influencing youth patronage of online sport betting.

Based on the findings, it was recommended that sport companies should be critical in the selection of celebrities so as to have the right 'personality' of celebrities to emphasis credibility, trustworthiness, who are knowledgeable and whose physical appearances match with the idea that are being promoted and sport betting companies should pay attention to the use of promotional strategies like public relations, publicity, and sales promotion that can appeal to youths.

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