

## **Economic Gratifications and Television Gaming Habits Among Youths in Port Harcourt Metropolis**

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### **Abstract**

*This study evaluated economic gratifications and television gaming among youths in Port Harcourt metropolis. The objectives of the study were to evaluate the economic gratifications youths in Port Harcourt derive from television gaming; analyze if television gaming acts by youths in Port Harcourt are diversionary and anti-social. Using a descriptive survey design and a sample of 370 respondents. The study adopted uses and gratifications theory and Dependency theory. The research found that television gaming among youths in Port Harcourt is not driven only by entertainment and social motives but also economic factors. The study therefore recommended that the local educators and youths counselors should involve in conducting surveys and workshop in schools to gather data and educate parents and students about the impact of television gaming. Social workers and community leaders should conduct assessments and provide intervention programs that address and mitigate any negative social impacts of gaming, ensuring a balanced and healthy engagement with television gaming. That active measures should be taken by the government at all levels, legislators, mass media, and community members to provide an accurate representation of sports betting as well as the risks involved.*

**Keywords:** *Economic Gratifications, Television, Gaming Habits, Port Harcourt*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Television sports gaming habits have created a new social norms and practices. For instance, Twitch, a popular streaming platform for gamers, has its own culture and set of practices that are unique to the platform. They include the use of emotes, which are small images or icons that can be used in the chat to express emotions or reactions. Twitch has its own set of social norms, such as the expectation that viewers will subscribe to a streamer's channel to support them financially. This has led to the emergence of a new type of celebrity. The Twitch streamer enables substantial income from sponsorships, subscriptions, and donations from their audience.

There is hardly any community you go to in Rivers State that you do not see one sports gaming centre. Sometimes you find up to three or four of these centres on a street. There is hardly any houses that does not have a television or an android handset which makes sports betting online very accessible. There are concerns about the impact television sports gaming culture has on the society. One of such concern is the potential for addiction to video games, particularly among young people. The World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized gaming disorder as a mental health condition. WHO in 2018 described it as a pattern of persistent or recurrent gaming behavior, which may be online or offline, manifested by impaired control over gaming, increasing priority given to gaming to the extent that gaming takes precedence over other life interests and daily activities, and continuation or escalation of gaming despite the occurrence of negative consequence. According to a recent report by Channels Television captioned: - The Rise of Esports: A Digital Revolution In Competitive Gaming (2023), it was about the "origin of e-sports, its exponential growth, the business ecosystem surrounding it, its impact on technology and traditional sports, the challenges faced and its potential future."

One of the key drivers of television sports gaming culture is the social aspect of gaming. Many sports video games are designed for multiplayer experiences, allowing players to compete against each other online. This has created a sense of community among sports gaming enthusiasts, who can connect with each other through online forums and social media platforms. This social aspect has also been amplified with the rise of esports, which are organized competitive events featuring professional gamers competing against each other for cash prizes. While the television sports gaming culture can be a fun and engaging activity for the youths, it can also have significant impact on their lives. One of the positive aspects of television sports gaming culture is its potential to promote physical activity and improve hand-eye coordination. For example, playing sports video games such as FIFA or NBA 2K can help youth develop skills and enhance knowledge of the game, which can then be applied to real-life sports. However, excessive sports gaming can also lead to a sedentary lifestyle, which can increase the risk of obesity, heart disease, and other health problems. Research has shown that youths who engage in excessive sports gaming are more likely to have poor physical health outcomes than those who do not.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Sport is no longer an activity that people engage in just for the sake of fun but it has evolved to be a means of economic gratifications, competitive business, and professional career industry. "Sport is no longer seen as a relaxing way to exert energy and interact with friends and families but it is a universal language that can bring nations together,

educate individuals, entertain millions of peoples, and in the past decades, a business that has generated billions of dollars. Sport has grown into a lucrative industry that has generated millions for the players, sponsors and sport partnerships” (Wyk, 2008, p. 12). Youths are currently growing up in a culture where sports betting is legal, accessible, and widely supported (Monaghan & Derevensky, 2008).

The Nigerian gaming landscape has continued to expand, benefitting from the large youthful population, improving internet penetration, and increasing access to internet-enabled devices. It has slowly emerged as a lucrative segment, leveraging Nigeria’s huge sport culture.

Even the proceeds from sports betting activities for the “lucky ones” are not properly utilized. According to Gallup Polls, Nigerians spend \$2 billion dollar annually on sports betting of which only less than \$200 million dollars were won by those that are lucky which are easily squandered because there is always a false hope that sports betting is seen as the “goose that lays the golden eggs”. Both the rich and poor, male and female, young and old engage in sports betting as the age limit is 18 years (See section 34 of the National Lottery Act 2005). However, we see people younger than 18 years play it because there is inadequate regulation. It is, therefore important to ascertain the economic gratifications gained from television sports gaming habits among the youths of Port Harcourt Metropolis.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study seeks to appraise the television gaming habits of youths in Port Harcourt so as to align them with overt economic gratifications. This is anchored on the scholarly premise of vicarious experiences as inherent offshoots of media encounters. The specific objectives therefore are to:

- i. Find out the economic gratifications youths in Port Harcourt derive from television gaming;
- ii. analyze if television gaming acts by youths in Port Harcourt are diversionary and anti-social.

### **Research Questions**

This study sought to answers the following questions:

- i. What are the economic gratifications derivable from television sports gaming habits or activities among the youths from Port Harcourt metropolis?
- ii. What are the discernible diversionary and anti-social behavior that youths derive from television gaming?

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study adopted two theories, Uses and Gratification theory and cultivation theory which helped sharpen this work.

#### **Uses and Gratifications Theory**

Uses and gratifications theory of mass communication talks about the importance and active part of the people as consumers or audience of media content. This theory focuses on why people use particular medium rather than concentrating on contents presented by media. Most of the theories related to field of media and communication discuss the effects of media in narrow and broader spectrum while this theory distincts itself from

others by giving an understanding of why and how people actively choose some media to gratify their needs. Uses and gratifications is basically an audience-centered approach by pointing its focus on “what do people do with the media?” instead of the traditional researches which focused on “what media do with the people (hypodermic view of media)?” This theory shifted attention from the message makers of the mass communication process to the message receivers; the audience. This approach works with the point of view that there is a variety of responses to media messages and people are capable of making up their own minds. Accepting messages, rejecting others and using the media for variety of reasons in different ways at different times.

The first formal statement of the Uses and gratifications theory came from Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch in 1974 which is that “Uses and gratifications focused on the social and psychological origins of needs which generate expectations of the mass media or other sources which lead to differential patterns of media exposure (or engagement in other activities) resulting in need gratifications and other consequences, perhaps mostly unintended ones”.

In its most complex form, the theory predicts that media-consumption gratifications are influenced by culture, social institutions, media opportunities, circumstances, personal traits, needs, beliefs and values. In turn, one’s beliefs about what media can provide are influenced by the gratifications one experiences by using those media. The theory postulates that media is a highly available product. That audiences are the consumers of product and that audiences choose media to satisfy given needs as well as Social and psychological uses such as knowledge, relaxation, social relationship and diversion.

### **Cultivation Theory**

Cultivation theory which is also known as cultivation analysis was developed by George Gerbner in 1969. Cultivation theory. The theory propounds that exposure to television viewing over a period of time will make an individual think and act based on what he or she has been exposed to. For instance, it was presumed that television was overtly and overly violent. Cultivation came about as a way to ascertain whether viewing contributed in any way to viewers’ conceptions and beliefs about the world. The basic hypothesis of Cultivation theory, though questioned by some, is that watching a great deal of television will be associated with the tendency to hold specific and distinct concepts of reality, concepts that are congruent with the most consistent and pervasive images and values of the medium. (Karen A. Foss & Stephen W. Littlejohn, 2009). It was equally developed to examine the long-term effects of television on American audiences of all ages. The first cultivation results were produced by George Gerbner and Larry Gross of the University of Pennsylvania, in 1976. In a Journal of Communication article titled “Living with Television: the Violence Profile” Cultivation theory derived from research project titled “Cultural Indicators”.

With this essential background, suffice it to say that exposure to the Television by Nigerian youths with special reference to sports betting glamorization is a lee way to the adoption of the habits displayed therein. This means that you can adopt the kind of media content you expose yourself to.

### **Economic Gratification**

As Television gaming begins to be a major factor in today’s environment, it is important to know that television gamers want Economic gratification. They stake monies on bets and games. This is what we notice when it comes to economic gratification for those involved in television gaming habits

Patience has long been considered a virtue, but today it seems more like an afterthought. We demand immediate responses to our instant messages. Our phones have Apps that simplify our lives and heighten our sense of immediate gratification. We record TV shows so we can skip commercials when we watch them later. Brick and mortar retailers are struggling to remain relevant in this new economy.

As humans, we are hard-wired to want immediate payoffs. Continuous advancements in technology have made instant gratification more intense. Some of the first businesses to respond to the need for immediacy were startups such as Uber, GrubHub and InstaCart. These companies are now each worth billions of dollars. The impact of this economy is not limited to just Business to consumer (B2C) companies, it's reach has extended to Business to Business (B2B) companies with less than favorable results. This "gratification" manifests itself in the obsession with short-term profits at the expense of creating long-term value. Investments in research and development, technology, equipment and worker training often get sacrificed to meet today's financial goals. Over the longer term, these sacrifices can have disastrous impacts to the bottom line. How a company balances the needs of immediate gratification vs long term strategy can be a strong indicator of sustainable results. Do financial leaders considered how this paradigm shift is impacting their team?

#### **The Power of Delayed Gratification**

In an interview published in Inc. Magazine, Craig Smith, who at the time was president of HomeAdvisor, a digital marketplace for home services, talked about the importance of having a long-term vision. He said it took 17 years for the company to grow to \$500 million, large enough to acquire their main competitor, Angie's List. The keys were bringing on board quality contractors and having a long-term view of marketing. "If you build a core base of loyal fans who really love your business and your product, you won't have to grind to get through every quarter," Smith said. In his very first letter to shareholders in 1997, Jeff Bezos laid out his approach to business and running Amazon. He summed up his philosophy in a six-word headline: "It's All About the Long Term." At the time, Amazon had just 256 employees and annual revenues of less than \$16 million.

#### **A Review of Television / Video Gaming habits**

Video gaming culture is universal due to the new media subculture created by video game hobbyists. As video games have rapidly increased in sophistication, accessibility and popularity over time, they have had a great influence on popular culture, especially among middle class adolescents and young adults. Television gaming culture has also changed with internet culture and the increasing popularity of mobile games. People who constantly play video game often identify as gamers, a term that can mean anything from players who only enjoy casual gaming to passionate enthusiasts and professional gaming competitors. The games becomes more social with multiplayer and online capability. Gamers find themselves in growing social networks. Playing video games can both be entertainment as well as competition, as the trend known as electronic sports or esports has become more widely accepted. Video game-focused gaming conventions have become popular social gathering events among computer enthusiasts since early 21<sup>st</sup> century and gaming system reviews and gameplay streaming have become important part of the geek culture.

#### **Influence of Television Sports Gaming on Youth**



Sports gaming has become a popular pastime for many youths around the world. With the advent of new technology and online platforms, young people are now able to engage in sports gaming on a larger scale than ever before. While sports gaming can be a fun and enjoyable activity, it can also have a significant impact on the livelihood of youth. This research will explore the influence of sports gaming on the livelihood of youths, including the positive and negative effects on physical health, mental health, academic performance, and social development.

### **Relationship between Gaming habits and Sports Betting**

Television sports gaming habits and sports betting have a complex and intertwined relationship. On the one hand, the growth of the gaming industry and the increasing popularity of eSports have led to new opportunities for sports betting. On the other hand, the rise of online sports betting has also had an impact on television sports gaming culture, influencing the way games are broadcast and consumed. This research will explore the relationship between television sports gaming culture and sports betting, including the impact of sports betting on the gaming industry, the role of advertising and sponsorship, and the challenges and opportunities presented by this relationship. Sports betting have become an increasingly popular form of gambling, with the global sports betting market estimated to be worth \$203 billion in 2020 (Statista, 2021).

### **Gambling Laws in Nigeria**

Gambling in Nigeria is regulated by the National Lottery Regulatory Commission. Lottery was legalized with the National Lottery Act, 2005 was recently nullified by November, 2024. By the nullification of this Acts enacted by the National Assembly, as it held that Lottery is not under the exclusive or concurrent lists. By implication, it means it is only States that have the right to legislate on lottery issues and lottery Act 2005 will be applicable to only the Federal Capital territory (FCT). Gambling is defined by Chapter 22 of the Criminal Code Act enacted in 1990. The law splits the games into two categories: The legal and illegal games. The legal games are lottery, land-based casino, and sports betting. Roulette, dice games, and non-skilled card games are illegal. The law regulates slot machine activity and only licensed operators can provide slot machine gambling. Money laundering activity is covered by the Money Laundering (Prohibition) Act, 2011. Although these laws are in place, gambling in Nigeria is not well regulated and as a result, there are many illegal casinos which operate in the country. The legal land-based casinos are located in the two largest cities with the current biggest casino being The Federal Palace Hotel, Lagos. Nigerian law focuses on activities to reduce money laundering and illegal gambling.

### **Online gambling**

Online gambling in Nigeria is regulated by the Nigerian Lottery Commission. All bookmakers are required to obtain a license from the gaming commission before operating in Nigeria. Nigerian law does not mention online space and there is no restriction for the people to reach local or foreign gambling sites. Although Internet space is not mentioned exactly in the law, the companies are obliged to follow the regulations and laws as it is for the land-based casinos. All types of online games are available except those that are illegal. Online Gambling Companies Nigeria is one of the most competitive markets in gambling in Africa. The size of the population and internet exposure of the residents creates the right conditions for online gambling companies to operate in. Gambling age The gambling age is defined by the law. People below the age of 18 cannot legally gamble. Payment gateways there is no obstacle when depositing

money to foreign or local bookies, although betting limits exist as defined by respective individual bookmakers. Users deposit money using bank cards, e-wallets such as Skrill or Neteller, and USSD services. There is no legal restriction or service blocking.

### **Nigerian Gambling Laws**

Nigerian Gambling Regulation and Legislation, The laws and regulations governing gambling in Nigeria can be a little confusing because there is no cut and dried law or legislation that solely addresses gambling in the West African Nation. Instead, there are two federal Acts that make reference to gambling in terms of what is illegal or not allowed, and what is legal and allowed. Here is a brief explanation of each: The Gaming Machines (Prohibition) Act of 1977 The first is The Gaming Machines (Prohibition) Act of 1977, which specifies that the ownership and use of gaming machines in Nigeria is illegal, and that the penalty if caught and convicted of owning and using gaming machines, is a year in prison without the option of a fine. In addition, all proceeds derived from said machines as well as the machines themselves are liable to be confiscated by the Nigerian Government. According to the Act, a gaming machine is considered to be any mechanical coin or token operated gambling or gaming device that is used for the sole purpose of enticing people to gamble in the hope they win monetary rewards. The Nigerian Criminal Code Act The second Act in Nigeria that pertains to what constitutes legal and illegal gambling practices is the Nigerian Criminal Code, specifically Subsection 1 of Section 236 in Chapter 22.

In this Act, an illegal gaming house is defined as any property or venue where unlawful gaming is offering or undertaken. If caught, the owner, operator, manager or occupier of an illegal gaming house can face a fine of 1000 Naira and/or two years in prison. The Act goes on to specify which types of gambling are permitted and which are not. In other words, which games are unlawful (see the list below). This, of course, begs the question of what constitutes legal or lawful gambling in Nigeria. What is Lawful Gaming in Nigeria? There are really only three lawful types of gambling in Nigeria – betting / pools, lotteries and a handful of land casinos. Here is a brief description and explanation of each:

#### **Lotteries**

According to Section 240 in Chapter 22 of the Nigerian Criminal Code Act, “lottery” includes any game, method or device whereby money or money's worth is distributed or allotted in any manner based on or to be determined by chance or lot. A lottery ticket includes any ticket, paper or other printed article that entitles the holder who has the winning numbers to collect its corresponding cash prize or equivalent. A "public lottery" means a lottery to which the public or any class of the public has, or may have, access, and every lottery shall, until the contrary is proved, be deemed to be a public lottery. According to Section 240, anyone caught acting like a ‘middle-man’ between a public lottery and buyers of lottery tickets players is liable for a 100 Naira fine or six months in prison.

#### **Young People’s Attitude towards sports gambling**

According to Hanss, Mentzoni, Delfabbro, Myrseth, and Pallesen (2014) “public perceptions of gambling are often equivocal. On the one hand, people are usually aware that gambling poses serious risks to those who are predisposed to gamble excessively”.

However, Vong (2009) on the other hand, it is also acknowledged that gambling can have positive consequences for communities (e.g. via the provision of a source of revenue for sporting clubs or humanitarian causes) and can be an enjoyable pastime for individuals. The balance of such negative and positive views according to Gainsbury, Wood, Russell, Hing, and Blaszczynski (2012) in Hanss, Mentzoni, Delfabbro, Myrseth, and Pallesen (2014) is very likely to affect the attitudes that individuals hold toward gambling and ultimately influences their decisions to engage in gambling.

There numerous studies in the literature that show that someone’s attitude towards gambling will determine how such an individual gambles and if he will experience gambling addiction. These works discovered that “those who hold more positive attitudes toward gambling are more likely to gamble and to experience gambling-related problems” (Chiu & Storm, 2010). These findings according to Fishbein (2000) as cited in Hanss, Mentzoni, Delfabbro, Myrseth, and Pallesen (2014) provide support for theories of behaviour and decision-making that assign attitudes an important role in determining people’s intentions to act and, indirectly, their actual behaviour. An example is the theory of planned behaviour.

### Methodology

The study adopted the survey method. Cozby (2007) says that a survey research design helps the researcher identify the relationship that exists among variables and the way attitude and behavior change over time. It also provides the avenue in which the researcher can elicit opinions and view from the respondents. Survey research investigates the relative occurrence, distribution, and interrelationships of sociological and psychological factors in both large and small groups by selecting and analyzing samples taken from the population (Okwachime, 2016). The study utilized questionnaire method to ascertain the view of respondents on Television Gaming Habits of Port Harcourt Youths, the universe of the study comprised the youths of Port Harcourt Metropolis which includes the entire Port Harcourt (Local Government Area), Obio Akpor and portions of Eleme Local Government Areas which is projected to be 1,858,165. A sample size of 400 was derived using Taro Yamane formula.

To ensure the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was subjected to expert review. Professors, communication scholars and supervisors evaluated the instrument to ensure its relevance, clarity, and ability to accurately capture the variables of interest. Data from the study were analyzed using frequency distribution tables and percentage.

### Results

**Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Respondents**

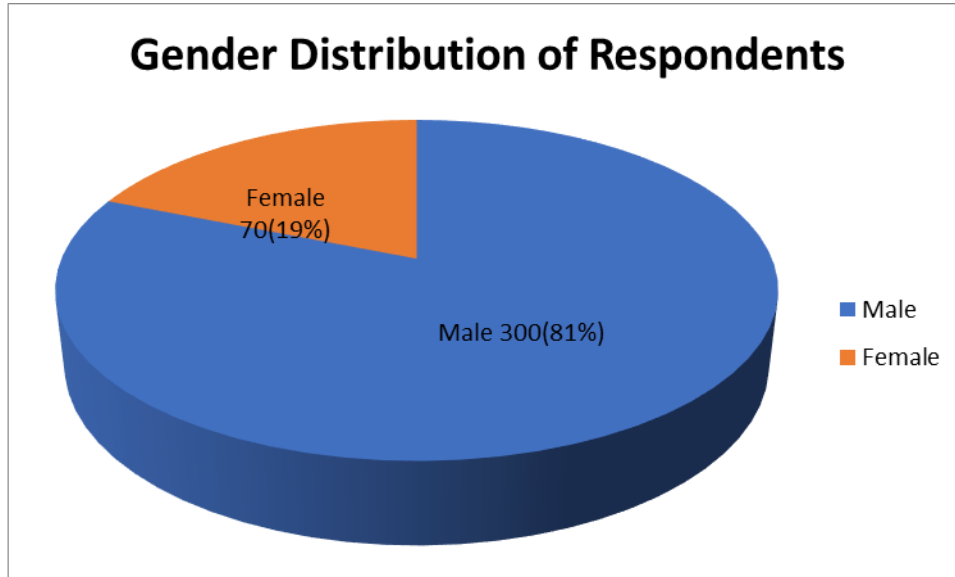
S/No	Variables	Frequency	Percent (%)
1.	<b>Gender</b>		
	Male	300	81
	Female	70	19
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>100</b>
2.	<b>Age</b>		
	18-23	280	76
	24-29	80	22
	30-35	10	3
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>100</b>



3.	<b>Marital Status</b>		
	Married	230	62
	Single	120	32
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>100</b>
4.	<b>Occupation</b>		
	Student	180	49
	Civil Servant	60	16
	Business	70	19
	Artisan	40	11
	Others	20	5
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>100</b>
5.	<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
	Higher Degree	170	46
	HND/BSc/B.A	165	45
	WASSCE	20	5
	FSLC	15	4
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>100</b>
6.	<b>Religion</b>		
	Christian	280	76
	Muslim	10	3
	Tradition	50	14
	Others	30	8
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>100</b>

Result from Table 1, showed that majority of respondents are male (81%) compared to female (19%), indicating a significant gender disparity. Age distribution shows that the largest group falls within the 18-23 years range (76%), followed by those aged 24-29 years (22%), and a small proportion aged 30-35 years (3%). Marital status data indicate that most respondents are married (62%), with single individuals making up 32% of the sample. Regarding occupation, nearly half of the respondents are students (49%), with civil servants (16%), businesspersons (19%), artisans (11%), and others (5%) comprising the rest. In terms of educational qualifications, 46% hold a higher degree, 45% have HND/BSc/BA, while 5% and 4% possess WASSCE and FSLC qualifications, respectively. The religious affiliation of respondents shows a predominance of Christians (76%), with Muslims (3%), traditionalists (14%), and others (8%) forming the minority. The sample is predominantly young, male, and Christian, with a significant portion being students or holding higher education degrees. This demographic profile highlights the importance of considering these factors in any relevant analyses or interventions aimed at this population.

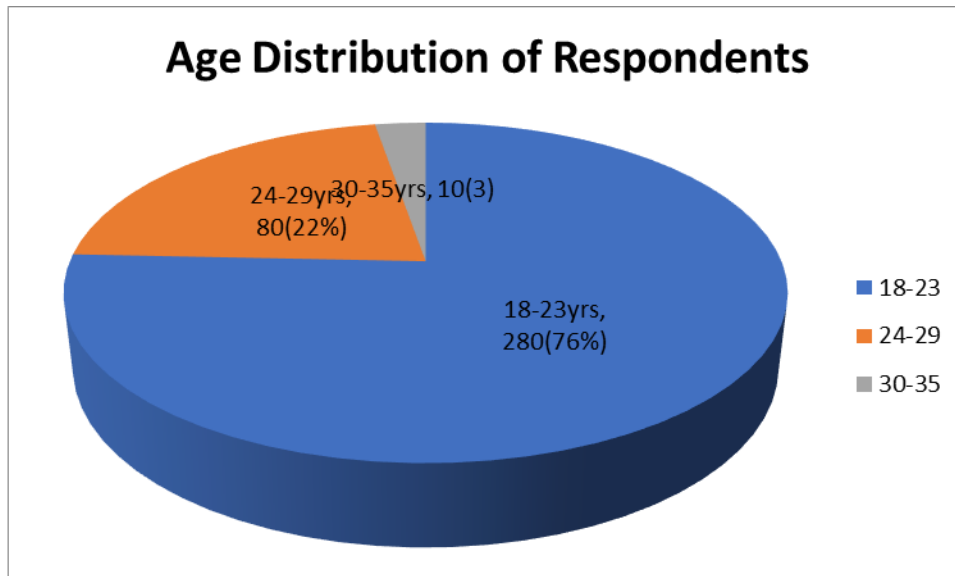
### Gender Distribution



**Figure 1: Showing Gender Distribution**

Result obtained from Figure 1 on distribution of gender showed a significant imbalance, with males constituting 81% (300 individuals) and females making up 19% (70 individuals). The result also indicated that male is predominant.

### Age Distribution

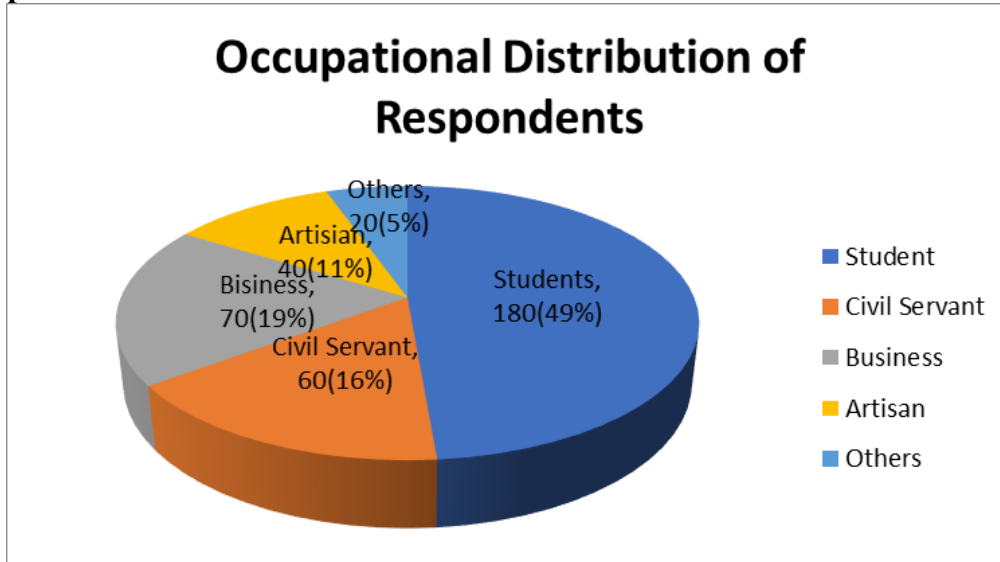


**Figure 2: Showing Age Distribution**

Result obtained from Figure 2 revealed that majority of respondents (76%, 280

individuals) are aged 18-23, followed by 22% (80 individuals) aged 24-29, and a small fraction (3%, 10 individuals) aged 30-35. The sample is largely composed of young adults, primarily in the 18-23 age range.

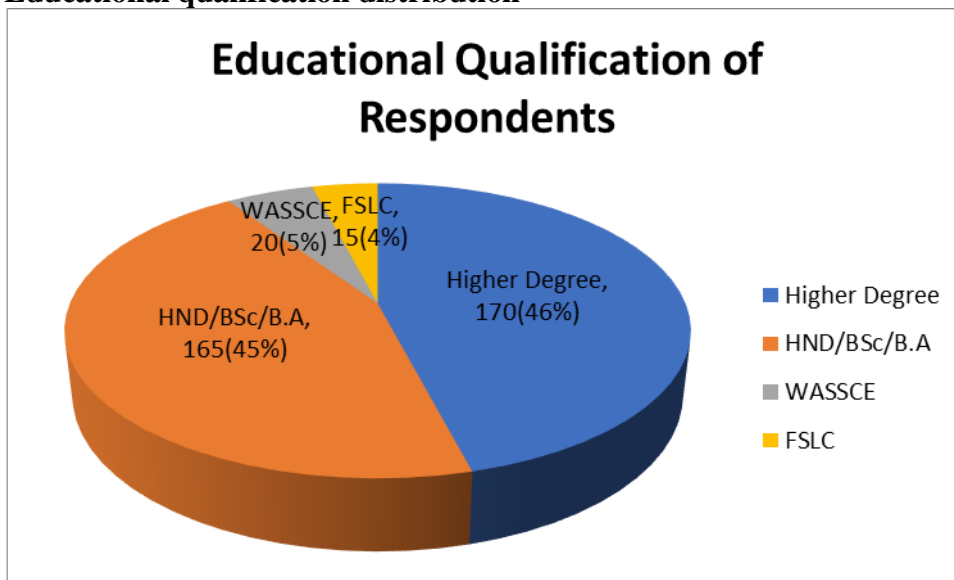
### Occupation Distribution



**Figure 3: Showing Occupation Distribution**

Result obtained from Figure 3 indicated that students form the largest occupational group at 49% (180 individuals), followed by business at 19% (70 individuals), civil servants at 16% (60 individuals), artisans at 11% (40 individuals), and others at 5% (20 individuals). The sample predominantly consists of students, with a diverse range of other occupations represented.

### Educational qualification distribution



**Figure 4: Showing Educational qualification distribution**

Result obtained from Figure 4 revealed that educational qualifications are fairly evenly distributed between those with higher degrees (46%, 170 individuals) and HND/BSc/B.A (45%, 165 individuals), with smaller proportions having WASSCE (5%, 20 individuals) and FSLC (4%, 15 individuals). The sample has a high level of educational attainment, with nearly equal representation of higher degree holders and HND/BSc/B.A graduates.

**Question;** What are the economic gratifications derived by youths in Port Harcourt from television gaming?

**Table 2: Percentage analysis on the economic gratifications derived by youths in Port Harcourt from television gaming**

S/N	ITEMS	Agree	%	Disagree	%
12	To make extra money	255	69	115	31
13	To get more information about sports	271	73	99	27
14	My friends are into sports betting	286	77	84	23
15	To support my favourite team	294	79	76	21
16	To have fun and participate in social activities.	269	73	101	27
17	I don't have any other job	282	76	88	24
18	Enticing ubiquitous advertisements	298	81	72	19

Based on the Likert scale analysis from Table 2 on the economic gratifications derived by youths in Port Harcourt from television gaming, several key insights emerged Firstly, a significant number of respondents (79%) of respondents agree that they engage in television gaming to support their favorite teams, indicating a strong emotional and possibly financial investment in sports. This suggests that gaming serves not just as entertainment but also as a means of expressing loyalty and support. Secondly, a notable portion (81%) of respondents agree that enticing ubiquitous advertisements play a role in their engagement with television gaming. This high agreement suggests that advertising plays a persuasive role in attracting youths to gaming activities, potentially influencing their spending behaviors. Lastly, a substantial number (76%) of respondents indicate that they do not have any other job, implying that for a significant portion of youths in Port Harcourt, gaming might serve as a supplementary income source or a primary means of engagement when other job opportunities are scarce. The findings underscore that television gaming among youths in Port Harcourt is driven not only by entertainment and social motives but also by economic factors such as supporting favorite teams and potentially supplementing income. Moreover, the influence of advertising highlights the commercial dynamics shaping youths' engagement with gaming activities in the region.

**Question:** What are the discernible diversionary and anti-social behaviour that youths derive from television gaming?

**Table 3: Percentage analysis on the discernible diversionary and anti-social behaviour that youths derive from television gaming**

S/N	ITEMS	Agree	%	Disagree	%
22	Development of criminal behaviours	260	70	110	30
23	Betting addictions	280	76	90	24
24	After exposure to media representation, I used my school fees or business money to bet	288	78	82	22
25	Have you ever used the money from the bet wins for alcohol, smoking and having fun with friends	297	80	73	20
26	Suicidal thoughts	269	73	101	27
27	I invest in business and meet my financial obligations	290	78	80	22
28	Difficulties in clearing outstanding debts	300	81	70	19

Based on the analysis presented in Table 3 regarding discernible diversionary and anti-social behaviors derived from television gaming among youths revealed that there is a significant majority, 70%, agree that exposure contributes to the development of criminal behaviors, indicating a perceived link between media consumption and negative conduct. Additionally, 76% acknowledge the risk of developing betting addictions, highlighting a prevalent concern among respondents. Further analysis shows that 78% of respondents have used school fees or business funds for betting after media exposure, suggesting a direct financial impact on personal responsibilities due to media influences. Moreover, 80% have used bet winnings for activities like alcohol, smoking, and socializing, underscoring a potential pathway from gaming to risky behaviors. The results indicated that there is a strong association between television gaming exposure and detrimental outcomes such as criminal tendencies, betting addictions, financial mismanagement, and risky behaviors. Addressing these issues requires holistic approaches that consider media literacy, youth education, and supportive interventions to mitigate the negative impacts of media consumption on vulnerable populations.

#### **Discuss of Findings**

The finding in Table 2 underscored that television gaming among youths in Port Harcourt is driven not only by entertainment and social motives but also by economic factors such as supporting favorite teams and potentially supplementing income. Moreover, the influence of advertising highlights the commercial dynamics shaping youths' engagement with gaming activities in the region.

In Table 3, the finding indicated a strong association between television gaming



exposure and detrimental outcomes such as criminal tendencies, betting addictions, financial mismanagement, and risky behaviors. Addressing these issues requires holistic approaches that consider media literacy, youth education, and supportive interventions to mitigate the negative impacts of media consumption on vulnerable populations.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study it is concluded that sports betting among respondents reveals several critical insights. Nearly universal knowledge of sports betting, with 95% familiar, underscores its widespread influence. However, active information seeking is less prevalent, suggesting time constraints or preferences for passive acquisition. Participation is high, with 84% engaging in betting, reflecting its popularity and social acceptance.

Economic factors and support for favorite teams drive television gaming among youths in Port Harcourt, with advertising significantly influencing engagement. Football is the preferred sport for betting, guiding strategic planning and marketing. The activity's time-intensive nature, with many spending over three hours on it, highlights its popularity and significant time commitment. The study also notes a strong association between television gaming and negative outcomes, including criminal tendencies and financial mismanagement, suggesting the need for comprehensive interventions. Furthermore, a significant relationship between television gaming habits and economic gratifications was identified, impacting youth participation in betting activities.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, it is recommended as follows:

1. Local government and business development officers should create programs that help youths monetize their gaming skills, such as through esports competitions, streaming, and game development workshops.
2. Social workers and community leaders should conduct assessments and provide intervention programs that address and mitigate any negative social impacts of gaming, ensuring a balanced and healthy engagement with television gaming.

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