

An Investigation into Smart Marketing Tactics  
and the use of Sponsorship by the Gambling  
Industry to Determine the effect it has on  
Young Irish Males Motivation to Gamble and  
the Emotional Attachment it Withholds

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## ***Abstract***

Online gambling is an extremely popular outlet for users to be involved and it has quickly become a global phenomenon as they are involved in games of chance for monetary amounts in return (Fulton, 2015). Online users can engage in betting services through a variety of gaming options. There are many alluring entities to this industry, yet it can also have detrimental effects on an individual leading them down a self-deceiving cycle of devastating results in some cases. This paper aims to highlight new and interesting findings relating to youth gambling between the ages of (18-24) across Ireland, through measuring the affects that smart marketing tactics have on three distinct groups of individuals. These groups are divided into

- (i) “*Occasional Gambler*” – rarely involved in the industry within, yet still has a betting profile.
- (ii) “*Moderate*” – a moderate gambler, often involved in bet wagering (couple of times a month) has an active betting profile.
- (iii) “*Vulnerable*” – A consumer in which is betting multiple times a week.

The objective of this study is to investigate how the Irish gambling industry, encourages young Irish male users to become repeat customers using social media and smart marketing tactics. Posing a question:

*“Are young males (18-24) in Ireland being mentally shaped by the gambling industry through the use of smart marketing tactics in order to become gamblers for life?”*

### ***Method:***

The researcher will be conducting a qualitative approach through in-depth interviews over a three-month period. The researcher aims to discover how marketing tactics influence individuals from each of the named reference groups.

### ***Results:***

Most respondents recalled sponsorship deals currently promoted by the gambling industry highlighting how it is influential for many consumers including adolescents. Advertising messages in which incorporate emotional appeals gather the most attention from consumers in which encourage call to actions and brand recall, highlighting their the most influential for the chosen age demographic. Research highlighted that promotional advertisements generate high level of involvement yet can be deemed as bombardment from the industry.

**Conclusions:**

There is clear evidence that promotional incentives are a driver of motivation for users within the 18-24 age demographic within Ireland. Highlighting that regulatory change is needed to protect vulnerable consumers from the tactics used by the industry.

**Keywords:**

Gambling, Bet Wagering, Advertising, Emotional Appeals, Marketing Campaigns, Sponsorship, Sport, Addictive Consumption, Chasing Losses.

## Declaration

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*Cheryll Dillon, August 2020.*

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## *1.0 - Overview*

### **1.1 Introduction**

Gambling is a renowned industry in which has high levels of participation among users in a global context. In the eyes of many consumers gambling is perceived as a harmless pastime which has been deemed a social activity for fun (Dean, 2011). Yet, through conducting research it has been found that there has been an increase in problem gambling behaviour due to the accessibility and array of gambling choices available to consumers (Gainsbury et al., 2012). With gambling being a popular pastime for many consumers, Irish youth are led to believe that this pastime holds no detrimental effects and is simply deemed a popular socially accepted form of entertainment (Derevensky and Gilbeau, 2015). With this industry being presented to consumers in a positive manner using sponsorship with popular sporting activities it places a positive brand perception in the mind of the consumer. Within an Irish context, Ireland are currently unsure of the exact number of problem gamblers but from research conducted in consumer spending it highlighted that Irish consumers gamble more than €5bn (Rouse, 2016). A problem gambler is defined as an individual who does not know when to stop being involved in bet wagering as they are no longer in a controlled state of mind regardless of losses (Linnet et al., 2010).

Highlighting it's a popular industry for consumer spending. This figure may be rising due to the availability of services as it allows a bet wager to be placed on a variety of offerings alongside the increase in advertising messages and campaigns.



## 1.2 Justification for Research

From conducting extensive research much research has been devoted to the gambling industry. Yet, with legislation and societal changes research regarding the gambling sector has quickly become outdated. With the rise of accessibility for users to join remote gambling sites it is essential for research to be conducted to determine the current figures of active gamblers today. With many consumers actively involved in bet wagering and holding online betting accounts (Meyer et al., 2009), it is unusual that Ireland still does not have a current figure for the amount of individuals actively engaged in gambling and or the exact figure of problem gamblers as it is a growing concern for the Irish nation (Murray, 2019). There is a lack of studies in a European context in relation to adolescence and young male gambling to uncover their motivations to gamble. Therefore, it has resulted in a study in relation to the Irish market. The justification for this study is to understand the effects sponsorship and smart marketing tactics have on young Irish males to uncover the individual's motivations and emotional attachments to said industry. In turn, the researcher wants to obtain information of why youth gambling for males is on the rise in Ireland.

## 2.0 – Literature Review

### 2.1 Remote Gambling

Gambling is an activity in which an individual is involved in games of chance for monetary amounts in return (Fulton, 2015). It is a globally recognised activity in which has risen over time in popularity and has now become a globally recognised addictive consumption product in which can result in significant harms to individuals which has also has an effect on families and communities (Lewis et al., 2015). Consumers have access to gambling services in many forms ranging from in house services such as bookmakers, casinos and online gambling services therefore providing more opportunities for consumers to be involved with the industry. Now with the rise of digital technologies, consumers have access to the internet twenty-four hours a day leading to an increased availability to internet gambling leading to a phenomenon known as “Remote Gambling” or “E-Gambling” which provides consumers with increased odds an array of betting options (Options for Regulating Gambling, 2010). Online gambling has been available since the mid 1990’s (Griffiths, 1999) yet with the integration of digitalisation and gamification remote gambling has fast paced become the leader in the betting industry in which generates profits globally of \$336 billion in 2012 as they have access to a large volume of potential consumers to target (Justice, 2010). Through conducting research, it has been found that Paddy Power and their company merger with BetFair became the largest online gambling firm in Europe with a market value of 10 billion Euro (Statista, 2020). It has also been found that online gambling is the most popular form on betting in Ireland with almost half of gambling losses accumulated by the online industry (Problem gambling facts and statistics - SpunOut.ie - Ireland's Youth Information Website, 2020).

Gambling is a growing concern within Ireland (Department of Health, 2019). The Irish department of health conducted research into the Irish gambling industry and uncovered many interesting insights in which are relevant to this research area. The research highlighted that online gambling is most prevalent in the age demographic of 25-34-year-old users at 5.7% followed by 18-24 years old users at 4,8% (Ibid).

The figures also shown that males have a higher prevalence of becoming problem gamblers at 1.4% against females at 0.2% (Ibid). The study also highlighted that problem gambling is most common in young males from 1.9% of 18-24-year olds and 2.9% in 25-34 (Ibid).

A “problem gambler” is defined as an individual who does not know when to stop being involved in bet wagering as they are no longer in a controlled state of mind regardless of losses (Linnet et al., 2010).

These insights, highlight there is a rising issue of young male gamblers in Ireland who have

progressed to become problem gamblers due to the availability of betting sites and bookmakers.

### 2.1.1 Popular Betting Activities

Irish consumers are heavily involved with the gambling industry in regards of online and offline services. In 2019, Irish consumers spent €9.8bn over all on the gambling industry with €4.3bn being spent on horse racing and other sports betting and €4.7bn on online and offline gaming machines and bingo (Neil, 2019). In comparison to 2018, Irish consumers spent €8bn on all forms of gambling both online and offline, in 2017 Irish consumers spent €6.2bn showing an increase yearly on consumer spending on the industry (Neil, 2019). Irish consumers relationship with gambling is progressively getting worse highlighting the dysfunctional relationship. With many consumers struggling with problem gambling and addiction during this rising addictive industry.

**Horse Racing:** Irish consumers place the most betting wagers on horseracing with over 70% of betting wagers placed on this sport (Sports Betting Ireland | Updated Data | Ireland's Top Bookmakers, 2020).

**Casino Gaming:** Online casinos are very popular for Irish consumers with many betting sites like Bet365 and Betfair offering casino services with appealing offers. When searching online for Irish online casinos consumers are greeted with an array of alluring promotional offers to entice them into the industry such as “deposit amount matched by the company” “free spins” “welcome bonuses”. Online casino gambling allows users to enjoy the offering from the comfort of their home alongside target a large volume of consumers due to the array of service offerings such as roulette, bingo, poker. With the rise of digitalisation consumers can now place large wagers on their chosen area of spending making it a more appealing offering than offline services (Murphy, 2019). Research on consumer spending regarding the gambling industry highlighted that casino gambling is proving to be more popular than sports betting (Neil, 2019).

**Football:** Football can be perceived as the most popular sporting event worldwide (Davies, 2020), with many clubs having a direct gambling sponsor attached promoting their services. Football is the most popular sporting area to gamble on within the UK (Brent, 2018), as it is the home to major clubs, renowned players, and league events as the FA Cup. The FA cup, an English league event attracts a large following annually. In 2017, it was reported that the FA cup final alone attracted 7.9 million viewers across all platforms showcasing the popularity of this sport (Ibid). Gambling sponsorship in the UK market is a popular outlet for the advertising industry with 17 out of 24 clubs having shirt sponsorship from Sky Bet

(Davies, 2020). Alongside sponsoring stands and stadiums, fans and viewers are continuously reminded of the partnership of betting and football (Ibid).

## 2.2 Big Data and Remote Gambling

With the rise of digitisation and smart technology 91% of Irish consumers own a smartphone with high percentage usage rates showcasing that individuals are continuously engaging with their device for various reasons (Global Mobile Consumer Survey 2019 | Deloitte Ireland, 2019). Now with the rise of smartphone accessibility many consumers engage in online gambling services often, with Deloitte reporting that many consumers use their smartphones to engage in betting services with 6% of users using their smartphone to place or redeem their bets (Deloitte, 2017). The gambling industry are availing of digital advancements through the incorporation of big data and digital footprints. Big data is a variety of unstructured and structured data sets containing in depth information in which is too large to process in a traditional manner. Digital footprints are time stamped insights which highlight a consumers behaviour and interactions in an online setting (Tuton and Solomon, 2015), which provide the gambling industry with key consumer insights such as mobile transaction history and online traffic to target consumers more effectively in order to create relationships and to improve customer relationships (George et al., 2014). The insights big data provides will also showcase customer profiles which provide market researchers with an in-depth insight such as purchasing behaviours and customer website visits through the use of data analytics (Charlesworth, 2014) which allows the industry to create user targeted approaches to promotions and advertisements. Many consumers prefer the ease of e-gambling through online apps and websites such as Bet365, BetFair due to ease of betting at any time, improved odd's, cash out options, live betting with updates. An enticing offering from the e-gambling service is known as "in-play betting" allowing consumers to bet on varying offerings within the live event such as football matches choosing a first goal scorer or which player will receive a yellow card. It entices consumers to be involved with the incorporation of appealing odds. These elements have provided benefits both to the consumers alongside the industry. As the industry has a larger reach in a variety of countries alongside access to key consumer insights through the creation of customer profiles through the incorporation of big data (Top online gambling companies, by market value 2017 | Statista, 2017). From conducting research, it was found that in play bet offerings for football have been the fastest growing element of e-gambling with consumer expenditure rising from £355 million in 2010 to £600 million in 2012 (Ibid).

When a consumer joins an e-gambling service, they have created a user profile in which provides their email address. Big data and digital footprints will gather all relative data on specific consumers, for marketers to understand their behaviours and interests allowing effective targeting. Digital crawling will showcase how long a consumer will spend on site alongside highlighting their betting interests i.e. horse racing and virtual horse racing.

Marketers and market researchers can obtain this data to effectively target the consumer on a weekly basis to be involved with the industry through providing incentives to play further. This can be perceived as bombardment as an individual cannot stray away from their addiction as they are enticed to play further. Alongside e-promotions, consumers are continuously targeted during live sporting events through sponsorship tactics ensuring positive brand perceptions to encourage further business with the industry. If the industry feels they have lost a consumer due to the lack of engagement with websites or applications, marketers will use promotional activities such as a free in play bet offer to entice the consumer back to the brand in order to recreate brand loyalty. Many consumers simply join a betting wager due to the promotional incentive provided by the industry due to “fear of missing out”, these fear tactics are used to lure consumers back to play to avoid consumer loss.

Many consumers want to excel at gambling in order to gain larger monetary amounts leading to many consumers search keywords relating to sports betting in order to understand the industry further for example “betting tips, football betting tips” has been a popular search among the UK consumer (Statista, 2020). Digital footprints allow marketers to become aware of the traits of the consumer highlighting the times in which they place a betting wager. If they haven’t bet within a specific time frame, they are targeted using promotional tactics to influence their referral back to the site. These digital footprints incorporated into gambling sites can be seen as an ethical violation as it is an invasion of consumer privacy alongside creating a dangerous environment for vulnerable consumers who are battling against addiction due to extensive user targeted advertisements (Nissenbaum, 2004). This unethical practice by the industry is shaping consumer behaviour within the industry as they are spamming the consumer with informational and promotional offerings to entice them and gain positive brand perceptions.

With the incorporation of digital footprints on gambling sites, smart marketing techniques have been created in which target vulnerable or “problem” gamblers in which alter a consumer’s mindset. Thus, through the rise of remote gambling and the partnership with big data, consumers are becoming more vulnerable due to the information digital footprints has gathered allowing marketers to target consumers more effectively regardless of ethical violations (Gainsbury, S. M. *et al.*,2016).

## *2.3 Creation of Target Market and Advertising Tactics*

As the gambling industry is an extremely popular outlet on a global level many strive to become market leaders. Yet, it is a challenging outcome as there is a large volume of competitors within this industry with a lack of differentiation within service offerings. Making it difficult for companies to stand out from competitors to drive customer acquisition. Leading to companies using promotional tactics and smart marketing tactics to encourage customer acquisition. To differentiate their service offering many businesses will create a persona which is based upon their ideal consumer to drive brand value (D'Adderio, 2008).

### *Paddy Power Brand Persona*

Paddy Power and their merger with BetFair placed the organisation in a superior position to their competitors, due to their advancements in technology through the creation of their mobile betting app, making remote gambling easily accessible (Kennedy, 2010). Meeting consumer demands through understanding their needs and wants in which will drive brand value. Paddy Power also strived against competitors due to their brand personality and how it resonated it with high volumes of consumers due to their tongue and cheek, humorous advertisements which has polarised the nation at times. Their advertisements target specific personas who have similar interests and attitudes. Creating a relationship with consumers using emotional appeals.

### *Emotional Appeals*

Advertising uses informational and emotional appeals using consistent messages to target consumers effectively (Hansen, 2005). To make the consumer aware of industry offerings, encourage engagement and to provoke conversations between individuals (Fill, 2013). Many companies incorporate appeals into their advertising campaigns to be effective in a crowded marketing place as a company must be noticed and then remembered (Clow and Baack, 2005).

An *emotional appeal* creates a connection between the consumer and the brand, providing a reason for the consumer to choose your company over another competitor. It aims to create a positive or negative emotion through enticing the consumer or motivating them to purchase the offering, in turn creating positive brand perceptions (Albers-Miller and Stafford, 1999).

Emotional appeals can be created through incorporating humour, fear, sex, or music into an advertisement to place a positive brand perception in the mind of the consumer (Clow and Baack, 2005). The outcome is dependent on the individual, as each consumer has different reactions.

*Fear appeals* are used to deter a consumer away from an industry through focusing on a solution or an opportunity to change (Veljanova and Ciunova-Shuleska, 2019), through highlighting negative outcomes that an individual may experience due to unsafe behaviours (Lewis et al., 2007). This form of appeal evokes a negative emotion on the consumer in which in turn will motivate the consumer to align their emotions and behaviours with those recommended in the advertising message (Schneider et al., 2001).

*Informational Appeals* are used to inform a consumer of your offering through highlighting features and or benefits to convince usage and create positive brand perceptions (Kotler and Armstrong, 1994).

Yet, there's more than just emotional appeals in which need to be incorporated into advertising campaigns, marketers need to place a message into their advertisement through a call to action i.e. purchasing in order to gain a free bet (Clow and Baack, 2005). Included are some advertisements incorporating appeals.

#### Emotional Appeals Through Humour Paddy Power

Paddy Power incorporate tongue and cheek humour into their campaigns to drive brand awareness and customer acquisition. There regarded as a strong presence in advertising in Ireland.

Paddy Power used humour within an advertisement targeting Manchester United fans, through creating a life size wax figure of Sir Alex Ferguson outside Old Trafford.



Figure 1 "In Case of Emergency" <https://images.app.goo.gl/pbFqGzsp5aRYV597>



They also made a stream of advertisements known as “lets make things more interesting” through incorporating odd’s on scenarios. Once again showcasing tongue and cheek controversial humour. In which raises their popularity.



Figure 2 "Let's Make Things Interesting" <https://images.app.goo.gl/LKmjRs9ESLBoxw5y8>



Figure 3 "Lets Make Things Interesting" <https://images.app.goo.gl/pEWKEDL79RZ4SjQY7>

### Fear Appeals to Deter Usage – Quit Smoking

A renowned successful Irish advert using fear appeals was a quit smoking advert using a man with cancer caused by smoking “I wish I was an Actor”. It used a real-life scenario to highlight the dangers smoking can have on an individual.

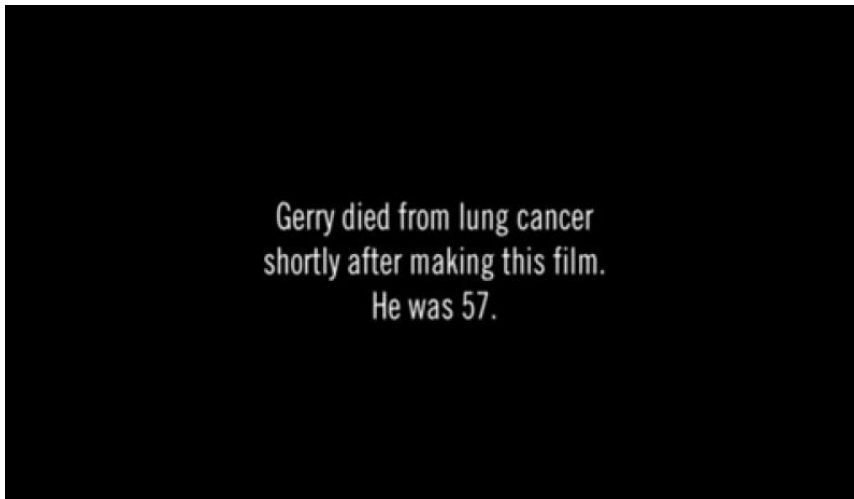


Figure 4 "I wish I was an Actor" <https://images.app.goo.gl/emilWnJhRBeCs369>

### Informational Appeals by Paddy Power

Paddy Power incorporate informational appeals to entice consumers into bet wagering through highlighting company offerings.



Figure 5 Paddy Power Informational Appeals of Bet Offerings; <https://images.app.goo.gl/hkRGmoGc8rzGkYwCA>

### *Advertising Tactics used by the Gambling Industry – Sponsorship Integration*

Research suggests that an individual's greater exposure to advertising tactics used by the gambling industry has portrayed positive brand perceptions and attitudes in which initiates a consumer to place a betting wager (Anderson et al., 2009). Within a UK football context, gambling advertisement is found relatively everywhere. If an advertisement isn't showcased during half time, the opportunity has not been missed by the industry due to heavy sponsorship in real time such as logo's and shirt and stadium sponsorship. The gambling industry also incorporates advertising messages into programmes relating to the sport, such as Match of the Day in which showcases gambling logos and branding for 71%-89% of the shows running time (Davies, 2020). Therefore, the industry is incorporating a *call to action* through live sporting events. Encouraging users to be involved with the industry as their club or interest is related to the industry itself, creating a positive brand perception for the consumer. This call to action will entice consumers to the industry through unique brand offerings such as betting on live sporting events in play and or unique promotions within adverting messages can allow consumer relationships to evolve ensuring brand loyalty (Stern, 1988). The gambling industry was targeted in recent times due to the issue of bombardment of gambling advertisements during live sporting events (Duncan, Davies and Sweney, 2020). It is a concern for the younger demographic as it provides positive brand perceptions and messages of encouragement to gamble. During the World Cup, viewers were exposed to 90 minutes of bet related advertisements (Ibid). Highlighting the issue of continuously showcasing the availability of the industry could lead to a positive relation to problem gambling (Tidwell and Hoffman, 2007).

### *Advertising Tactics used by Market Leaders*

Research highlighted that advertising messages and appeals influence and or impact an individual's motivation to purchase and or heighten brand awareness (Binde, 2014).

Alongside being influential to their brand perceptions and decision making (Ibid).

Gambling institutions are creating positive brand messages to consumers using social media campaigns, targeting infrequent and frequent gamblers to partake in activities (Abrams et al., 2013), with many unable to resist the temptation of the brand messages. Gambling operators use social media to target their chosen brand personas who have similar value and views to the brand to build relationships and connections with current and potential customers (Sproston et al., 2015). With gambling advertisements highlighting the positives of the industry through showcasing sponsorship and major sporting events, it can reduce the effect that responsible gambling campaigns have on audiences who need aid.

Paddy Power incorporate stunt marketing which holds shock value into their advertising methods to create engaging content for consumers to enjoy and create conversations. They gain consumer interest whether it be positive or negative through placing tongue and cheek content online, examples can be found within section 2.3 under "Emotional Appeals".

Through implementing these marketing tactics, it drives consumers to their online remote gambling service through a wide array of touchpoints such as referrals from social media, their app itself continuously framing consumers mind through constant positive messages in relation to gambling. SkyBet and Betway have created advertisements found on social media platforms using popular English players such as Declan Rice and Paul Merson to discuss betting, highlighting to younger audiences the positives of the industry and the allure it holds (Davies, 2020). Through creating positive and consistent messaging they are highlighting the positives in relation to the industry such as a fun "winning" environment (Gainsbury et al., 2015). Although there are many problematic behaviours including addiction associated with gambling, there are not strict guidelines or restrictions placed around the advertisements of this industry (Derevensky et al., 2016). Gambling advertising is a factor in the contribution of problem gambling due to positive exposure it has on consumers and its enticing nature through increasing the urge to gamble (Derevensky et al., 2010). Through continuous exposure to gambling advertisements it is increasing an individual's awareness of the brand and the availability it has (Hanss et al., 2015). An area in which the gambling industry hide away from is the issue of problem gambling, they acknowledge users may have an issue, but it doesn't put a stop to some ethical violations they condone through marketing practices. Consumers who are known as problem gamblers are not able to escape the marketing efforts of the gambling industry due to the ease of restrictions in online gambling as it is become a normalised industry (Gainsbury et al., 2015). The industry has

created advertisements highlighting the industry alongside placing responsible gambling advertisements alongside it to showcase how it can be perceived as “ethical”.

### *Positive Brand Messages*

Marketers can drive traffic to their website through call to actions implemented in social media campaigns in which entice consumers to be involved with the industry through bet wagering. As previously stated, once you join a bet wagering site a consumer is continuously monitored through big data and data crawling alongside receiving unwanted push notifications and promotions enticing you to engage in activities (Pulse, 2012). This practice can be perceived as bombardment in some cases as a vulnerable consumer cannot escape the grip of the industry. Research conducted showed that consumers who had an online betting profile were impacted greatly by online advertisements as they would refer back to their profile in order to engage in betting practices due to the positive emotional response (Hing et al., 2014). The study also showed that consumers who did not have an online betting profile were not as enticed to gamble (Ibid). This showcases that online advertisements regarding the betting industry prompts an array of consumers to the website using a call to action. These consistent messages from the gambling industry showcased many positive emotional appeals through humour and joy changing a consumer’s perception of the industry to positive showing the industry as a harmless activity to be engaged in. Furthermore, the efforts of the gambling industry as excelling to normalise this “negatively implicated” pastime (Moore & Ohtsuka, 1999).

With the normalisation of this pastime many users are unaware of the harmful impact the industry can cause on an individual’s mental health and wellbeing. With the industry creating positive brand messages through partnership with sporting celebrities and tv entertainment shows such as “Sky Sports” they are trying to trigger a consumer’s motivation to gamble through enticing marketing efforts. Enticing younger demographics into the industry through using sports fan culture as a talking point (Deans et al., 2017). Irish consumers place the most betting wagers on horseracing with over 70% of betting wagers placed on this sport (Sports Betting Ireland | Updated Data | Ireland’s Top Bookmakers, 2020). Marketers are aware of the popularity of this sport amongst Irish consumers as total racecourse betting accumulated to €78.9 million in 2019 (O’Connor, 2020). Therefore, marketers implement a large array of marketing efforts based around this sport such as highlighting the Grand National and Cheltenham in advance of the event to boost engagement and morale in relation to the event. Irelands department of health reported over 9 out of 10 men reported by the HSE public health department of Ireland are being treated for a gambling addiction with those recognising their problem at the median age of 35 years old (Murray, 2019), yet there are many more individuals across Ireland suffering with this addiction. Through this statistic it

can be highlighted that males are heavily impacted by the efforts of the gambling industry and are unaware of the impacts it may have on their health and wellbeing. Therefore, there needs to be more regulations placed on the advertising regulations of the gambling industry to create a safer environment for consumers. As currently advertising methods are heavily affecting consumers behaviour, intentions, and motivations through the use of emotional appeals and promotional incentives.

## *2.5 Addictive Consumption and Remote Gambling*

### *2.5.1 Marketing Practices of The Gambling Industry*

The gambling industry is part of the experience economy, as many individuals enjoy the experience they feel during their involvement. Yet, many consumers are not aware of the impacts the industry has on their mental health and overall wellbeing due to the addictive traits it consists of. It is hard to diagnose a gambling addiction as there are not many physical effects that are attached to the addiction but their signs of sleep deprivation from anxiety leading to pale skin, dark under eye circles and weight loss (Addiction Treatment, 2020). There are many serious psychological effects such as depression, self-harm, suicidal thoughts as the continuous losses can leave a person feeling helpless and alone (Ibid).

With remote gambling proving to be a popular outlet for many Irish consumers, many simply struggle with the availability of these services alongside the bombardment of promotional offerings. As the industry uses excellent marketing techniques using big data profiles which provides an element of value in the eyes of the consumer due to the personalisation of the advertisements. Many simply cannot escape the grip from the gambling industry in turn they become addicted to the industry and the “benefits” it provides.

Currently, Ireland haven't measured the exact number of “problem” gamblers but have estimated the number is 400,000 based on findings from surveys conducted across Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland (Murray, 2019).

A problem gambler is a consumer who continuously chases their losses in order to win back their money resulting in some cases financial debt (Addiction Treatment, 2018). An individual who has a gambling addiction has behavioural traits in which highlight their issue such as secretive nature, depression and or unhappiness, varied mood swings “highs and lows” (Fulton, 2015), dishonest behaviour such as taking money from friends and family to feed their habit and or causing arguments as an excuse to gamble (Fulton, 2015). Based on the estimated number of problem gamblers, it is highlighting that Irish legislation needs to be created to secure at risk consumers from the clever tactics and questionable ethics used by the industry, as two third of the Irish population has participated within the industry (Gov.ie, 2020). Irish legislation has been introduced in which holds security for problem gamblers and children known as the Gambling Control Bill 2013 in which replaced old Irish legislation which didn't hold value for vulnerable consumers (Gambling Control Bill, 2013).

Within 2017, it was reported that Irish consumers gamble and lose around €2.2 billion per year, highlighting that there are problem gamblers within Ireland yet the exact figure still needs to be found as the state are currently refusing to find the exact number of Irish gambling addicts (Oireachtas, 2019). As there is continuous access for consumers to be

involved with the gambling industry through the use of remote gambling, there are concerns for problem gambling (Muddie et al, 1993) as many consumers do not know when to give up on bet wagering, it is dependent on their outcomes of a “win or lose” situation (Gabbott and Hogg, 1994). Due to the availability of the services offered by the industry many consumers develop addictive traits due to the excessive involvement in which makes these individuals vulnerable to marketing tactics used by the industry (Brindley, 1999).

The industry tries to normalise their practices through creating a relaxing instore environment for consumers in order to entice them to have long visits in store through incorporating arm chairs, newspapers stands a café area alongside many screens to enjoy the offerings (Sheridan, 2005). Bookmakers are also cleverly placed beside pubs for convenience for the consumer as it provides further entertainment (Ibid).

### *2.5.2 Addictive Consumption*

Online gambling has been available to consumers since the mid 1990's (Griffiths, 1999) yet since then there has been a growth in concern for individuals who suffer from problem gambling/addictive consumption due to the increased availability through 24 hour access to the platforms and the increase in accessibility across devices (Gainsbury et al., 2012). Due to the increased availability of remote gambling platforms many individuals simply cannot pull away from the industry meaning the “consumer becomes the producer” of their involvement within the industry in which can have positive or negative implications in which is dependent on their outcomes of a win or lose scenario (Muddie et al., 1993). Compulsive consumption is a behavioural trait in which is deemed excessive and is disruptive to the individual (Faber et al., 1987). Addictive consumption is a behaviour in which an individual cannot fight the urge to partake in an activity (Faber et al., 1987), in this manner we will be referring to the participation within the gambling industry. This is described as an addiction for an individual as they have formed a habit in which they cannot control nor breakaway from. The individual is merely pressured to be involved. This type of consumer behaviour is disruptive to an individual and can be perceived as “excessive” as the individual continuously wants to be involved with the process of bet wagering due to the unknown outcome. Many individuals who gamble multiple times a week may suffer from an impulsive control disorder known as pathological gambling as they cannot fight the urge to gamble (Williams and Potenza, 2010).



### *2.5.3 Chasing Losses*

Pathological gambling is an impulsive disorder in which the consumer doesn't know when to stop being involved in bet wagering, the individual is no longer in a controlled state of mind (Linnet et al., 2010). The individual partaking in gambling practices continuously wants rewards regardless of losses, the individual becomes fixated on a term known as "chasing losses" in which they will continue to bet until they win or match said losses (Ibid). A consumer in which partakes in chasing losses are trapped within an addictive deceiving cycle as they are continuously trying to win back what they lost (Campbell-Meiklejohn et al., 2008).

### *2.5.4 Dopamine and Gambling Activities*

During enjoyable activities the brain releases an endorphin known as "dopamine" in which causes a rush to the brain. Individuals who partake in gambling practices would get a release of dopamine when they are involved due to the potential reward they may obtain (Linnet et al., 2010). Dopamine can also cause addictive traits within the brain due to the uncertainty gambling holds for an individual in which enhances the addiction or "craving" to be involved, the rush provided by the dopamine encourages a user to be involved regardless of monetary losses or gains (Linnet et al., 2010). Dopamine releases may be associated with losses in pathological gambling, the feeling can act as encouragement to continue (Ibid).

### *2.5.5 Consumer Misbehaviour*

Consumer misbehaviour refers to when an individual overly consumes a product or service in consumption situations (Fullerton and Punj, 1997) through violating generally accepted norms of conduct (Fullerton and Punj, 2004). This represents a dark side of a consumer as their actions of misbehaviour are visible to others. Negative consumer behaviour not only affects the individual, but it provides a negative experience for all consumers as it can include pathological damage or financial losses (Ibid). Relating consumer misbehaviour to the gambling industry showcases when an individual becomes consumed by the services provided by the industry in which lead to problem gambling and or addiction consumption. Consumer misbehaviour in relation to addictive consumption refers to the harm and or damage it causes the individual but not focusing on other consumers within a consumption setting (Faber et al., 1995). Yet, others are inflicted with negative complications who are attached to the individual who suffers from addictive consumption.

Another area of consumer misbehaviour is when an individual cannot break away from betting services, taking "chasing" into consideration. An individual will engage in more betting activities if they lose in order to win it back i.e. "chasing losses". Yet, this also has another side to chasing through addiction. An individual will continue to be involved in betting

practices when they win as they perceive they can win more as they have more money than previously expected.

### *2.5.6 Problem Gambling Statistics*

Research has highlighted that there are many reasons behind an individual's compulsive consumption disorder (Roberts et al., 2006). with many academics highlighting an individual may have a higher tendency to gain an addictive consumption disorder if they are being triggered by traumatic events (Ibid) or depression (Gupta, 2013). Many individuals in which have a gambling addiction are trying to hide their addiction due to the financial implications it has attached (Fulton, 2015). Irish statistics show that 7% of gamblers are at risk of a developing a gambling problem (Freyne, 2015). The Institute of Public Health has highlighted that gambling addictions affects young people at 2-3 times the rate of adults (Justice, 2010) Ireland is ranked third on the world's biggest gamblers list showcasing how online betting holds a large loss percentage alongside betting forums (The world's biggest gamblers, 2017). In 2016, it estimated that there was \$2.2billion in losses in Ireland alone (Ibid). Due to the nature of individuals chasing losses and addictive consumption disorders, a statistic showed that 1 in 5 problem gamblers attempt suicide (National Council for Problem Gambling, 2009), highlighting it is more than double of other known addictions. Many consumers engage in gambling practices for entertainment or for "experiences" yet many individuals as previously stated generate problematic behaviours such as mental health problems and suicide (Browne et al., 2016). In relation to Ireland, statistics have shown that online gambling is most prevalent in 18-24-year olds at 4.8% (Department of Health, 2019). The Irish economy are making large volumes of revenue from the Irish consumers, a survey conducted in the UK highlighted that 78% of revenue from online gambling was generated by 4% of consumers showcasing the level of addiction in which the industry holds. The Irish government currently do not provide enough services to aid problem gamblers who suffer from addiction consumption disorders as they do not provide any state funding to aid these services yet the Irish government can aid the gambling industry through donating €1.3bn to the sector (Neil, 2019). Irish government and the Irish department of health are aware of the detrimental impact gambling has on consumers therefore more services to aid gamblers are needed in order to encourage younger demographics to face their issue from an early age.

## Losing streak

2016 estimate

Biggest gamblers, loss\* per resident adult, \$

Total losses by country, \$bn

Biggest loss\* by country, \$bn

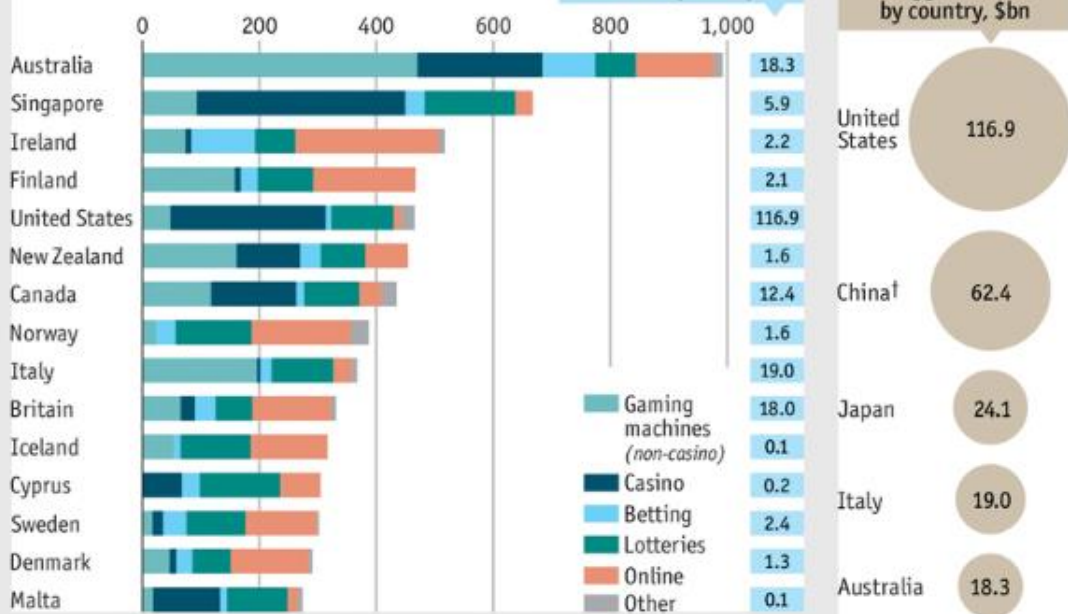


Figure 6 The Economist "The worlds biggest gamblers" 2017, <https://www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2017/02/09/the-worlds-biggest-gamblers>

## 3.0 – Research and Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

Within this chapter, the researcher aims to justify the reasoning behind the chosen research methodology. Research is designed to uncover answers to a specific question through using a scientific and systematic approach through research problem solving. Individuals conduct researcher to discover the answers to a subject. It is obtained through setting objectives within research to allow a researcher to uncover the truth within a subject which has not yet been discovered (Kothari, 2004).

The objective of this study is to investigate the impact sponsorship and smart marketing tactics have on an individual's motivation of involvement and emotional attachment to the industry. This study consists of a qualitative research approach through interviewing young males alongside using an inductive approach to interpret their underlying motivations to gamble. The researcher also conducted secondary research using academic journals and reputable reports in which relate to the gambling and marketing industry.

### 3.2 Research Problem Definition

This research problem serves as a starting point for research as without recognising a problem it cannot be amended or justified (Ellis and Levy, 2008). Research is conducted according to the researcher's intention (Shuttleworth and Wilson, n.d.), through creating a series of research questions to uncover motivations and intentions (Anderson, 1998). The research question for this study;

*Are young males (18-24) in Ireland being mentally shaped by the gambling industry through the use of smart marketing tactics to become gamblers for life?*

The reasoning behind the posed question is for the researcher to understand and or interrupt the motivation of young males have when they are targeted through smart marketing tactics used by the industry, with specific focus on the three chosen categories "occasional gambler, moderate gambler, vulnerable gambler".

### **3.2.1 The Research Objectives**

Research objectives provide a clear, structured approach to research through integrating statements to identify the area in which the researcher intends to uncover (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009), they allow the researcher to obtain specific information.

The investigation in which will be conducted is to create an understanding of the impact the smart marketing tactics and the use of social media has on young males (18-24) across Ireland, with a core focus on three reference groups “occasional gambler”, “moderate” and “vulnerable” consumers. The literature review provides a foundation to the objectives within this dissertation. Four research objectives were created to obtain key information from this investigation.

- 1) To investigate whether an individual is influenced by promotional offerings as a driver of motivation to be involved in bet wagering and the consumers attitude formation.**

*The objective will analyse:*

- The research aims to discover if this statement is factual
- Gain an understanding into which reference group it affects more
- Does age play a role within this context?

- 2) To discover if smart marketing tactics through the use of sponsorship on large sporting events influence an individual’s attitude towards betting practices**

*The objective will analyse:*

- Whether or not sponsorship influences an individual’s brand perception and drives customer acquisition through motivating a consumer to gamble
- Does it encourage a referral to their betting site to join in on bet wagering?
- Does it change their perception of the gambling industry or the sporting event in which it is being sponsored by?

**3) To discover if an individual's awareness of the impact gambling practices has on mental health and wellbeing alters the consumers attitude towards gambling practices**

*The researcher will discuss:*

- Addictive Consumption
- Chasing Losses
- Consumer Misbehavior

**4) To investigate the impact gambling advertising has on the public with reference to the younger demographic under the age of 18**

*This section will gather the individual's opinion on the following:*

- Do you find today's advertisements to be influential in the crowded advertising market?
- Do you believe advertisements can alter a consumer's behaviors and motivations?
- Can you recall any recent advertisements in relation to the betting industry which stand out in your mind?
- Are you more likely to remember advertisements in which use emotional appeals such as humorous appeals? Sex appeals? The integration of music? If so, which relates more to you and sparks your attention
- Do you feel digital media is more affective to gain consumer attention and drive brand value more so than traditional methods?

### 3.3 Methodology

The researcher will be investigating an individual's emotion in relation to the industry alongside discovering their motivations for involvement, through measuring the impact sponsorship and smart marketing tactics have on the male (18-24) age demographic in Ireland within a qualitative manner.

To achieve the objectives of this study in a structured approach, the researcher used a methodology created by Saunders et al (2012) known as the research onion to provide a systematic approach to this dissertation. Through using this approach, it provided readers with a clear structure to follow alongside aiding the different methods used by the researcher. It is comprised of six different section which are needed to gather effective research information. These layers lead to the final step where the research will gather the data in order to relate the findings to conclude the investigation.

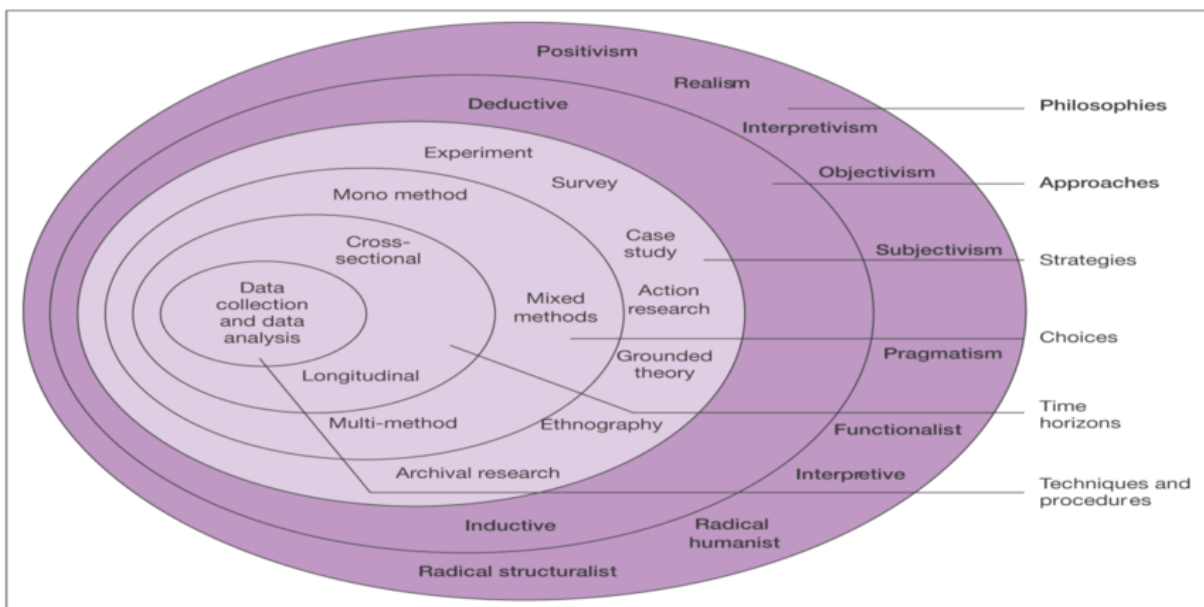


Figure 7: The Research Onion (Saunders et al., 2007).

### 3.3.1 Chosen Research Philosophy

Research philosophy refers to how a researcher can further develop their knowledge within a specific field through gaining key information creating “new knowledge” (Saunders et al., 2015). The researcher currently is gaining new knowledge in the field of marketing impact on young males in Ireland from the gambling industry. There are number of different philosophies available to researchers to further develop a theory (Ibid).

These are as follows;

- Positivism
- Realism
- Interpretivism
- Pragmatism
- Ontology
- Subjectivism
- Epistemology
- Axiology

The model highlights two philosophical models; Ontological and Epistemological (Saunders et al., 2015). *Ontology* according to Crotty (1998) refers to the study of being. It is referring to “what is” and what constitutes reality. *Epistemological* refers to the natures and forms of knowledge how its created and acquired (Cohen et al., 2007).

This form or study will highlight the relevance it has on the individual (Bryman and Bell., 2011). Therefore, this research is based around an epistemological approach as the researcher aims to understand the impact social media campaigns and smart marketing tactics of the gambling industry has on young Irish males from three distinct groups. To uncover “acceptable knowledge” through the use of qualitative market research (Bryman and Bell., 2011). Within an epistemological philosophy there are two different approaches “*positivist*” or “*interpretivist*”. Interpretivism is a socially constructed approach through culture and language providing rich information to the researcher (Saunders, 2009). Interpretivism highlights that everyone is different, highlighting different meanings and experiences providing different “social realities” (Ibid). It also focuses on social actors through investigating the experiences of individuals (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Whereas “positivists” attempt to show everyone is that same that universal “laws” apply to everybody (Saunders, 2009).



The researcher believes an interpretivist approach will suit this study as the researcher aims to create new understandings and interpretations of the impact marketing campaigns and tactics has on young Irish males and their motivations to gamble.

### 3.3.2 Research Approach; Inductive vs. Deductive

As the researcher is using Saunders “Research Onion” as a means of structure, it highlights that next step is choosing a tool to analyse and gather the data. There are two forms of tools either an *inductive approach* or a *deductive approach*.

An inductive approach is related to interpretivism through understanding an individual’s behaviours and their variables attached through qualitative research. Within this approach the researcher will gather data through observations, then their findings are linked back to theory (Bryman and Bell., 2011). A deductive approach is used to develop a hypothesis using existing theories to formulate a research approach to test (Ibid). Thus, the research aims to create an understanding of the motivations and emotions of the individual to understand their involvement within the industry.

### 3.3.3 Research Approach; Qualitative vs. Quantitative

Qualitative research is used to gain an understanding into individuals experiences, attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, and their interactions (Pathnak et al., 2013). It investigates a direct experience in which an individual has felt or undergone (Ibid). Through using a qualitative approach, the researcher can understand the individual’s point of view through interviews and observations (Orb et al., 2000). Where as a “Quantitative” research approach, examines numerical data testing numerous variables to test a hypothesis using statistical systems.

After considering both options of data collection, the research has chosen to conduct a qualitative research approach. As the researcher will be obtaining data which consists of an individual’s feelings, thoughts, and ideas (Quinlan, 2011). Within this approach the researcher can obtain data in relation to an individual’s experience relating to their exposure of marketing tactics used by the industry whilst gathering opinions of the impact it had on their motivations to gamble. As each interviewee may have different approaches to the industry and reasons behind their involvement. Using this research philosophy, it takes an individual’s social roles into accountability. To understand the gambling industry from a consumer perspective, the research joined gambling sites and allowed for promotional advertisements alongside following social media accounts of popular gambling businesses. The researcher also followed major sporting events to further understand the use of smart tactics through sponsorship. By joining these platforms and following events, the researcher could understand a consumer’s point of view and allow for further interpretation of the use of these tactics.

### 3.3.4 Chosen Research Approach

The researcher has chosen as qualitative research approach, through conducting interviews with males who engage in gambling activities. The researcher believes an inductive approach would suit the study as an interpretivism approach is needed to understand the individual's intentions (Saunders et al., 2012). It provides a flexible less structured approach to interviewing allowing conversation to move freely to obtain richer information. Thus, semi structured interviews will be conducted using specific questions yet allowing the interviewee to move freely throughout his thought process. To continue a structured research approach, the research has outlined clear objectives throughout through referring to a list of topics, objectives, and questions to ensure all relevant areas are covered yet still allowing free flowing conversation. A mix of open-ended questions and probing questions will be used during the interview process. This process allows the interviewee to elaborate on their responses to discover rich information (Cameron and Price., 2009). Through using this approach, the researcher will obtain opinions and experiences alongside uncover motivations and emotional attachments to the industry. The research is solely using a mono method approach using interviews for data collection.

### 3.3.5 Chosen Research Strategy

Following Saunders research onion, the third layer highlights that the researcher must select a research strategy such as surveys, grounded theory, ethnography and so on (Saunders et al., 2012). One or more strategies can be selected to best suit the research topic (Ibid). Ethnographic research consists of examining individuals through observations and understanding consumer perspectives (Saunders et al., 2009). It is suited to an interpretivism philosophical approach.

A "Grounded Theory" approach is used to discover theory obtained from data sets to create a comparative analysis (Chun Tie, Birks and Francis, 2019). It can be used within this study as it represents an inductive research approach through posing questions to the respondents, continuously conducting a deeper dive to derive rich information (Quinlan et al., 2011).

Therefore, the researcher is conducting a grounded theory and ethnographic research approach to discover rich information from the respondents during the interview process.

### 3.3.6 Qualitative Data; Interviews

Interviews are part of primary data collection within qualitative methodologies (Cooper and Schindler, 2014). The researcher will conduct qualitative interviewing through a semi structured research approach, as it is more flexible to gather rich information from the respondents (Ibid). Through conducting interviews on an individual basis, it will help gain an in-depth insight into the identification of patterns of exposure that individuals have to the marketing techniques from the gambling industry.

This semi structured research approach will follow a round of specific questions at the beginning in turn allowing the respondent to follow their own thoughts. To obtain key data, the researcher needs the respondents to openly discuss their feelings towards the gambling industry. In turn, the researcher can understand the actions and or emotions an individual felt due to exposure of said marketing techniques and tactics. Allowing the researcher to underpin a theoretical issue within the gambling industry.

This approach will follow objectives in order to remain semi structured through following a list of topics and or question yet still allowing the respondent to expand on answers.

Within this qualitative ethnographic and grounded theory research approach, the writer will have the ability to produce contextual real-world knowledge based around the individual's behaviours. For example, an at-risk gambler who is heavily influenced by the messages sent by the gambling industry could lead to compulsive consumption disorder which is very disruptive to an individual. This allows the writer to be involved in the study and to lead on from questions and answers given by the individuals (Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. M., 1990).

### 3.3.7 Chosen Time Horizons

The time horizons layer relates to a period in which the researcher has intended to complete the study by. The research onion stated that the study can be cross sectional or longitudinal, these are used when approaching a variable (Saunders et al., 2009). A cross sectional study would compare different population groups at one single point of time (Ibid), referring to the study the researcher will be comparing the three chosen reference groups motivations and emotional attachments to the industry. Taking a snapshot of their behaviours and or responses to the study. The researcher intends to gather information over a three-month period which allows large sporting events to take place such as Ascot, Premier League football. Alongside gathering information in relation to bet usage during non-sporting events i.e. virtual gaming and casino usage. This will allow the writer to gain a clear understanding of the patterns in which arise. A longitudinal approach is conducted over an extended period which isn't suitable to this specific dissertation.

### 3.3.8 Data Collection

This area is the last layer of the research onion in which the researcher will divide their data collection into *primary* and *secondary* collection methods.

*Primary data* is first-hand information in which is gathered through its original source (Douglas, 2015). Primary data is obtained through conducting surveys and interviews to address a problem at hand (Ibid). Whereas *secondary data*, is a collection of second-hand information which is based around past data such as books, journal articles and or government publications (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

The researcher will follow a primary data collection approach through an interviewing process. Each interview conducted will be recorded to eliminate bias. The recorder interview can be switched off at any time if the interviewee feels uncomfortable at any time, it is merely there to transcribe. The data obtained through the investigation will allow conclusions to be drawn. Yet, the researcher did obtain trusted secondary data sources to compliment this research. Through choosing trust sources from WARC, EBSCOhost, official reports from governing bodies and other websites to ensure high-quality data.

For data analysis collection an open coding approach will be taken to allow the writer to segment the data which was discovered and place it into meaningful expressions.

To evaluate and justify the writer's methodological findings, the writer will then use a thematic approach to pinpoint and recognise themes discovered within the data which will allow key themes to become clear for the final analysis. The theoretical model will clearly show individuals the themes and patterns in which has been discovered from conducting this research.

### 3.3.9 Study Sample

Choosing the correct respondents for your sample is important as qualitative data collection consists on gathering individuals' opinions in an array of different representations (O'Reilly and Parker., 2013). As the researcher aims to gather rich data from three different reference groups **occasional consumers** which gamble rarely, **moderate gambler** (couple of times per month) and **vulnerable gamblers** (gambles multiple times per week). Nonprobability sampling was conducted based on respondents simply being chosen due to their unique characteristics and their experiences with the industry. As the researcher needed an array of attitudes and experiences to gather insights, themes and or conclusions (O'Reilly and Parker., 2013). In order to avoid data saturation and gain rich insights, the researcher will interview six young Irish males within the age demographic of 18-24 years old from the Dublin region. The researcher will select participants the Dublin region alongside interviewing returning customers to the gambling industry who currently have active betting accounts and visit instore bookmakers. A returning customer would be defined as an individual who uses the service more than once a week. The research intends to interview two males from each reference group to gather unique characteristics and attitudes to uncover a consumer's motivation to gamble. The interviews are intended to be 40 minutes long to allow key information to be gathered, within a relaxed environment to allow individuals to be relaxed. Thus, creating a semi structured approach.

The researcher will use a thematic analysis approach as it allows the researcher to clearly identify and closely examine the data to discover emerging themes and patterns in the information received. Each theme which is identified will allow a key understanding of everyone's perceptions of the gambling industry and their emotions and motivations towards gambling.

### 3.3.10 Ethical Implications

Ethics refer to moral principles in which alters a person's behaviour within an activity or relationship (Cooper and Schindler., 2008). Market research faces many ethical issues (Michaelides and Gibbs, 2006), therefore research needs to be conducted in a morally responsible manner (Saunders et al., 2009). As this investigation may be deemed as personal the respondent has the right to privacy and to quit the investigation at any time. All information gathered by the researcher was solely used for the purpose of this dissertation. To maintain a professional confidential structure, the researcher will provide all respondents with written and verbal conformation of consent before the process begins. To provide a comfortable environment for the respondents. To differentiate responses from the anonymous respondent's alias names will be used for further structure.

### 3.13 Research Limitations

Qualitative data collection is faced with many limitations (Anderson 2010), merely the researcher interviewing the respondent can limit their responses. Time factors is another area of limitations for not only the researcher but the respondent. The respondent may not be available or may fear anonymity. For the researcher, a limitation in which was faced was the time scale to complete the dissertation due to impacts of COVID-19. As the researcher intended to gather data over a longer period through gathering responses from an array of large sporting events. To uncover whether marketing efforts of large-scale events such as Cheltenham horse racing festival encouraged/influenced more users to partake in gambling practices.

The impact of COVID-19 limited the availability of respondents due to social distancing impacts in which resulted in which restricted data collection such as interviewing via web calling and or emailing. Restrictions such as gambling establishments being closed and large-scale sporting events with high involvement rates being cancelled. This implication altered the approach to the study resulting in how consumers resulted in online gambling service such as virtual gaming due to the lack of live sporting events.

#### **4.0 – Analysis of Findings**

The researcher set clear objectives to provide a structured approach within research findings to uncover the respondent's opinions on four key objectives. The researcher interviewed six individuals in which fell into three chosen research groups to understand the effect marketing tactics of the industry have on their motivation to gamble. The researcher will refer to the three reference groups used: **Occasional Consumers** (gamble rarely), **Moderate gamblers** (couple of times per month), **Vulnerable gamblers** (gambles multiple times per week) in order to highlight the affect the industry has on each group.

#### **4.1 Research Findings**

The researcher conducted primary and secondary research within the findings section. The researcher used secondary research using academic literature and articles to gain further insights. Understanding previous literature and the newly gathered primary data through interviews allowed the researcher to gather further opinions.

#### 4.1.1 Objective 1

Objective one within research findings aimed to understand the impact marketing tactics used by the industry, with a focus on promotion through offerings and or sponsorship had on an individual's motivation to gamble. It provided insights for the researcher of how respondents utilise industry offerings whilst understanding their emotions felt and motivations to continue. The research began the interview process by uncovering how often the three reference groups utilise the industry alongside gathering information on their betting preferences to uncover a variety of promotional tactics used.

**“To investigate whether or not an individual is influenced by promotional offerings as a driver of motivation to be involved in bet wagering and their attitude formation.”**

#### 4.1.1A Individuals attitude towards the Gambling Industry

Within today's society, gambling is an acceptable form of entertainment for many due to the availability and an array of options available (Derevensky and Gilbeau, 2015).

Secondary research highlighted that many consumers deem the gambling industry as a source of entertainment a “fun” past time regardless of the implications it may have on an individual. In reports from Australia, individuals reported the industry and the involvement as a “game”, another form of entertainment (Hume and Mort., 2011).

Adolescents between the ages of (12-19) within the UK reported the industry as a means of entertainment in which they can make money from due to the use of luxurious and extravagant imagery used (Derevensky, 2009). When conducting primary research, all three reference groups deemed the industry as a “fun” form of “entertainment” and or a “fun past-time”.

**OC (Occasional Consumer):** *“I don't gamble often but when Cheltenham or The Grand National is on I'd use my profile, harmless bit of fun”*

**MG (Moderate Gambler):** *“I'd gamble a lot when I'm out with friends, it's something to do makes the time spent more exciting because were all hoping to win, it's just some fun”*

**VG (Vulnerable Gambler):** *“I'd gamble nearly every day or at least multiple times a week. I follow horse racing or football to see odds, results online and watch live sport. It's my past time just simply entertaining”*

Through gaining an insight into how often the industry is used by each respondent alongside their betting area of preference within their betting profile, it allowed the researcher to gather opinions in relation to the industry. As each respondent had an active betting profile, the



researcher aimed to uncover insights into how the consumer reacts to promotional incentives.

#### 4.1.1B Promotional and Marketing Tactics used by the Gambling Industry

Due to the rise of technology, the marketing of products and service has risen alongside it (Binde, 2007). With digital advertising growing rapidly it allows gambling institutions to target advertisements to their chosen target audiences (Sproston et al., 2015). Secondary research highlighted that advertising is recognised to be a positive correlation to an individual's influence on their motivations (Binde, 2014). With many individuals reporting promotional incentives through email promotion is a means of encouragement and or motivation of involvement (Fogel., 2011).

Many problem gamblers cannot resist the marketing campaigns and promotional incentives used the industry (Martin et al., 2013) leaving these consumers in a vulnerable position. With researchers highlighting that gambling advertisements have the greatest impact on vulnerable audiences "problem gamblers" (Binde, 2009). Researcher also found that individuals who frequently are involved in the industry with exposure to wager marketing are impacted by the marketing tactics used encouraging intentions to gamble (Hanss et al., 2015).

The researcher referred to the reference groups to uncover their opinions of promotional offerings used by the industry.

**OC:** "I'd get a lot of offers because I rarely use the profile they simply want to pull me back in, I'll accept the offer if it's on an area of interest"

**MG:** "I had to block all emails and notifications due to the intense bombardment, it was almost 4/5 times a day trying to promote an offering or provide an incentive through a free claim offer" the respondent proceeded to explain "I don't use the free bet incentives, there's always a hidden catch to encourage more spending. I used to accept them but then it became too much and too often".

**VG:** "I'm not overly impressed by the free bet offerings or promotions used by BET365 because they are always a small incentive whilst new users get larger amounts. But I always claim them because I'm betting anyways might as well get something for free".

Respondents agreed that the use of promotional incentives are an encouragement to spend and motivate you to continue spending throughout the day.

**VG:** *“These gambling companies aren’t your friend, there not doing it out of the kindness of their heart trying to show an act of kindness they solely want more money and your custom. And for many they have it.”*

**MG:** *“these promotions are like a shark bite for the vulnerable”.*

The respondents had a unified view that the use of promotional incentives encourage most consumers to engage in further involvement with the industry.

This highlights the unawareness many consumers have regarding the impact gambling can have on an individual’s health and wellbeing. The lavish advertisements and integration of heavy promotional incentives through free bet offerings heavily encourage many users for further involvement.

#### 4.1.2 Objective 2

Objective two within research findings aimed to gain insight into the use of sponsorship within the gambling industry to attract users to engage in betting services.

The researcher aimed to uncover an individual's awareness of the usage of brand sponsorship and the impact it can have on an individual. Aiming to generate opinions of the impact it can have on vulnerable audiences such as younger demographics below the legal betting age of 18 and or problem gamblers.

**“To discover if smart marketing tactics through the use of sponsorship on large sporting events influence an individual's attitude towards betting practices”**

##### 4.1.2.A Awareness of Sponsorship in Today's Sports Market

Gambling advertisements are solely highlighting a positive, extravagant lifestyle to consumers promoting a luxurious lifestyle one can obtain (Derevensky et al., 2009). The use of these advertising messages can allure consumers in through highlighting a possible lifestyle in exchange for involvement. Within a UK study many students reported their involvement within the gambling industry is due to advertising influences as a means of motivation (Griffiths and Barnes, 2008), with respondents highlighting that the use of promotional offerings through incentives encouraged usage for the individual leading to involvement (Robinson, Wysocka and Hand, 2007). The use of betting sponsorship within a sporting content has few restrictions currently, with many clubs within the UK heavily sponsored by gambling industries (Davies, 2020). The researcher wanted to gain an insight into an individual's awareness of sponsorship within sporting events. The researcher began this portion of the interview stating that “almost 80 minutes of in game play time there is exposure to gambling advertisements through sponsorship deals” (Davies, 2020), in order to uncover an individual's awareness of exposure the interviewer asked the respondents to name any sporting events or clubs in which are sponsored by gambling institutions. The researcher started this objective off with an exercise of recall to gain an insight into normalisation of gambling in a sporting context as sports and sponsorship are now going hand in hand (Gainsbury and Russell., 2015). All respondents referred to the English football teams in which are heavily endorsed by the gambling industry in terms of sponsorship (Davies, 2020). Many listed an array of sporting clubs named or affiliated with betting agents alongside naming horse races in which are named after the agents itself.

**OC:** “I watch a lot of football it's very heavily endorsed but you start to forget about it overtime. Stoke City stadium is referred to as the BET365 stadium, that's how heavily endorsed it is”.

**MG:** “Off the top of my head, Everton, Watford, Aston Villa, Bournemouth, Burney, Newcastle, Norwich, Crystal Palace, Wolves, Leeds and Stoke City or being closer to home BOHS”.

**VG:** *“The football industry is very heavily endorsed, seeing these advertisements and sponsorship deals is second nature, you just get used to it, your almost expecting to see it”*

**MG:** *“sponsorship and sport is a package deal, its embedded in it, it would be weird not to see it plastered on jerseys and stadiums”.*

#### 4.1.2.B Motivation for involvement due to exposure from Sponsorship

The researcher aimed to uncover an individual’s motivation during live sporting events in which are heavily sponsored by the industry. To discover if sponsorship within large sporting events, encourage the respondents to be involved with the industry through betting during live games and or using the betting services in which are promoted by the event.

Sponsorship is used to engage customers within the experience economy (Wakefield, Wakefield, and Keller, 2019) with sports being the most common deal it allows a direct brand message to be communicated (Cornwell., 2019). Sponsorship deals created need to be a brand fit for their chosen target market (Wakefield, Wakefield, and Keller, 2019). William Hill a betting agent sponsored the Australian Open tennis league, targeting their chosen target market for a consecutive two-week period. This exposure led to high customer acquisition rates (Rolfe, 2016). Highlighting many users are encouraged by the integration of sponsorship deals in large sporting events. Yet, research highlighted sponsorship and the presence of the company logo or brand emblem didn’t encourage involvement or call to actions for problem gamblers (Robinson, Wysocka and Hand, 2007). The researcher aimed to uncover the respondent’s opinion of sponsorship as a motivator to gamble.

**OC:** *“Growing up watching sports your exposed to these sponsorship deals, you just get used to them but they do encourage spending for many as the live odd updates on banner ads encourage you to be involved”.*

**VG:** *“The betting sponsorship doesn’t encourage me to bet, I’ll do it on my own accord”*

This highlighted mixed reviews with some respondents stating that sponsorship can alter their motivation to gamble but can deem it to be persuasive to many users viewing live sport.

**MG:** *“Younger audiences may use the industry or have a positive brand perception of the industry because its linked with their favorite sport or team”.*

#### 4.1.2.C The Use of Sponsorship and Promotional Tactics on Vulnerable Audiences such as Adolescents and Problem Gamblers

With sponsorship on the rise and promotional advertisements deemed as “bombardment” by the respondents. The researcher aimed to uncover the respondent’s opinion on younger viewers. To gather their opinion on the banning of sponsorship deals of addictive industries to protect vulnerable audiences such as adolescents and problem gamblers.

Betting sponsorship is fast becoming a normalised area allowing children to deem it as a fun form of entertainment (Korn et al., 2005). IEG (2012), stated that every industry is trying to target a younger demographic” to influence the consumer into becoming a consumer. The impact of gambling on adolescences has become a rising health issue (Derevensky, 2005), due to 60-80% of young users engaging in gambling before the legal consenting age (Delfabbro and Griffiths, 2014). Research highlighted that adolescences strive to be involved with the industry due to the alignment of sponsorship and advertising tactics linked with the sporting industry (Thomas et al., 2016). Research has shown that many adolescences can recall an advertisement in which was related to a betting company (Ibid).

The researcher aimed to generate the respondent’s opinions regarding the removal of betting sponsorships from the sporting industry to protect vulnerable consumers.

All respondents were opposed to the idea of removal for the protection of children from addictive industries, an **MG** stated: *“It’s part of the industry, without it the sports world wouldn’t be the same”*.

Yet, they all shared a common view that the industry is aiming to influence younger audience through connecting it with sporting events as it has a large following and many support specific areas.

**VG:** *“Everyone is becoming too sensitive, betting is a bit of fun, were all used to the industry having sponsorship deals”*.

**OC:** *“Gambling is everywhere but it’s just specifically advertised here in sporting events”*.

### 4.1.3 Objective 3

Objective three within research findings aimed to discover the impact gambling practices has on an individual's mental health and wellbeing. The researcher aimed to uncover an individual's awareness of the harmful impact the industry can have. Through gaining an insight on an individual's perception of the risks associated with involvement.

**“To discover if awareness of the impact gambling practices has on an individual's mental health and wellbeing alters the individual's attitude towards gambling practices”**

#### 4.1.3.A Individuals understanding of the harms associated with problem gambling: Problem Gambling and Addictive Consumption

The researcher aimed to uncover an individual's awareness of the impact gambling has on an individual's wellbeing through asking a variety of questions. The researcher began by asking the respondents if they personally feel gambling can impose and risks on an individual. As stated in the literature review Irelands exact number of problem gamblers is still to be discovered but it is estimated that over 30,000 consumers are heavily affected by the industry (Murray, 2019). With 7% of gamblers at risk of developing a gambling problem (Freyne, 2015). The researcher began by questioning the respondents on the awareness of the problem or addictive behavior by reading a statistic provided by the Irish Department of Public Health “Are you aware of current gambling addiction figures within Ireland within the 18-24 age demographic highlighting that this age demographic has a high prevalence rate with addiction showing that many seek counselling services”. The respondents were unaware that their age demographic had this high prevalence rate, but they weren't surprised due to the addictive nature the industry holds.

**VG:** *“I'm very aware of the impact gambling can have on not only myself but on my friends and family, it has a knock-on effect to everyone. It's a highly addictive industry but you need to be strong enough to fight the craving to engage and simply know when enough is enough”.*

**OC:** *“I personally feel gambling is the most dangerous addiction one can have, with alcoholism and drug addiction you can physically see a person change. When a person is dealing with a gambling addiction, they show no physical signs which is very scary, their fighting against their mind”.*

**MG:** *“I wasn't aware Irish figures were so high, it makes you think how many are targeted and addicted to the industry, it's insane”.*

Problem gambling addictions are rising worldwide with many public health sectors seeking new ways to protect vulnerable consumers from the grips of the industry through marketing campaigns and changes in legislation. With many adolescences engaging in gambling practices before legal age it's a rising concern for public health departments globally to warn consumers on the addictive nature the industry holds.

**VG:** *"When you lose your money from gambling all day you feel like you've just hit rock bottom think how you'll get one from end of the week to the next. You'll tell yourself you will stop but you just can't"*

**MG:** *"My friends set alarms in the middle of the night to place a bet on Asian football, to me that's a sign of addiction".*

#### 4.1.3.B. Addiction vs. Entertainment

Within this investigation the respondents highlighted they deem the industry as a source of entertainment a “fun” past time regardless of the impact it may have on an individual as found in objective one. Secondary research shown within an Australian report that individuals reported the industry and the involvement as a “game”, another form of entertainment (Hume and Mort., 2011). Adolescents between the ages of (12-19) reported the industry as a means of entertainment in which they can make money from due to the use of luxurious and extravagant imagery used (Derevensky, 2009). This highlights the lack of unawareness youth have regarding the impact gambling can have on an individual’s health and wellbeing. When asking the respondents do, they feel younger audiences are aware of the impact the industry has on an individual, there was a united view that adolescents under the age of 18 are not aware of the impact the industry holds due to the lack of education on the subject.

**OC:** *“I don’t think there aware of the impact the industry really has its all fun and games a bit of entertainment with friends and then it gets in on you. Many simply can’t stop €5 turns into €20 then into €50 it’s a never-ending cycle”.*

**VG:** *“They’ll learn when they engage. They don’t know the full extent of the addictive nature it holds. they’ll understand as it goes on but by then it might be too late to try and pull back.”*

**MG:** *“When I was underage gambling, I defiantly didn’t realise how addictive it is I just seen it as a way to make more money, now that I look back I wish I didn’t do what I done. I learned how to control my spending over time”.*

The UK deregulated gambling advertisements within 2007, with the government deeming the industry as a leisure activity (Powell and Tapp, 2009). The change of regulation has led increased availability of the opportunities to gamble for consumers alongside an increase in advertisements in relation to the industry (Powell and Tap, 2009). Advertisements released since the regulation change are highlighting the industry as a social norm to be involved as its fun and entertaining (Ibid). These marketing messages used by the industry is attracting more consumers into the industry due to the lack of awareness of the negative impact the industry does hold such as “addictive consumption”. The lavish advertisements and integration of heavy sponsorship through celebrity endorsements merely highlight positive brand messages to consumers.

**OC:** *“Children aspire to be someone they admire like sports stars and other celebrities. The industry is aware of this and they connect with them to target the young consumers in advance”.*



**VG:** *“The advertisements defiantly play a role in enticing consumers in especially youth because, you think wow It could be me to win and ill have this much money at my disposal”.*

**MG:** *“My little brother he’s underage but would always ask me to put money on a horse for him because he knows he has the opportunity to make more, he’s enticed by the game of chance”.*

These advertisements not only entice younger demographics to the industry, but they also influence problem or recreational gamblers. As the positive brand messages being used by the industry are altering the public health advice deeming the industry as harmful. With many consumers seeking services to change their perceptions on the industry or seek health advice regarding the industry many are not availing of said services due to the positive imagery used by the industry.

#### 4.1.3.C. Consumer Misbehaviour and the involvement in “Chasing”

The researcher wanted to uncover insights of an individual's involvement in consumer misbehaviour through chasing losses.

**MG:** *“Chasing has so much adrenalin, trying to get my winner after so many losers!! It's very hard to stop when you're in the moment, but when all your money is gone from chasing your walking out of the bookies and saying to yourself “I was going to back that horse” or “I should have taking his tip” That game of chance is eating into your mentality”.*

Within all three reference groups involved in chasing it is deemed a scenario which happens almost every time they bet.

**VG:** *“Chasing is the devil. Whether your winning or losing! This is the part of gambling which you hate or love. You can't have gambling without chasing”.*

To gain insight into consumer misbehavior the researcher placed the respondents in a scenario the results showcased how addictive the industry is as many simply couldn't resist the urge to be further involved.

Researcher - You've been betting for a while today as a form of entertainment whilst socializing. You've broke even but there's more sport still on. You decide to place one more bet, placing a single bet, €10 on a 10/1 horse. You win!! Now what do you do?

**VG:** *“Continue betting because there's sport available with the €100.  
If I lose the €100, I'll still keep going because I've only lost the bookies money not mine”.*

**MG:** *“You keep playing because you've more money than you expected. Yes, it sounds bad that I'm continuing but that's the fun of it”.*

**OC:** *“Id try double it. I don't gamble often so why not”.*

#### 4.1.4 Objective 4

This section within the study aimed to gather an individual's opinion on a variety of questions in related to the use of advertising to demographics below the age of 18, problem gamblers and the use of marketing tactics today.

**“To investigate the impact gambling advertising has on the public with reference to the younger demographic under the age of 18.”**

##### 4.1.4.A The Power of Advertising Methods on an Individual

The researcher aimed to gather insights and opinions on how influential marketing campaigns are in today's crowded market space, as consumers are exposed to over 600 advertisements per day (Simpson, 2017).

**OC:** *“I am influenced by some advertisements because I know its targeted to me it would be on all my socials, I'd think about it over time and id end up buying what there offering”*

**MG:** *“Gambling advertisements are so influential because they affiliate themselves with well-known sports stars to lure new customers in”*

**VG:** *“Advertisements in relation to sports events like Cheltenham encourage you to be involved from advance through using the early odds, I'm involved weeks before it, So I can understand how their influential to children and problem gamblers”.*

The researcher asked the respondents to recall any recent advertisements used by the betting industry in which stands out in their mind to generate brand recall. Alongside enquiring if the advertisement in which they recalled motivated them to be further involved. Three respondents used the example of the Cheltenham 2020 advert which featured Colm Meaney which highlighted tongue and cheek humour of how Irelands horses are betting than English racehorses.

**OC:** *“The Cheltenham 2020 advert was brilliant seeing how Ireland and the English compare, of course it was controversial though, that's how Paddy Power operate”.*

Many advertisements where recalled by the respondents but with a core focus on Paddy Power advertisements. The researcher questioned why do you remember Paddy Power? many responded it was to do with their integration of humour.

**MG:** *“They use stunt marketing all the time on social media to get the attention of users, like tongue and cheek adverts you just have to laugh” the respondent continued by saying “even though Paddy Power are part of the addictive industry you just have to love them because they're so funny”.*

**VG:** *“Paddy Power was always my bookmaker of choice due to their advertisements showcasing their bet offerings and humour, they stand out”.*

The respondents had a united view that advertisements motivate individuals to use a product or service highlighted through the media, in relation to the gambling industry consumers are motivated regardless of the impact addiction can play. The insight also highlighted that appeals which will be discussed within the next section play a role in brand recall.

#### 4.1.4.B Emotional appeals within Advertising Campaigns

Advertising uses an array of appeals such as informational and emotional appeals through consistent messages in order to target consumers effectively (Hansen, 2005). To make the consumer aware of industry offerings, encourage engagement and to provoke conversations between individuals (Fill, 2013). The researcher aimed to gain an insight into the recall of advertisements in which incorporate appeals through investigating. Questioning which form of advertisement an individual would be more likely to remember *“humour appeal, sex appeals, fear appeals or musical appeals”* which sparks their attention to recall it.

**OC:** *“The most bizarre humour adverts always grab my attention, making you think who really let that happen?”.*

**MG:** *“I always remember musical appeals like the theme tune to 123.ie or GoCompare are always in the back of his mind, I can just sing it randomly at any time of the day”.*

**VG:** *“Humour always catches my attention, it’s just a standout to me. I can remember so many funny Paddy Power stunts and adverts because of it”.*

The respondents were all in agreement that the use of these appeals whether it’s through humour or music allows you to engage in brand recall alongside sparking brand perceptions which are positive. Many respondents stated if someone was to ask for an insurance brand, the ones in which incorporate jingles will spring to mind first. When relating it to the gambling industry all respondents stated when using an in-store book makers they all choose Paddy Power because *“there the most popular bookies”* highlighting that brand awareness and the integration of media appeals can encourage users to use this brand over another.

#### 4.1.4.C Using emotional and psychological appeals through fear to change consumer behaviour

Users under the legal age of gambling between 12-17 perceived the advertising messages used by the industry as a lavish lifestyle one can obtain from joining (Derevensky, 2009). These users reported that advertising messages are targeting them to join bet wagering sites in hope to obtain wealth through encouraging imagery (Ibid). Whereas problem gamblers reported that seeing advertisements related to the industry had little to no effect on their motivation to gamble that it is not the root cause of their addiction (Binde, 2009). With many influenced by marketing messages to join the industry, there is a need for public health safety to play a role in influencing vulnerable consumers to the effects this industry has on an individual. Literature argues that public health advertising plays little role in creating awareness of the dangers of the industry with it having a poor success rate (Najavitis et al., 2003). It has been argued that changes to legislation play a more positive role in changing consumer behavior through the banning of advertisements and sponsorship (Dowling et al., 2005). The researcher aimed to gather opinions on the matter of advertisements using physical or physiological appeals to deter a consumer from engage in a particular industry for example, gambling or smoking. Respondents had a united view that these fear appeals using graphic imagery and or physical scenarios solely don't influence an individual from deterring away from an industry. Raising a point that education from an early age of addictive industries should be implemented into the education curriculum to deter users from joining in future scenarios.

**MG:** *“Anti-gambling advertisements should be created to show the impact it has on an individual later in life, it’s a highly addictive industry. Yes, it’s a bit of fun but for many we can’t stop, it’s part of our day to day routine. But I don’t believe an appeal will solely fix the problem. Legislation would need to be altered to protect vulnerable consumers, to deter them away”.*

**VG:** *“If I had of been aware of the impact gambling has on an individual and their finances, I wouldn’t have engaged when I was underage. I was naïve, I didn’t understand the effects, so education is needed but I don’t feel fear appeals influence consumer perceptions”.*

**OC:** *“Fear appeals defiantly grasp consumer attention, but they don’t solely influence an individual”.*

## ***5.0 – Research Findings***

This section will discuss the findings within section 4.0 Findings. In which will relate and interpret the literature within this review based on the previously set out objectives.

***The research question is as follows:***

*Are young males (18-24) in Ireland being mentally shaped by the gambling industry using smart marketing tactics to become gamblers for life?*

**The objectives for this research and areas within the literature review are as follows:**

- 1. To investigate whether an individual is influenced by promotional offerings as a driver of motivation to be involved in bet wagering and their attitude formation.**

Through conducting primary and secondary research it was discovered that the use of promotional incentives through email spam, pop up notifications and the use of advertising encourage users to engage in betting practices. Within a UK study many students reported their involvement within the gambling industry is due to advertising influences as a means of motivation (Griffiths and Barnes, 2008), with respondents highlighting that the use of promotional offerings through incentives encouraged usage for the individual leading to involvement (Robinson, Wysocka and Hand, 2007). This is in line with the views of secondary research. Although one participant highlighted, they had to block all notifications and emails due to bombardment from the industry explaining it caused too much pressure. A commonality was found that Paddy Power is the instore bookie of choice but for e-gambling measures the respondents all chose to use BET365 due to popularity and brand offerings through fast cash outs, in play betting, instant win collection. All respondents viewed the promotional offerings provided by the industry solely as an enticement to spend further in which they all did.

**2. To discover if smart marketing tactics through the use of sponsorship on large sporting events influence an individual's attitude towards betting practices.**

Research shows that linking gambling to sports enhances a user's motivation to be involved (Sproston et al., 2015). The researcher aimed to uncover if the integration of sponsorship can influence a consumer to be involved in bet wagering. As previous research shows that gambling sponsorship through highlighting company name or emblem can lead to customer referrals (Rolfe, 2016). The respondents didn't agree that the use of sponsorship personally affects their motivation within any reference group as there solely focused on the sport of interest. But most respondents agreed that the integration of sponsorship can encourage more vulnerable audiences such as children. They stated their rationale behind their statement because their placing a celebrity in which one may admire to the industry as an encouragement to one day be involved alongside raising awareness of the brand. Within a study of children and sponsorship, many children had excellent brand recall through recalling gambling practices in which were partnered with well-known sports stars and clubs (Thomas et al., 2016).

This research highlighted that the chosen respondents are not motivated by the integration of sponsorship but agree vulnerable audiences may be encouraged.

### 3. To discover if awareness of the impact gambling practices has on an individual's mental health and wellbeing alters the individual's attitude towards gambling practices.

Research shows that young males are the highest risk of developing a problem gambling addiction in relation to sports betting (Gainsbury et al., 2014). The rise in young males betting has been linked to the advertising messages and sponsorship deals used by the industry showcasing power and success and attractiveness of the industry (Milner et al., 2013). With problem gamblers being more targeted by advertisements than non-problem gamblers (Binde, 2014). Through discussing the rise of problem gamblers in Ireland and the high addiction prevalence rates within the respondents age demographic all were unaware of the figures mentioned yet were not surprised. As many reported some of their friends have traits of addiction. All respondents were aware of the risks that gambling can impose on an individual due to gaining an addiction. Yet, being aware of the impact still doesn't deter the respondents from the industry.

The researcher aimed to uncover when they were below the legal age of betting where they aware of the impact it would hold. Many stated they weren't aware of how highly addictive the industry was as its not vocalized, many simply used it for "fast cash" **MG** respondent stated, *"it's the most dangerous form of entertainment"*.

The information obtained showed how highly addictive the industry is and regardless of information provided to highlight the impact it may have it still doesn't deter users as the addiction to the industry has already began.

**VG:** *"Every month I say I'll stop because I've lost it all, then I'm paid, and I go straight back into the bookies. I'm hooked"*.

Showcasing, emotional appeals through fear and educational programmes are needed for children and adolescences within education to show the impact this form of "entertainment" can have on an individual to deter them before legal age.

The researcher also asked questions in relation to the engagement of consumer misbehavior to gain insights in an individual's ability to resist the industry. All respondents including the occasional gamblers agreed that they partake in "chasing" either losses and or wins. The respondents are unable to deter away from the industry regardless of winnings as they are now playing off "money they never would have originally had".



#### **4. To investigate the impact gambling advertising has on the public with reference to the younger demographic under the age of 18.**

Within this objective the researcher was solely gathering the opinions of the respondents in relation to the impact gambling advertisements have on vulnerable consumers. Through asking a variety of questions in relation to advertising tactics used by the industry.

All respondents stated that they are influenced by the offerings within the advertising market as they are being targeted in a variety of different manners. One respondent stated, "seeing it all the time advertised just makes you want to buy it or know more about it". The researcher led to brand recall through recent advertisements used by the industry with many of the respondents referring to Paddy Power due to their integration of emotional appeals incorporated through humour and stunt marketing. **VG:** *"Paddy Power is always the first to come into my head when someone talks about gambling or the bookmakers because there everywhere and everyone knows them"*.

This is due to the fact of Paddy Power having an excellent brand persona.

**MG:** *"You see more Paddy Power ads than ever before in traditional or digital methods when large events are coming around". Targeting consumers in advance of large events to encourage involvement.*

As the researcher discussed emotional appeals it was led into the use of fear appeals through advertising highlighting the dangers of industries through physical or physiological appeal with an example of quitting smoking adverts. There was mixed view whether these appeals would deter a user from an industry with one respondent from the **OC** reference group saying, *"it can place a seed in one's mind, but doesn't mean it'll change it"*.

Views on the matter were split with some saying they ignore them or turn it off and others saying they listen, but it will only take effect if you want it to. Respondents saying that fear appeals will only work for some individuals but once again it was raised that awareness of the addiction rates should be highlighted through education.

## 6.0 - Conclusion and Recommendations

Through conducting qualitative data in the form of semi structured in-depth interviews over a three-month period (June – August) allowed the researcher to obtain rich data from the respondents. This approach allowed the researcher to understand the motivations and emotional attachments the respondents have to the industry. The rationale behind this investigation was to uncover the impact smart marketing tactics and sponsorship used by the gambling industry had on young males (18-24) motivation to gamble and their emotional attachment it withholds.

Many consumers are involved within the industry due to the perception of it due to positive brand messages alongside the industry being apart of the experience economy through “entertainment”. The gambling industry is perceived by many as a “fun” positive industry through lavish advertisements. Primary and Secondary research had a unified view that the industry is creating positive brand messages to highlight the entertaining and glorified side of the industry with the intent to target younger demographics to encourage involvement in later life due to positive brand perceptions.

Although the industry provides gamble responsibly messages within campaigns, the message is over shadowed from their lavish advertisements. Leaving many consumers including vulnerable consumers unaware of the detrimental impacts the industry holds.

Although the respondents are aware of the impact that gambling can have on an individual's health and wellbeing it is not an element of deferral. Many respondents were not aware of the rising numbers of addicted consumers within their age demographic, highlighting the impact the industry can have on an individual.

There is clear evidence that promotional incentives are a driver of motivation for users within the 18-24 age demographic within Ireland. The respondents simply cannot escape the grip of the industry as it lures you back in time and time again. All three reference groups regardless of usage rates all partake in consumer misbehaviours through “chasing” wins and losses due to the adrenaline it provides. Highlighting that regulatory change is needed to protect vulnerable consumers from the tactics used by the industry. Sponsorship was also deemed as an enticement for younger demographics through partnering famous sports stars with betting agents to create positive brand perceptions and encourage brand recall. As many respondents could recall betting agencies in which have partnered with English football clubs. Respondents could also recall advertisements in which showcased emotional appeals with a key focus on Paddy Power in which incorporated emotional appeals through humour to entice further involvement.

Thus, the researcher believes that smart marketing tactics and the incorporation of sponsorship campaigns are not the sole reason for consumer involvement many other factors play a role in their decision making for involvement.

### 6.1 Recommendations for future academic research:

- It is recommended that an Irish study is created into underage demographics below the legal age of 18. To determine the impact marketing tactics such as advertising and sponsorship has on Irish adolescences motivation to be involved with the industry. Alongside understanding their perception of the industry, uncovering their awareness of the impact the industry may hold on an individual's health and wellbeing.
- There was a limitation placed on this study solely choosing males for this study. Females do engage in gambling practices. Therefore, it would be interesting for a future study to include a woman's perspective.
- Conducting this study in a longitudinal manner over an extended period gaining insights on how a variety of different sporting events influence audiences to partake.
- Conducting a mixed method approach to gain further opinions and insights into the impact marketing messages and tactics has on an individual.

### 6.2 Personal Learning

The thesis itself is a challenging yet rewarding piece of work. With many lessons learned within conducting a thesis of this size, planning is a fundamental element. Whilst reflecting on the piece of work created the researcher feels the inclusion of female gamblers were needed for a more diverse piece of work. As Covid19 provided many obstacles to the research, a quantitative approach may have been a better choice due to many respondents not wanting to conduct interviews due to social distancing and the uncertainty of the virus.

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