

Sport, Sports Betting, and Gambling from the Perspective of University Students: Case of the Czech Republic

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BACKGROUND: Sport in the 21st century represents a multidisciplinary field its an indispensable role in the lives of individuals and society. Sport is associated inter alia with winning, victory, defeat; teamwork and individualism, professionalism and amateurism, feelings of joy and happiness, as well as with feelings of tension, uncertainty, excitement, and taking risks. Risk also appears within the context of sports betting and gambling, being a characteristic phenomenon there. This kind of risk brings both positives and negatives for the participants. University students represent a specific demographic group for whom this risk holds a certain appeal and interest. **AIM:** The primary aim of this paper was to determine whether there is a correlation between the experience of the survey sample of respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling, and their biological age, gender, and the type of faculty they study. The secondary objective was to identify the preferred sports concerning sports betting among respondents in the Czech Republic.

METHODS: In this research paper, various scientific research and mathematical-statistical methods were applied. Furthermore, citation and reference databases Scopus, and the bibliographic and citation database Web of Science were used. **SAMPLE:** The research sample consisted of two categories of respondents. Those with a prior experience in sports betting (N = 391) and those without any prior experience in sports betting (N = 679). The respondents were university students in the Czech Republic. **RESULTS:** The results suggested that biological age does not significantly impact the experience of the survey sample of respondents regarding sports betting, as a category of gambling. Additionally, it was discovered that gender, as well as the type of faculty the respondents study influenced the experience of the respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling. **CONCLUSIONS:** The most frequently preferred sports activity for sports betting among university students in the Czech Republic is football.

Keywords | Sport, Sports Betting, and Gambling from the Perspective of University Students: Case of the Czech Republic

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1 INTRODUCTION

Sport, sports betting, and gambling represent leisure activities that offer the individual a sense of excitement and thrill, as they trigger an alternation between brief moments of fear and moments of hope. In terms of historical evolution, it can be said that fixed-odds sports betting originates in Scandinavia and The United Kingdom (Elias et al., 2003).

Sports betting means placing bets on approved categories of international, national, or local sports events, whether on the field or off the field, physically, via the phone, or via the Internet (Queensland Government Statistician's Office, 2014).

As further stated by Mintas (2009), among the initial sports that systematic betting began on from 1921 in the United Kingdom, football took precedence.

As Aragay et al. (2021) noted, sport and sports betting in the 21st century encompasses new algorithms and technologies with an unprecedented conception of sports, and is becoming a common activity among sports audiences, particularly among young adults and the middle-aged. The fact that sports knowledge and sports events results (such as sports matches, competitions, races, Olympic games, etc.) are instantly and readily creates a false impression of higher winning probabilities with lesser reliance on chance. These positive influences and characteristics contribute to the growing popularity of gambling and sports betting as a common leisure activity among young adults.

According to Gainsbury (2012) or Hing et al. (2014), the development of information and communication technologies is a significant growth factor allowing multinational sports betting agencies that offer the services of online sports betting to extend their services across borders. Simultaneously, such expansion provides customers with easy access, convenience, anonymity, and favourable prices.

Elton-Marshall et al. (2016) further state that young people are being increasingly lured into online gambling via the Internet, and that the prevalence of problem gamblers is higher in online gambling compared to offline gambling.

Yazdi and Katzian (2017) suggest that online gambling is sought after by younger and more educated men.

The current extensive and aggressive marketing, targeted promotion, and marketing communication, particularly during sports events, contribute to an increasing rate of customers of gambling, sports betting, or online sports betting (Binde, 2014).

In this context, Sklar et al. (2010) argue that the aim of advertising to promote gambling and sports betting is to communicate unrealistically easy winnings without real possibilities of losing. The mission of such campaigns is to establish gambling and sports betting as desirable leisure activities, especially among young adults.

However, Elton-Marshall et al. (2016) list potential risks and dangers associated with sports betting and gambling, including the development of undesirable and hazardous addictions.

As a result, they emphasize the need for informing not young adults about the possible risks associated with sports betting and gambling, while advocating for increased government control and restrictions on gambling service providers.

LaBrie and Shaffer (2011) also propose that for measuring the effects of sports betting and gambling addiction, common indicators of addictive behaviours should include (a) the proportion of gamblers in the population and (b) the frequency of their betting on sports events. LaBrie and Shaffer (2011) also defined precise patterns of behaviour typical of sports betting, which differentiate individuals who acknowledge having gambling problems from those who do not have such issues.

Kairouz et al. (2012) claim that government policies and preventive measure must heed the fact that the issue of sports betting and gambling primarily pertains to young and single males.

The domain and all aspects related to gambling are legislatively regulated through the laws of the Czech Republic, Law No. 186/2016 Coll. (the Gambling Act, sometimes referred to as the Lottery Act). This law was approved by the Chamber of Deputies on April 13, 2016, ratified by the Senate on May 26, 2016, and signed by President Miloš Zeman on June 7, 2016. The law came into effect on January 1, 2017.

Sport, sports betting, and gambling are the topic of this academic paper. These will be researched on a selected sample of respondents, namely university students in the Czech Republic. The primary aim of this research is to determine whether a statistically significant correlation does exist between the experiences (participation) of the respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling, and between their biological age, gender, and the type of faculty the respondents' study at. The secondary objective is to identify the most commonly preferred sporting activity for sports betting among respondents in the Czech Republic. The introduction of the paper presents the fundamental theoretical foundations for the research area. Subsequently, the research objectives, methodology, and data collection are to be introduced and verified through selected mathematical and statistical methods. Following this, the research findings will be presented, and a discussion of these findings will be conducted. The final part of the paper will be dedicated to an overall summary of the research topic for the Czech Republic.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Sport has been a global phenomenon since its beginning and is interconnected with all aspects of social life. Sport with various sports branches is perceived as attractive, engaging, creative, and motivating for those involved. These positive attributes exhibited by sports and the sports categories have been creating an environment appealing for sports betting and gambling, driven by the uniqueness and dynamism of sports (Li et al., 2012).

In a general sense, sports betting can be characterized as an activity conducted on a betting market. The betting market serves as a platform for individual or group bets placed on specific sports events (Koning & van Velzen, 2009).

Hing et al. (2015), or Hoye et al. (2010) view sports betting as an activity on the betting market based on the outcomes of local, national, or international sporting events or sports activities.

Anastasovski and Nanev (2014) further elaborate that sports betting is connected to predicting the results of a specific sporting event by placing a certain wager on such outcome.

Sport and sports betting have gained significance and appeal and are being heavily promoted, primarily targeting young adult males. It is obvious that issues related to gambling and potential addiction are on the rise. Therefore, in order to design and target interventions in public health and treatments related to gambling, it is crucial to identify the risk factors and links associated with gambling in the context of sports (Hing et al., 2016).

Hing et al. (2014), Lamont et al. (2011), or Sproston et al. (2014) argue that the growth of sports betting contributes to the occurrence of gambling addiction and sports betting-related addictions.

Nevertheless, it is clear that sports and sports betting generate popularity and substantial revenues for the gambling industry, not only due to marketing and promotion but also due to the unique features of sport. The existence of the relationship between sports betting and gambling has been confirmed and this relationship can be perceived as positive and also significant (Koning & van Velzen, 2009; Mao et al., 2015).

Lopez-Gonzalez et al. (2018) explain that current marketing and promotion of sports and sports betting normalise betting decisions among increasingly larger segments of the population. Betting agencies, in their marketing communication and promotion, present situations or characters that conventionalise betting and encourage specific behaviours while ignoring other kinds.

Etuk et al. (2022) argue that sports betting nowadays is easily and readily available, normalised, and features many attractive and stimulating functions for consumers of sports betting and gambling.

In this context, Chóliz (2008) further states that the reason sports and sports betting are one of the oldest and most popular game activities today is psychological. The typical characteristics that encourage betting on sports events or other gambling games include the availability of sports with the possibility of physical or online betting, and the growing numbers of sports betting venues, where addictive substances such as alcohol or drugs are used.

As mentioned earlier, young people are a high-risk group for gambling, sports betting, and subsequent gambling-related issues that can lead to addictions. University students also fall into this category (Moore et al., 2013).

Clarke (2004), or Lightsey and Hulsey (2002) explain the above by stating that besides the usual pressures associated with transitioning into adulthood and adapting to university life, many university students must transition to social, emotional, academic, and financial independence, and some struggle to cope with these transitions. High stress levels and mood disor-

ders may occur, increasing students' vulnerability to gambling and, in some cases, addiction.

According to Labrador and Vallejo-Achón (2020), the most commonly bet on sport is football. This is likely due to football's status as one of the most popular global sport, its representation in media, particularly in television.

Conversely, Deans et al. (2017) assert that in Australia, rugby and football attract the most sports bets, thanks to extensive advertising and sponsorship.

While sports and sports betting are interesting, dynamic, and alluring areas, there are real shortcomings in the scientific and research field, and in the realm of empirical evidence, in different countries worldwide (Mao et al., 2015).

Additionally, Sirotkin et al. (2023) note during the period of the Covid-19 pandemic, university students were unable to travel abroad. The students also reported other restrictions, such as in collective sports. These factors may have contributed to gambling.

However, some empirical research show that the perception of sport and issues related to sports, sports betting, and gambling vary based on variables. These variables include: (a) sporting activity (Yüce et al., 2017); (b) biological age (Aragay et al., 2021; Ayandele et al., 2020; Labrador & Vallejo-Achón, 2020; Wickwire et al., 2007; Williams et al., 2006; Yüce et al., 2017); (c) geography (Aragay et al., 2021; Binde, 2005; Kairouz et al., 2020; Paradis and Nadeau, 2012; Yazdi and Katzian, 2017; Yüce et al., 2017); (d) culture (Binde, 2005; Labrador & Vallejo-Achón, 2020; Yaar, 2011); (e) religion and beliefs (Binde, 2005; Labrador & Vallejo-Achón, 2020; Yaar, 2011; Yüce et al., 2017); (f) gender (Aragay et al., 2021; Kairouz et al., 2020; Paradis and Nadeau, 2012; Salonen et al., 2017; Yazdi and Katzian, 2017; Yüce et al., 2017); (g) social environment (Ayandele et al., 2020); (h) education (Aragay et al., 2021; Kairouz et al., 2020; Yazdi and Katzian, 2017; Yüce et al., 2017).

In the Czech Republic, the legal framework overseeing gambling falls under Law No. 186/2016 Coll., the Gambling Act. This law regulates gambling, conditions for their operation, measures for responsible gambling, and the jurisdiction of administrative authorities concerning gambling operations.

3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE AND METHODS

The subject of this research paper is the field of sports, specifically sports betting and gambling from the perspective of university students in the Czech Republic.

Sport and the sports industry represent a current and discussed topic, not only due to various sporting events (sports matches, competitions, races, etc.) but also because of countless sports-related affairs, whether positive or negative.

Sport, as a leisure activity, offers a wide range of possibilities for participants. However, the population seeks beyond active or passive participation in sports. It seeks other ways to engage

with sports. One such option is betting on various sports events or activities. Nevertheless, issues related to sports betting fall under the category of gambling, and when not controlled it can lead to the state of addiction.

This research paper presents selected partial results that are part of a comprehensive research study mapping the area of sports betting and gambling among university students in the Czech Republic. This segment of respondents was chosen due to the positive relationship of young adults and the middle generation to sports betting and gambling.

Another factor is that Czech secondary information sources insufficiently address the issues related to sports, sports betting, and gambling in the context of young adults, the middle generation, or university students. Currently, any publications or empirical data and information in this area can be exclusively accessed from foreign information sources.

The authors of this research paper are aware that the issue of sports betting and gambling is a complex one due to its societal significance. Therefore, they do not mean to trivialise or promote sports betting or gambling, leading to dangerous addiction, particularly among young members of the population.

The main objective of this research paper is to determine whether there might be a statistically significant relationship between the experience (participation) of the survey respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling, and the biological age, gender, and type of faculty currently being studied by the respondents. The secondary research objective is to explore the most common sports activities and subsequently determine which of these sports activities are preferred by respondents for sports betting in the Czech Republic.

The respondents are university students in the Czech Republic studying in full-time or part-time programmes who have either experienced or not experienced sports betting at the time of the research. In the context of this comprehensive research study on sports betting and gambling, it should be noted that this study will consider sports betting on specific sports events (sports matches, competitions, races, etc.) not held as part of the Summer or Winter Olympic Games.

In order to achieve the aforementioned research objectives and to better understand the relationship between the variables, four research questions have been formed:

Research question 1: Is there a statistically significant relationship between the experience (participation) of the survey respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling, and the biological age of the respondents?

Research question 2: Is there a statistically significant relationship between the experience (participation) of the survey respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling, and the gender of the respondents?

Research question 3: Is there a statistically significant relationship between the experience (participation) of the survey

respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling, and the type of faculty the respondent is currently studying?

Research question 4: What is the most common sports activity for sports betting preferred among respondents in the Czech Republic?

The research data and information collected within the conducted research study was done through an anonymous structured questionnaire. The anonymous structured questionnaire survey was divided into several sequential sections, some of which are presented as research findings in this research paper.

This questionnaire survey was conducted multiple times due to the low number of respondents in the first phase. Therefore, the first phase took place from January 2023 to March 2023. Afterward, the second phase was initiated in mid-March 2023 and concluded in July 2023. As part of the zero phase, a pre-test was conducted, involving a total of eight respondents who had experience with sports betting, and the questionnaire survey was conducted in a paper-based format. These eight respondents were further politely requested to share the questionnaire survey, particularly among their university classmates who were known to have experienced betting on sports events or sports activities.

The research sample of the respondents consisted of two categories. The first category comprised of university students in the Czech Republic who had experience with or had participated in sports betting at the time of our research ($N = 391$). The second category of respondents consisted of university students in the Czech Republic who did not have any experience with sports betting at the time of our research, meaning they had not participated in sports betting thus far ($N = 679$). In order to verify and answer the designed research questions, both categories of respondents were analysed. The verification of research questions was achieved using the Pearson chi-squared test, which determines whether there is a statistically significant relationship between the selected statistical characteristics. For the analysis and the subsequent processing of the data and information obtained, we used the Microsoft Excel 2013 spreadsheet programme and the IBM SPSS Statistics 23 statistical software.

It is essential to note that participation in the research study was voluntary and anonymous. Respondents were informed that the area of sports betting and gambling can lead to undesirable and dangerous addiction if engaged in uncontrollably and long-term.

From the legal perspective, the field of sports betting and gambling in the Czech Republic is regulated by the Law on Gambling (the Gambling Act), Act No. 186/2016 Coll.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following table (*Table 1*) presents the basic structure of the respondents according to selected characteristics.

The table (*Table 1*) presents the research sample of respondents who participated in the quantitative research study con-

Table 1 | Basic structure of the interviewed respondents according to selected characteristics

Biological age	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
18–22	357	33.36%
23–27	300	28.04%
28–32	232	21.68%
33–37	92	8.60%
38–42	34	3.18%
43–47	33	3.08%
48+	22	2.06%
Total	1,070	100.00%
Gender	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Female	340	31.78%
Male	723	67.57%
Other	7	0.65%
Total	1,070	100.00%
Type of faculty studied at	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Applied Informatics, Informatics and Management	26	2.43%
Architecture, Art and Architecture	20	1.87%
Security Management of the Police Academy of the Czech Republic in Prague	11	1.03%
Jan Perner Transport Faculty	21	1.96%
Economics, Economics and Administration, Social and Economic Studies, Business and Management	87	8.13%
Electrical Engineering, Technology, Material Technology	22	2.06%
Pharmacy	21	1.96%
Philosophy/Faculty of Arts	20	1.87%
Mining and Geology	12	1.12%
Music and Dance, Theatre, Film and Television	26	2.43%
Humanities	57	5.33%
Chemical, Chemical technology	26	2.43%
Medicine	30	2.80%
Forestry and wood technology	16	1.50%
Logistics and crisis management, security engineering	24	2.24%
Mathematics and Physics	23	2.15%
International relations	54	5.05%
Multimedia communications, design and art, visual arts	24	2.24%
National economics, business economics, finance and accounting	66	6.17%
Others	49	4.58%
Teaching	33	3.08%
Law	42	3.93%
Science	27	2.52%
Restoration	7	0.65%
Fisheries and water protection	9	0.84%
Social sciences, social studies	25	2.34%
Civil engineering	26	2.43%
Mechanical engineering	43	4.02%
Physical education and sports, sports studies, physical culture	41	3.83%
Textile engineering	17	1.59%
Veterinary medicine, veterinary hygiene and ecology, environment	30	2.80%
Military leadership, military technologies	19	1.78%
Horticulture	35	3.27%
Healthcare Sciences, Health and Social, Health Studies	61	5.70%
Agriculture, AgriSciences	20	1.87%
Total	1.07	100.00%

ducted through an anonymous structured questionnaire survey. In the context of the research topic, it is obvious that there is a predominance of younger respondents and male gender (67.57%) over female gender (31.78%). The segmentation of respondents by their current field of study is also presented in Table 1, with the largest representation of the faculties of Economics, Economics and Administration, Social and Economic Studies, Business and Management (8.13%), while the faculty of Restoration has the least representation (0.65%).

Research question 1: Is there a statistically significant relationship between the experience (participation) of the survey respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling, and the biological age of the respondents?

To verify and answer the Research question 1, the Pearson chi-squared test was used, with a p-value of 0.832, which is higher than the standard level of significance (.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected at a significance level of 5%. In this case, it can be stated that the biological age of the respondents does not have an impact on the experience (participation) of the surveyed respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling ($\chi^2 = 2.813$, $df = 6$, $p > .05$).

Research question 2: Is there a statistically significant relationship between the experience (participation) of the survey respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling, and the gender of the respondents?

To verify and answer the Research question 2, the Pearson chi-squared test was used. Regarding the dependency, the data showed that the p-value is lower than the standard level of significance (5%). It can be concluded, therefore, that there is a statistically significant relationship between the experience (participation) of the surveyed respondents in sports betting, as one category of gambling, and the gender of the respondents ($\chi^2 = 10.423$, $df = 2$, $p < .05$). The strength of this relationship was also examined using Cramer's V, with a value of 0.099, indicating a very weak relationship in this case.

Research question 3: Is there a statistically significant relationship between the experience (participation) of the survey respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling, and the type of faculty the respondent is currently studying?

The result of verifying Research question 3 using the Pearson chi-squared test shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between the experience (participation) of the survey respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling, and the type of faculty the respondent is currently studying, as the p-value is 0.000 ($\chi^2 = 72.011$, $df = 34$, $p < .05$). The strength of this relationship was further tested using Cramer's V, with a value of 0.259, indicating a weak relationship in this case.

Research question 4: What is the most common sports activity for sports betting preferred among respondents in the Czech Republic?

The research study addressing the issues of sports, sports betting, and gambling in the Czech Republic through the selected target

segment of university students also aimed to determine the most common sports activity preferred by respondents for sports betting in the Czech Republic. Based on the theoretical foundations presented to respondents, the following selected sports or sporting activities were provided: (a) football; (b) hockey; (c) tennis; (d) others. University students who had experience with sports betting at the time of the research were asked to select only one of these sports activities. The following table (Table 2) presents the possible sports activities preferred by the research respondents for sports betting in the Czech Republic.

Based on Table 2, we can conclude that the most common sports activity preferred by respondents for sports betting in the Czech Republic is football (40.41%). Ice hockey ranks second (32.99%), and tennis third (14.07%). Respondents also mentioned other sports activities such as basketball, horse racing, handball, motorsports, and volleyball.

This research paper addresses the topic of sports, sports betting, and gambling from the perspective of university students in the Czech Republic.

The research study presents the following findings. The biological age of respondents does not influence the experience (participation) of the survey respondents in sports betting, as category of gambling. In contrast, we confirm a relationship between the experience (participation) of the survey respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling, and the gender of the respondents. Furthermore, we also confirm a relationship between the experience (participation) of the survey respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling, and the type of faculty that the respondent is currently studying.

Aragay et al. (2021) conducted a prospective study in Barcelona, Spain, involving youth in the context of online sports betting. Their results indicate that a younger age (34.9 ± 9.5), male gender, higher education (43.8%), higher weekly spending on gambling (EUR 100.00), and non-smoking habits were linked with online sports betting. This result supports the focus of our research on university students, as one of the at-risk segments for gambling and potential sports betting addiction.

Yazdi and Katzian (2017) also conducted research on gambling in two forms: offline gambling (N = 1,167 respondents) and online gambling (N = 72 respondents). They claim that both forms of gambling are more engaged in by men with higher education (51.56% for offline gambling and 86.11% for online gambling). However, there were differences in biological age, with respondents older than 50 years preferring offline gambling (42.80%) and respondents aged 30–49 years preferring online gambling (52.78%). These findings are in line with our sample of respondents, where our research focuses on a more educated segment of the population, especially university students.

Elton-Marshall, Leatherdale, and Turner (2016) conducted research in Canada among adolescent youth with the sample of 10,035 students. They found that 41.6% of adolescents (35.9% female and 47.4% male) engaged in gambling in the past 3 months. The most preferred form of gambling was online

Table 2 | The most frequent sports activity preferred by respondents for sports betting in the Czech Republic

Types of sport	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Football	158	40.41%
Hockey	129	32.99%
Tennis	55	14.07%
Other	49	12.53%
Total	391	100.00%

sports betting. These findings also confirm the results of our conducted research, where sports betting is one of the common forms of gambling.

Based on the results of an online survey conducted by Hing et al. (2016) in Australia, it can be said that the most vulnerable population segment with tendencies for gambling and sports betting are men, particularly younger, single, educated, and employed full-time or full-time students. These facts again confirm the results of our research, especially regarding gender, biological age, and the status of university students studying full time. Hing et al. (2016) further discovered the fact that the risk of possible addiction to sports betting or gambling increases with higher frequency and spending on sports betting. Salonen, Alho and Castrén (2017) also claim, based on their research, that men with a net income of more than EUR 2,000 engage in gambling.

Moore et al. (2013) conducted a research study with the sample of 836 Australian university students (546 women and 286 men) and 764 international university students (396 women and 369 men) aiming to identify correlations between these two groups of university students. According to their study, sports betting and gambling are more frequently engaged in by men than women, and nearly 10% of male international students could be considered addicted to sports betting or gambling. This conclusion again confirms our findings that male university students are more involved in sports betting and gambling.

Clarke et al. (2006) or Welte et al. (2008) confirm in the research that men not only have more positive attitudes towards sports betting and gambling but also gamble more frequently than women. According to their research, gender significantly correlates with both the frequency of gambling and problems with gambling or the development of gambling addiction.

Welte et al. (2008) suggest that women tend to engage in gambling in adulthood, while men engage in gambling in adolescence. Another finding they present is that Asians, as a race group, had the lowest engagement in sports betting and gambling, possibly because the Asian population tends to engage in gambling later in life. On the other hand, the engagement of the Black people in sports betting and gambling is less likely, but if they are already engaged in this activity, their engagement is one of the highest.

Gassmann et al. (2017) conducted a study using an online survey focused on the behaviour of the German population in

sports betting with a sample of 634 respondents. They claim that the typical sports bettor is 32 years old, male, has a low income, but a strong interest in sports and sports-related events and is willing to take risks. These research conclusions partially support our results, as our research findings show that men have more experience with sports betting and gambling. However, according to our findings, biological age does not affect sports betting or gambling.

In contrast, the results of Wicker and Soebbing (2012) suggest that men with higher incomes but lower levels of education are more inclined to sports betting and gambling. This finding does not completely correspond to our research results as we targeted university students in the Czech Republic.

Humphreys and Soebbing (2012) say that participation in sports betting and gambling decreases with age. Men bet more often, and the probability of participating in sports betting increases when household income is low, and household members are employed. The average age of gambling participants is approximately 44 years in the UK and around 35 in Canada.

Labrador and Vallejo-Achón (2020) also researched the most common type of sport on which Madrid students prefer to bet. Their results suggest that most people bet on football (94.6%), followed by basketball (34.5%), tennis (27.5%), and others (15.7%). Other sports included horse and greyhound racing. Madrid students bet less than 5% on the remaining sports. Their findings also support our research, as the most common sport in our research is football (40.41%), followed by ice hockey (32.99%), and tennis, which also ranks third (14.07%).

5 CONCLUSIONS

Sport is a branch that, due to its diversity and scope, touches upon all aspects of human society and human life itself. In the context of globalisation, the field of sports and sports activities transcends boundaries and geographical constraints. Sport offers universality and appeal to both active sportspeople, elite athletes, and passive or amateur athletes. However, sport is not only associated with positive characteristics but also with negative aspects. Sports betting and gambling may be included among the negative characteristics, in addition to banned anabolic androgenic substances and steroids.

This research paper seeks to address a research gap on the issue of sports, sports betting, and gambling in the context of university students in the Czech Republic.

Based on the processed theoretical background regarding this research issue, it is obvious that the areas of sports, sports betting, and gambling show a very close relationship. The possible intersection of these two fields presents a range of positive and negative elements.

The primary objective of this research paper was to determine whether a dependency exists between the experience (participation) of the survey respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling, and their biological age, gender, and the type

of faculty the respondent is currently studying. The secondary objective of the research article was to identify the most common sports activity preferred by respondents for sports betting in the Czech Republic. The respondents for the research were university students in the Czech Republic.

For the empirical part of the research article, four research questions were formed, to which answers were sought, among others, through a quantitative research survey conducted through an anonymous structured questionnaire.

The results of the primary research data and information confirmed that the biological age of the respondents does not affect the experience (participation) of the survey respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling. Furthermore, a relationship between the experience (participation) of the survey respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling, and the gender of the respondents was confirmed. Lastly, a relationship between the experience (participation) of the survey respondents in sports betting, as a category of gambling, and the type of faculty the respondent is currently studying was also confirmed. The most common sports activity identified in connection with the most preferred sports activity for sports betting by university students in the Czech Republic was football.

Although sports betting is a common phenomenon, there is a limited number of research studies on this topic in Czech academic literature on sports, sports management, and sports science, as well as in field of Czech empirical research. Therefore, the originality, contribution, and value of this research lie, *inter alia*, in discovering and subsequently closing the research gap above.

Furthermore, the results of this research paper provide information on the issue focusing on the area of sports, sports betting, and gambling. It may serve as a starting point for the development of preventive programmes or further treatment, protective, and intervention activities, primarily aimed at younger and middle-aged men to limit gambling and sports betting or improve their health if they have already become addicted. According to Hardová, Barkasi, and Barta (2022), the priority of prevention is a healthy lifestyle. Schools implement programmes promoting health, preventing socially pathological phenomena, recommending the use of methodologies and examples of good practice.

The research limitations of this research article are, for instance: (a) the research was conducted only in the Czech Republic; (b) the research sample could have been more extensive; (c) the research focused solely on university students in the Czech Republic; (d) qualitative research techniques within the selected sample of respondents could have been conducted for a deeper understanding of the research issue; (e) the survey could have taken physical form in addition to its online form;

(f) the research could have been conducted for an even longer period of time. Despite the research limitations listed, it is to be stated that this paper is a valuable and rich source of an entirely new set research data and information in a previously underexplored research area, namely the field of sports, sports betting, and gambling in university students in the Czech Republic.

Authors' contributions: Conceptualization: PS, JB; Introduction and Theoretical background: PS, JB; Methodology and Results: JB, PS; Final edition: PS, JB. All the authors contributed to the article and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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