
Islam and its Teachings: A Vital Means to the Problem and Perception of Gambling among Muslims of Nasarawa North Senatorial District Nigeria

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Abstract

Objective: Gambling is a pervasive issue that negatively impacts individuals and communities globally, including among Muslims, despite its explicit prohibition in Islam. This study aims to explore the prevalence, causes, and consequences of gambling among Muslims in the Nasarawa North Senatorial District, with a focus on understanding the role of Islamic teachings in addressing this problem. **Theoretical Framework:** The theoretical framework of this study is grounded in Islamic principles, particularly the prohibition of gambling as stated in the Qur'an and Hadith, which highlight its moral and social consequences. A review of relevant literature reveals that gambling is not only an economic concern but also a moral and psychological issue, often resulting in addiction and community deterioration. **Literature Review:** Furthermore, the literature emphasizes the critical role of religious education in mitigating such behaviours. **Methods:** The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to provide a comprehensive analysis of the issue. Data collection involved gathering responses from Muslim participants in the study area, focusing on their perceptions and experiences with gambling. **Results:** The findings reveal that gambling is prevalent among the respondents, with addiction emerging as a significant problem. Many gamblers lack sufficient knowledge of Islamic teachings on gambling, which contributes to their continued engagement in this prohibited activity. Interviews further highlight the societal and economic challenges faced by gamblers, including financial instability and family disintegration. The study concludes that Islam and its teachings play a vital role in addressing gambling, but the persistence of this issue is largely attributed to a lack of awareness and understanding of these teachings. **Implications:** As an implication, the research underscores the need for enhanced Islamic education and awareness programs. Community-based initiatives, such as counselling and support groups, are recommended to prevent and address gambling among Muslims in the region. **Novelty:** The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the intersection of gambling and Islamic teachings within a specific Muslim community, providing valuable insights into how religious principles can be leveraged to tackle modern social issues. By emphasizing the role of Islamic education and community engagement, this research contributes to a broader understanding of effective strategies for mitigating gambling and its harmful effects on the Ummah.

Keywords: gambling, perception, muslims, nasarawa north senatorial district, islamic teachings.

INTRODUCTION

Islam provides its adherents with a moral road map for their personal, social, and professional spheres. Muslims receiving and providing healthcare thus navigate carefully whether their practice within their professional sphere is in keeping with the sharia (Islamic law). The ethical-legal framework delineated by Islam's normative sources juxtaposes with global health priorities, secular healthcare systems, and patient preferences. Such factors may require Muslims to navigate between multiple moral spheres [1].

Gambling and other terms such as gaming and 'games-of-chance' derive from the Anglo-Saxon 'gamen' and 'gamon', which mean sport or play. The general use of the word gamble denotes any decision executed in any transaction or pursuit involving risk and uncertainty. Hence, gambling is to play a game of chance for money; to take a risk for some advantage; or a risky venture [2]. Risk and uncertainty are faced in gambling since the outcome of the decision taken is unknown, even though a good outcome is always expected. Therefore, it is said that politics is 'a big gamble' since judgments passed in this area are always uncertain and risky. The use of the word usually, however, refers more specifically to economic activity which is very concerned with the aspect of gain, loss, risk, and uncertainty relating to the 'game of chance'. Economically, therefore, to gamble is to "play 'games-of-chance' for money, especially for unduly high stakes; or to stake money (especially to an extravagant amount) on some fortuitous event" [3].

Gambling is on-purpose betting, namely risking one value or something that is considered valuable, by realizing the existence of certain risks and expectations on the events of the game, competition, race, and events that are not or uncertain results. There are many kinds of gambling, including roulette, follow, lottery, dice or glodog, docking, togel, etc [4]. Gambling is risking a certain amount of money or assets in a chance-based guessing game, to get a certain amount of money or assets greater than the amount of money or assets originally invested. The Naqli argument about Gambling. Islamic teaching has generally been misconceived as an act of worship that is usually separate from the context of life. The true Islamic teaching, however, is applicable throughout all lifetime and through all times. None of its teachings can be said to be outdated, and it has been proven that Islamic teaching is regarded as the essence and authority of the true way of life [5].

The Prophet (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said; The Deen is naseehah (advice). The companion said, "To whom? The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "To Allah and His Book, and His Messenger, and the leaders of the Muslims and their common folk" [6]. Gambling or 'game-of-chance' is believed to be as old as the dawn of civilization and has been used to facilitate decision-making in law, military operations, ceremonies, liturgy, and economics [7]. According to Paton, these matters were possibly decided by various methods of divination in primitive times to allow people to decisively discern their future [8]. Hence, the primary objective was, initially, decision-making. However, to add some sporting zest, gambling became 'secularized' by risking some stake or possession on the turn of chance.

However, insufficient studies have been made on the cultural and religious significance of gambling as claimed by infusionists. Nevertheless, archaeological findings in the world over strongly suggest that the origin of religious gambling, as claimed by infusionists, is irrefutable. This is chiefly because painted pebbles, dice, board games, astragals, and other such artefacts are all gambling implements dated to as early as 3500 BC. Since a large number of astragali were discovered in many prehistoric site excavations, it has been suggested that people tossed these bones in 'games of chance' as long as 40,000 years ago. While some of these ancient 'games-of-chance' continue to be used to this day in regions of their archaeological digs, numerous modern implements and methods have since been created to 'entertain' the human urge to gamble [9].

In the Glorious Qur'an, the word maysir, which refers to the lottery, appears three times at three different places: In (Q 2:219), Allah says: They ask you O Muhammad (SAW) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling Say: "In them is a great sin and (some) benefit for

men, but the sin of them is greater than their benefit." And they ask you what they ought to spend. Say: "That which is beyond your needs." Thus, Allah makes clear to you His Laws so that you may give [\[10\]](#).

In another surah, Allah says: O you who believe! Intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic drinks), gambling, al-*ansâb*, and al-*azlâm* (arrows for seeking luck or decision) are an abomination of shaitân's (satan) handiwork. So, avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) so that you may be successful [\[11\]](#). Satan seeks to stir up enmity and hatred among you using winning and gambling and to bar you from the remembrance of Allah and from praying. Will you not abstain from them? The aforementioned verses that prohibit lottery are complemented by the word *Qimar*, which specifically means 'betting', which does not appear anywhere in the Glorious Qur'an. The prohibition of gambling in the Glorious Qur'an takes place in stages beginning with verse 219 of chapter 2, followed by verses 90 and 91 of chapter 5 [\[12\]](#).

When discussing the wisdom of the prohibition of lottery and other associated games of gambling, renowned classical Qur'anic commentator, Yunus, explains that among the consequences of *maysir* and *qimar* are hostility, cursing, and disagreement among the participants; harmful to economic growth, besides distracting people from remembering Allah and performing prayers. He added that betting and *maysir* also give rise to the desire to try to win, especially after losing, until all the property is finally used for the lottery, so much so that the gambler will neglect his wife and children. Surely, the loser of this gambling game will regret it. This will cause a lot of social malaise and destroy the socio-economic fabric of society. In the prophetic Hadith, the words *maysir* and *qimar* or their derivatives appear only a few times. Besides the Hadith which mentions the words *maysir* or *qimar* specifically, there are also some Ahadith that mention the prohibition of certain activities that bear the elements of *maysir* or *qimar* [\[13\]](#).

For example, al-Bukhari and Muslims reported that the Prophet (SAW) once said;

When he said you let us bet, then let him give charity [\[14\]](#).

In another hadith, al-Bukhari also reported that the Prophet (SAW) said:

Look out for these two dice, as indeed, both are of non-Arab gambling [\[15\]](#).

Another Hadith collector, al-Bayhaqi, reported that the Prophet said: Indeed, Allah has forbidden wine, gambling, and *kubah* (a game that uses boards, fruit, and dice, also known as *tabo* or *nard*), and every intoxicant is illegal. These Ahadith show that there was gambling or a game of chance even at the time of the Prophet (SAW) [\[16\]](#).

The findings of this study hold important implications for religious leaders, educators, and policymakers. The high prevalence of gambling and the lack of awareness regarding its prohibition in Islam indicate an urgent need for enhanced religious education within Muslim communities. Strengthening Islamic teachings in schools, mosques, and public platforms can serve as a preventive measure against gambling-related behaviors. Community-based initiatives, such as faith-based counselling, support groups, and public awareness campaigns, can also play a vital role in reshaping perceptions and promoting behavioral change.

The novelty of this research lies in its localized focus on the Nasarawa North Senatorial District, providing an in-depth exploration of gambling within a specific Muslim community in Nigeria. By combining religious, social, and psychological perspectives, this study offers a comprehensive approach to addressing gambling through Islamic teachings. It fills a gap in existing literature by linking scriptural understanding with real-world behaviors and offering practical, faith-centred solutions to modern moral challenges. This integrative model may be adapted in other Muslim-majority areas facing similar issues.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Roesmanto, several factors influence gambling. Social & Economic factors for people with low social and economic status gambling is often seen by some people as a

means to improve their standard of living. Because they think, with very little capital, they will get the maximum benefit or get rich in an instant without great effort. In addition, the social conditions of people who accept gambling behavior also play a major role in the growth of these behaviors in the community [17]. Gambling is a common behavior among youths; most often betting at nightclubs or online. There are mostly multiple peril issues and comorbidities for youths that increase their likelihood of problem gambling, such as male gender, tobacco, drug, and alcohol use, certain behavioral disorders, lower socioeconomic status, and participation in athletics [18].

Green proposed in his book *Betting and Gambling* that he thought was more complete. He described 'gambling' as a contract between two parties in which the transfer of anything of value from one to the other is made contingent on an unpredictable event, with one party's benefit offset by the loss of the other. As a result, this encompasses all forms of gambling, including 'games of chance' and betting on horse races and other sporting events between clients and bookmakers or between people, as well as all types of sweepstakes, lotteries, and similar ventures. Certain commercial interactions are included in this [19]. Gambling is described as an activity in which money is used to take uncertain risks in the hopes of winning something of value [20]. Sule and Adam discussed the evolution of betting and gambling in football and its degeneration into online betting among youths across the globe. The authors further explain the involvement of Muslim youth in lottery and betting all toward financial gain to the detriment of their religion. The negative effects of gambling/betting were also discussed by the authors, where issues of health, poverty, laziness, frustration, waste of financial resources, and conflicts as some of the effects of gambling/betting. The authors concluded with an Islamic perspective of gambling/betting with sound reasons as to why they are not permitted for Muslims to take part in them [21].

Hume on his part discusses the connection between sports and the betting/gambling industries, stating that in modern times the relationship between the two sectors has become closer and more complex; that the gambling/betting agencies are now major sponsors of several sporting teams and individual athletes and the gambling industry is a main financial contributor to grassroots sporting clubs all the over world [22]. Another work of relevant work is where Scholes-Balog, & Hemphill explained that contemporary evidence also suggests that online bettors may be at a bigger risk of some substance use and psychological health issues, akin to non-online bettors. Scholes-Balog and Hemphill, for example, in their work note that online gambling, particularly problematic gambling, was found to be connected with poor mental health and issues of substance misuse. Similarly, their findings from the Gambling Prevalence Survey link smoking and alcohol use with sports betting, and that may also be useful for building a better understanding of potential cohorts of problem sports betting gamblers [23].

METHODOLOGY

This research employed a methodological survey to achieve its objectives. Survey-based research offers a range of data collection methods, with interviews and questionnaires being the most widely used techniques. For this study, the primary data was obtained specifically through interviews. The process of conducting this research followed three essential stages. First, the researchers focused on finding and gathering reference materials relevant to the research topic. This initial step involved identifying credible sources and exploring existing literature that could provide valuable insights and a solid foundation for the study. By synthesizing this information, the researchers ensured the research framework was grounded in relevant academic discourse [23].

The second stage involved conducting interviews, which formed the primary source of data collection. These interviews were carefully designed and implemented to capture in-depth perspectives and nuanced insights related to the research theme. Following the data collection, the responses were meticulously analyzed to identify patterns, themes, and intersections that align with the research objectives. The findings were then elaborated upon to enhance the depth of the analysis, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the topic under investigation [23].

In the final stage, the researchers synthesized the findings and provided key highlights to conclude the study. This conclusion not only encapsulated the main outcomes of the research but also offered suggestions and directions for further study. By presenting these highlights, the research aims to contribute to the academic discourse and inspire future inquiries into similar areas of interest. In summary, this methodological survey successfully utilized a structured approach to data collection and analysis. Starting from gathering relevant references, conducting and analyzing interviews, and concluding with meaningful insights, the research methodology ensured the objectives were met effectively. This structured process underscores the importance of methodical planning and execution in producing high-quality academic research [24].

Table 1. Research Methods

No.	Research Process	Details
1	Collecting Reference Materials	Finding and gathering relevant reference materials to support the research.
2	Conducting and Analyzing Interviews	Conducting interviews, analyzing them, and elaborating to understand the intersections of the essay.
3	Highlighting Research Outcome	Concluding the research by summarizing key highlights and outcomes for further study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Practice of the Game of Lottery in Nasarawa North Senatorial District

According to Friday Moses Asevogo, from his experience and knowledge of the environment majority of those who are involved in lottery/betting revealed that nearly 4 in 10 youths in the area really engage in some form of betting, and mostly those aged 14 – 35 years are the largest proportion. The elderly were mostly engaged in karta and poll [24]. Furthermore, Yamusa Abubakar states that, in terms of active participation in the game of the lottery and other forms of gambling, the majority of youths who engage in the act are Muslims and, to some extent, school dropouts. The majority of those engaged in lottery triumph bet only a few times a month, while some hardly win or never win at all. Many gamblers prefer betting platforms that offer timely redemption of winnings, favourable odds on games, a reputation for prompt payment, and are easy to use [25].

Types of Game of Lottery Players in Nasarawa North Senatorial District

The major types of lottery and gambling games in Nasarawa-North senatorial district, Nasarawa State, according to Saleh Kasimu Mamman, are: Casinos, Lottery, betting on sports, playing cards, playing on the internet, betting on dice, games of skill, and community events. This type of lottery and gambling games is not acts that involve only the youths, but elderly persons addicted to it are also engaged in it. It has been observed by the researchers that of all lottery and gambling methods, sports betting was the most highly patronized in the study area. This is premised on the fact that this mode remains the most accessible of all modes of lottery and gambling in the study area, as most of the persons involved in the act today highly patronize sports betting houses, while only a few patronize pool houses and gambling houses. Moreover, there is an increasing rate of watching sports activities such as England's Premier League, La Liga, and UEFA Champions League, among others. Lotto and online betting were being followed with increased attention. Believed that the rate of growth in online betting is substantial and had high expectations that this mode may overcome sports betting in the years to come [26].

It has also been observed by the researchers that there are a lot of lottery game spots in the Nasarawa North Senatorial District of Nasarawa State. These types of lotteries range from sports betting, online betting pools, Karta, dice, Ludo, and many other forms of lottery that are

not popular among the people of the area. Some of these are access bet, bet9ja, betting, jackpots, black pack, roulette, craps, video poker, pool, and Karta.

Characteristics of the Game of Lottery in Nasarawa North Senatorial District

Musba'u Inuwa reported in an in-depth interview that one of the characteristics of lottery/gambling games in the area is that to boost their odds of winning, gamblers may engage in superstitious behavior before or during gaming. They may feel happy and confident if they win. They might start to plan their next bet. And if they lose, they shift the blame to their opponents. If they lose, though, they may experience feelings of shame or guilt, as well as the worry of their spouse discovering their secret. They will also be under a lot of stress, wondering where they will get the money to replace what they have spent [27].

According to Mathew Thomas Maga, before gaming, many of those who engaged in gambling and lottery games often reported feeling preoccupied with gambling. They may reach a point where gambling is all that matters to them. It's comparable to the urges that alcoholics and drug addicts experience before drinking or getting their fix. They depend solely on the money they get from a lottery and other gambling games [28]. Marako Yusuf, on his part, states that one of the characteristics in the area is that gamblers in the area may also be concerned that if they wait to bet or play lottery games, they may miss out on a chance to win. They get caught up in fantasies about winning and what they'll do with the money if they do [29]. They may become ecstatic before gambling and while anticipating a large victory. If they are unable to place a wager, they may frequently become irritated or angry.

Speaking on the characteristics of lottery games and players of lottery, Sabiu Halilu states that a mediocre player takes a cautious approach to betting. The player does not put large sums of money in danger that he cannot afford to lose. But some gamblers wager large sums of money. They must go out of their way to apply the greatest techniques because they are betting a huge sum of money [30]. They must put more effort into research to reduce the risk of losing a large sum of money. Rendering his views on the characteristics of the lottery, Sulayman Bawa states that some gamblers who are deeply into the business in Nasarawa North see the game as an investment. They treat gaming with the same seriousness as a business enterprise from the start. Some well-known gamblers have even borrowed money to gamble. They must design a workable model that will allow them to win the bets to recoup the money, and make a profit. It takes time and effort to achieve success [31].

Causes of the Game of Lottery in Nasarawa North Senatorial District

On the causes of the game of lottery in Nasarawa North, Muhammad Abdullahi Rabi, in an in-depth interview, avers that one of the major causes of the involvement in the game of lottery is attributed to peer group influence. Most people's involvement in the act is mostly engineered by their peers or friends. This they do through alluring with what they won from the game they played [32]. At times, these friends allure them by borrowing their funds to participate in the game, and with this, they get trapped in the act. On his part, Hassan Sani Muhammad stated that the causes of the involvement of individuals in the game of the lottery are attributed to a lack of parental guidance. Some parents do participate in gambling, and as such, it leads their wards into the act. In some cases, some parents drag their children into participating in the game for them to win [33]. You can also find where all the family members gamble, and as such, this leads some of the children to get involved in the lottery.

Unemployment is ascribed to be one of the causes of engaging in lottery and gambling in the study area. This is according to Luke Maigoro Abashim in an interview where he states that most of those engaged in the game of lottery, most especially sports betting, were unemployed youths. Most unemployed individuals engage in the lottery just to meet some of their financial needs. And what is won as a result of gambling would be channelled to support their living expenses [34]. Lack of knowledge of religion is another contributing cause of lottery and gambling among the people of the study area. It has been observed by Lawal Abdullahi that a lack of religious knowledge and the fear of Allah leads people into the game

of the lottery. Most people involved in the lottery and other gambling games lack a proper understanding of the religion of Islam. Some, despite knowing the religion of Islam, do not put it into practice, hence the involvement in the act of lottery and gambling [35].

Maga Sule Muhammad, in an in-depth interview, stated that the changing family value system and crisis changed several things in the Nasarawa-North senatorial district. As the traditional single-income, polygamous family and stay-at-home housewives or mothers system changed, women and children began to actively participate in economic activities in the area, and the country's values and system underwent a shift. After the crisis, many women found freedom, which led to many of them getting involved in betting games. The youth were also eager to get into betting games since it provides another way to gain quick money if they are lucky after placing a wager [36]. He further stated that a new economic relationship was established, shifting the focus from traditional agricultural and community economic pursuits to what is now known as individualistic and competitive economic pursuits followed by each individual.

On his part, Oliver Kigbu explains that many youths in the area have developed a get-rich-quick mindset, which is exacerbated by the loss of the age-old value system, where the motto was the dignity of labor. Many youths have abandoned that age-old value system, which has resulted in an upsurge in the want-to-get-rich-quick mindset, where they will do everything to get rich quickly. The majority of Nigerian youths today turn to betting games in the hopes of making quick money while ignoring hard labor and dignity [37].

The qualitative findings backed this conclusion. While most IDI (In-Depth Interview) participants mentioned peer influence as a primary cause of gambling, others mentioned a variety of sources. A gaming agent, in particular, shared his thoughts on the causes of gambling among gamblers. He had the following to say: What these persons (gamblers) have in common is that one will introduce the game to another, who will most likely be a friend. They'll both arrive at this location, and the former will instruct the latter on how to play the game. The latter will then attempt to learn more by playing the game repeatedly. He'll learn the game's logic and when and how to play it as a result of this procedure (Oliver Allu Maga) [38].

Ahmed Kasimu Ubugadu, during an in-depth interview, stated that social media has played a significant role in the spread of gambling-related information. People learn about gambling from their friends, but they also learn about it from the incessant advertising of gambling firms on television and radio. The Internet is the most widely used information medium. Because of its convenience and financial appeal, internet gambling has become popular among young people [39].

Perception of the Game of Lottery in Nasarawa North Senatorial District

Speaking on the perception of lottery and gambling games, Orford & Griffiths aver that gamblers generally held more accepting views towards gambling activities and statements about gambling than non-gamblers. For example, gamblers were more likely to regard various gambling forms as 'leisure activities' than non-gamblers. Gamblers were also more likely to hold the view that gambling occasionally but not in excess was acceptable and that gambling was a good way for social bonding among friends [40].

Discussing the perception of the game of Lottery, Sunday Yakubu avers that lottery and gambling are said to be linked to parental and peer conflict, reduced family cohesion, a family history of gambling, and associating with peers who gamble, as well as expressing more favorable parental and peer attitudes toward gambling. The impact of parental attitudes, on the other hand, is not always clear. Parental disapproval was found to be adversely connected to gambling among youths in the area, but favorably related to gambling among males [41].

In many regions of the world, the availability of gambling places has recently expanded dramatically. The proliferation of legal and commercial gambling casinos has been linked to increasing gambling engagement as well as certain negative consequences. The fast expansion

of betting houses in Nigeria, for example, has created additional chances and attractions for Nigerians, but it has also increased the number and characteristics of problem gamblers [42].

Maga Muhammad states that gambling in my view, gambling is when people risk their own money to increase their financial gain. It's all about taking chances. People will want to take a chance by investing money in one game or the other to increase their wealth. For example, you'll see customers coming into my shop with just N100 in the hope of winning more, sometimes as much as N10,000 or N15,000. However, be mindful that some people will play with large sums of money and not win anything. That's why I stated it's a game of chance and danger. Similarly, the qualitative findings are supported by interviews with some security personnel. One of the participants, Ahmad Wampang, saw gambling as a legal or illegal way of taking a chance in exchange for a monetary return. He expressed his opinion as follows:

Gambling refers to any legal or unlawful activity in which people invest their money and effort in something or someone in the hopes of receiving a larger reward. In other words, gaming activities may be legal if they are recognized and properly registered by the state or government. Surebet, Nairabet, casino, babajebu, and other sites are examples. Young people engage in unlawful gaming operations in unfinished constructions. They aren't always disclosed to the general population. Taking risks is a principle in gambling, whether legal or illicit [43].

Similarly, Tanko Adamu stated the following on his perception of the game of lottery and gambling: Gambling is a game of chance that is usually practiced by young people to make money. The primary motivation for people to gamble is to win more money than they put in. Some gamblers are usually unsuccessful, while others have a chance of winning. Those who are unable to control their failures are prone to rage and violence as a result of the anguish of losing their money and receiving no compensation. Some gambling operations are now officially sanctioned by the government, and we, the cops, rarely make arrests in those establishments. However, given the negative impact on society, the authorities have the authority to arrest unlawful gamblers [44].

Lottery and other associated games, according to Mubaraq Ibrahim Kwatta, can provide substantial rewards. This represents the general perception of lottery and gambling games in Nasarawa-North. Gambling is seen as lucrative and a way out of poverty. It has been almost effectively projected as a tool of 'youth empowerment' among low-income young people. Winnings are publicly publicised, while losses are kept quiet [45].

Islamic Solution to the Problem of Gambling in Nasarawa North Senatorial District

The game of lottery/gambling is fast becoming a norm in society nowadays, from street gambling to online football betting and other sports gambling/betting. Seems Muslim youth's gambling is so frustrating, especially when they refuse to understand the Islamic stance on gambling. The legal ruling concerning gambling/betting in Islam is not contestable. It is as clear as the bright moonlight on the fifteenth day of the lunar Month. The Qur'anic injunction is clear on it as enshrined in the Glorious Qur'an 5:90 Shaykh Sayyid Saabiq (may Allah have mercy on him) said in Fiqh al-Sunnah that It is not permissible to bet in any case where money is offered by all so that the one who wins will take all the bets, and if a person loses he will lose to his companions because this comes under the heading of gambling, which is haram [46]. The prohibition on gambling is clearly stated in the Glorious Qur'an and stands immutable. This is based on the command of Almighty Allah, which states:

They ask you about wine and gambling. Say, in them is great sin and some benefits, but the sin in them is greater than their benefit [47].

Almighty Allah also says, O you who believe! Intoxicants and gambling, sacrificing to stones and (divination by) arrows are an abomination of Satan's handiwork. Eschew such (abomination) that ye may prosper. Satan's plan is (but) to excite enmity and hatred between

you, with intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah and prayer. Will you not then abstain? [48].

Islam forbids gambling in all ways and forms. The very idea of taking someone else's money as a result of winning a game of chance is abhorrent to Islam. Allah describes Maysir, which we often translate as "games of chance" or gambling, as "abomination devised by Shaytan", which all Muslims should avoid at all costs. There are many Hadith that speak of different games often used for gambling, showing that they are all forbidden to play. One such game is Backgammon, an Old Persian game using dice to move pieces across its board. The movement is determined by the throw of the dice, which makes the whole game dependent on an unknown. Thus, it is a game of chance, and it is forbidden to play.

It is reported on the authority of Abu Musa Al-Ashari that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Whoever plays backgammon disobeys Allah and His Messenger [49]. This Hadith is very clear in its import. It describes playing backgammon as an act of disobedience to Allah and His Messenger. Needless to say, when something is described as constituting disobedience to Allah or the Prophet, then it is forbidden. Another Hadith quotes Abdullah Ibn Masoud as saying: Refrain from these two marked cubes that are associated with omen, for they are a form of gambling [50].

This is a clear reference to backgammon, which relies on two cubic dice with a number given to every side of each dice. It is not the dice themselves that are a form of gambling, but the purpose for which it is used in a game. Since the throw of a dice is unpredictable, the whole game becomes a game of chance, and such games are gambling. Hence, they are forbidden. A more detailed description is given by Abu Hurayrah: Whoever plays backgammon in a game of gambling is like one who eats pig meat, and the one who plays it without gambling is like one who dips his hand in a pig's blood, and the one who sits there watching a game is like one looking at pig meat [51].

Abdullah Ibn Al-Zubayr, a companion of the Prophet who ruled Hijaz and Iraq for several years, once addressed the people of Makkah saying: I have heard that some men from the Quraysh play a game called backgammon. Allah says "Believers! Intoxicants, games of chance, idolatrous practices, and divining arrows are abominations devised by Satan. Therefore, turn away from them so that you may be successful." (5: 90) I swear that anyone who is brought to me for having played it will be punished physically in his hair and body, and I will give his belongings to the person who brings him to me [52].

All these Ahadith and reports confirm the strict prohibition of backgammon as an example of games of chance that are associated with gambling/betting. Some people may wonder about the reason for such a strict prohibition that extends even to playing games without betting on the result. The answer is that such games of chance, like backgammon, always tend to add a little bit "to make the game more exciting." They also have the same characteristics as gambling in making a person hooked on them, wasting too much time playing them.

When gambling is involved, it means that the winner takes the money of the loser without having earned it. Islam teaches Muslims to follow the proper practice of earning money through work and effort, not relying on chance. Moreover, property has its sanctity. It cannot be taken by another person except in exchange for something else, i.e. goods for money, or as a gift or charity. To take it through gambling is to take it forcibly, without any returns. It is not surprising that those who gamble often harbor grudges against each other, even though they put up appearances of friendship and acceptance. This is because they are always divided into winners and losers.

If the loser does not speak out against the winner, it is because he cannot do anything about his loss. Moreover, failure in one game prompts the loser to seek another game to have a chance to regain his lost money. The winner also wants another game, feeling that if his luck holds, he stands a chance to double his winnings. If the roles are changed, each would experience moments of success and failure. They want to play more and more. This leads to compulsive

gambling, which is a serious condition. The gambler ends up gambling away everything he has, including his family, honor, and integrity. This prescription is not only limited to gambling for the acquisition of money, but it is also applicable to the game of lottery, 'games-of-chance', or gambling for entertainment and recreation (Qaradawi, 88-93). If one's involvement in a game of chance, even for relaxation, is forbidden, this same prohibition becomes more easily grasped in cases of gambling to attain profit at the expense of others. Hence, the application of this position extends, therefore, also to the process of passing similar judgments on speculative stock market transactions [53].

The study reveals that gambling among Muslims in Nasarawa North is not merely a behavioral issue but is deeply rooted in limited religious knowledge and socio-economic pressures. Many individuals engage in gambling due to financial desperation, peer influence, and a lack of awareness about its Islamic prohibition. The research highlights a disconnect between Islamic teachings and everyday practices, indicating the need for contextually relevant religious education. This underscores the role of faith-based interventions in addressing modern moral and social dilemmas.

CONCLUSION

To this end, the investigation of Islam and its teachings about the problem and perception of gambling among Muslims in the Nasarawa North Senatorial District reveals a profound understanding of the cultural, spiritual, and social implications of this contentious issue. The findings underscore the importance of adhering to Islamic principles that advocate for responsible financial behavior, ethical conduct, and communal welfare. Islamic teachings unequivocally prohibit gambling, emphasizing its detrimental effects on individual lives and society at large. This prohibition is rooted in the broader objective of promoting justice, preventing harm, and fostering a community that thrives on mutual support and honesty. The pervasive nature of gambling in contemporary contexts poses challenges that must be addressed through education, awareness campaigns, and community engagement, ensuring that both younger and older generations are informed about the negative consequences of such activities. Furthermore, the role of local leaders and religious authorities is crucial in guiding the community towards understanding and internalising these teachings. By fostering an environment of dialogue and reflection on the Islamic stance against gambling, stakeholders can cultivate a culture that values moral integrity and responsible decision-making. Ultimately, as the Muslims of the Nasarawa North Senatorial District navigate the complexities of modern life, it is essential to reinforce the understanding that adherence to Islamic teachings not only offers a means to combat the adverse effects of gambling but also serves as a pathway to a more fulfilling and spiritually enriched life. By embracing the principles of Islam, individuals and communities can work together to build a harmonious society free from the detriments associated with gambling.

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Author Contribution

Ibrahim Shekarau Dahiru: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Project administration. Shuaibu Mahmud Nasidi: Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Investigation.

Conflicts of Interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

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