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# A frequency and content analysis of gambling advertising shown during the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023

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**Abstract:** The growing popularity of women's football could provide an opportunity for gambling operators to target a new and potentially untapped audience, however, there has been comparatively less research on gambling advertising in women's sports compared to men's. This study therefore sought to examine the frequency and content of TV gambling adverts during UK coverage of the FIFA Women's World Cup (WWC) in 2023. All matches were recorded on Sky TV, and variables from each match were coded, including the company responsible, the products advertised, the type of each gambling advert, and the use of safer gambling messages. During 32 matches, 19 gambling-affiliated adverts were coded ( $M = 0.6$ ). Only brand awareness, and financial inducements advert types featured. Just three of these adverts (15.8%) embedded a safer gambling message, "Take time to think". Adverts featured luck-based games, e.g., lottery or slots; games that have been reported to be popular amongst women, but there were no adverts from female focused gambling operators, suggesting a limited use of gendered advertising. Inconsistencies in advert types between the two coders uncovered regional differences in the content of observed gambling adverts. This raises methodological challenges which would need to be addressed to conduct future research on TV gambling advertising. This study is of significance as it is the first to examine gambling advertising in women's football. Future research should continue to monitor women's sport as a potential marketing opportunity for the gambling industry.

**Keywords:** Gambling, Advertising, Marketing, Football, Soccer, Women's Sport.

## Introduction

The FIFA Women's World Cup (WWC) is one of the most established women's international sporting competitions. Viewing figures during the WWC in 2023 were predicted to reach 2 billion, an increase of 75% from the previous WWC audiences in 2019 (BBC, 2023; Euromonitor International, 2023). Although this is far fewer than the 5 billion people who watched the Men's World Cup (MWC) in 2022 (InsideFIFA, 2023), it shows there is significant worldwide growth in the audience for women's football. Similar trends have emerged in the UK, with an estimated 29.9 million people watching the WWC in 2023 on TV (Women's Sport Trust, 2023) representing an increase of 7.7 million viewers from the WWC in 2019 (Independent, 2019).

The performance of the English Lionesses in the Euros 2022 has arguably catalysed the growth in UK audience numbers for the Women's Soccer League (WSL) and the WWC. The Women's Sport Trust reported that 40% of new viewers in the 2022/2023 WSL season were female and under the age of 35, and that over a third of people who watched the WWC in 2023 on TV, did not watch the MWC in 2022 (Women's Sport Trust, 2022, 2023). It is now estimated that the number of women watching women's football is double the number of women watching men's football (Fifty, 2023). This meteoric rise in the popularity of women's football in the UK, the more diverse audiences, and the growing viewer numbers provide gambling companies with a significant opportunity to capitalise on this trend and to create new consumers.

Gambling companies in the UK spend an estimated £1.5 billion a year on marketing (GambleAware, 2018). It is estimated that £747 million of this is spent on marketing messages which target specific groups of people (GambleAware, 2018; Riley, 2021), in their attempts to widen appeal to new consumer groups. The use of gendered advertising by the gambling industry has been acknowledged as a significant driver in encouraging women to gamble (GambleAware, 2023). Adverts could for example promote the luck-based games that are more appealing to women, such as online casino slots, or social gambling games such as bingo (Baggio et al., 2018; Hing & Breen, 2001; McCormack et al., 2014; Stark et al., 2012; Stead et al., 2016), whilst for men, this could involve the promotion of skill-based games, such as sports betting or poker (LaPlante et al., 2006; McCormack et al., 2014). This represents one of the many assumptions of the gendered differences in gambling behaviour, engagement and participation (Wardle, 2017). Some have pointed towards the role of social attitudes (Delfabbro, 2012), governmental policies (Wardle, 2017), and the actions of the gambling industry (Downs, 2010) in generating these differences.

Researchers have suggested that women typically avoid skill-based gambling due to a perceived lack of knowledge of how to play, thus influencing their shift towards luck-based games (Delfabbro, 2012). Additionally, researchers theorised that the introduction of betting shops

discouraged women from participating in gambling due to the shame and stigma that was associated with being seen gambling in public (McCarthy et al., 2019; Wardle, 2017), thus contributing to differences in gambling engagement compared to men. The gambling industry itself has further facilitated these differences through various strategies, namely around its use of advertisements. Through the promotion of commercial bingo, using celebrities to attract female consumers (Downs, 2010) and advertisements that hone in on the psychological (e.g., to alleviate negative emotions such as boredom or stress; GambleAware, 2023) and social drivers (e.g., participating in gambling to maintain social connection with others) (Bedford, 2019; Wardle, 2017) encouraging women to gamble, the gambling industry has influenced product preferences amongst women. Furthermore, the feminisation of gambling through the emergence of female-oriented brands such as ‘Foxy Bingo’ or ‘Pink Casino’, whose use of women in the forefront of campaigns has been commonly used by operators to target women (Biggar et al., 2023) influencing these gendered preferences by reinforcing the narrative that luck-based games are popular amongst female gamblers.

However, the digitisation of gambling and changes in the legal landscape, resulting in increased accessibility to gambling products, greater advertisement, and sponsorship has shifted attitudes towards female gambling, normalising it as an everyday activity and provided a safe environment for women to engage in gambling (Biggar et al., 2023; McCarthy et al., 2019; Wardle, 2017). This has further facilitated a change in the type of gambling products women are engaging in, with reports of a growing consumer base for skill-based gambling such as sports and horse betting (Biggar et al., 2023; McCarthy et al., 2018; Wardle et al., 2010). As engagement in gambling products amongst women is changing, it is important to understand how the gambling industry thus responds to this and the advertising strategies they use accordingly to attract customers, especially in football which has become so intertwined with the gambling industry.

TV represents a significant platform for gambling advertising. Of the gambling advertising shown on TV, a significant focus has been international and club men’s football (Newall et al., 2022; Sharman et al., 2023; Torrance, Heath, Andrade, et al., 2023). Although this high frequency of advertising in men’s football has led to some industry self-regulation, one recent analysis suggested that this “whistle-to-whistle ban” only reduced the incidence of TV adverts by 43% (McGrane et al., 2024). Research on TV gambling advertising for men’s football has categorised these adverts into four distinct groups: ‘Financial inducements’ that encourage people to gamble through not normally available financial incentives (Hing et al., 2017; Newall et al., 2019), ‘Odds’, promoting odds on specific bets (Newall et al., 2019; Rockloff et al., 2019), ‘Brand awareness’, reminding the viewer of the existence of the brand, without promoting any specific offer (Newall et al., 2019), and ‘Safer gambling’

adverts, informing viewers of the safer gambling features and tools available (Sharman et al., 2023). During the Men's European Championships in 2021, a total of 113 TV gambling adverts were recorded during match coverage, an average of 4.5 adverts per match (Newall et al., 2022). A year later, during the FIFA Men's World Cup 2022, Sharman et al. (2023) recorded 156 adverts by gambling companies during live broadcasts, an average of 5.2 adverts per match. Research by both Newall et al. (2022) and Sharman et al. (2023), indicated that adverts based on financial inducements were the most frequent. Adverts promoting brand awareness or betting odds were the second and third most popular category of advert respectively.

Notably, both these studies reported that safer gambling adverts during both the 2021 and 2022 tournaments were far less frequent, constituting less than 6% of all gambling adverts. Safer gambling adverts are by no means a statutory requirement, and could be seen by some as a diversionary tactic used to delay government regulation, and the potential implementation of independently-designed warnings about gambling harms. One recent analysis of gambling operators' safer gambling adverts suggests that they can, like conventional gambling adverts, also give viewers urges to gamble, perhaps due to their use of the operator's logo and branding (Newall et al., 2024).

Previous studies on advertising in men's football are of significance to the aims of the current study as they have provided initial insights into the way gambling operators target UK audiences (Newall et al., 2022; Sharman et al., 2023). This poses the question whether elite women's football is subject to similar or distinct patterns of TV gambling advertising. To date, however, there have been no studies which have looked at gambling advertising during Women's football competitions. As such, our aim was to conduct an exploratory study investigating:

1. The content and prevalence of gambling advertisements during the FIFA WWC 2023 using the methodology used in two previous studies (Newall et al., 2022; Sharman et al., 2023).
2. The proportion of advertising which focused on specific marketing categories including financial inducements, odds, safer gambling features, and those focused on raising brand awareness, as well as any unique advert categories not observed in previous research.
3. The potential use of gendered advertising in TV gambling adverts during the WWC 2023.

### Method

The FIFA WWC 2023, hosted in Australia and New Zealand, consisted of 64 matches. Of the total broadcasted matches, half were broadcasted on ITV and coded. The matches broadcast on BBC, where there are no commercial breaks for gambling adverts could not therefore be coded.

This study's preregistration is available from: <https://osf.io/kvt8a>

### Data Extraction and Variables

This was an observational, cross-sectional study. Data was collected by two researchers (T.P. & M.D.) who coded the data of the gambling adverts that appeared during the commercial breaks on the broadcaster ITV's screening of the matches. The variables that were extracted for each match are summarised (see *Appendix A*). Variables Collected). The live matches were recorded on Sky TV, from which raw data from these matches was collected and coded. Using recordings allowed researchers to rewatch matches, ensuring data collection was accurate and could be independently verified. Adverts were coded from the first advert break following the start of the match programme, until the commentators signed-off of at the end of the match. The only variation in the methodology described above that was used in the two previous studies by Newall et al. (2022) and Sharman et al. (2023), was the recording and coding of matches took place in two locations: Kent and Wiltshire – the locations where the researchers were based throughout the period of the WWC 2023. The results from these previous studies did not indicate advertising may vary based on the location in the UK, given that either a single main location or catch-up recordings of matches were used for them. As reported by Sharman et al. (2023), differences in adverts exist between catch-up showings of matches e.g., Box of Broadcasts and live recordings of matches, and so only live match recordings could be used.

### Appendix A. Variables Collected

Advert number	The cumulative number given to each ad
Match	The countries that are playing against each other
Date	Date the match was on
Stage	The stage of the competition in which the match occurred
Programme time of start	The time the programme starts at (UK time)
Kick-off Time	The time the match starts at (UK time)
Day of the week	The day of the week the match occurred on
Company	The company responsible for the advert
Segment number	The segment in which the advert appeared in, e.g., 1 = pre-match, 2 = at half-time, 3 = after final whistle, but before the presenters' sign-off on the match.

Time of advert	Time the advert starts (UK time)
Product Advertised	The type of gambling activity, game or product that is being promoted or featured during the advert, including, but not limited to sports betting, animal racing, bingo, lottery, slot machines or online casino.
Advert Category	<p><b>Financial Inducement:</b> An advert offering some unique financial offer to bet, not normally available, such as a free bet or a refund if a bet were to lose (Newall, Moodie et al. 2019).</p> <p><b>Odds:</b> An advert featuring the odds on one or more specific bets, e.g., "Harry Kane to score first, 3-to-1" or if a given set of odds are advertised as being boosted or otherwise higher than they would be (Newall, Thobhani, et al., 2019), this advert's key offer would still be coded as odds advertising, and not a financial inducement.</p> <p><b>Safer Gambling:</b> An advert which primarily talks about an operator's range of safer gambling tools, and not other offers such as a financial inducement or currently available betting odds.</p> <p><b>Brand Awareness:</b> An advert which primarily reminds viewers about the existence of the gambling operator (Newall, Moodie, et al., 2019), and not other types of advertising as defined above.</p> <p><b>Other:</b> Any gambling advert that does not fit into one of the above advert categories.</p>
Summary of advert	Narrative summary of the adverts. Speech is verbatim and shows the types of offers, odds, bets available and is supported by a screenshot
Safer gambling message	Is there a safer gambling message? (Yes/No)
What message	What was the safer gambling message (TTTT/ WTFSS/ Other)?
Message Duration	At what point during the advert did the safer gambling message appear (Beginning/ Throughout/ At end)?
Safer gambling message (SGM) summary	Description of SGM and any additional notes, e.g., What else was going on when the SGM was being shown, the placement of the SGM. Note: Presence of Be GambleAware Ad on screen is not included as a SGM.

Celebrity endorsement	Was there a celebrity or famous person in the advert or promoting the company? (Yes/No)
Which celebrity	What celebrity was featured in the advert?
Music	Was there a recognisable song or tune that appeared at any point during the advert, and if so, what song and what artist?

The adverts in one match were jointly coded, with four subsequent matches coded independently whereby extracted data was compared to ensure coding was consistent between the researchers. Inter-coder agreement of this initial sample reached the threshold (>90%) for satisfactory inter-coder agreement. Any disagreements in the coding of variables were resolved through discussion. T.P. coded all the remaining games ( $n=27$ ), while M.D. coded half of the remaining games ( $n=14$ ). Data repository and screenshots of adverts are available from: <https://osf.io/wgu8y/>

### Results

Across 32 matches, 19 adverts were recorded over 13 games from four operators: The Postcode Lottery ( $n=15$ , 78.9%), Betfair Casino ( $n=2$ , 10.5%), Sky Vegas ( $n=1$ , 5.3%) and The National Lottery ( $n=1$ , 5.3%). This equates to less than 0.6 gambling adverts per match. There were eight adverts (42%) in the group stages, while 11 adverts (58%) featured during the knockout stages. The adverts were relatively evenly split across the duration. Half time was the most popular slot with seven adverts, whilst the pre-and-post match periods each had six adverts.

### Advert Type

The most common advert type was brand awareness ( $n=16$ , 84%), used by just two operators, both of which are lottery companies.

The Postcode Lottery was the most frequent advertiser in this study. They had five distinct adverts which varied from interviewing past winners, monthly prize draws of up to “£3.2 million” and the millionaire street advert offering the chance to win a share of “£1 million every Saturday” (See *Figure 1*). One advert informed audiences about how The Postcode Lottery works, encouraging people to sign up stating that “70% of GB postcodes” are already playing. Celebrity endorsements featured Danyl Johnson (Singer), Matt Johnson (Welsh TV presenter), Judie McCourt (TV and Radio Broadcaster) and Jeff Brazier (English TV presenter). The song ‘Let Em In’ by Billy Paul featured in all adverts, and notably no safer gambling messages appeared in any of these adverts.

The National Lottery used an advert dubbed ‘Pockets’ to promote brand awareness. The advert follows the love story between two

protagonists and playing the Lotto, the game that has long been associated with the National Lottery. After many years of playing, the two are elated in the realisation that they possess a winning ticket. The advert ends with the National Lottery logo and text on screen 'It could be you'. Again, music was used in the form of 'Always Together with You' by Spiritualized.

The only other advert type was financial inducement ( $n=3$ , 16%). This was used by Betfair Casino and Sky Vegas.

Betfair Casino presented a fictional character called 'Brett Flair' a play on the words Bet Fair – a singing, dancing market stall seller dressed in a way that is a nod to the sitcom character Del Boy. The soundtrack accompanying the advert was a prominent feature using a parody of the song 'I Want It That Way' by The Backstreet Boys. The advert featured a play till you win free jackpot which could be won by playing their pinball slot game. Betfair Casino did include the safer gambling message 'take time to think'. However, this appeared at the end of advert, at the bottom whilst the Betfair Casino logo featured centrally on screen in a large font.

The Sky Vegas advert used the actor Paul Dallison as a figure skater. Whilst skating around the rink, the first financial inducement offer was an ad promoting "50 seriously free spins" when players join Sky Vegas (*See Figure 1.*). The advert continues with a second financial inducement with graphics and a voice over saying players can receive "200 more spins by depositing and spending £10". At the end of the advert, 'take time to think' appeared at the bottom of the screen with the Sky Vegas logo in the middle, with text on the screen and voiceover saying, "Join the UK's most popular online casino".





**Figure 1.** Examples of brand awareness (© Postcode Lottery) and financial inducements (© Sky Vegas). Copyright notice. The authors acknowledge that the copyright of all screenshots used in *Figure 1* are retained by their respective copyright holders. The use of these copyrighted materials by the authors are for the purpose of research, criticism or review under the fair dealing provisions of copyright law in accordance with Sections 29(1) and 30(1) of the UK Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

### Regional Differences in Adverts

In two matches: Australia v France and England v Colombia, an advert produced by The Postcode Lottery appeared at the same time, was categorised as the same advert type, but the actual content of the advert differed across the two coders. The advert that T.P. coded was the Millionaire Street advert (*See Figure 1.*), while the advert M.D. coded was one of the generic Postcode Lottery adverts where previous winners were interviewed. In a further five matches, regional differences emerged. This occurred when M.D. coded three Postcode Lottery adverts across Portugal v Vietnam, China v Haiti and Australia v Sweden that were not present in T.P.'s recordings. T.P. recorded an advert by Betfair Casino in Spain v Netherlands and a Postcode Lottery advert in Japan v Norway, these were not present in M.D.'s recordings of the matches.

### Exploratory Comparison with the MWC

Using an independent samples t-test as an exploratory analysis, the mean number of adverts across all available matches in the WWC 2023 ( $M = 0.6$ ,  $s.d. = 0.8$ ) was significantly less than the MWC 2022 ( $M = 5.2$ ,  $s.d. = 1.2$ ), ( $t(60)=18.05$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = 1.00$ , 95% CI [4.10, 5.12]).

### Discussion

This study investigated the frequency and content of gambling adverts run during the ITV coverage of the FIFA 2023 WWC. Overall, 19 gambling-related adverts were recorded across 32 matches, therefore averaging 0.6 adverts per match – a significantly lower number than the 5.2 gambling adverts recorded per match in the MWC 2022 (Sharman et al., 2023). Only brand awareness and financial inducement adverts were used. Brand awareness adverts constituted 84% of all the adverts. This is in contrast with the results from previous research by Newall et al. (2022) and Sharman et al. (2023), which reported that financial inducements constituted the largest proportion of adverts during the men's international football competitions. Beyond featuring products that are more popular among women, such as the lottery or online casino games, there was limited gendered gambling advertising, and there were no adverts from female-focused brands such as 'Foxy Bingo' or 'Pink Casino'. There were no adverts promoting odds or safer gambling features reported in this study, and furthermore it became apparent that there were regional variations in the screening of these adverts.

Several factors may contribute towards explaining the limited number of gambling adverts during the WWC 2023. Firstly, the duration and time for TV adverts to feature in matches throughout the tournament was more limited. In the WWC, the time between the programme starting and match kick-off ranged between 10 and 95 minutes, with an average duration of 30 minutes. This is less than the 45-90 minutes that was available in the MWC in 2022. This shorter timeframe meant there was less scope for gambling adverts to feature. It is unlikely this was the choice of gambling operators, but rather a factor of the rights and slots ITV secured when bidding to screen the WWC.

Secondly, the difference in time zones between UK audiences watching on TV and the WWC where matches were played in Australia and New Zealand would account for a significant difference. Since Australia and New Zealand are between 8-13 hours ahead of UK time, it meant that when matches were played, a significant proportion ( $n=13$ ; 40.6%) had a kick-off time of between 01:00-08:00am UK time. Live matches played during the UK's night-time would mean fewer viewers, and therefore there would be a lower return on the costs of advertising. In contrast, the MWC in Qatar, where there was only a three-hour time difference from the UK, and matches were played during more sociable hours for UK audiences, greater investment in advertising may have been warranted as the revenues generated from it would be higher.

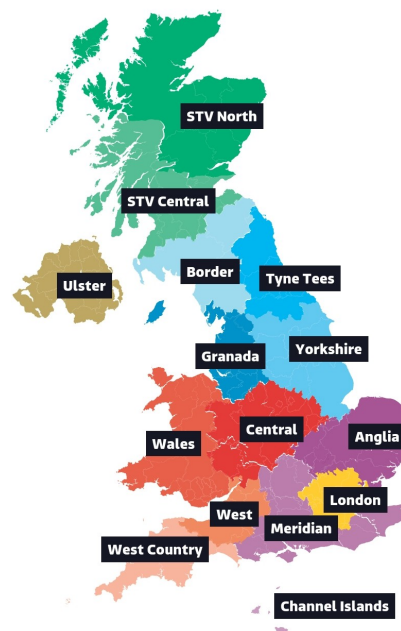
Thirdly, with audience numbers of the WWC 2023 less than half of the MWC 2022 (BBC, 2023), it may be that gambling operators did not see value in promoting themselves and their products, with the return on investment insufficient to warrant the advertising costs. Research should continue to monitor the prevalence and content of gambling marketing in women's football, given the frequency of gambling logos seen in the men's club game (Bunn et al., 2019; Lopez-Gonzalez & Griffiths, 2018; Torrance, Heath, & Newall, 2023), and the growing woman's football movement at all levels, it offers ideal opportunities for gambling operators to increase their presence in women's sport, and for future research into their marketing strategies.

The WWC 2023 featured lotteries and casino products, which are assumed to be popular amongst women (Baggio et al., 2018; Hing & Breen, 2001; McCormack et al., 2014; Stark et al., 2012), in contrast to the promotion of sports betting, as has been reported in previous studies (e.g., Newall et al., 2022; Sharman et al., 2023) to be the norm in the men's international football competitions. This has revealed some interesting insights into how gambling companies have responded to who they think their target audience is and the types of gambling markets that appeal to them. Given online casino games have been a significant driving force behind record gambling industry revenues (Davies, 2023), it is not surprising to see the promotion of online slot games during the WWC where adverts have potential to reach substantial audiences. The advertising of these products is of concern due to the high risk of gambling-related harm they are associated with (Allami et al., 2021; Booth et al., 2021; Marionneau et al., 2024) and the evidence which has suggested an association between gambling advertising and gambling behaviour (McGrane et al., 2023).

Only three adverts featured safer gambling messages, appearing at the end of adverts and for a short duration, using the slogan, 'take time to think', which has been shown to have no positive effect on immediate gambling behaviours (Newall et al., 2023). This was because the adverts seen here which promoted the lottery did not feature any safer gambling message, which is in fact consistent with what has been seen in men's football (Sharman et al., 2023). Although the lottery presents some of the lowest risk for problem gamblers (Public Health England, 2019), it is often regarded as the gateway to more severe gambling behaviours and harms, particularly in young people (Booth et al., 2020; Felsher et al., 2004; Stark et al., 2021).

The differences in the data between the two coders resulted in the finding that ITV allows for regional differences in adverts. They are the "only broadcaster that allow advertisers to target consumers on a national, macro, regional, and microlevel" (ITV Media, n.d.). Although some adverts coded were consistent with one another, one coder was based in the Meridian region and the other in the West region of ITV's regional divisions of the UK (*See Figure 2.*), and we suggest that the differences noticed were likely the result of this. An illustration of this in the WWC is both the

Australia v France, and the England v Colombia matches, where adverts that occurred by the same company and at the same time, were categorised as the same advert type but the content of the advert was different. Consequently, this regional variation meant that it is hard to precisely determine the total number and the content of adverts being shown to all UK viewers. This was not identified as a problem the previous study by Sharman et al. (2023) as the coding of adverts took place in just one location by one individual. It is therefore an important and notable finding, should researchers decide to use ITV to conduct observational studies of adverts, that potential geographic variability should be built into the research design. This discovery of variations in the prevalence and content of gambling adverts in two regions could speak to a wider problem. It has been extensively documented that the presence of land-based gambling outlets disproportionately occurs in areas of greater socio-economic decline (Adeniyi et al., 2023; Evans & Cross, 2021; Wardle et al., 2014). Future research could look to examine whether regional TV gambling adverts vary across socio-economic profiles and areas where there is more deprivation.



**Figure 2.** How ITV divides the UK into different sectors to allow for advertising on a regional level (©ITVCommercial. All rights reserved.). Copyright notice. The authors acknowledge that the copyright of the screenshot used in Figure 2 is retained by their respective copyright holder. The use of this copyrighted material by the authors are for the purpose of research, criticism or review under the fair dealing provisions of copyright law in accordance with Sections 29(1) and 30(1) of the UK Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

This paper is not without limitations. It is predominantly descriptive, and limited to a single country, potential outlet for gambling advertising, and time. Like other gambling advertising research, the present work cannot answer any questions regarding this advertising's potential effects on

viewer's behaviour (Newall et al., 2024). Additionally, when designing the study, we were unaware that regional differences in adverts were a possibility with ITV, which led us to believe that data collection in two different parts of the country would yield the same data. Researchers performing similar studies in other jurisdictions should be alert to such potential variation (Columb et al., 2023). One of areas of interest for the study was to look at the use of gendered advertising during the WWC. The use of a gendered advertising framework with specific criteria e.g., visual cues and language, to define what exactly gendered advertising is, to determine whether an advert was targeted at a female audience and the implications of this would have been beneficial to the study. A visual content analysis would therefore be a more appropriate method of analysis for future studies wishing to explore gendered advertising by the gambling industry. Finally, many gambling operators leverage social media or digital platforms for advertisements. Although the focus of this study was TV advertising, incorporating these types of adverts would have provided a fuller understanding of the marketing strategies used by gambling companies. This is an area future researchers should seek to explore given that sport has been identified as a prominent target of online gambling marketing (Guillou-Landreat et al., 2021).

The prevalence of gambling advertising as a feature during this international women's football competition was minimal. Future research should seek to review whether TV gambling advertisement increases as audience numbers increase in future international football competitions and furthermore control for potential regional variations in the gambling advertising that audiences are exposed to.

### **Ethics approval**

King's College London Ethics Review Committee approved this project as a minimal risk study on July 22, 2023 (MRA-22/23-39164).

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No funding was received for this research.

### **Relative Contributions**

TP played an equal role in conceptualisation, and a lead role in data curation, formal analysis, writing of original draft and equal role in writing of review and editing. MD played an equal role in data curation and a supporting role in writing of the original draft. PN played an equal role in conceptualisation and a lead role in writing of review and editing. SS played an equal role in conceptualisation and a supporting role in writing of review and editing.

**Competing interests**

TP has received travel and accommodation expenses from the Society for the Study of Addiction (SSA) to attend their annual conference in 2024. MD has no interests to declare. PN is a member of the Advisory Board for Safer Gambling – an advisory group of the Gambling Commission in Great Britain. In the last three years, PN has contributed to research projects funded by the Academic Forum for the Study of Gambling, Alberta Gambling Research Institute, BA/Leverhulme, Canadian Institute for Health Research, Clean Up Gambling, Gambling Research Australia, and the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation. PN has received honoraria for reviewing from the Academic Forum for the Study of Gambling and the Belgium Ministry of Justice, travel and accommodation funding from the Alberta Gambling Research Institute and the Economic and Social Research Institute, and open access fee funding from the Academic Forum for the Study of Gambling and Greo Evidence Insights. Steve Sharman (S.S.) is currently in receipt of funding from UKRI (via a Future Leader's Fellowship), and via grants from the NIHR, and Greo. He has also received, in the last 5 years, funding from the Circle U. Seed Funding (EU) Scheme and the Wellcome Trust via a King's Prize Fellowship. He has also received honorarium from Taylor Francis Publishing, the Academic Forum for the Study of Gambling, and the University of East London Undergraduate Research Internship Scheme. SS has also received travel and accommodation expenses for the Current Advances in Gambling Research Conference, funded by GREO, the SSA (Society for the Study of Addiction), and Health and Social Care Wales. SS is also a member of the Advisory Board for Safer Gambling (ABSG), and a trustee for the Society for the Study of Addiction.

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