NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF KIDNAPPING IN NIGERIA

BY

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work on has been read and approved as meeting the requirement for the award of Higher National Diploma (HND) Mass Communication Department, Institute of Information and Communication Technology, Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin.

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to Almighty **Allah**, the Giver of knowledge my parents, **Mr and Mrs Aderogba**, my supervisor, **Mr. Issa Idris.** and to those who ignore their selfish interest to work for the success and interest of the less privilege people.

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ABSTRACT

The study used content analysis to examine newspaper coverage and framing of kidnapping cases in Nigeria in The Nation and The Punch newspapers from January to December, 2020. The objectives of the study are to determine the level of frequency given to kidnapping cases in selected Nigeria newspapers, examine the level of prominence given to the news stories on kidnapping in the country, to determine the direction of the kidnapping cases in in selected Nigeria newspapers, to analyse how kidnapping incidence is framed in selected Nigeria newspapers. Framing Theory was used as theoretical framework. The basic assumption of the media Framing Theory believes that individual frame entails individual's cognitive understanding of a given situation. The two newspaper were selected been the two newspaper with highest readability. This research basically set out to access newspaper coverage and framing of kidnapping in Nigeria and The Nation and The Punch newspapers from January 2022 to December 2022 were selected to be accessed as the sample size being the two most read newspapers in Nigeria. 60 editions of The Nation and 60 editions of The Punch a total number of 120 publication were randomly selected and analyse as population of the study and Coding Sheet is used as the research instrument. However, based on the findings, the result of the study shows that the two papers under investigation report more stories of kidnapping as news ahead of feature article, cartoon and opinion with 91.6% of the coverage in the newspapers analysed written as news articles. The prominence given to kidnapping cases in Nigeria newspaper is less important as majority are only featured in the inside pages of the publications analysed, few at the front page and none at the back page. The results of the study shows that 66% of kidnapping cases are placed at the inside pages on the publications, the direction of which kidnapping cases are reported in Nigeria newspaper is unfavourable, though the rate at which the newspaper outlet tries to make their direction neutral with 38% of the publications but 58% of their publications is yet unfavourable of kidnapping cases, kidnapping cases in Nigeria are mostly framed in a

harsh tone in the result of the study with 44% which is the highest of the coverage written in a harsh tone. In Summary, 2022 being a year before Nigeria 2023 election the attention of the media is mostly attracted to political issues and politicians. Political issues and adverts take most part and prominence of the newspaper publications. The two papers under instigation have a particular section in the inside page of their publications flagged "City and Crime" in The Nation and "" in The Punch where most of the kidnapping cases are published. Kidnapping cases are mostly presented in as news article at the inside pages between one to five times in an unfavourable direction and a harsh to in every of their publications. In conclusion, going by the findings, the study revealed that the two newspapers under investigation normally report kidnapping cases more in form of news stories. From the findings also, the study discovered that the newspapers papers under investigation report more stories of kidnapping cases at the inside page within the study period. The findings of the study show that the two papers under investigation report kidnapping cases only within one to five times in every of their publication within the period of study. The findings of the study also show that the two papers under investigation report kidnapping cases more on unfavourable direction compare to favourable and neutral. The findings of the study show that the two papers under investigation report kidnapping cases on a harsh tone This implies that the media have responsibility to play as far as reporting of kidnapping cases is concern considering the power of the media as the 'Fourth Estate of the Realm', reportage of such issues will address societal problems like kidnapping cases. As recommendation, the media (print) could integrate some variables of Entman's framing theory into permanent work programme to promote constructive reporting. For instance in each news report, the media should give less salience to the problem and the cause of the problem. But moral lessons and solution to the problems should be given more salience. This will make the public see the moral lessons and solution to the problem more important than the problem and its cause. The solution to the problem must be information that are helpful not the ones that could incite the public. The media should periodically organise

trainings for their staff to understand the different perspectives of world politics, to know how the two basic perspectives (liberalists and realists) could make or mar constructive reporting and acquire skills on how to write constructive news report.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0   Introduction

1.1   Background of the Study

Violent crimes, such as armed robbery, drug trafficking, kidnappings and abductions, assassinations, bank raiding, militancy, and terrorism has been a major challenge in most countries of Africa. And Nigeria is no exception. Kidnapping as a form of violent crime has the potential to emerge into other felonies such as physical abuse, financial extortion, and murder etc. Nigerian kidnapping activities can be traced back to the early nineties (Hazen & Horner 2007). Dating from the early 2000s, kidnappings contributed extensively to a climate of terrorism in Nigeria's South East, Niger Delta, and South-western regions, and subsequently became a routine occurrence. According to The Cable, 4,616 people were kidnapped in Nigeria in 2022. 3,972 civilians, 202 military personnel, 186 police officers, 154 vigilantes, 14 security guards and 17 others were reportedly killed in the period under review. Kidnapping according to Ngwama, (2014) is a security concern which is not new in Nigeria, and its ubiquity has been exacerbated by the strain on security. Furthermore, the severity of kidnapping in Nigeria is so tremendous that it has impacted almost everyone in the country. According to Ezemenaka (2018), kidnapping instances became frightening when militants seized oil personnel, ostensto attract global attention to the country's catastrophic situation in the oil-rich Niger Delta region. Since then, the social problem of kidnapping has spread far and wide like a wildfire. Another high-profile kidnapping occurred in Chibok, Borno State. During this time, a terrorist group known as BokoHaram kidnapped approximately 230 female secondary school girls who were in the process of writing their O'Level exams (Shuaibu, 2015). Nonetheless, numerous examples of kidnapping of government leaders, business owners, the rich, the poor, and even students have occurred.

Notably, the constant prevalence of human abductions in Nigeria led to a global uproar as the mass media and communities joined in raising the alarm and keeping the public informed regarding this societal menace.

The media exists as an information source and broadcast, instructional promotion, espionage, societal education, and mobilization. These functions distinguish the media as a vital link or factor in the relationship between the government and the governed. In light of the aforementioned functions, Ngwama (2014) proposed that the media should be active in broadcasting and publishing kidnapping cases so that the government can take appropriate action.

Specifically, the print media (newspapers), according to Zenn (2014), played a major role in keeping the public abreast of the state of the Chibok girls' abduction, as well as other similar cases of kidnapping in Nigeria. In disagreement with this, Eze (2011) posited that in the coverage of issues of conflict such as kidnapping, the print media function of surveillance and news publishing has been unpalatably ineffective as they do not report most vital cases of kidnapping, especially in rural communities. In light of this, Nwabueze, Ugochukwu, and Gebra (2014) asserted that there is a need for the print media sector to brace-up and carry out wider surveillance so as to bring to public notice issues that require urgent attention with a view to mobilizing development efforts in that area. Importantly, print media is one of the most cost-effective ways to reach out to the public, and as a result, audiences can easily comprehend and keep up with current events.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

Empirical evidence in the literature shows that studies have discussed mass media coverage of issues of national and international interests. Some of these studies revealed that kidnapping is worthy of reporting by the media. However, thedegree of prominence, frequency and direction given to such events or issues by the press go down to a lower position as captured in the literature by (Inyang, 2013). Hazen and Horner (2007) recommend that kidnapping cases required a systematic examination of the problem in order to identify its underlying factors and its devastating consequences for policy recommendations for tackling the problem in Nigeria and beyond.

Therefore, the degree of prominence given to kidnapping cases by the press in Nigeria determines what Nigerians feel and thinks about kidnapping and its attendant consequences. As the "Fourth Estate of the Realm", the mass media is expected to bring forth kidnapping cases into discourse, thereby setting the agenda and keeping its diverse audiences abreast of the situation. Thus, going by the gap in the literature, posers like do Nigerian media report kidnapping cases and what is the degree of coverage given to such cases apparently motivated this study to examine the coverage of kidnapping cases in Nigeria. One of the challenges that draws the attention of both the populace and the government of a particular society is the security of lives and property. As such, a breach of security, either in the nature of kidnapping, abduction, bomb explosion, or other means, arouses public interest and anxiety. To that end, the public is seek for accurate and dependable information about the WHY, WHEN, and WHERE of the unpalatale scenario (Inyang, 2009). With the increasing incidence of kidnapping in Nigeria, it is crucial to keep the public informed about the situation of internal insecurity, precautions, and governmental efforts. To accomplish this, the mass media must be accurate, dependable, and effective in delivering such essential information to the general public (Kyrian, 2017). O on the other hand, Muobike (2018), found that in the reporting of kidnapping instances in Nigeria, journalists provide contradictory information on issues regarding crisis situations. He further claimed that coverage varies from newspaper to newspaper. To this end, print media businesses have failed to harmonize their information.

Furthermore, empirical researches have shown that kidnapping is deserving of media coverage. However, the degree of prominence, regularity, and direction given to such occurrences or issues by the press is of lower level (Okoro & Odoemelam, 2013). One would argue that the traditional media, which has a social responsibility of providing the public with proper knowledge about specific happenings in society, would have paid

more attention to kidnapping issues and informed the public accordingly, but the opposite is the case.

This study is therefore set to comparatively examine print media coverage and framing of kidnapping in Nigeria.

1.3   Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study it is to analyse the rate at which the media report kidnapping related cases in Nigeria. In order to achieve the purpose of the study, the following objectives are set:

1. To determine the level of frequency given to kidnapping cases in selected Nigeria newspapers
2. Examine the level of prominence given to the news stories on kidnapping in the country
3. To determine the direction of the kidnapping cases in in selected Nigeria newspapers

1.4   Research Questions

1. What is the level of frequency of newspapers coverage of kidnapping in Nigeria?

2. What is the level of prominence given to the news stories on kidnapping in the country?

3. What is the direction of newspaper coverage of kidnapping in Nigeria?

1.5   Significance of the Study

Professionally, this work will help to know how the media has effectively covered the activities of terrorists kidnapping in Nigeria, the economic implications, and how government responds to news of kidnapping in the country. Academically, this study will also serve as an empirical data for future researchers who may wish to carry out a further investigation on the activities of terrorists in Nigeria. Banditry operations in Nigeria are on the increase, hence there is a need to keep the public apprised through quick dissemination of news relating to banditry operations such as kidnapping. From this note, this study will meticulously assess the effectiveness of the print media in reporting kidnapping news in Nigeria. Therefore, the outcome of this study will inform print media firms that they need to step up their news reporting speed and communicate the news in simple languages for the understanding of a layman. Additionally, subsequent researchers will use it as a literature review. This means that other students who may decide to conduct studies in this area will have the opportunity to use this study as available literature that can be subjected to critical review. Invariably, the result of the study contributes immensely to the body of academic knowledge with regards to the print media coverage of kidnapping in Nigeria.

1.6   Scope of the Study

The study is focused on print media coverage of kidnapping in Nigeria. Hence, the study will further determine whether print media firms are accurate and timely in their reporting of kidnapping news in Nigeria. Also, the study will delve into determining the extent of the print media's effectiveness in reporting kidnapping news and ascertaining if there is any significant difference between the level of frequency, prominence, and direction given to kidnapping cases in the Daily Trust and Vanguard newspapers. Thus, the Daily Trust and Vanguard newspapers will serve as case studies for this research.

1.7   Limitation of the study

In the course of carrying out this study, the researcher experienced some constraints, which included time constraints, financial constraints, and language barriers. However, the researcher is able to manage these just to ensure the success of this study.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Media: This is the main means of mass communication (broadcasting, publishing, and the internet) regarded collectively.

Print Media: This is the means of mass communication in the form of printed publications, such as newspapers and magazines.

Newspaper: a printed publication (usually issued daily or weekly) consisting of folded unstapled sheets and containing news, articles, advertisements, and correspondence.

Coverage: The amount and quality of reporting or analysis given to a particular subject or event

Kidnapping: criminal offense consisting of the unlawful taking and carrying away of a person by force or fraud or the unlawful seizure and detention of a person against his will.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

Kidnapping is a global problem that affects countries all over the world—from the United States and Mexico to many countries in Africa, Asia, and beyond. Governments are working hard to address this problem and ensure that the perpetrators are captured and brought to justice.

Kidnapping refers to the abduction and captivity of a person, typically to obtain a ransom. Sometimes kidnappers hold their captives longer in order to demand more money from the victim's relatives or associates. It is a wicked act.

No matter the level of difficulty anyone is facing, that is not enough reason to choose kidnapping as an option to survive. There are many causes of kidnapping, including unemployment, poverty, religion, political issues, and so on. The practice can be reduced with governmental involvement.

Kidnapping in Nigeria

Kidnapping is not a new problem in Nigeria, and it is one of the country's biggest challenges. The country faces many problems, including unemployment, corruption, and low education rates—but it is kidnapping, thanks to high-profile incidents perpetrated by the Islamic militant group Boko Haram, that has drawn the world's attention. The facts show that the rate of kidnapping in this country is indeed high.

International organizations are joining Nigerian groups to combat this problem. Chad, Cameroon, and the United States have recently joined in the fight.

Boko Haram's kidnappings are motivated by both politics and religion, according to their own leaders as well as the Nigerian government.

The kidnappings are political because corrupt politicians want to destroy the government of the former President Goodluck Jonathan. The kidnappings are also religious because of the group's fundamentalist Islamic beliefs. The meaning of their name is "Western education is prohibited," which explains why they continue to target schoolchildren. On the night of April 14, 2014, about 276 Chibok schoolgirls, ages 16 to 18, were kidnapped by this group.

A popular Christian musician in Nigeria, Chika Okpala, lamented the kidnapping of a friend in a song entitled "Ndi Nto" (meaning "the kidnappers"). He stated that when the perpetrators were asked why they did it, they said they needed money. They went on to explain that they did not have jobs due to high unemployment.

Sometimes, ordinary citizens participate in kidnappings in order to line their pockets, usually youths who are hired by rich men to do their dirty business. The criminals will target rich families and sometimes demand up to twenty million naira (the equivalent of about $119,000).

The government of the Nigerian state of Anambra issued a new law that changed the punishment for anyone caught kidnapping. The former governor of this state, Peter Obi, declared that offenders would be sentenced to death—and that anything purchased with ransom money, like a house or car, would be destroyed.

A Worldwide Issue

The rates of kidnapping in Europe, North America, and South America are attracting worldwide attention. The practice of kidnapping has become quite lucrative for some, and there are criminal groups that have made it their business model.

In Mexico, with its history of drug-related violence and police corruption, kidnapping is an old story. According to the U.S. Department of State, Mexico suffered an estimated 105,682 kidnappings in 2012, and in 2013 the number reached 131,946, the highest number on record.

The disappearance of children in the United States is not unheard of, either, and it is a problem that police and other agencies are working hard to address. According to the National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children, roughly 800,000 children are reported missing each year in this country

Kidnapping is seen as a lucrative business and the shortest means to wealth by those involved in this crime. The current wave of abductions across the country makes every person a potential target regardless of social class or economic status.

This is different from a number of historical kidnapping themes in the country:

Political Kidnappings

This refers to the political kidnapping which started in the petroleum industry in Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta region in the early 2000s:

In the Niger Delta, agitators took expatriates working with multinational oil giants hostage, to force oil companies operating there to carry out community development projects for the benefit of the host communities or force government into negotiations for more of economic benefits accruing to the federal treasury for the region.

Boko Haram Kidnappings

Kidnappings by jihadist terror group Boko Haram in Nigeria's northeast and northwest began in 2009 in concurrence with the conflicts in the region.

Abductions by Islamist terrorist Boko Haram are to further its agenda, recruit fighters, instil fear, gain more international popularity and force the government to negotiate with it for ransom which is one of the means of generating funds for its terrorist operation. Boko Haram have committed several mass kidnappings of students.

Their 2014 kidnapping of 276 teenage girls from a secondary school in Chibok, Borno State, was covered extensively by the international media, making millions of people aware of that specific crime and of the insurgency. Boko Haram often demand that victims' families or the government pay them ransoms, or that the government release prisoners from their group.]Boko Haram has brainwashed and forced some of the young people it has kidnapped into joining them and carrying out attacks, including suicide bombings. Boko Haram force many young female victims to marry them.

Commercial Kidnappings

Kidnapping for ransom on a commercial scale became rampant in Nigeria in 2011 spread across all the 36 states and the country's capital, Abuja.

In February 2021, Nigerian journalist Adaobi Tricia Nwaubani wrote for the BBC News, "The Nigerian government seems to have suggested that it can no longer be relied on to keep citizens safe."

Kidnapping Instances

North

Zamfara State

Zamfara, one of the security dark spots in Nigeria is caught between herder-farmers clashes and kidnapping and banditry. In June 2019 a household was attacked by bandits seizing the man alongside his three wives and a 13-year-old son. In August the Director

of Budget for the state was kidnapped while his deputy he had been travelling with was killed in the attack.

In 2019, the governor of Zamfara, Bello Matawalle initiated a peace and reconciliation plan to bring the bandits who attack and kidnap villagers back home offering them jobs in place of kidnapping and banditry. In August 2019 over 300 kidnapped victims who were held captive waiting for the payment of ransom on their heads by family members were freed. Days later another batch of 40 kidnap victims were freed.

Makurdi Kidnapping

On 24 April 2021, gunmen kidnapped students from the Federal University of Agriculture in Makurdi, in Benue State. According to eye witnesses, three students were kidnapped, but two students were confirmed kidnapped later. This is Nigeria's fifth kidnapping from an academic institution in 2021. It came just four days after the Greenfield University kidnapping. On 28 April 2021, the university released a statement confirming the return of the abducted students.According to the university's spokesperson, the two students came back on 27 April 2021 unhurt.

South-East

Kidnapping of the Head of the Methodist Church in Nigeria.

The head of the Methodist church in Nigeria, Samuel Kanu was kidnaped on Sunday the 26th of May 2022. The kidnapping occurred along a highway in the southeastern state of Abia. He and a number of priests travelling to the Owerri airport after a church event, were abducted after their vehicle's tyres we punctured by the assailants' bullets.

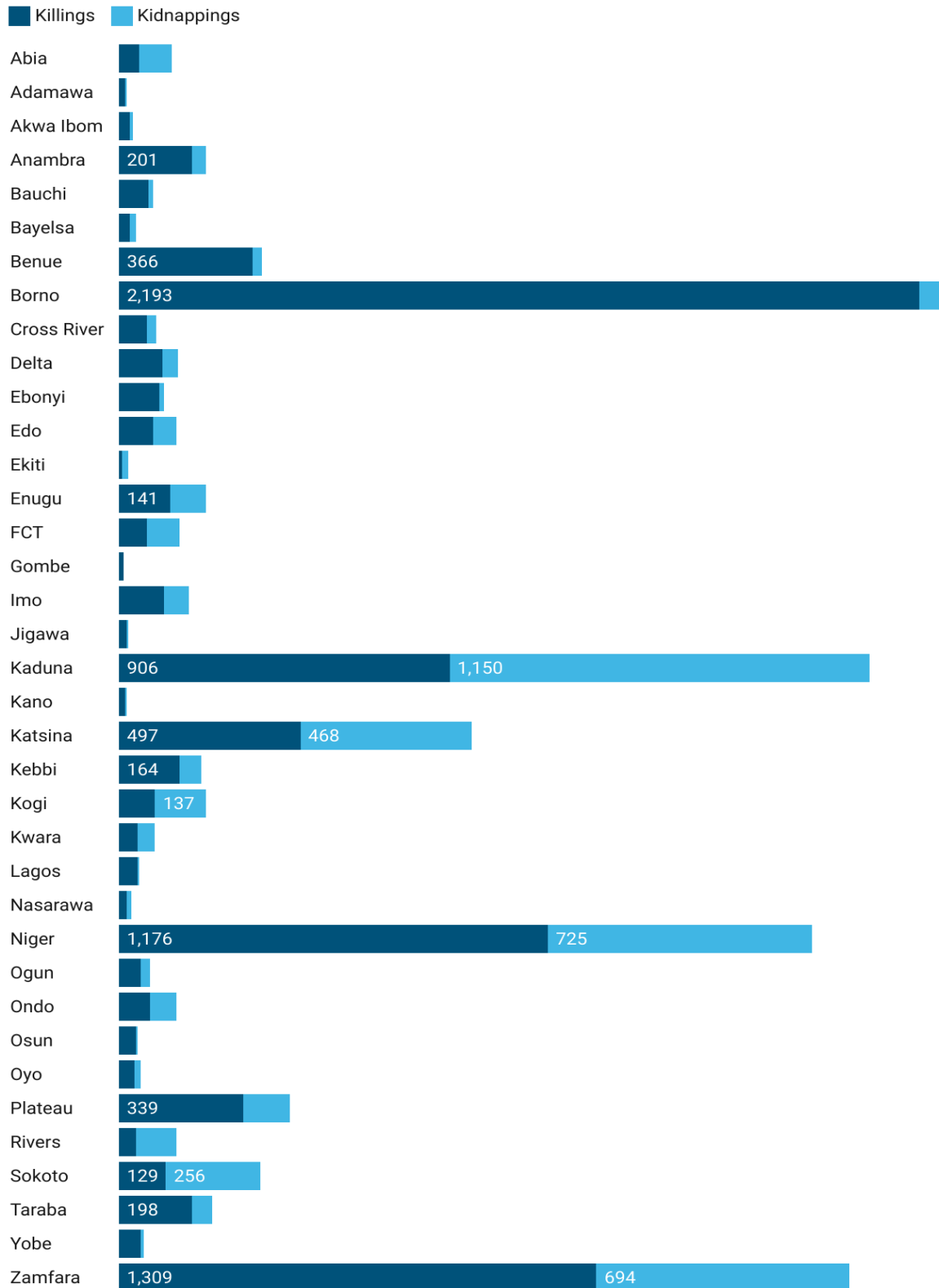They were abducted by a network of commercial kidnappers which claimed to oversee kidnappings in the region. The grouped consisted mostly of Fulani immigrants from a number of countries in the Sahel region such as Niger, Mali and Sudan.

These immigrants however had lived extensively in Nigeria and spoke Igbo - the native language of the region, very fluently.

Under real threats of death by decapitation (as was the fate of past un-cooperating victims), the priests were coerced into paying an eventual ransom of a hundred million Naira. This was done via phone calls to heads and members of the church.

The funds were intended for distribution among the members of the kidnapping group present, but most were to be sent to other senior members of the larger kidnapping network, as well as to their sponsors.

Killings, kidnap victims across Nigeria in 2022

■ Killings ■ Kidnappings

State	
Abia	
Adamawa	
Akwa Ibom	
Anambra	201
Bauchi	
Bayelsa	
Benue	366
Borno	2,193
Cross River	
Delta	
Ebonyi	
Edo	
Ekiti	
Enugu	141
FCT	
Gombe	
Imo	
Jigawa	
Kaduna	906 1,150
Kano	
Katsina	497 468
Kebbi	164
Kogi	137
Kwara	
Lagos	
Nasarawa	
Niger	1,176 725
Ogun	
Ondo	
Osun	
Oyo	
Plateau	339
Rivers	
Sokoto	129 256
Taraba	198
Yobe	
Zamfara	1,309 694

Chart: Kunle Adebajo • Source: Nigeria Security Tracker • Created with Datawrapper

2.1.2 Causes of Kidnapping

Poverty

Poverty is usually the root cause of kidnapping. When a person is poor and hungry, he or she can be propelled to commit crimes to survive. They may think kidnapping is the only way to escape poverty. So they begin to target individuals capable of paying huge ransoms for their release.

Unemployment

Like poverty, unemployment leads one to see kidnapping as a more profitable way of making income. An idle mind is the devil's workshop. When people are not adequately employed, they turn to other means, usually criminal activities, to sustain themselves.

Greed

The get-rich-quick syndrome, especially among the youths, has increased the kidnapping rates in Nigeria. These people fancy the luxurious things of life and want them by all means, even when they cannot afford them. They want to drive the poshest cars, live in mansions, throw expensive parties, and travel abroad for holidays. This lifestyle is often unattainable for most people. So many turn to kidnap rich people and demand huge ransoms to afford the life they dream of.

Dirty politics

They say politics is a dirty game. Most times, it's true. Politicians are known to sponsor the kidnapping of their rivals to win a political position. They employ thugs and other criminal elements in society to do their dirty jobs for them. Some kidnapped victims don't survive the ordeal as they end up being assassinated, while others will disappear without a trace.

Religion

Religion plays a huge role in the kidnapping rates in most countries. In Nigeria, the Boko Haram insurgents, an Islamic terrorist organisation, have kidnapped many people in northern Nigeria. The Chibok girls and Dapchi schoolgirls are just a few out of numerous cases of kidnapping inspired by religion.

Corruption

A country where corruption thrives is a hotbed of kidnapping. If a government is corrupt where officials embezzle public funds to enrich themselves instead of helping the masses, then the masses will turn to crime, ergo kidnapping, to survive. The funny thing is some of these greedy government officials end up becoming victims of kidnapping.

2.1.3 Types of Kidnapping

Basic Kidnapping

By far the most common form of kidnapping, this can be accomplished in the most part of the world with minimal preparation, with relatively low risk of failure. Kidnappers with generally target local businessmen or their families; those regarded as been "well-off", without having sufficient resources to spend a great deal of money on security precautions. The kidnapper's goal is a fast, easy payoff. Generally, the ransoms requested are relatively easy for the victim's family or company to obtain.

High Net worth Individual Kidnapping

Generally, the intended target is studied for some time prior to the actual kidnapping, allowing the perpetrators to gather intelligence and security procedures and personal habits. After the victim has been taking, his or her family or employer is contacted with the ransom demand. Generally, a negotiation process occurs. As most of these incidents

are perpetrated by experienced kidnapping gangs, the victim is generally released if ransom is paid. As a high-net-worth individuals become increasingly security-conscious, this type of kidnapping has been on the decline in recent years, in favor of less involved kidnappings with smaller, but easier to obtain payoffs.

Tiger Kidnapping

A crime involving a hostage-taking in order to force the victim to commit or assist in a theft. The hostage or hostages is/are held as until the victim has met the demands of the criminals. All of the victims work in a location where cash is being handled, such as bank, post Office, currency exchange firms etc.

Express Kidnapping

The victim is abducted, then forced to withdraw their ransom from a bank or ATM. If all goes well, the victim is released afterwards, generally after having been relieved for all valuables of on their person (and occasionally in their residence). This type of kidnapping is popular in urban areas, due to the prolific ATMs. In some cases, this will develop into a standard kidnapping, with further ransom demanded of the family or employer. In other cases, the victim is held overnight, to get around a one-day withdrawal limit.

Virtual Kidnapping

A virtual kidnapping is more income than actual kidnapping. The perpetrators will wait until their target is unreachable open back visiting an area with no cellular coverage, for example), then will contact the targets family or company claiming they have kidnapped the target and demanding an immediate ransom. The target eventually returns, unaware that anything untoward has occurred. Due to the need for haste the ransoms demanded are generally relatively modest. Another common technique is to call the target pretending to be a cellular phone company representative, and ask them to turn off their

phone for a short while for a technical reason, during which the virtual kidnapping is conducted. Thus far, virtual kidnappings are commonly in Latin America, specifically Argentina, Brazil, and Colombia, and Mexico.

Politics Kidnapping

The kidnapping conducted to extort political concessions from governments or security forces. As monetary ransom is no longer enough, it is more difficult to negotiate kidnap victims freedom as in many cases the political concessions or demand cannot be met by the involved governments, putting the victim's life at greater risk.

Bride Kidnapping

A form of forced marriage when which the groom-to-be kidnaps his bride. In many cases the would-be couple has never met until the day of kidnapping. This way of marriage is practiced in the Caucasus region, Central Asia, and some Nations in Africa. In many cases Bride is raped in order to convince her to stay with her husband, as in many traditional cultures the loss of virginity is actually judged. In some cultures a bride price is customary, so the kidnapper contact his victim's family to demand compensation

2.1.4 Impacts of Kidnapping

For the victims, there are many negative consequences of kidnapping, including:

- Psychological trauma

- Fear and lack of trust

Psychological Trauma

The negative psychological effects of being abducted are huge, especially for a child. Depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD) may last a lifetime.

Fear and Lack of Trust

In a society where the incidence of kidnapping is high, fear limits people's lives and actions. They will always move with caution as they do not know who might be the next target. The rich surround themselves with security guards because of their fear of getting kidnapped.

Solutions

There are solutions that may help reduce the rate of kidnapping, including:

- Training strong anti-kidnapping agents

- Monitoring the activities of the police

- Serious punishment for offenders

- Job creation

Training Anti-Kidnapping Agents

Any country that wants to fight kidnapping successfully must hire and train capable agents to combat the issue. When law enforcement agencies are actively involved, the incidence of this crime can be lessened.

Monitoring the Police

Reports show that the police are involved in some kidnappings. Notable examples have occurred in Mexico. Eliminating the criminals within the ranks of law enforcement is key.

Seriously Punishments for Offenders

Mild punishment does nothing to deter criminals. When the government treats kidnappers harshly, fewer abductions will occur.

Job Creation

Generating jobs for citizens, especially for the youth, can have a huge impact on the fight against crime. When people are gainfully employed, they do not need to commit crimes.

2.1.5 Newspaper Coverage of Kidnapping

Frame Patterns used by the Media in Crisis Situations

In content analytical study of the "Print Media Framing of Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria" (Okoro and Odoemelam, 2014), the following frames were used: response frame, political frame, human interest frame, conspiracy frame, attribution of responsibility frame, ethnicity frame, economic frame, labeling frame, ethnic frame and religious frame. Okoro and Odoemelam discovered that The Guardian, ThisDay and Vanguard newspapers reported Boko Haram insurgency in a predominantly policy response frame, while the Daily Sun laid emphasis on ethnic and religious frames (Okoro & Odoemelam, 2014). The media's emphasis on the government's quick response and effort to form new policies that would address the problem is constructive. The same year, a research on "The Mass Media Coverage of the Kidnap of the Chibok school girls" (Amannah, Mba-Nwigoh, Ojo, and Nwigoh, 2014), revealed that there is a predominant

use of conflict approach and lesser use of peace-oriented journalism by the mass media in reporting the Chibok girls kidnap. Scholars used categories such as neutrally objective, cause-promotion, conflict approach and peace journalism in their study and discovered that the media are yet to adopt proactive approach to reporting conflicts which supports the aim of this study. Also, in the analysis of the abduction of the Chibok girls in two southern and northern Nigeria-based newspapers, Ngwu and Ekwe (2015), used rescue efforts frame, powerlessness frame, hopelessness frame, political frame, religious frame, ethnic frame, conspiracy frame and economic frame. Result showed that hopelessness frame was used more in news reports. The media framed the situation as hopeless which is not constructive. From the results above, it can be deduced that the positive salience given to the government's prompt response to curb Boko Haram insurgency in 2014, the negative framing of the security state of the country as a hopeless situation the same year (2014), and the negative report of the government's indifference to the abduction of Chibok girls in 2014 support the assertion that the media tell the people what to Framing of the Abduction of Chibok Girls in The Guardian and The Nation Newspapers 4 International Journal of Communication: an Interdisciplinary Journal of Communication Studies, 22, September, 2017. Published by the Communication Studies Forum, Department of Mass Communication, University of Nigeria, Nsukka think about. In other words, the media frame information they want the people to think is more important whether it is constructive or not. A content analysis on the coverage of crisis in West Africa sub-region by three elite Nigerian national dailies and three leading magazines over two decades ago revealed that the media covered conflicts news stories well (Edeani, 1994). Unfortunately, news stories which contained constructive suggestions accounted for just 26 percent of all the contents of the newspapers and magazines (Edeani, 1994). Those that contained no suggestions represented 27 percent of the total content, while stories which were adjudged to be irrelevant to both constructiveness and non-constructiveness constituted the remaining 47 percent (Edeani 1994). Twenty years after, Owolabi and O'neill (2014), analysed the content of Nigerian press. The study

revealed that the press has not performed creditably well in the coverage of poverty and related issues. Also, rural communities were neglected in news reports and the community news was found to be lacking in development contents (Owolabi & O'neill, 2014). Contents were mostly tragic occurrences like religious crisis and inter-tribal disputes (Owolabi & O'neill, 2014). Both results show that salience was not given to constructive news report, implying that the issues Edeani discovered over twenty years ago (that majority of the news content are not constructive) still feature till date. This could be as a result of lack of understanding of what and how to present information in a constructive manner. In a research by Lauren McCarty (2013) on "Framing famine: An Analysis of the US Media Coverage of the 2011 Famine in the Horn of Africa'', Sei-Hill et al and Scheufele note that the key aspect of frame building and frame understanding is societal understanding. For an American audience, frames must adjust to the needs of the society or the framing will potentially be lost or misunderstood (McCarty, 2013). McCarty used two major frames: episodic and thematic frames. She further broke down the major frames into sub-frames and added factors that constitute the sub-frames. The factors are: causes of the famine; which showed nine factors that contributed to the famine. Blame for the famine; showed ten different factors that contributed to the famine. Solution to the famine showed 11 factors that could be used to end the famine of which the need to weaken terrorism and strengthen local government to improve famine conditions recorded the highest percentage (McCarty, 2013). These sub-frames are detailed enough to put into work programmes. Also, frames were tailored to the needs of the society and the policy of the government which yielded positive results. The media lay emphasis on frames they consider more important than others. Unfortunately, these frames are mostly not presented in a manner that is productive or that would proffer solution to the problem, which means that the effect of the news report may not yield the desired results. But Klaidman (1990, p. 119) while writing on health crisis says, "the media are frequently accused of reporting inadequately but this charge is vague, sweeping and usually unsubstantiated". The real focus should be on how well we can

legitimately expect the media to cover health crisis because there are standards for reporting a particular crisis of any sort (Klaidman, 1990). Therefore, the standard for reporting constructively is the gap this study sought to fill.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Framing Theory

Framing Theory was first introduced by Erving Goffman (2009) and further developed by communication scholars such as Robert Entman (2019). It posits that the media do not merely report news, but rather **frame** it in ways that affect how audiences interpret events.

According to Entman (2017), framing involves:

- **Selection**: Choosing certain aspects of a perceived reality.
- **Emphasis**: Highlighting specific details or narratives.
- **Exclusion**: Omitting or downplaying other details.
- **Elaboration**: Expanding or interpreting the selected information.

A theory is a set of ideas formulated to explain social phenomenon. It could be in form of preposition or hypothesis but largely, the theory are statement of principles of a subject they could be conjectural.

A theory is simply a system of explanation. Thus; various scholars of communications science

McQuail (1983), a theory consists of a set of ideas of varying status and origin which seek to explain or interpret some phenomenon. Some scholars look at a theory as making meaning out of nothing. Through theories, sense or meaning can be made out of disturbing situations.

Hence the research will employ the use of: Framing Theory.

2.2.1 Theory of Evolution of Kidnapping in Nigeria

Kidnapping, according to Onuoha and Okolie-Osemene (2019) is not a new occurrence in Nigeria, as it has been happening as far back as the 1980s when the act was mainly carried out for rituals, but became an issue of concern in the 1990s as a result of the crisis in Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta region. The region originally comprises six states, namely, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Rivers, but was politically mapped- out and expanded to include Abia, Imo and Ondo states.

The origin and growth of kidnapping in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria is traceable to what Townsend (2008) called "natural resource nationalism" which means the tendency of the people in this region to look for greater payback from the natural resources derived from their soil (Akpan, 2010).

Kidnapping became a recurrent crime in Niger Delta from the year 2000 when the people of the area began to form militant groups to agitate against perceived inequality and ill treatments by the Nigerian government and oil companies, with Niger Delta People Volunteer Force (NDPVF) being the front runner, (Odoma & Akor, 2019; Onuoha & Okolie-Osemen, 2019). An act that started off as abduction became financially motivated and militants began to demand millions of dollars as ransom for the release of hostages.

By January 2007, "nearly 100 foreign hostages, mostly oil workers, have been kidnapped in the restive region" (Oduwole 2007:6), and between 2006 and 2008, "kidnappers in Nigeria pocketed ransoms of over $100 million" (Okocha and Ikokwu 2009:1).

Onuoha and Okolie-Osemene pointed out that, although Late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua initiated an amnesty programme in 2009 in order to reduce the civil unrest in the region, kidnapping for ransom had already spread to other parts of the country, particularly the Sout East and South West (Onuoha & Okolie-Osemene, 2019). This is in line with Akpan (2010) position that kidnapping in Nigeria has had four versions over the years, viz: Kidnapping as a liberation struggle; kidnapping for economic benefits; kidnapping as a political tool and kidnapping as a new habit of crime. In essence, kidnapping started with a liberation struggle in the Niger Delta which was later monetised; at some point it became an instrument for political disputes and now, kidnapping has become a lucrative venture for unemployed youths and angry groups in the country.

The first large-scale abduction was carried out by Boko Haram terrorists on April 14, 2014 with two hundred and seventy-six (276) secondary school girls in Chibok community of Borno State, Nigeria abducted. Since then, kidnapping has become a thriving criminal enterprise for hoodlums across states in Nigeria (Odoma & Akor, 2019). While selective kidnapping is often carried out in the southern part of the country, large scale kidnapping is the modus operandi in the north, with ransoms being demanded in bulk (SBM Intelligence, 2020). This is evident in the attacks on boarding schools whereby bandits kidnapped hundreds of students at a time to hold them for a bulk ransom which communities are more likely to pay (Meyer, 2021).

Between December 2020 and February 2021, kidnappers have kidnapped a total of 769 students from their schools across northern Nigeria in at least five separate incidents (Aljazeera, 2021). This started with the abduction of more than 300 boys from their boarding school in the town of Kankara, in northwestern Katsina State in December, 2020 (Meyer, 2021). On 17th February, 2021, 27 boys and their teachers were taken from a school in Kagara, Niger State, and ten days later, on February 26, 2021, more than 300 schoolgirls were taken from their school in Jangebe, Zamfara State, and they were released the following week (Meyer, 2021). Currently, negotiations of ransom have moved beyond individuals to include communities and government. Katsina and Zamfara States governments for instance, have been criticised for negotiating with bandits and introducing amnesty schemes. Between June, 2011 and the end of March, 2020, at least $18.34 million has been paid to kidnappers as ransom (SBM Intelligence, 2020). On the number of people kidnapped in the country between January and June, 2021, the SBM report indicated that a total of 2,371 persons were abducted across the states of the federation with a total of ₦10 billion demanded as ransom for the kidnap victims.

So many kidnap cases go unreported out of the fear of not losing the kidnapped victim to the cold hands of death, hence, victims and their loved ones do the biddings of their abductor (Chidi, 2014: Odoma & Akor, 2019).

Kidnapping has become so pervasive in Nigeria such that there is now panic among the people who are unsure of whom the next victim will be. The crime has become a veritable commodity in the hands of its perpetrators who have now made a multi-million naira business out of it (Osumah and Aghedo, 2011).

2.2.2 Justification of Theory

Concisely, the focus here is on media framing of kidnapping cases in the Nigerian newspapers, which might contribute to regional, religious, cultural and social stereotype. Framing theory also takes salience into consideration. Salience is the act of making information more prominent, noticeable, meaningful or memorable in order to enhance the probability that the receivers of a message and process it and remember it (Entman, 1993). Frames "introduce or raise salience or apparent importance of certain ideas, activating schemas that encourage target audiences to think, feel, and decide in a particular way." The nexus between these theories and the study is that, issue-attention cycle theory contains crucial insight into what is currently happening with public opinion about kidnapping in Nigeria today. Over long periods of time, kidnapping in Nigeria has potentially pique and drop on multiple occasions, with the media playing an influential role in exactly where and when this occurs. Thus, the theory holds a vital position in the understanding of how the press covered and report kidnapping cases in Nigeria. As such, media frames can also aid in changing the perception of the society on the coverage and reportage of kidnapping cases in Nigeria. The theory serves the research goal in the context of understanding the type of issue that attracts prominence by the press from August to October 2022. This is because 'Framing Theory' interrogate how the press tend to pay attention or frame stories that affect the society in the public domain and how attention is been shifted to such issues like the kidnapping cases in Nigeria.

2.3 Research Study Review

In a study conducted by Christian, Okwudiri and Chukwuemeka (2015) using mixed research methods- content analysis and survey methods to investigate how selected Nigerian newspapers (*The Guardian, The Sun, The Trust and Leadership* Newspapers) report the Chibok school girls' kidnapping or abduction in Government Secondary School, Chibok Borno State found that Nigerian newspapers used frames like: rescue

efforts frame, hopelessness frame, political frame, religious frame, ethnic frame, conspiracy frame and economic frame in their news reports of the abducted girls and of these frames used by Nigeria newspapers, the frame of hopelessness is mostly used by the selected papers.

The study also found that the South East residents who are print media audience believe that the way Nigerian press report the Chibok kidnapping or abduction influenced their perception of rescue effort negatively. Therefore, the researchers recommended that print media journalists and owners should understand that it does not do any country good when the media concentrate only on government frustration in the face of terrorism. Since it is established that terrorism thrives when media organisation project it as succeeding, the media must learn to emphasize the strength of the government. The study recommends that other studies should look at other media contents apart from news. This will give an enriched result of media framing of terrorism, especially the abducted girls.

Shutt *et al.,* (2004) found that the threat of child kidnapping or abduction has been a socially constructed problem, resulting from mass media sensationalism and fabrication. In line with Spector and Kitsuse (2006), Shutt *et al.* (2004) support that the public has responded to this socially constructed problem by trying to fix it through several policy initiatives, such as Megan's Law and Carlie's Law. While these policy initiatives certainly address the problems of nonfamily abductions and stereotypical kidnappings, they fail to address the issue and root causes of family abductions, which comprise the largest portion of kidnapping incidents with the media playing a significant role in terms of frequency of coverage to kidnapping cases.

Muobike (2018) using the content analysis method and Entman's Framing Theory as theoretical guide discovered in his study that the newspapers tend to give a new meaning or definition to the kidnapping or abduction like that of Chibok girls. The newspapers framed the problem as insecurity (64.4%) by giving salience to it, implying a gross

existence of insecurity in the nation. He also believes that the government is part of the problem the nation has. Surprisingly, the media blamed Boko Haram to a very small extent (14.4%) implying that national insecurity could be caused by anybody and any group if the government does not put up measures to control it.

The findings point that kidnapping is a trend the country has been battling with diverse conflicts for more than two decades and the media are yet to report conflicts in a manner that will encourage the government and the governed to team together to solve the problem. It implies that there is a possibility that the media frame news from a realist's perspective.

A Comparative Content Analysis of Press Coverage of Kidnapping Cases in Nigeria by. Aondover Eric Msughteraniel. Bayero University (Nigeria) PhD. Student, Department of Mass Communication, Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria. Doctoral student at BUK is a communication scholar. He has published papers in several national and international scholarly journals and attended and participated in several conferences and workshops on communication, media and journalism. He is a member of ACSPN and Social Science Research Council (FSSRC), USA. Their study uses content analysis to examine press coverage of kidnapping cases in Nigeria in the Daily Trust and The Guardian newspapers from August to October, 2020. The objectives of the study are to examine the frequency; prominence and direction so as to measure the extent of kidnapping cases by the selected newspapers. Issue1Attention Cycle Theory and Framing Theory were used as theoretical framework. The basic assumption of the issue attention cycle theory is that issues regarding the environment tend to suddenly leap into prominence, remain there for a short time and then gradually fade from the center of public attention while Media Framing Theory believes that individual frame entails individual's cognitive understanding of a given situation. The study found that the two newspapers reported kidnapping cases more in their inside pages with 52.6% (Daily Trust) and 46.8% (The Guardian).

CHAPTER THREE

3.0   Research Design

The content analysis research design was adopted in this study to examine the level of how the select newspapers reported cases of Kidnapping in Nigeria and also to generate primary data from the manifest and latent content on Kidnapping in Nigeria. It is a research process that involves a rigorous procedure of investigation in order to arrive at a conclusion that is systematic and empirical by using certain categories and coding procedures that are standard and informed by the understanding of the topic or concept under investigation (Omoera & Nwaoboli, 2023).

Walizer and Wienir (2018) as cited in Asemah, Gujbawu, Ekhareafo & Okpanachi (2017: P. 78), says content analysis is a systematic procedure use to examine the content of recorded information. This method was employed because it creates opportunity for an explicit, organized plan for assembling all the data collected, enhancing and simplifying data collection, measuring of concepts under study and their interpretations. Researchers that adopt this method are noted for studying, interpreting and analyzing media content in a very objective way.

3.1   Research Method

The study will use content analysis. It is a research process that involves a rigorous procedure of investigation in order to arrive at a conclusion that is systematic and empirical by using certain categories and coding procedures that are standard and informed by the understanding of the topic or concept under investigation. The study will use content analysis in order to follow the systematic way of communication content. As are search technique in the social sciences, content analysis became popular and its application increased in the early 1950s as a result of the work of Berelson who provided an insight into the analysis of communication research using content analysis (Berelson, 1952). Other studies have shown that content analysis has been used since 1914; this was so because of its ability to use "non-quantified" "verbal material" into a "quantitative data" that can be "manipulated for purposes of description or hypothesis testing"

3.2 Population of the Study

There are many newspapers published in Nigeria but The Punch newspaper will be used as the population because they circulate both hard and soft copy and have wider coverage. The Punch are undoubtedly the most patronized newspaper outlets in Nigeria Therefore, 120 printed newspaper version of The Punch daily publications is chosen as the population.

3.3 Sample of the Study

Two elite Punch newspapers (The Punch newspapers) were purposively selected due to their prestige and wide circulation. Editions published from January 2022 to December 2022, according to Stemple, were chosen. Stemple states that increasing a sample size beyond twelve editions will not produce any significant result from any number below twelve editions (see Wang, 2010). He discovered that twelve issues from two constructed weeks could effectively represent the content of an entire year (Wang and Riffe (2010).

The technique to be employed by this research is Random Sampling. five published editions of The Punch in a month would be analysed. For The Punch Newspapers – 60 printed version from January 2022 to December 2022 is selected and 60 copies from January 2022 to December 2022 is selected for The Punch Newspapers.

3.4 Research Instrument

The data gathering instrument is coding sheet. Coding entails the act of placing a particular unit of analysis into a content category. Coding sheet generally contains: Date of Publication, Publication, Theme, Content Categories, Frequency (1-5 times, 6-11 times, 11 and above), Direction (favourable, neutral, unfavourable), Prominence (front page, inside page, back page), Page Number and Tone (harsh, neutral, soft).

3.5 Method of Data Collection

Since this study is a content analysis which entails the study of manifest content of the newspapers, coding system will be used. The essence therefore, is to effectively analyse the following units of analysis which was employed in this research to help guide coding of the selected newspapers samples.

(i) Nature of the Story: This has to do with whether the stories carried by the selected newspapers are news, features, editorials, opinions, letters, and cartoons.

(ii) Direction of the Story: This implies the area; the stories covered were targeted at. Put vividly, it means whether the stories covered by the selected samples are:

a. Favourable – In this research it means the story is about the rescue or escape of kidnap victims.

b. Unfavourable – In this research, it means the emergence of kidnap cases of kidnap victims are yet to be rescued.

c. Neutral – In this study, it means when the story is unbiased that is not supporting either side. For instance when it talks about how to put a stop or rescue kidnap victims.

(iii) Frequency of Coverage: This means the number of times the stories carried by the selected samples appear in a single newspaper. It could be 1-5 times, 6-10 times, 11 and above.

(iv) Tone of the Story: It means the manner of which each of the story sample in the selected newspapers under study. The story could be placed in Harsh, Soft or Neutral.

(v) Prominence: This implies the placement accorded to the stories in the selected newspaper samples. The story for instance, could be placed in the Front Page (FP), Inside Page (IP) and Back Page (BP). Where a story is placed, determines to an extent, it level of significance or importance.

The items in all the two dallies was content analyse based on the

a. Front Page: A story displayed on the front page is more prominent than one tucked into inner page. Similarly, a story on the front page with a banner headline has more prominent than the one whose headline covers fewer columns.

b. Back Page: Story published on the back page enjoys more prominence than inside page story, though some of the national newspapers reserve their back pages for sports stories, but this method is often broken when there is an important story to display.

c. Inside Page: A story published on the inside page is relevant, though not all that prominent as the one published on the front page.

3.6 Method of Data Presentation and Analysis

In this study, the researcher used descriptive techniques, which are based on qualitative and quantitative analyses. In qualitative analysis, according to Nwodu (2017), the study takes account of numerical values or the frequencies with which the various delineated items of the content analysis occurred.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The research designed code sheet will be reviewed by a lecturer in the Department of Mass Communication, Kwara State Polytechnic. Units of analysis in each category were assigned numbers for ease of coding. Categories and units of analysis with ambiguous boundaries were redefined. To reduce ambiguity and bias, the categories and units of analysis might be exhaustive. Categories will be adequately defined. The validity of the instrument is face validity.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study and analyse the data collected. This chapter deals with administration, presentation and interpretation of data gathered from 120 randomly selected publications of The Nation and The Punch newspapers from January 2022 to December 2022.

In this chapter, tables and pie charts arc provided. At the end of each questions in order to enhance the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected.

The study used content analysis. It is a research process that involves a rigorous procedure of investigation in order to arrive at a conclusion that is systematic and empirical by using certain categories and coding procedures that are standard and informed by the understanding of the topic or concept under investigation. The study used content analysis in order to follow the systematic way of communication content.
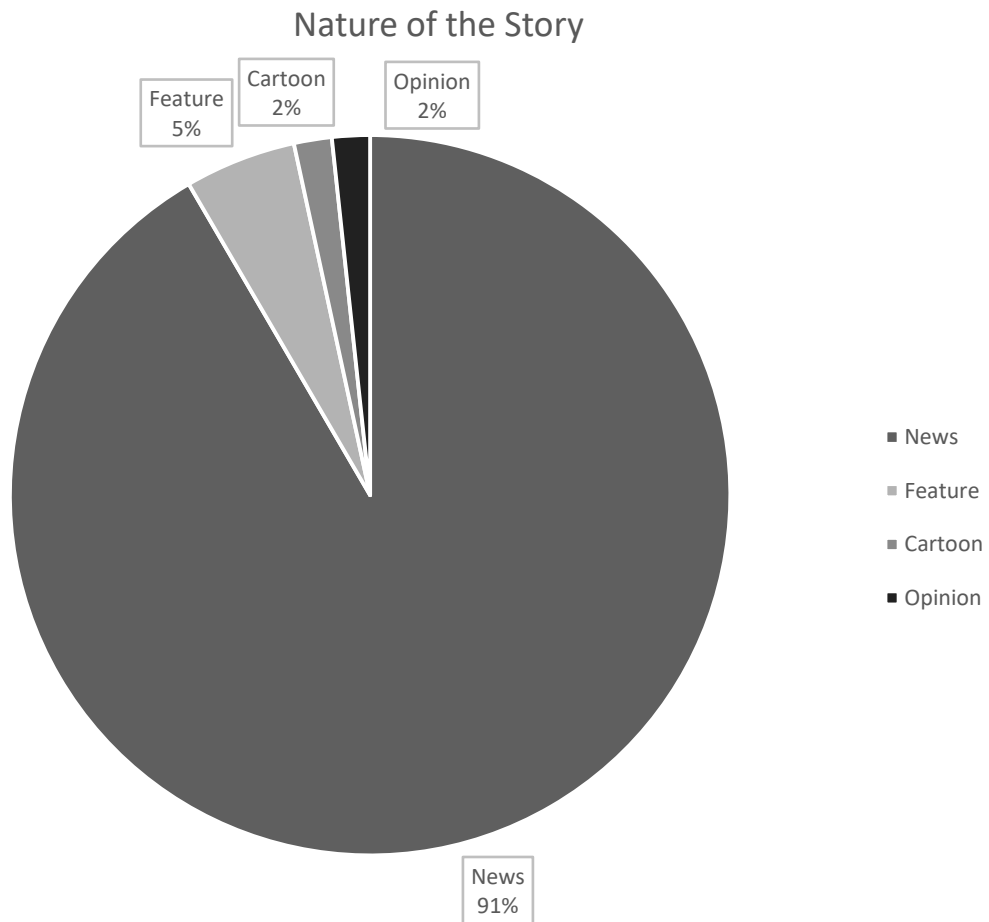
The analysis of the data is based on the coverage and framing of kidnapping in Nigeria The Nation and The Punch newspaper being the too print media outlet with the most reach in the country. The percentage of responses is obtained through tabular format and chart.

4.1 Data Presentation

Table 1: Nature of Story

Nature	The Nation		The Punch		Total	
	No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
News	53	88.4	57	95	110	91.6
Feature	3	5	3	5	6	5
Cartoon	2	3.3	0	0	2	1.7
Opinion	2	3.3	0	0	2	1.7
Total	**60**	**100**	**60**	**100**	**120**	**100**

Source: Field Work 2025

Nature of the Story

Feature 5% Cartoon 2% Opinion 2% News 91%

- News
- Feature
- Cartoon
- Opinion

Table 1: The data generated shows how The Nation and The Punch publications covers kidnapping related cases from January 2022 to December 2022. Base on the data generated The Nation coverage is 88.4% News, 5% Feature, 3.3% Cartoon, and 3.3% Opinion, while The Punch publications covers kidnapping related cases is selected publications with its nature to be 95% News, 5% Feature, 0% Cartoon, and 0% Opinion.

The data indicates that The Nation reports kidnapping cases in more different nature which are News, Feature, Cartoon, and Opinion than The Punch that majorly centralise their coverage on News and Feature articles.

From the data, it is evident that The Nation and The Punch newspapers under investigation cover and reports kidnapping cases within the period of study as 91.6% News, 5% Feature, 1.7% Cartoon, and 1.7% Opinion.

Table 2: Direction of the Story

Direction	The Nation		The Punch		Total	
	No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Favourable	25	41.7	16	26.7	41	34.2
Unfavourable	13	21.7	32	53.3	45	37.5
Neutral	22	36.6	12	20	34	28.3
Total	**60**	**100**	**60**	**100**	**120**	**100**

Source: Field Work 2025

Diection of the Story
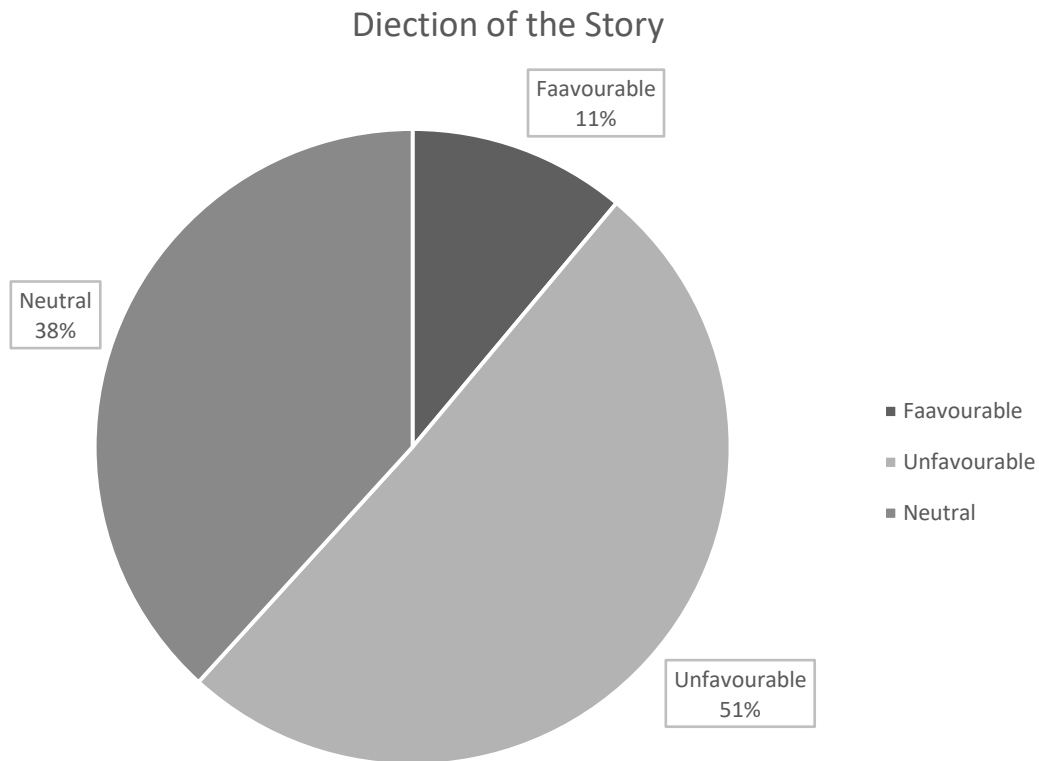
Table 2: Data generated shows the direction of kidnapping cases in The Nation and The Punch from January 2022 to December 2022. It is evident from the findings that, The Nation reports kidnapping cases 41.7% in a Favourable direction, 21.7% in an Unfavourable direction, and 36.6% in a Neutral direction, while Th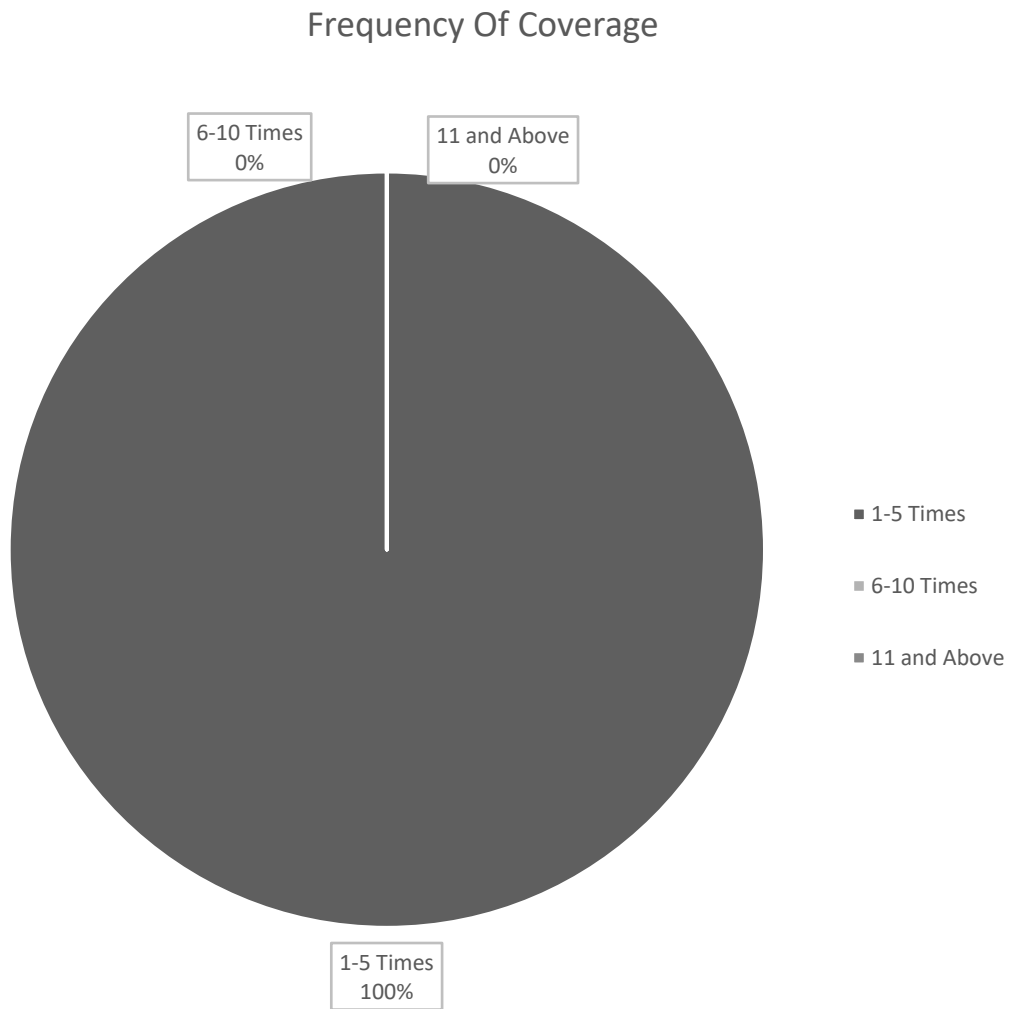e Punch reports kidnapping cases 26.7 % in a Favourable direction, 53.3% in an Unfavourable direction, and 20% in a Neutral direction.

The data indicates The Nation reports in a more favourable direction than The Punch having a higher percentage in favour and neutral than that of The Punch.

From the data, it is evident that the two newspapers under investigation reports kidnapping cases within the period of study 34.2% on a Favourable ground, 37.5% Unfavourable, and 28.3% Neutral.

Table 3: Frequency of Coverage

Frequency	The Nation		The Punch		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
1-5 times	60	100	60	100	120	100
6-10 times	0	0	0	0	0	0
11 and above	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**60**	**100**	**0**	**100**	**120**	**100**

Source: Field Work 2025

Frequency Of Coverage

Table 3: Data generated shows the frequency of coverage of kidnapping cases in The Nation and The Punch from January 2022 to December 2022. The Nation reports kidnapping cases 100% 1-5 times, 0% 6-10 times, and 0% 11 times and above, while The Punch reports kidnapping cases 100% 1-5 times, 0% 6-10 times, and 0% 11 times and above .

The data indicates that the two newspapers under investigation reports kidnapping cases within the period of study 100% between 1-5 times in every of their publications sampled.

Table 4: Prominence of the Story

	The Nation		The Punch		Total	
Prominence	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Front page	20	33.3	21	35	41	34.2
Inside page	40	66.7	39	65	79	65.8
Back page	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**60**	**100**	**60**	**100**	**120**	**100**

Source: Field Work 2025

Prominence Of The Story

Back Page 0%	
Front Page 34%	■ Front Page
	■ Inside Page
Inside Page 66%	■ Back Page
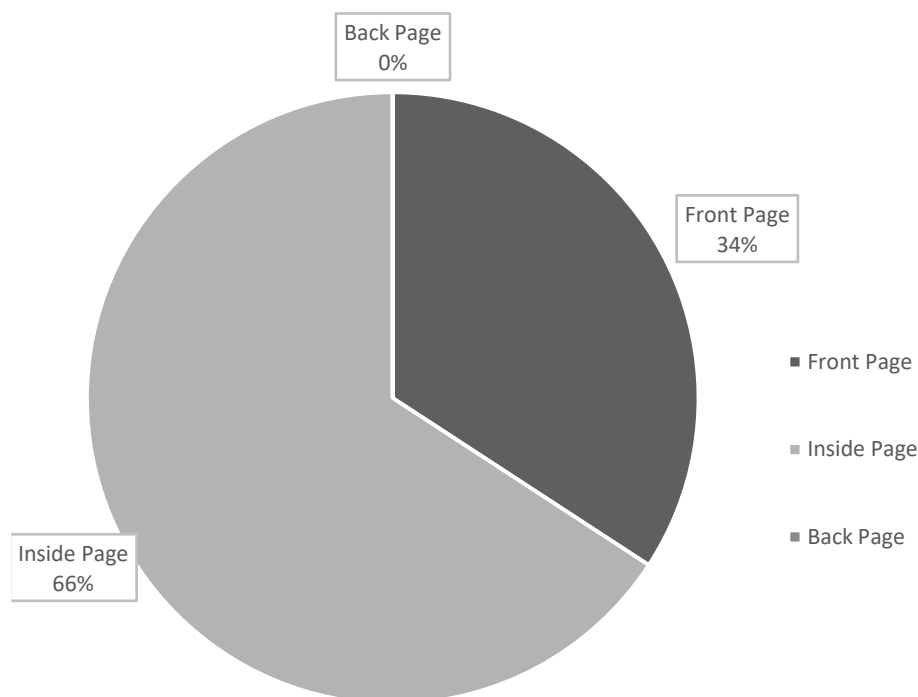
Table 4: Data generated shows the prominence given to kidnapping cases in The Nation and The Punch from January 2022 to December 2022. Base on the data generated, The Nation reports 33.3% kidnapping cases at the front page, 66.7% at the inside page, and nothing was recorded at the back page, The Punch reports 35% kidnapping cases at the front page, 65% at the inside page, and nothing was recorded at the back page.

The data indicates that The Punch reports more cases of kidnapping at the front page than The Nation but The Punch less reports of kidnapping cases at the inside page compare to The Nation

From the data, it is evident that the two newspapers under investigation reports kidnapping cases more in the inside page within the period under study, with 65.8% reports in the inside page, 34.2% at the front page and nothing was recorded at the back page.

Table 5: Tone of the Story

Tone	The Nation		The Punch		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Harsh	18	30	35	58.3	53	44.2
Neutral	22	36.7	12	20	34	28.3
Soft	20	33.3	13	21.7	33	27.5
Total	**60**	**100**	**60**	**100**	**120**	**100**

Source: Field Work 2025

Tone Of The Story

Table 5: Data generated shows that the Tone of coverage of kidnapping cases in The Nation and The Punch from January 2022 to December 2022. It is evident from the findings that, The Nation reports 30% kidnapping cases in a Harsh tone, 36.7% in a Neutral tone, and 33.3% in a Soft tone, while The Punch reports 58.3% kidnapping cases in a Harsh tone, 20% in a Neutral tone, and 21.7% in a Soft tone.

The data indicates The Nation reports in a report kidnapping cases in a neutral tone but The Punch reports are of a harsh tone.

Data indicates that The Nation and The Punch newspaper under investigation reports kidnapping case more in a Harsh tone. The reports are 44.2% Harsh, 28.3% Neutral, and 27.5% Soft.

Tone Of The Story

Table 5: Data generated shows that the Tone of coverage of kidnapping cases in The Nation and The Punch from January 2022 to December 2022. It is evident from the findings that, The Nation reports 30% kidnapping cases in a Harsh tone, 36.7% in a

Neutral tone, and 33.3% in a Soft tone, while The Punch reports 58.3% kidnapping cases in a Harsh tone, 20% in a Neutral tone, and 21.7% in a Soft tone.

The data indicates The Nation reports in a report kidnapping cases in a neutral tone but The Punch reports are of a harsh tone.

Data indicates that The Nation and The Punch newspaper under investigation reports kidnapping case more in a Harsh tone. The reports are 44.2% Harsh, 28.3% Neutral, and 27.5% Soft.

4.2 Analysis of Research Question

Research Question 1

What is the level of frequency of newspapers coverage of kidnapping in Nigeria?
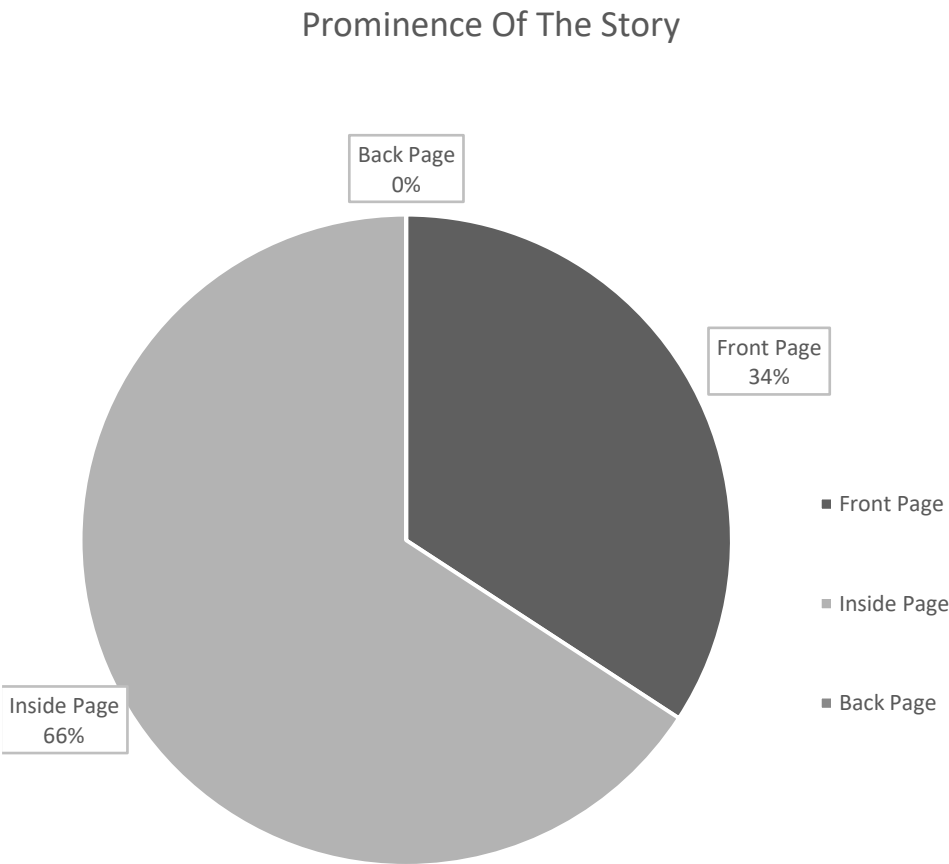
Frequency Of Coverage
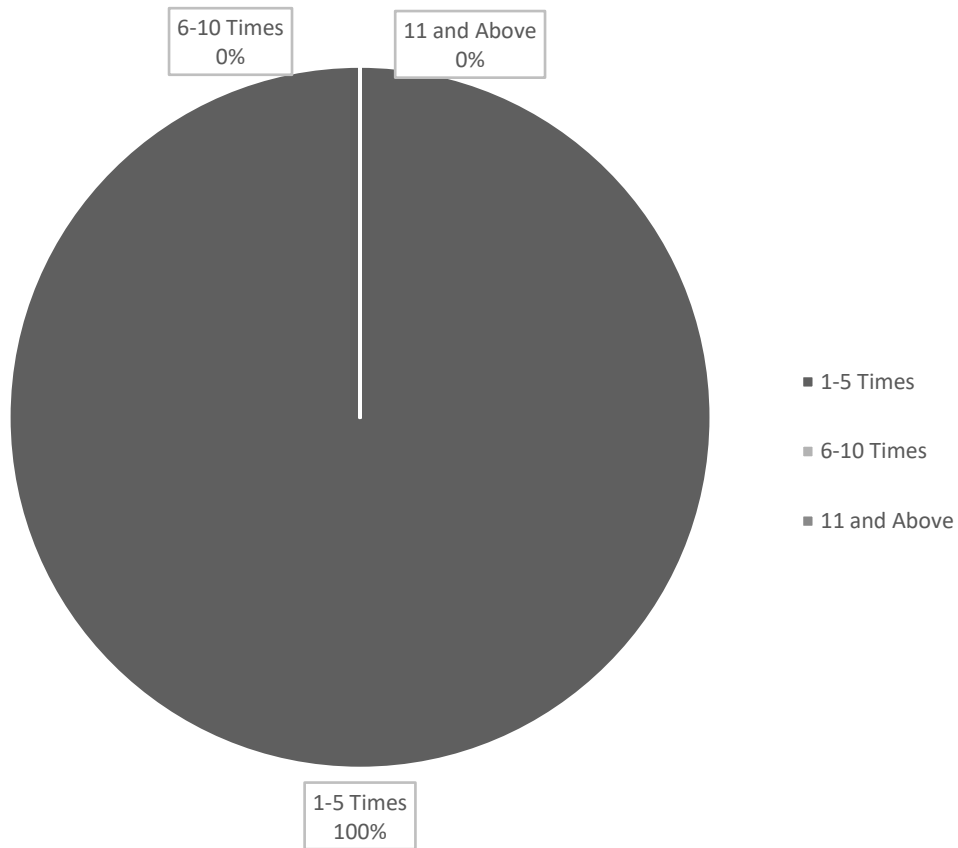
Data generated shows the frequency of coverage of kidnapping cases in The Nation and The Punch from January 2022 to December 2022. The Nation reports kidnapping cases 100% 1-5 times, 0% 6-10 times, and 0% 11 times and above, while The Punch reports kidnapping cases 100% 1-5 times, 0% 6-10 times, and 0% 11 times and above

The data indicates that the two newspapers under investigation reports kidnapping cases within the period of study 100% between 1-5 times in every of their publications sampled.

Research Question 2

What is the level of prominence given to the news stories on kidnapping in the country?

Prominence Of The Story

Back Page
0%

Front Page
34%

■ Front Page

■ Inside Page

■ Back Page

Inside Page
66%

Data generated shows the prominence given to kidnapping cases in The Nation and The Punch from January 2022 to December 2022. Base on the data generated, The Nation reports 33.3% kidnapping cases at the front page, 66.7% at the inside page, and nothing
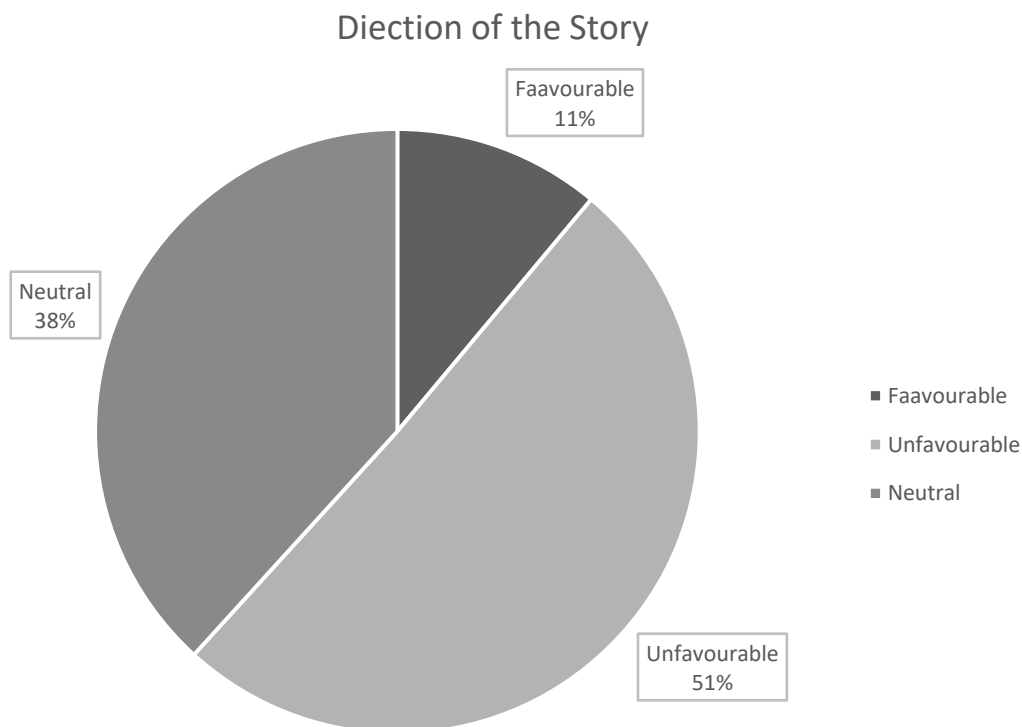
was recorded at the back page, The Punch reports 35% kidnapping cases at the front page, 65% at the inside page, and nothing was recorded at the back page.

The data indicates that The Punch reports more cases of kidnapping at the front page than The Nation but The Punch less reports of kidnapping cases at the inside page compare to The Nation

From the data, it is evident that the two newspapers under investigation reports kidnapping cases more in the inside page within the period under study, with 65.8% reports in the inside page, 34.2% at the front page and nothing was recorded at the back page.

Research Question 3

What is the direction of newspaper coverage of kidnapping in Nigeria?

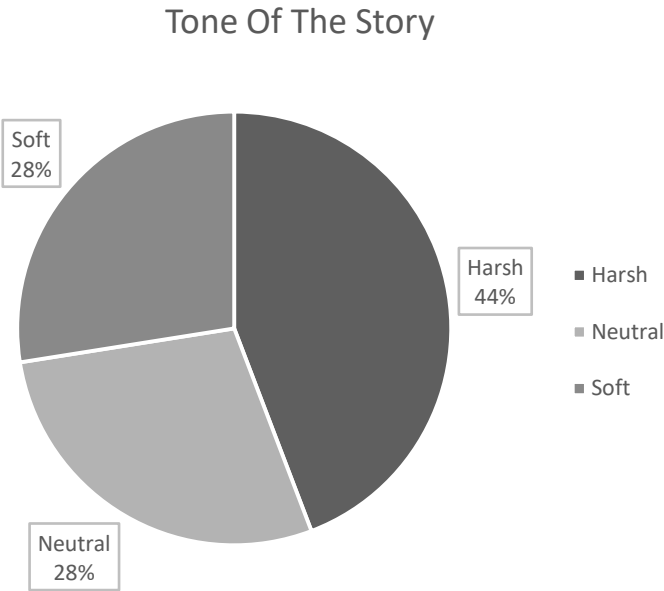Diection of the Story

- Faavourable
- Unfavourable
- Neutral

Data generated shows the direction of kidnapping cases in The Nation and The Punch from January 2022 to December 2022. It is evident from the findings that, The Nation reports kidnapping cases 41.7% in a Favourable direction, 21.7% in an Unfavourable direction, and 36.6% in a Neutral direction, while The Punch reports kidnapping cases 26.7 % in a Favourable direction, 53.3% in an Unfavourable direction, and 20% in a Neutral direction.

The data indicates The Nation reports in a more favourable direction than The Punch having a higher percentage in favour and neutral than that of The Punch.

From the data, it is evident that the two newspapers under investigation reports kidnapping cases within the period of study 34.2% on a Favourable ground, 37.5% Unfavourable, and 28.3% Neutral.

Research Question 4

How were kidnapping incidence framed in selected Nigerian newspapers?

Tone Of The Story

Data generated shows that the Tone of coverage of kidnapping cases in The Nation and The Punch from January 2022 to December 2022. It is evident from the findings that, The Nation reports 30% kidnapping cases in a Harsh tone, 36.7% in a Neutral tone, and 33.3% in a Soft tone, while The Punch reports 58.3% kidnapping cases in a Harsh tone, 20% in a Neutral tone, and 21.7% in a Soft tone.

The data indicates The Nation reports in a report kidnapping cases in a neutral tone but The Punch reports are of a harsh tone.

Data indicates that The Nation and The Punch newspaper under investigation reports kidnapping case more in a Harsh tone. The reports are 44.2% Harsh, 28.3% Neutral, and 27.5% Soft.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

This research basically set out to access newspaper coverage of kidnapping in Nigeria and The Nation and The Punch newspapers from January 2022 to December 2022 were selected to be accessed being the two most read newspapers in Nigeria. 60 editions of The Nation and 60 editions of The Punch a total number of 120 publication were randomly selected and analyse as population of the study and Coding Sheet is used as the research instrument.

However, based on the findings, the result of the study shows that the two papers under investigation report more stories of kidnapping as news ahead of feature article, cartoon and opinion with 91.6% of the coverage in the newspapers analysed written as news articles.

In addition, the prominence given to kidnapping cases in Nigeria newspaper is less important as majority are only featured in the inside pages of the publications analysed,

few at the front page and none at the back page. The results of the study shows that 66% of kidnapping cases are placed at the inside pages on the publications.

Furthermore, the direction of which kidnapping cases are reported in Nigeria newspaper is unfavourable, though the rate at which the newspaper outlet tries to make their direction neutral with 38% of the publications but 58% of their publications is yet unfavourable of kidnapping cases.

Kidnapping cases in Nigeria are mostly framed in a harsh tone in the result of the study with 44% which is the highest of the coverage written in a harsh tone.

In Summary, 2022 being a year before Nigeria 2023 election the attention of the media is mostly attracted to political issues and politicians. Political issues and adverts take most part and prominence of the newspaper publications. The two papers under instigation have a particular section in the inside page of their publications flagged "City and Crime" in The Nation and "" in The Punch where most of the kidnapping cases are published. Kidnapping cases are mostly presented in as news article at the inside pages between one to five times in an unfavourable direction and a harsh to in every of their publications

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0   Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter deals with the Summary, Findings, Recommendations and conclusion. Following the research carried out on newspaper coverage and framing of kidnapping in Nigeria the following findings and deduction were derived.

5.1   Summary

Violent crimes, such as armed robbery, drug trafficking, kidnappings and abductions, assassinations, bank raiding, militancy, and terrorism has been a major challenge in most countries of Africa. And Nigeria is no exception. Kidnapping as a form of violent crime has the potential to emerge into other felonies such as physical abuse, financial extortion, and murder etc. Nigerian kidnapping activities can be traced back to the early nineties (Hazen & Horner 2007). Dating from the early 2000s, kidnappings contributed extensively to a climate of terrorism in Nigeria's South East, Niger Delta, and South-western regions, and subsequently became a routine occurrence. According to The Cable, 4,616 people were kidnapped in Nigeria in 2022. 3,972 civilians, 202 military personnel, 186 police officers, 154 vigilantes, 14 security guards and 17 others were reportedly killed in the period under review.

The media exists as an information source and broadcast, instructional promotion, espionage, societal education, and mobilization. These functions distinguish the media as a vital link or factor in the relationship between the government and the governed. In light of the aforementioned functions, Ngwama (2014) proposed that the media should be active in broadcasting and publishing kidnapping cases so that the government can take appropriate action.

Specifically, the print media (newspapers), according to Zenn (2014), played a major role in keeping the public abreast of the state of the Chibok girls' abduction, as well as other similar cases of kidnapping in Nigeria. In disagreement with this, Eze (2011) posited that in the coverage of issues of conflict such as kidnapping, the print media function of surveillance and news publishing has been unpalatably ineffective as they do not report most vital cases of kidnapping, especially in rural communities

Chapter two review related literature on newspaper coverage and framing of kidnapping in Nigeria. The theory adopted by this research is Framing theory, framing theory suggests that how something is presented to the audience (called "the frame") influences the choices people make about how to process that information. Frames are abstractions that work to organize or structure message meaning. The term Kidnapping was conceptualised with instances of kidnapping in Nigeria, the causes, types, and impacts of kidnapping, with the framing patterns used by the media in crisis situation.

Chapter three focuses on the methodology adopted in the data collection and analysis, content analysis was adopted using coding sheet as instrument used to gather data drawn question of the study 120 publications of The Nation and the Punch were selected as the population of the study, and the editions published from January 2022 to December 2022 are selected as the sample size and random sampling adopted as the sampling technique.

Chapter four presents the data for analysis, and also analysis of percentage score and frequency method were used with the aid of pie chart to interpret analytically, and descriptively, analysis of the research question was also presented.

The finding of the study reveals that the two papers under instigation have a particular section in the inside page of their publications flagged "City and Crime" in The Nation and "" in The Punch where most of the kidnapping cases are published. Kidnapping cases are mostly presented in as news article at the inside pages between one to five times in an unfavourable direction and a harsh to in every of their publications.

5.2   Conclusion

Going by the findings, the study revealed that the two newspapers under investigation normally report kidnapping cases more in form of news stories. From the findings also, the study discovered that the newspapers papers under investigation report more stories of kidnapping cases at the inside page within the study period. The findings of the study show that the two papers under investigation report kidnapping cases only within one to five times in every of their publication within the period of study. The findings of the study also show that the two papers under investigation report kidnapping cases more on unfavourable direction compare to favourable and neutral. The findings of the study show that the two papers under investigation report kidnapping cases on a harsh tone This implies that the media have responsibility to play as far as reporting of kidnapping cases is concern considering the power of the media as the 'Fourth Estate of the Realm', reportage of such issues will address societal problems like kidnapping cases.

5.3 Recommendations

The media (print) could integrate some variables of Entman's framing theory into permanent work programmes to promote constructive reporting. For instance in each news report, the media should give less salience to the problem and the cause of the problem. But moral lessons and solution to the problems should be given more salience. This will make the public see the moral lessons and solution to the problem more important than the problem and its cause. The solution to the problem must be information that are helpful not the ones that could incite the public. The media should periodically organise trainings for their staff to understand the different perspectives of world politics, to know how the two basic perspectives (liberalists and realists) could make or mar constructive reporting and acquire skills on how to write constructive news report.

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<div align="center">**Questionnaire**</div>

Dear Respondent,

We are Student of the Department of Mass Communication, Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin. We are conducting a research on the topic **"Newspaper Coverage of Kidnapping in Nigeria".**

With humility we request that you help us in answering the question below as honest as you can and we want to assure you that every of your information shall be used for nothing than academic purposes.

Section A: Demographic Information

(Please tick or fill in as appropriate)

1. **Gender**:
   ☐ Male
   ☐ Female
2. **Age**:
   ☐ Under 18
   ☐ 18–25
   ☐ 26–35
   ☐ 36–45
   ☐ 46 and above
3. **Marital Status**:
   ☐ Single
   ☐ Married
   ☐ Divorced
   ☐ Widowed
4. **Occupation**:
   ☐ Student
   ☐ Civil Servant
   ☐ Private Sector Worker
   ☐ Self-employed
   ☐ Unemployed
   ☐ Other (Please specify): _____

5. **Level of Education**:
   - ☐ Primary
   - ☐ Secondary
   - ☐ Tertiary
   - ☐ Postgraduate
6. **State of Residence**: _____

Section B: Newspaper Coverage of Kidnapping

7. How often do you read newspapers?
   - ☐ Daily
   - ☐ Weekly
   - ☐ Occasionally
   - ☐ Rarely
   - ☐ Never
8. Which newspapers do you read most frequently?
   - ☐ The Punch
   - ☐ The Guardian
   - ☐ Vanguard
   - ☐ Daily Trust
   - ☐ This Day
   - ☐ Others (Specify): _____
9. How frequently do you come across news on kidnapping in newspapers?
   - ☐ Very Often
   - ☐ Often
   - ☐ Sometimes
   - ☐ Rarely
   - ☐ Never
10. In your opinion, how detailed is the coverage of kidnapping cases in Nigerian newspapers?
    - ☐ Very Detailed
    - ☐ Detailed
    - ☐ Moderate

☐ Poor

☐ Very Poor

11. Do you think newspapers sensationalize kidnapping stories?

    ☐ Strongly Agree

    ☐ Agree

    ☐ Neutral

    ☐ Disagree

    ☐ Strongly Disagree

12. Do you think newspaper coverage of kidnapping creates public fear?

    ☐ Strongly Agree

    ☐ Agree

    ☐ Neutral

    ☐ Disagree

    ☐ Strongly Disagree

13. Which aspect of kidnapping is most reported in newspapers?

    ☐ Victims' experiences

    ☐ Ransom demands

    ☐ Government response

    ☐ Arrest of kidnappers

    ☐ Others (specify): _____

14. Do you believe the newspapers are objective in reporting kidnapping cases?

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

    ☐ Not Sure

15. Do newspaper reports on kidnapping influence your perception of security in Nigeria?

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

16. Should newspapers do more investigative reporting on kidnapping cases?

    ☐ Strongly Agree

☐ Agree

☐ Neutral

☐ Disagree

☐ Strongly Disagree

17. What kind of information would you like to see more in newspaper reports on kidnapping?

18. How do you think newspaper reporting can help reduce kidnapping?

19. Do you trust the accuracy of kidnapping reports in Nigerian newspapers?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Sometimes

20. Any additional comments or suggestions?