Kidnapping and Abduction Online News Reports' Influence on Fear of Victimization and Prevention Practices

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Abstract

The increase in reports of kidnappings and abductions in the Philippines has been widely circulated on social media. Studies indicate frequent exposure to crime news significantly increases people's fear of crime. Hence, this research investigated the demographics, exposure to online kidnapping and abduction news, degree of fear of victimization, and prevention practices among students at Pampanga State Agricultural University (PSAU), in Magalang, Pampanga, Philippines, to determine if these news reports affect their fear and safety behaviors. The study surveyed 380 college students at PSAU using a quantitative inferential research method. Techniques such as Frequency Distribution Tables, Mean calculations, and Chi-square tests were employed for statistical analysis. Key findings indicated that most respondents were female students aged 20-21, with monthly family incomes below 20,000 pesos. A significant portion of these students frequently encountered online news about kidnappings and abductions, with 11.5% encountering such news often (five to seven days per week) and 43.5% sometimes (one to three days per week). The students displayed a substantial level of fear of becoming kidnapping and abduction victims, with a mean fear score of 3.83. Meanwhile, they adopted preventive measures like cautious information sharing, heightened vigilance, and open communication with family. The results also demonstrated that sex and exposure to online crime news are significantly related to fear of victimization. It recommends that government bodies, educational institutions, media professionals, and parents intensify their roles in educating about responsible crime news consumption and implementing effective prevention strategies to reduce people's fear and potential victimization.

Keywords: Kidnapping, Abduction, Fear of Victimization, Prevention Practices, Online News Reports

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Introduction

The Internet's emergence has revolutionized how news and information are disseminated, opening up many opportunities in journalism, particularly in creating and distributing news stories for a wide audience across various platforms (Khan & Shnaider, 2021). The Internet has been instrumental in making online news sources accessible through digital devices, playing a crucial role in educating and informing the public about global issues and events (Bennett, 2021). These sources encompass a wide range of journalistic beats, which refer to specific topics or subject areas covered by reporters (Rogers, 2019).

Among these, crime reporting is a highly popular beat in journalism, involving objective, interpretative, and investigative reporting, and is closely linked to public safety (Dane, 2020; National Institute of Mass Communication & Journalism, 2020; Truong, 2021). Public interest is particularly high in crime stories covering a variety of offenses, including kidnappings and abductions, which are deliberate acts punishable by law with significant physical or psychological impacts (Dane, 2020; Victim Support, 2022). Kidnapping, defined in the Philippine Revised Penal Code, involves the illegal taking of a person without consent, while forcible abduction pertains specifically to the abduction of women against their will (Attorneys of the Philippines, 2017; BatasNatin, n.d.).

Globally, numerous cases of missing people are reported, with youth often being the primary victims of abductions, contrary to the common belief that younger children are more frequently targeted (Missouri Child Identification Program, n.d.; World Population Review, 2022). In the Philippines, kidnapping and abduction remain persistent issues across the country, with a significant number of incidents recorded, including those linked to Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators (POGOs) (Philippine Strategic Associates, 2021; Pinlac, 2022; Sarao, 2022). Despite being illegal, the risk remains high, prompting government agencies to implement various policies and establish units like the Philippine National Police Anti-Kidnapping Group (PNP-AKG) to address the problem (Dalizon, 2022; Gonzales, 2019).

Recently, an increase in online reports of kidnapping and abduction in the Philippines has led to concerns over the proliferation of fake news, prompting the PNP to request the removal of misleading posts to avoid public panic (Caliwan, 2022; Recuenco, 2022). This situation underscores the importance of studying the impact of crime news consumption on public fear of crime and victimization. Research indicates that greater exposure to crime news, especially via social media, can amplify fear among the public (Näsi et al., 2021; Teilerboim and Thielemann, 2013).

Crime news serves as a risk message, raising awareness about criminal events. However, the emotional toll of crimes like abduction, which can have long-lasting psychological effects on victims and their families, necessitates effective risk communication to help the public make informed decisions regarding their safety (Akwash, 2016; Bathiya, 2018; Lampoltshammer, 2014; World Health Organization, 2022). In today's media landscape, understanding how news media communication affects perceptions of safety and crime risk is crucial (Hollis et al., 2017).

The study at Pampanga State Agricultural University in Magalang, Pampanga, Philippines, was designed to determine the influence of online kidnapping and abduction news reports on the fear of victimization and prevention practices among college students. It explored the relationship between demographics, exposure to such news, fear levels, and prevention

strategies. The research is guided by the assumptions of the Cultivation Theory and its adaptation to social media.

Research Methods

The authors utilized a quantitative inferential research method to investigate the influence of online news reports about kidnapping and abduction on the fear of victimization and prevention practices among students at PSAU. This method, which involves numerical data and statistical analysis, was chosen to discern patterns and relationships in the data (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2015;). Inferential statistics were used to make reliable conclusions about the larger population from a sample (Calvello, 2020).

The research was conducted at PSAU, selected for its relevant student demographic, aligning with typical abduction victim profiles (Johnston, 2018). A sample of 380 students was selected using simple and stratified random sampling methods, ensuring a representative and unbiased sample. Slovin's Formula was applied to determine this sample size, based on the university's total student population.

The primary tool for data collection was a survey questionnaire, designed with reference to various pertinent studies and literature (Barthel et al., 2020; Chockalingam & Srinivasan, 2009; McLeod, 2018). This questionnaire comprised four sections covering demographic information, frequency of exposure to kidnapping and abduction news, degree of fear of victimization, and prevention practices.

Data collection procedures involved obtaining the university's student population data and consulting a statistician for appropriate statistical methods. Once designed and validated, the questionnaire was distributed among the selected respondents after ensuring their informed consent and anonymity.

The authors employed frequency distribution tables, mean calculations, and chi-square tests for data analysis. These methods were used to determine the socio-demographic profiles of respondents, their exposure to kidnapping and abduction news reports, their degree of fear, and their prevention practices. The chi-square test, in particular, was utilized to explore relationships between respondents' socio-demographic status, their fear of victimization, frequency of exposure to such news, and their prevention practices.

Results and Discussion

I. Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The study's first objective was to determine the socio-demographic profile regarding age, sex, and family monthly income of Pampanga State Agricultural University students. In this case, the results are discussed as follows:

1.1 Age of the Respondents

Table 1.1 shows the respondents' ages, ranging from 18 to 25, divided into four age groups: 18-19, 20-21, 22-23, and 24-25. The majority, 50%, are aged 20-21, followed by 32.37% aged 18-19, 15% aged 22-23, and 2.63% aged 24-25.

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18 – 19	123	32.37
20 – 21	190	50
22 – 23	57	15
24 – 25	10	2.63
TOTAL	380	100

Table 1.1: Age of the Respondents

1.2 Sex of the Respondents

Table 1.2 presents the sex of the respondents. Most of the respondents among 380 PSAU students are female (66.8%), while the rest (33.2%) are male.

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	126	33.2
Female	254	66.8
TOTAL	380	100

Table 1.2: Sex of the Respondents

1.3 Family's Monthly Income of the Respondents

Table 1.3 displays the monthly family earnings of the surveyed individuals. The data reveals that a significant portion, 55.8%, of them, reported a family income below 20,000 pesos monthly. This indicates that most respondents belong to low-income families, as the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (2020) defines households earning between 10,957 to 21,194 pesos monthly as low-income. Additionally, the distribution of other income groups is as follows: 24.5% earn between 21,000 and 30,999 pesos, 9.5% between 31,000 and 40,999 pesos, 5.3% between 41,000 and 50,999 pesos, 2.6% earn over 61,000 pesos, and 2.4% between 51,000 and 60,999 pesos.

Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage
Below P20,000	212	55.8
P21,000 – 30,999	93	24.5
P31,000 – 40,999	36	9.5
P41,000 – 50,999	20	5.3
P51,000 – 60,999	9	2.4
P61,000 and above	10	2.6
TOTAL	380	100

Table 1.3: Family's Monthly Income of the Respondents

II. Frequency of Exposure to Kidnapping and Abduction Online News Reports

The study's second objective was to assess how often respondents encountered online news reports about kidnapping and abduction. Table 2 provides the frequency of exposure to such news among the respondents. According to the data, 43.95% of PSAU students reported "sometimes," indicating that almost half of them encountered kidnapping and abduction-related online news reports one to three times per week. Additionally, 11.5% of students

answered "often," signifying frequent exposure, typically five to seven days a week. These findings highlight that most students have varying levels of exposure to kidnapping and abduction news, likely due to the prevalence of crime news in media (Schildkraut, 2017).

Belfrage (2018) argued that youth's news consumption combines incidental and planned exposure. Many young people encounter news incidentally through their social media feeds, influenced by friends sharing news and news organizations' presence on social media. Some engage in deliberate actions, like installing apps with push notifications and following news-focused accounts on various platforms.

Similarly, many Filipinos frequently encounter news content while browsing social media, with 78% relying on incidental exposure through their Facebook feeds (Mateo, 2022). This exposure may also be linked to the increased incidence and online virality of kidnapping and abduction-related posts in the Philippines (Hunt, 2022; Recuenco, 2022).

However, 40% of respondents indicated "rarely" encountering such news, suggesting minimal exposure. This may be due to some students' lack of interest in current events, affecting the algorithms that shape their news exposure.

It's worth noting that young individuals often prefer lighter news topics, such as sports, entertainment, and culture, impacting the content that algorithms prioritize in their news feeds (Benjamin, 2022). Social media algorithms are crucial in determining what appears in users' feeds, prioritizing content based on relevance rather than publication date (Meyers, 2022). As a result, some youth may have limited exposure to kidnapping and abduction-related news due to their content preferences.

Finally, 5% of respondents reported "never" encountering online news about kidnapping and abduction. This suggests that a small percentage of students have never encountered such news, while most have.

Contrary to this study's findings, most young people are exposed to online news through social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube (Common Sense Media, 2019).

Frequency of Exposure	Frequency	Percentage
Never	19	5.00
Rarely	152	40.00
Sometimes	167	43.95
Often	40	11.05
TOTAL	380	100

Table 2: Frequency of Exposure to Kidnapping and Abduction Online News Reports

III. Degree of Fear of Victimization

The study's third objective was to assess respondents' fear of victimization, focusing on their perception of vulnerability to kidnapping and abduction. According to the Warr and Stafford (1983) Model of Fear, fear of victimization is influenced by perceived risk and perceived crime seriousness (Rader, 2017).

The Fear of Crime Scale (FOCS) was employed to measure respondents' fear of crime, using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'not at all fearful' to 'extremely fearful' (Elliott, 2022). The FOCS results revealed that PSAU students had a significant level of fear regarding kidnapping and abduction, with a grand mean of 3.83. Although not at the highest level, their fear was considerable, indicating their perception of these crimes as serious and their susceptibility to victimization.

These findings are in line with the perception in Nigeria, where kidnapping and abduction are seen as serious issues, and citizens feel unsafe (Afrobarometer, 2022). Similarly, Filipinos report fear, anxiety, and an increased sense of vulnerability to kidnapping and abduction (Luna, 2022).

The study found a substantial level of fear among respondents concerning kidnapping-for-ransom gangs (mean score of 4.09) and individuals using violence (mean score of 4.13) for kidnapping and abduction. This suggests that students perceived themselves as highly vulnerable to these forms of victimization, driven either by monetary gain or violence. This fear aligns with the perception in the Philippines, where kidnapping for ransom is viewed as a serious issue, with a significant number of reported cases (Pinlac, 2023).

Moreover, the study revealed that respondents substantially feared being kidnapped or abducted while walking alone on the street (mean score of 4.04) or in isolated and dark areas (mean score of 4.35). This indicates that students acknowledged the risks associated with these situations, particularly at night and in secluded places. These findings are consistent with reports from the Philippines, where people express high fear when walking alone at night (Mangahas, 2018). In contrast, a smaller percentage of individuals in Britain fear walking alone at night (Smith, 2021).

Respondents also exhibited a substantial fear of interacting with strangers, as indicated by a mean score of 3.75. This suggests an awareness of the potential vulnerability associated with such interactions, consistent with the perception that stranger-committed kidnapping is highly dangerous (Child Crime Prevention & Safety Center, 2018).

Concerns extended to victimization outside the school's vicinity, with a mean score of 3.79, indicating substantial fear. This reflects students' apprehension about becoming victims once they leave the school area. This fear aligns with data from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, which shows that attempted abductions often occur when children are traveling to or from school (Waugh, 2022). In contrast, a lower percentage of U.S. students fear being attacked away from school (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2021).

Furthermore, respondents expressed a substantial fear of being kidnapped or abducted while using public transportation, with a mean score of 3.71. This suggests that students perceived themselves as highly susceptible to victimization when commuting using public vehicles, even in the presence of witnesses. These concerns are shared by many commuters in the Philippines, who often feel unsafe due to the presence of criminals (Pagkatotohanan, 2022). In contrast, fewer individuals in London express fear while using public transportation (Imperial College London, 2020).

Finally, respondents reported a medium or moderate fear of being kidnapped or abducted within their neighborhood area (mean score of 3.18) and when alone in their households

(mean score of 3.18). Although they had concerns about these situations, their fears were more pronounced in public spaces, as seen in their substantial fear of walking alone on the street, using public transportation, and being outside the school vicinity. These findings contrast with those in Turkey, where women report high levels of fear both inside and outside their homes (Tandogan & Ilhan, 2016).

Statements	Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. In recent times, how fearful are you of becoming a victim of kidnapping and abduction?	4.08	Substantially fearful
2. Recently, how fearful have you been that you will be kidnapped or abducted by someone using violence?	4.13	Substantially fearful
3. Recently, how fearful have you been of being kidnapped or abducted when you walk alone on the street?	4.04	Substantially fearful
4. Recently, how fearful have you been of being kidnapped or abducted when you are alone in the house?	3.18	Medium fearful
5. Recently, how fearful have you been of being kidnapped or abducted while outside the school vicinity area?	3.79	Substantially fearful
6. Recently, how fearful have you been of being kidnapped or abducted when you talk to a stranger?	3.75	Substantially fearful
7. Recently, how fearful have you been of being kidnapped or abducted by a kidnapping for ransom gang?	4.09	Substantially fearful
8. Recently, how fearful have you been of being kidnapped or abducted inside your neighborhood area?	3.18	Medium fearful
9. Recently, how fearful have you been of being kidnapped or abducted when you walk alone in isolated and dark areas?	4.35	Substantially fearful
10. Recently, how fearful have you been of being kidnapped or abducted when traveling alone using public transportation?	3.71	Substantially fearful
Grand Mean	**3.83**	**Substantially fearful**

Remarks:
1.00 – 1.49   Not at all Fearful
1.50 – 2.49   Slightly Fearful
2.50 – 3.49   Medium Fearful
3.50 – 4.49   Substantially Fearful
4.50 – 5.00   Extremely Fearful

Table 3: Degree of Fear of Victimization

IV. Prevention Practices

The study's fourth objective aimed to investigate the prevention practices adopted by respondents to safeguard themselves from the risks of kidnapping and abduction. Prevention practices encompass various precautionary measures respondents take to reduce their vulnerability to these crimes. Table 4 presents the prevention practices employed by students to mitigate the risks of kidnapping and abduction. It is important to note that respondents could select multiple options.

The most frequently practiced preventive measure among students, with a frequency of 341, was "Being cautious about sharing personal data on social media." This finding indicates that many students prioritize safeguarding their personal information on social media, understanding the importance of not divulging such details. This practice enhances their privacy and limits strangers, especially criminals, from accessing their personal information, thereby reducing the risk of victimization.

Similar trends have been observed in Canada, where the youth exhibit a heightened awareness of online privacy concerns and actively take precautions to protect their personal data (MediaSmarts, 2023). In contrast, youth in the United States tend to be more liberal in sharing personal information on social media (Madden et al., 2013).

The second most frequently practiced preventive measure, with a frequency of 313, was "Not disclosing information, especially personal details, to others, even online." This result demonstrates responsible behavior among respondents, who exercise caution when sharing personal information, even in online interactions. This practice ensures information privacy and reduces the risk of physical harm, as potential criminals are unaware of an individual's location.

Similar practices are observed among Filipino youth, with a majority avoiding interaction and sharing personal information with online strangers (UNICEF Philippines, 2020). Australian youth are also reluctant to engage with strangers online (Scott, 2017).

The third most practiced preventive measure, with a frequency of 308, was "Ensuring that all doors and windows have functional locks." This outcome reflects students' conscientiousness in securing their homes to deter potential intruders. Properly secured homes reduce the risk of break-ins and victimization.

This practice aligns with findings in New Zealand, where a significant portion of the population prioritizes locking doors and windows for security (Olano, 2020). However, in the United Kingdom and the United States, a considerable portion of the population neglects to lock their doors and windows, posing security risks (DePompa, 2019; Response Source, 2022).

Conversely, several preventive measures were less commonly practiced among the students. For instance, "Assigning security officers within the family" ranked 21st in terms of preventive measures, with only 43 respondents reporting this practice. "Installing CCTVs at home as part of security measures" ranked 18.5th, with 98 respondents employing this measure. These results indicate that most students do not have security personnel or CCTV systems in their homes, which may be attributed to financial constraints, as many respondents come from low-income households. This financial limitation aligns with national statistics in

the Philippines, where a significant portion of the population falls into the low-income category (Zoleta, 2022).

"Changing their daily routine and travel routes" ranked 20th among preventive measures, with only 59 respondents reporting this practice. This suggests that respondents maintain consistent routines and travel routes, contrary to findings that women often avoid public places when faced with threatening situations (Bastomski & Smith, 2017).

Lastly, "Carrying pepper spray or other self-defense objects" ranked 18.5th, with 98 respondents utilizing such items. This finding implies that many students do not carry self-defense tools like pepper spray, which can be useful in emergencies.

Pepper spray is recognized as an effective defensive device, temporarily incapacitating threats and facilitating escape (Virginia Commonwealth University, 2022). Similarly, only a minority of female realtors in the United States carry pepper spray (Statista Research Department, 2019).

Prevention Practices	Frequency	Ranking
1. I am careful about revealing data on social media	341	1st
2. I don't reveal my information, especially personal information to other people, even online	313	2nd
3. I ensure that all my doors and windows have locks in working condition	308	3th
4. I stay alert with my surroundings when I'm walking outside the street	297	4th
5. I tell my loved ones my whereabouts	279	5th
6. I avoid engaging in conversation with strangers, even online	250	6th
7. I do not hitch a ride with a person I do not know very well	245	7th
8. I live a simple life and avoid being showy about my personal things on people	241	8th
9. Day or night, I do not walk in dark streets, alleys and unsafe shortcuts	237	9th
10. I get to know my neighbors and all those residing in my street	192	10th
11. I planned my escape actions in case of emergency	184	11th
12. I saved emergency hotlines in my phone	179	12th
13. I learn or practice self-defense moves or techniques	170	13th
14. I research information about safety measures	155	14.5th
15. I planned to report suspicious persons or movements to the barangay or police	155	14.5th
16. I used live location on messenger to share my exact location on my friends and family	144	16th

17. I carry in my bag a whistle or anything that may be used to sound an alarm when in danger	101	17th
18. I carry pepper spray or any object that can be used for self-defense	98	18.5th
19. I installed CCTVs at home as part of the security measure	98	18.5th
20. I changed my day-to-day routine and travel routes	59	20th
21. My family assigned a security officer within the family	43	21st
22. I joined in an organized neighborhood vigilance network	32	22nd

Table 4: Prevention Practices

V. Relationship of the Respondents' Socio-Demographic Profile to their Degree of Fear of Victimization

The study aimed to explore the link between respondents' socio-demographic characteristics (age, sex, family income) and their fear of victimization, using Chi-Square analysis to assess this relationship.

5.1 Age vs. Degree of Fear of Victimization

As shown in Table 5.1, the study found no significant relationship between age and fear of victimization, suggesting that age does not influence this fear. This aligns with Collins (2016), who found no overall age-fear of crime link. However, in specific contexts like disadvantaged neighborhoods in Germany and Australia, age-related fear differences were observed, with both younger and older groups showing similar levels of fear, varying by neighborhood wealth (Köber et al., 2020). Conversely, Mia et al. (2022) found that in Tangail Sadar, Bangladesh, people aged 38-47 had higher crime fears, possibly due to their societal roles and family concerns. This indicates that while age alone may not determine fear of victimization, other factors like social environment can play a role.

Demographic profile	Chi-Square Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Remark
Age	301.61	273	.113	not significantly related

Table 5.1: Age vs Degree of Fear of Victimization

5.2 Sex vs. Degree of Fear of Victimization

Table 5.2 shows a significant relationship between sex and fear of victimization, suggesting that women may experience greater fear than men. This is supported by societal stereotypes, as noted by Webster (2016), who states that women are often perceived as more vulnerable from birth, leading to a heightened fear of physical dangers. Mmari et al. (2018) also found in Shanghai that women are seen as more susceptible to crimes like 'rape' and 'kidnapping', reinforcing the belief in their physical weakness. Furthermore, Silva & Guedes (2022) highlighted that women's perception of themselves as defenseless increases their fear of crime. In Thailand, Prechathamwong & Rujiprak (2019) observed a similar trend, with

women more likely to experience fear of crime influenced by factors like perceived social disorganization and satisfaction with police crime prevention measures.

Demographic profile	Chi-Square Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Remark
Sex	95.15	39	.000	significantly related

Table 5.2: Sex and Degree of Fear of Victimization

5.3 Family's Monthly Income vs Degree of Fear of Victimization

Table 5.3 shows no significant link between respondents' family income and their fear of victimization, suggesting income does not impact this fear, and all income groups are equally susceptible. This contrasts with findings in Latin America, where Singer et al. (2020) identified a positive correlation between economic anxiety and crime fear. Similarly, in Europe, Vieno et al. (2013) observed higher fear levels among those feeling socially marginalized and critical of their welfare system. However, Hernández et al. (2020) found that higher socioeconomic status increased fear of crime in Peru due to more resources at risk.

Demographic profile	Chi-Square Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Remark
Family's Monthly Income	167.19	195	.926	not significantly related

Table 5.3: Family's Monthly Income and Fear of Victimization

5.4 Frequency of Exposure vs Degree of Fear of Victimization

Table 5.4 indicates a significant relationship between frequent exposure to online news about kidnapping and abduction and increased fear of victimization. This aligns with Gerbner's Cultivation Theory and Nevzat's assumptions regarding social media, suggesting that media exposure shapes perceptions and fears (Perera, 2021; Vinney, 2019). The study corroborates that regular exposure to such news heightens youths' fear.

Selvi (2021) also found media exposure to violence heightens fear of victimization, with individuals perceiving violence as more prevalent than it is. Similarly, Intravia et al. (2017) noted a strong connection between consuming crime stories and increased crime fear, especially among youth. In Chile, Näsi et al. (2021) observed that active media consumption elevates fear of violence, particularly on social media. Chan (2021) further supports this, stating that increased consumption of crime news heightens fear during specific periods. These findings collectively suggest that media exposure significantly influences fear perceptions.

Variables	Chi-Square Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Remark
Frequency of exposure vs Fear of Victimization	168.43	117	. 001	significantly related

Table 5.4: Frequency of Exposure vs Degree of Fear of Victimization

5.5 Frequency of Exposure vs Prevention Practices

Table 5.5 shows no significant link between exposure to online news reports and adoption of preventive practices among respondents, suggesting other factors influence youths' precautionary measures despite exposure to kidnapping and abduction news. This aligns with the Filipino cultural context where preventive behaviors are ingrained in values and lifestyle, as Borromeo (2021) notes, shaped by historical security challenges.

Contrarily, Obodo et al. (2022) in Nigeria found that visual multimedia exposure boosts security awareness and kidnapping prevention measures. Similarly, Liu et al. (2020) in China observed that mass media exposure, through negative emotions, significantly enhances preventive behaviors. In Bolivia, Zeballos Rivas et al. (2021) reported that high exposure to COVID-19 information on social media correlated with increased risk perception and subsequent adoption of COVID-19 preventive behaviors. These varied findings suggest that cultural factors play a role in preventive practices, but media exposure can also significantly influence behavior in different contexts.

Variables	Chi-Square Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Remark
Frequency of exposure vs Prevention Practices	63.45	66	.566	not significantly related

Table 5.5: Frequency of Exposure vs Prevention Practices

Conclusion

In conclusion, the predominant demographic among the respondents is females aged 20-21 in a lower-middle-class family. A significant portion often and sometimes encounter online news about kidnapping and abduction, leading to substantial fear among them. While they practice measures such as careful data sharing on social media and ensuring their personal safety, they less often engage in community vigilance or carry self-defense tools. Interestingly, age and family income do not appear to influence their fear levels, but sex does. Moreover, while exposure to abduction and kidnapping news heightens their fear, it does not necessarily affect their preventive actions.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the recommendations include enhanced awareness and education programs focusing on risk assessment and safety strategies, community engagement initiatives like neighborhood watch programs, personal safety workshops covering self-defense and situational awareness, social media safety campaigns, counseling, and support

services to manage the psychological impact of fear. Further research on the following is also recommended:

1. Gender Analysis: Explore gender-specific reactions to kidnapping and abduction news and coping mechanisms.
2. Age Range Expansion: Include more age groups to study developmental and generational fear and coping variations.
3. Content Analysis and Media Consumption: Examine news media content and the impact of different sources and content tones on fear and preventive behaviors.
4. Behavioral Discrepancy: Analyze the gap between increased fear and unchanged preventive actions.
5. Policy and Education Efficacy: Assess the role of policies and educational programs in fear mitigation and safety enhancement.
6. Technology and Digital Literacy: Evaluate the role of digital literacy and safety technologies in fear and preventive behavior modulation.
7. Longitudinal Insights: Monitor fear and behavior evolution over time amidst changing media and social landscapes.

Acknowledgments

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