

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN
LAWMAKINGPROCESS IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: A
STUDY OF THE NINTH HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
2019-2023**

BY

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A THESIS

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CERTIFICATION

This Dissertation titled, AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN LAWMAKING PROCESS IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: A STUDY OF THE NINTH HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, 2019-2023 has been approved as meeting the requirements for the award of Masters in Legislative Studies (MLS), UNIBEN-NILDS Postgraduate School Studies.

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to God almighty, my husband, my mentor, my motivator, my hero, Prince F.K Idepefo, SAN, FCI Arb, my number one cheerleader who never stops pointing me towards my potentials and excellence, our super trooper children, Akinyemi, Ademola, Adenike and Adewale, you would laugh and still encourage me to keep going. Your patience in teaching me to use the computer in handling my school work is all the encouragement I needed to achieve this.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this Thesis “AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN
LAWMAKING PROCESS IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: A STUDY OF THE NINTH
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, (2019-2023)” is a genuine research carried out by me under the
supervision and guidance of _____

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ABSTRACT

The significance of the legislature as a representative of the masses and the vital role of the media as the fourth estate cannot be overstated. This research delves into the media's influence on the legislative process in the 9th National Assembly. Employing a survey research design, the study focused on journalists from terrestrial mass media stations in Abuja, Nigeria. The sample, comprising 36 respondents, was selected using purposive sampling.

Data collection utilized a researcher-designed questionnaire titled "*Role of Media in Law-Making Process in the National Assembly*," which had been validated by both the supervisor and a media practitioner. Reliability was assessed through a test-retest method, yielding a correlation statistic of 0.801. Data analysis primarily relied on descriptive statistics, encompassing frequency and percentage.

The study's major findings revealed a substantial impact of the media on the legislative process in the 9th National Assembly. Media coverage emerged as a prominent influencer in this regard. Nonetheless, certain legislative activities, such as bill submissions, investigative journalism, constituency meetings, final bill passage, and oversight functions, were found to be less influenced by the media.

The study recommended that media experts, such as journalists and editors, should undergo specialized training in parliamentary reporting to bolster their comprehension of the nuances and importance of parliamentary proceedings. Moreover, to heighten public awareness of the legislative process, the Nigerian media should prioritize thorough media coverage. It is imperative to make concerted efforts to bolster the media's involvement in parliamentary activities, especially in constituency outreach initiatives. Media coverage serves as a persuasive instrument in legislative debates, steering the direction of discussions and substantiating arguments.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the study

Access to information is essential to any successful democracy. This is because it ensures that citizens make informed decisions and it also sets the agenda for impactful policy making. The Media, through which the information is accessible plays a critical role in disseminating unbiased, current and relevant information about government's policies to the people on the one hand, while policy makers responsible for policy formulation and implementation engage the media in advocacy on the impact of such policies on the lives of the people that elected them. The Media therefore serve as a mediating agent between the law maker and the electorates having an impact on the law-making process, directly or indirectly.

There have been little evidence to support the importance and strategic role the media plays in the consolidation and transition of democracy (Center for Democracy and Governance, 1999). Lotte (2015) also asserts that there is a dearth of studies that reveal the mechanisms through which the media may affect law making. Nevertheless, the academics acknowledge the increasing power of the media and one would expect it to play a role in all parts of the political process (Lotte, 2015). Due to the relevance of the media headlines to the legislature, legislators are vulnerable to what they watch on the television, read in the Newspapers, and listen-to on the radio.

People get information about international, national and local affairs from the media. This

aspect is important for both Print and Broadcast Media, such as influencing public opinion, setting the political agenda, providing links between the government and the public, acting as the watchdog of the society, and influencing socialization (Bhavna, 2018). Therefore, the media is a vehicle through which the government enlightens, explicates, and wins support for its programs and policies.

In the context of supporting the transition to democracy, the general goal of media development is to move the media away from those controlled or overtly regulated by the state or private interests to a media more open with some degree of editorial freedom that serves public interest. For the media to play a meaningful role in democracy, the ultimate goal of the media must be to develop diverse platforms and trusted voices, and to create and strengthen sectors that promote such channels. Trusted channels allow citizens access to the information they need to make informed decisions and participate in society. A media sector that supports democracy is one that exhibits a degree of editorial independence, is financially viable, and has diverse and plural voices that serve public good. It is defined as representing different voices, both through one channel and the diverse opinions and voices reflected in one channel.

Media is an important source of information not only for the political elites but also for the society at large. Even though the media is not the only source of information, it is nonetheless regarded as a credible source of information in most societies and it is the channel for gauging public opinion (Herbst, 1998), a purveyor of societal problems and possible solutions (Wolfe *et al.*, 2013; Vliegthart *et al.*, 2013). Media coverage of an issue can be a measure of salient issues in the society (Wolfe, 2012) and this is particularly important for parliamentarians as representatives of the people. Senator Effiong Bob while emphasising the importance of the legislature remarked during the 25th anniversary of Awka state house of Assembly that “It is

an indisputable fact that you cannot have democracy without the legislature because the legislature is the engine room of democracy”. The legislature is without any argument, the only institution that represents people in any democracy. It is the tonic that gives life to democracy” (Bob, 2017). This statement emphasizes the importance of the legislative arm of government under the searchlight of journalists in order to ensure and maintain accountability and transparency, as well as strengthen democracy (Edith, Nduka and Ruth, 2022). Constitutionally speaking, Section 4 (2) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended specifically highlights the role of legislative arm of government:

The National Assembly shall have power to make laws for the peace, order and Good government of the Federation or any part thereof with respect to any matter Included in the Exclusive Legislative List set out in Part 1 of the Second Schedule to this Constitution.

Nwaozuzu, Bulama and Gambo (2000); Nyong, (2008) explain further that the Legislature is the deliberative congress and law-making body of a nation or state refer to in some instances as National Assembly of that country . It may be unicameral (having a single legislative chamber), or bicameral (having two legislative chambers; one referred to as the Upper chamber, and the other the lower chamber). Irrespective of the type of legislature, its powers range from the passing of laws to redressing constituents’ grievances, approving the government’s annual budget, confirming executive appointments, ratifying treaties, investigating the executive arm of government, and even removing members of the executive and judiciary from office. PLAC (2017) in its report stated that National Assembly, by virtue of its constitutional powers, can act as a proxy for reform where the issues involved are of public or mass appeal. National Assembly is usually a forum for discussing ideas and policies, it

provides a platform for deliberating important political forces in a democracy. It has adopted measures on a number of occasions that led to amendment of many laws and even constitutional changes.

In a democratic environment, the legislative represents the sovereignty of people and therefore takes precedence over the other two branches (Executive and Judiciary) of government. Although the Constitution clearly state that ‘sovereignty belongs to the people of Nigeria . . .’ it provides for representation in Government administration because not all Nigerians can enact laws or take decisions on governance at the same time. But enjoying this immense power is not enough without the responsibility to ensure a credible legislative process that reflects and responds to the needs of society (PLAC, 2017). Representatives must act in the interests of the represented (the sovereign) through stakeholders consultation and exercise of discretionary power and judgment while synthesizing the views of the governed in a way that responds to their needs.

The power to make laws, which is one of the major responsibilities of a legislature is the main instrument of governance and its procedure is highlighted in the constitution. Section 58 (1) expressly provides that the law making powers of the National Assembly can be exercised by bills passed by National Assembly and assented by the President. Likewise, section 9 of the Constitution empowers the National Assembly to alter any part of the 1999 Constitution (PLAC 2017). Legislative process according to Lotte (2015) involve the step by step procedure of turning bill proposals into laws. A Bill can emanate from the Executive arm, the legislature (private member Bill) or from citizens. But, where it originates from a citizen, it can only be sponsored for consideration by a serving member of a Legislative House.

Once a bill is received in either House of the National Assembly, the President of the Senate or Speaker of the House of Representatives forwards it to the Rules and Business Committee for the House of Representatives and Committee on the Rules and Procedure for the Senate to determine its suitability or otherwise for legislative action. (PLAC 2015). The legislative process, that is, the parliamentary deliberation about a proposed bill, in fact starts once the bill is introduced (Lotte, 2015). There is scholarly consensus about the fact that the relationship between Media, Members of Parliament (MPs), and Members of Government can be defined as a complex interaction (Cook 2006; Davis 2009 and Sellers 2010) and that the relationship between political and media actors is complementary (Van and Stefaan 2011). The relationship is complex in the sense that legislative processes are often rather lengthy and technical, and therefore incongruent with media logic (Lotte, 2015). Meanwhile Politicians complement media by adjusting to and anticipate the way media operate (Davis 2009; Strömbäck 2008; Van Aelst and Stefaan 2011). Sellers (2000) further argued that during legislative processes, political actors may on one hand respond to media coverage and on the other anticipate the media attention their legislative behavior might receive.

A study piloted in the US revealed that by attracting media attention to a subject, legislators may pass related legislation through congress more successfully. Media attention can influence political debates and eventually the resulting legislation. although the media obviously do not have power to legislate, except to influence behaviour of legislator by paying more attention to a bill (Wolfe, 2012) through intensive media attention and coverage. member of the 9th National Assembly confessed at the end-of-year get-together and award ceremony organized by the house of representatives press corps in Abuja that media kept them on toe to deliver their mandate (Levinus. 2022) which include making laws for peace, order and good

governance, over-sight functions, technically called checks and balances, exercising control, monitoring and supervisory roles over the executive, to ensure public goods and welfare of masses are delivered (Egbo 2021). Legislature generally regards media as the most significant political agenda setter (Lengauer, Donges and Plasser 2013; Van *et al.*, 2008) as a strategic role. Media, as an agenda setter can set and influence policy agendas in the legislative process. Through media coverage, agenda should be set for debates in the parliament and draw lawmakers' attention to issues of public concern and good governance (edith, nduka and ruth, 2022). However, it is uncertain whether the legislative process in the 9th assembly, including fundamental changes in the content of the bill, is inspired by the media. Hence, the need for this study on the assessment of the role of the media in law making process in the National Assembly.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As a manifestation of the sovereignty of the masses, legislature is central to political debate. But, to a large extent citizens hardly know anything about the legislative process, despite public character of the deliberations. The parliamentarian efforts to disseminate legislative proceedings through various publications, recording of debates and the possibility for journalists to have access to elected officials is not compensated with the feedback from people on their awareness and input in the lawmaking. It was observed that out of all the bills that were passed by the lower chamber of the 9th assembly there is little evidence that media play the role of setting agenda in the legislative process by disseminating relevant and salient information to the public. According to Dzisah (2016) and Akinwalere (2020) little attention has been paid to dominant issues in the media coverage of the parliaments on the African continent. In addition, people are not actively carried along in legislative process. As a result,

people's opinion is relegated in the legislative process.

It is plausible that media attention is important to legislation. Given the growing consensus of media power, media coverage is expected to play a major role in every part of the legislative process. However, Scholars suggest that the short attention span of the media limit legislative processes. On the other hand legislative processes are often rather lengthy and technical, and therefore may be incongruent with media logic. There seems to be a fundamental mismatch between the way in which the media operate and the processes of policymaking". This poses a lot of constraint to media in setting agenda for political discussion and legislative process.

Studies on political agenda-setting strongly suggest that the mass media influence political agendas, but how do these media affect later phases of policymaking especially the legislative process, remain largely uncertain. Thus the need for this study on the assessment of the role of the media in law making process in the National Assembly and the best way electorate can be involved in the legislative process, also effect of media on the outcome of legislative process in the lower National Assembly.

1.3 Research Objective

The research objective was to investigate the role of the media in law making process in the National Assembly: A study of the ninth House of Representatives, 2019-2023. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the prominent role of the media in the legislative process of the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly
2. examine if the role of media influences legislative process of the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly

3. determine the effect of the role of media on the outcome of legislative process in the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly
4. make recommendations on how to improve media role in the legislative process

1.4 Research Questions

1. What is the prominent role of the media in the legislative process of the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly?
2. What role of media influences legislative process of the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly?
3. What is the effect of the role of media on the outcome of legislative process in the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly?
4. What are the recommendations on how to improve media role in the legislative process?

1.5 Scope of study

This study was delimited to the role of the media in law making process in the National Assembly. The study is delimited to the Political Journalist practicing in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja, Nigeria.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study develop knowledge of the role of media in legislative process. As a result, the research adds to existing body of knowledge about media and law-making in various ways:

- 1.It demonstrates the media's impact outside agenda setting phase;
2. It enhance Understanding of media influence on key political issues
- 3.It provides detailed information on the individual-level mechanisms that influence the behaviour of political and media personnel

during the legislative process. Hence, this study will be of immense benefit to the critical stake holders involve in the process of law making such as the political journalist, the electorate, the policy makers and the parliamentarian. The researcher will find the study very useful as a guide to related research on agenda setting role of the media in legislative process. It will enlighten citizen to understand his constitutional right in the process of law making and the how to participate, lend his voice policy decision.

1.7. Arrangement of the Study

Chapter one of this study centered on the foundation of the study. It contained the problem that necessitate the study and highlighted the variables of the construct in the study which formed the objectives and research questions. Chapter two focuses on literature review. The highlight of chapter two are the review of the main concepts in the study; the supporting theory for the study as well as the related empirical studies that are linked to the study. The gap in the previous empirical studies is also identified. Chapter three relates to the description of the research method adopted for the study. Chapter four describes the result of the research and chapter five summarized the study, highlighted the findings of the study, and stated the recommendations and the areas for further studies.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

Member of Parliament (MP): Members of Parliament are the elected legislature in the House of Assembly and House of Representative.

Media: Media are the transmission channels that the 9th National Assembly adopts to transmit the legislation process, procedure and proceedings to the masses. It includes publication in the dedicated journals, Mass Media and Websites.

Media Coverage: Media coverage is the collection of different media that disseminate the legislative proceedings or the outcome of legislative work

Media Attention: Media attention is the attitude of the media to an issue that attract legislative attention before the beginning of legislative process.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter is concerned with the review of related literature and will be discussed under the following sub –headings:

- i. Conceptual framework
- ii. Theoretical framework
- iii. Empirical framework

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 Media

The word "media" comes from the word "medium" which means mode or carrier. The word was first used in relation to books and newspapers. Such as Print media and with the advent of technology, media now includes television, film, radio and internet. The media serve as watchdogs to protect public interest from wrongdoing and to raise public awareness. As the fourth pillar of democracy alongside the judicial, executive and legislative branches, today's media play a significant role in addressing injustice, oppression, misconduct and partisanship in society (Bhavna, 2018). Media or the Press are those agencies of the mass media which 1999 Constitution specifies “shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in (chapter 2) and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people.”(Sec 22). These agencies of the mass media are identified as “the press radio, television and other agencies of the mass media” (Sec 22). They are both print and electronic, and they include news agencies and other information gathering outfits that are involved in the collection, collation and procession of information for use in the mass media (Guardian, 2021). The Internet media is arguably an evolving aspect of the media which is very pivotal in media practice. The role of the

internet media cannot be overemphasized. Oyewole (2022) opined that the law enforcement agencies often rely on social media, an internet-based media platform complaints to investigate an alleged crime. In 2020, a social media campaign prompted the Lagos state government to set up a judicial panel of inquiry into alleged extrajudicial killing and brutality of a formation of the Nigerian Police Force known as the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) (now disbanded). Also, the murder case of Ms Iniubong Umoren, Ms Umo Uduak brought attention to her friend's disappearance by taking to Twitter. These tweets provided vital information that led to the investigation, arrest and prosecution of the culprits.

The goal of media development generally should be to move the media from one that is directed or even overtly controlled by government or private interests to one that is more open and has a degree of editorial independence that serves the public interest. If the media is to have any meaningful role in democracy, then the ultimate goal of media assistance should be to develop a range of diverse mediums and voices that are credible, and to create and strengthen a sector that promotes such outlets. Credible outlets spur the confidence of people in the media and enable citizens to have access to information that they need to make informed decisions and to participate in society.

A media sector supportive of democracy would be one that has a degree of editorial independence, is financially viable, has diverse and plural voices, and serves the public interest. The public interest is defined as representing a plurality of voices both through a greater number of outlets and through the diversity of views and voices reflected within one outlet. Aghamelu (2021) observed that one of the main constitutional roles of the media in a democracy is to objectively monitor governance while maintaining consistency and in holding those involved in the democratic process accountable to the people. These include those with executive, legislative and judicial functions in the polity together with all institutions of governance and democracy. Dukor's argument is that the mutual distrust existing

between the state and the media in Nigeria, has negated the benefits of the fundamental right to know and impart information (Dukor,1998). This paradoxical trend in Nigeria is for the state to negate its constitutional relationship to the media and citizenry. The consequence of this situation is that the development of the entire society is undermined with regard to the right to know and impart information. This tends to widen the gap in communication between government and society, while diminishing the key function of the media.

Summarily, print and broadcast Media functions include influencing public opinion, determining the political agenda, providing a link between the government and the people, acting as a government watchdog, and affecting socialization (Bhavna, S.2018). National media can influence which issues get most attention during the legislative process, how these issues should be understood, and can enhance the reputation of politicians.

According to some scholars, the media have become a political institution on their own (Cook, 2005; Schudson, 2002 and Sparrow, 1999). Large-scale scientific studies show that media set and influence policy agendas (Tan & Weaver, 2009; Baumgartner & Jones, 1993; Soroka, 2002) and that political actors use the media to influence the legislative agenda (Sellers, 2010). It is difficult to think of contemporary politics without (thinking of) the media. While comparing prints and electronics media in legislative process, Van and Walgrave (2011) suggest that parliamentarians view Audio-Visual media as more influential. However, empirical studies argue that newspapers are actually more likely to have a stronger impact on politics than Audio-Visual media (Walgrave, Soroka & Nuytemans, 2008). Moreover, researches reveal that TV news follows the direction of newspapers (Reese & Danielian, 1989), with newspapers having a greater impact on TV news than vice versa (Golan, 2006; Vliedghart & Walgrave, 2008).

The media have the sole prerogative to choose what should be brought into limelight and what not to. What we know about the world is largely based on what the media decide to tell us (Khadijat & Agboola, 2017). More specifically, the result of this mediated view of the world is that the priorities of the media strongly influence the priorities of the public (McCombs, 2004). The media serve as models from which members of the public take cues for meaning-making of a myriads of events occurring on a daily basis. Udoakang *et. al.*, (2014) strongly believe it is through the mass media that views in the society are made known, government policies and activities are publicised and opposing views are heard. Again, the mass media serve as the conduit for the various forms of interaction among the different facets of the society. The strings of the interaction are normally controlled by many variables, such as the legal, ethical, political, socio-cultural, technological and economic factors.

2.1.2 Types of Media

Luhan and Fiore (1962) characterized various media as ranging from “hot” to “Cool”. They further observed that all media are extension of some human faculties-Psychic or physical. Micheal (2007) broadly categorized media as broadcast or interpersonal. However, the boundaries between the two are blurry and overlap. Broadcast media disseminate information to a large number of recipient often in one direction and interpersonal media are usually in two way, between two participants.

In his Book *Evolution of Media*, Micheal (2007) traced the foundation of human communication to face to face interaction. Speech is communicated by sound and received by hearing, and text and writing are communicated on paper and received by sight. Media therefore involve other sensory organs such as smell, taste and kinesthesia. He opined that the evolvement of communication media involve the extension of one or more natural media. For instance, transmission of sound by radio signal, mass

production of newspaper and storage of sound on compact disk are extension of natural means of communication that conquer distance and time.

Michael (2007) broadly categorized media as mass communication or broadcast media which involves the transmission of information to many people through Television, Radio, Newspaper and Bill board; Narrow cast media involves dissemination of information to few people and interpersonal communication or media that involves one-on-one communication such as telephone, or telegraph.

Amelia Ellicott (2021) categorizes media into three types: News Media, Social Media, and Web Media which is, also called earned media, shared media, and owned media. Other forms of modern media include print media, television, movies, and video games. News or Earned Media takes on elements of Mass Media and uses them to deliver news to target users or the general public. This is unpaid material or content written about a company or individual. Social/Shared Media are digital tools, like websites and Apps that enable users to quickly and easily create and publish content to the public. It is an “evolving” medium because the definition is constantly changing. Web media are forms of communication using voice, text, and visuals on the web. Examples of web media are videos, photos, and graphics.

James Delabajan (2022) distinguishes between traditional and contemporary media. According to him, Modern Media comes in many forms: Print media (books, magazines, News Papers), television, movies, video games, music, mobile phones, different types of software, the Internet. Print media on the other hand is used to describe the traditional or "old school" print-based media, such as newspapers, magazines, books, comics, and graphic novels. Each media type includes both content and the device or object to which that content is delivered.

According to Leverageedu (2021), media is categorised into six different types such as:

1. Traditional Media
2. Print Media
3. Electronic/Broadcasting Media
4. Outdoor Media or Out of Home Media (OOH)
5. Transit Media
6. Digital Media/New Media/Internet

Traditional Media

This is the traditional or cultural ways of communicating within the community. It is among the oldest types of mass media that transfer traditions and culture over generations. The communication tools have been developed from beliefs, customs, rituals, and practices of society. Traditional media imparts indigenous ways of communication for ages. Further, this type of mass media varied as per each culture and society as every culture has its mediums to communicate to its mass audience. Thus, the traditional media can be folk songs, dances, folktales and folklore as well as paintings, sculptures, stupas, statues and fairs, festivals, rural or community radio.

Print Media

Before the invention of the printing press, printed supplies had to be written by hand, making mass publication nearly impossible. Print media is one of the elementary types of mass media, very popular and useful for reaching a wider audience. Newspapers are considered to be the oldest form of mass media after traditional mass media. This is because the general public has long relied on newspapers to keep up with the latest events locally and around the world. Thus, print media originally referred to

newspapers, but has expanded to include magazines, tabloids, advertising brochures, magazines, books, novels and comics.

The history of print media in Nigeria goes as far back as the 1840s when the European missionaries established community newspapers to propagate Christianity. This initiative later gave rise to the establishment of newspaper outfits pioneered by the likes of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe in 1937, titled “West African Pilot”. The New Nigeria Newspaper Limited, with its head office along Ahmadu Bello way, Kaduna, was established by the then government of the northern region on 23rd October, 1964. The first copy of the paper was issued on 1st January 1966. Its initial name was Northern Nigerian Newspapers Limited, but when states were created, it was changed to New Nigeria Newspaper Limited up till today (Olaoluwa, 2022).

Electronic Broadcasting Media

Broadcasting is the use of electronic broadcast media to deliver audio and video content to distributed audiences. Broadcast media is one of the most profitable types of mass media because it appeals both aurally and visually, making it easy for illiterate people to disseminate news. Centuries later, after newspapers were used as the first mass media, radio and television appeared. Radio was the primary news medium during the war, not only for sports and entertainment, but also for the information of the general public. According to Chikodili (2013), television broadcasting in Nigeria started with the initiative of the first Western Region premier Chief Obafemi Awolowo who on October 31, 1959 launched television broadcasting at Ibadan the headquarters of the region. The Western Region went into partnership with the Overseas Rediffusion Limited. The Western Nigerian Radiovision services limited were created with the responsibility of radio and television broadcasting under one management. Nigeria as the giant of Africa has to her credit, the first television outfit in Africa, the

Western Nigeria Television (WNTV) on NTA Ibadan. The emergence of what is known today as Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) was borne out of the sheer desire to cater for the crying needs of variegated audience in terms of News gathering, packaging and transmission; this became the second oldest station after WNTV, resuming transmission on 1st October, 1960. The Degree No 24 of 1977 caused all existing television stations in the country to be taken over by the federal government and then led to a change of name to Nigerian Television Authority (NTA).

Since inception, television broadcasting in Nigeria has been transmitting through analogue television which use complete waves to transmit pictures and sounds. The major drawback of this is that location plays an integral factor, disabling, distorting images and audio on Television in rural areas (Kombol, 2008). This would defeat the intended purpose of establishing broadcasting in Nigeria which is that of national integration arising from the diverse homogenous nationalities in the country. With over two hundred and fifty ethnic nationalities and over three hundred and fifty languages, Nigeria obviously is faced with a lot of challenges in terms of integration and bringing the people of Nigeria to work for a common goal. Broadcasting in Nigeria is now regionalized with every region catering for the interest of its people to the detriment of bringing the multi-cultural populace with a unifying focus. Broadcasting stations on their own have been attempting to bridge the gap of ethnicity by ensuring that no ethnic group is left out in their operations and to ensure that el'cry' interest is protected. It is no longer news that most broadcasting stations broadcast more in indigenous languages as a way of integrating their diverse audience. When television was invented, it was primarily used to disseminate news, and later for telecasts, live events, and other entertainment purposes, making it the most effective mass medium. Forms of broadcasting media are: Television, Radio (AM, FM, Pirate Radio, Terrestrial Radio, and Satellite), Traditional Telephone, Film/Movie/Motion Picture, Video Games, Audio Recording and Reproduction.

Outdoor Media

Also known as OOH or out-of-home media, it focuses on delivering information and news to the public when they are away from home. Out-of-home media values displaying advertisements and engaging people with new products, social causes, or social developments or changes. These stand out in branding ads for buildings, streets, polling stations, roadsides, vehicles, screens, kiosks and more. It is one of the most prominent types of mass media used for both commercial and public welfare advertising and primarily includes billboards, Distribution of banners, Lamppost Banners, Posters, Signs and Placards Brochures, Compare advertisements, and wallscapes. Ifeh (2021) writing on Out-of-Home Advertising, opined that Out-of-Home Advertising otherwise called outdoor advertising in Nigeria can be dated back to colonial history. In 1928, West African Publicity Limited; a subsidiary of the United African Company (UAC) was set up to oversee marketing activities in both Nigeria and other West African countries. In 1929, the company transitioned into a full-time advertising firm and was renamed Lintas with two other subsidiaries: Afromedia; the outdoor medium and Pearl/Dean; the cinema arm. In the 1950s other advertising agencies emerged and in the 1960s Mr Kelly of Afromedia Commission Media Research spearheaded the development of Outdoor Advertising Contractors of Nigeria which later evolved to Outdoor Advertising Association of Nigeria. Most working-class Nigerians spend over 70% of their time away from home. Traditional roadside billboard remains the predominant form of Outdoor advertising in Nigeria. However, over the years there has been significant growth in digital outdoor advertising.

Transit Media

Transit Media revolves around the concept of disseminating advertising and information while consumers are 'moving' in public places and on public transport. This includes display ads for vehicles and modes of transportation. With the goal of "Drive Home, A Message", Transit Media helps bring branding at scale to the millions of people who travel across the country's roads and highways every day. While some consider this type of mass media outdated or ineffective, it is widely found on the sides of buses, subways, and at stations where passengers board and disembark on public transport. Bus Advertising, Railway Advertising, Taxi Advertising, Transit Shelter Advertising are the main forms of transit media. In Nigeria, it is common place to see Transit advertising at train stations, bus stops, and even travel routes in some frequent routes across cities. Akenzua (2022) categorized transit media into indoor and outdoor transit media. Indoor Transit Advertising refers to the placement of ads signs inside of buses and trains. Examples include, static advertisements (posters, boards, brochures, and other materials), video commercials (displayed on video screens), and audio advertisements. Outdoor Transit Advertising Involves the method of Transit Advertising whereby ads are placed on the outer bodies of vehicles or any relevant public transport system. For example, roof advertising and onboard advertising (done on the front, left, and right sides or back of the vehicles) are the two types of outdoor transit advertisements. The most popular ones seen around Lagos are bus shelters. This is commonly used on both mass transport like BRT or small buses and privately owned buses like staff buses, with necessary approvals from the relevant government agencies.

New Media or Digital Media

Since the invention of the World Wide Web by British scientist Tim Berners-Lee in 1989, the Internet has dramatically dominated mass media of all kinds due to its rapid spread and the sophistication of digital technology. New media is an interactive two-way communication where users are active producers of content and information. Kolawole and Umejie (2022) agrees that the Nigerian media

landscape is a changing climate. Once dominated by print, radio and television, it is experiencing a disruption by digital platform. By April 2014, when *The Cable*, the third of Nigeria's three strongest online newspapers was founded, there was no print newspaper that hadn't created an online version. There was as well no television or radio station that hadn't established an online presence. That was the extent to which digital media was redesigning journalism practice. The Internet is become a highly interactive Mass Medium and can be easily defined as a "network of networks". It quickly became the centre of Mass Media because it integrated all major types of Mass Media so well. Through the Internet, also known as mass media convergence, news sites can be browsed online, broadcast television programs, and listen to online radio. New media are typically the reconceptualization of existing media. It is a rapidly growing Mass Media, easily accessible with a computer and internet connection (broadband or WiFi). Forms of Digital Media include; Websites, Emails, Social Media and Social Networking Sites (SNS), Webcast and Podcast, Blogging and Vlogging, IPTV (Internet Protocol Television), E-forums and E-books, E-commerce and M-commerce, Digital Videos, Computer Animation, Digital Video Games, Human-Computer Interface, Virtual World & VirtualReality.

2.1.3 Role of the Media

Sören (1997), Centre for Democracy and Governance (1999) and Lotte (2015) assert the important role of the media in reinforcing the awareness of the public to law making process. According to Article 19 of 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers". In view of this declaration, Centre for Democracy and Governance (1999) describe access to information as the fundamental role of the media in governance. The centre based its argument on two reasons; first, Instead of acting on ignorance or misinformation, the media empower citizens to make responsible and

informed decisions.

Secondly, media serve as a “Watch Dog” that ensures elected officials keep their oaths of office and carry out the wishes of those who voted for them. The center also emphasizes that the role of the media in disseminating information remains sacrosanct, especially in post-conflict and ethnically homogeneous societies, as mediators between the state and all aspects of civil society. Buttressing the watch dog role of the media, Bhavna (2018) expatiates that from muckraking early in the century to today's investigative reporting, mass media bring to attention of people evidence of corruption, abuse of power, and ineffective policies and programs.

2.1.4 Role of Media in Promoting Accountability and Good Governance

As a nation, Nigeria has been plagued with a myriad of problems over the years, and this has greatly affected the mode of operations of the media. As earlier established, the media always take on the colouration of the society. To contribute its own quota towards ensuring an end to the several problems in Nigeria, the media have carried out various functions which also conform to the political system of the nation. They include, among others; Correlation, Surveillance/Watchdog, Mobilization, Enlightenment and Political Sensitization, Transmission of Cultural Heritage, Entertainment, Agenda Setting, Advertising (Imhoagene, 2015).

The media play a significant role in shaping public opinion and influencing the lawmaking process in numerous ways. Peter and Paul, (2021) Highlighted some key roles of the media that impacts lawmaking in Nigeria.

- i. **Agenda Setting:** The media has the power to set the agenda by determining which issues receive public attention and discussion. Through news coverage, editorials, and investigative reporting, the media can highlight specific problems, events, or policy debates, effectively bringing them

to the fore front of public consciousness. This agenda-setting function can influence lawmakers' priorities and shape the legislative agenda.

- ii. **Public Awareness and Engagement:** The media acts as a crucial conduit for information, educating the public about proposed laws, policy options, and their potential impact. By disseminating information, the media raises awareness among citizens, enabling them to form opinions and participate in the lawmaking process. Public support or opposition, as reflected through media coverage, can influence lawmakers' decisions and the likelihood of a particular law's passage.
- iii. **Framing the Narrative:** The media's framing of an issue significantly impacts public perception and, consequently, legislative action. By choosing which aspects of an issue to emphasize or downplay, the media can shape how the public understands and interprets complex policy matters. The framing can influence public sentiment, generate support or opposition, and ultimately sway lawmakers' positions on specific legislation.
- iv. **Public Pressure and Advocacy:** Media coverage often highlights public sentiment and mobilizes advocacy efforts around specific causes or policy proposals. Through news stories, opinion pieces, and interviews, the media amplifies the voices of interest groups, experts, and citizens, encouraging public debate and discourse. The resulting public pressure can impact lawmakers' decisions, either by compelling them to respond to popular demands or by dissuading them from pursuing certain legislative actions.
- v. **Accountability and Transparency:** The media serves as a watchdog, scrutinizing the actions and decisions of lawmakers. Investigative journalism and news reporting expose instances of corruption, policy failures, or unethical behavior within the legislative process. By holding lawmakers accountable, the media can shape public opinion and influence the passage or

rejection of legislation. Additionally, media coverage can shed light on the transparency of the lawmaking process itself, exposing procedural flaws or lack of openness, and prompting reforms.

- vi. **Media Influence on Legislators:** Lawmakers are not immune to media influence. Media coverage, public opinion polls, and feedback from constituents can shape legislators' stances on various issues. Lawmakers may adjust their positions or priorities based on the media's portrayal of public sentiment, fearing electoral repercussions or seeking to align with popular opinion.

Media coverage of legislation often amplifies public sentiment and mobilizes advocacy efforts around specific causes or policy proposals. Through news stories, opinion pieces, and interviews, the media amplifies the voices of interest groups, experts, and citizens, encouraging public debate and discourse. There are several instances where media reportage of certain legislations has elicited public pressure and advocacy that leads to divided interest among legislators. The extant Gender Bill is one seeking equal rights for women, men and persons living with disabilities. It was sponsored by Sen. Biodun Olujimi (PDP, Ekiti South) and introduced in the Senate in 2021. The bill which had been pending before the National Assembly, sought affirmative action for women in governance and political representation including 35 per cent appointed positions for women and 20 per cent affirmative action in party administration. It was frustrated by some senators who objected that it was against the Islamic perspective and some socio-cultural norms. The lawmakers agreed that the concerns raised against the bill should be erased before consideration and passage. The media highlighted the different perspectives of the bill, both pros and cons. The constitutionality of the bill was revealed by the media. Ogundapo (2023) reported in Premium times emphasizing that the bill seeks to implement section 42 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It also seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. It will ensure the equality of opportunities for every person.

Aliogo (2022) examines the implications of the gender bills rejected by the National Assembly. He brought to the fore the need to consistently challenge the oppression that our patriarchal society imposes on women as well as the urgent need to revamp and purge democratic system of obscure bias. The Deputy Minority Whip of the House, Sen. Nkeiruka Onyejeocha, who is the only female member of the body of principal officers of the house and also sponsored some of the rejected bills, was reported to have been extremely disappointed with the non-passage of the bills. The decision of the National Assembly to reject the gender equality bills engendered severe criticism, backlash and even protest from women groups and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) groups. Notably, the bill has passed second reading at the Senate is clearly an effort of media advocacy. This came as a result of media advocacy role.

The Petroleum Industrial Bill (PIB) after over two decades of vacillation was finally signed into law by President Muhammadu Buhari on August 16, 2021 with the expectation that the new law would promote transparency and accountability in the extractive sector, eliminate regulatory/legal hurdles, attract critical investments, unlock financial resources, accelerate local content development, and enhance employment, among other opportunities. The active involvement of the media during the period prior to signing into law cannot be overemphasize. Currently issues of contradictions arising from the PIA elicited media reaction. As a "watch dog", the implications of the loop holes in the Act and growing concerns of key players in the sector is widely covered by the media, there is never a communication gap. Oladipo (2021) reported a call by industry players for prompt fixing of the contradictions of the PIA for full deregulation. It is on record that public reactions termed the PIB 'scandalous' when it was initially passed (Sobechi *et al.*, 2021).

The obnoxious aspects of the PIB and delay that preceded passing into law was loudly echoed across many media platforms. This was a way of media influencing the legislative outcome of the PIB. Amid

the continuous agitation by civil society groups and key players in the industry that followed, the National Assembly was under compelling pressure to pass the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) without further delay. Udo (2020) reporting in *PrimiumTimes*, elucidated the position of Mele Kyari, the Group Managing Director who stated the absence of a stable fiscal environment for the petroleum industry to be inhibitory to the much needed growth in the upstream sector of the industry. He lamented that international investors in the oil and gas industry were fast losing confidence in Nigeria as a result of the absence of a petroleum industry law to guarantee a stable investment environment. The Senate was urged to act quickly to enable a move from this unstable situation to a very stable one so that countries and investors can find investing in the industry attractive. Thus, through its voice, the media communicated to the National Assembly the need to quickly pass the bill.

Recently, in March, 2023, many media platforms including *THISDAYLIVE*, *The Guardian*, *Vanguard*, reported concerns over a bill proposed by the House of Representatives proposed legislation titled, “bill for an Act to Amend the Medical and Dental Practitioners Act, Cap. M379, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004, to mandate any Nigeria trained Medical or Dental Practitioner to Practice in Nigeria for a minimum of five before granted a full license by the council in order to make quality health services available to Nigeria,”. This bill was sponsored by Hon. Ganiyu Johnson. The House of Representatives at the plenary on April 6, 2023, passed through second reading this bill to mandate medical doctors to practice in Nigeria for at least five years before moving abroad if they want. In his lead debate, Johnson said the proposed legislation seeks to cure the exodus of brain drain and build the manpower in medical sector. He opined that Nigeria-trained medical or dental practitioners must work in the country for a minimum of five years before they are granted full licenses.

Opposing the bill however, Hon. Nkem Abonta, described it as offensive. Stiff reactions and arguments ensued at plenary sessions. The media coverage of this time was highly unprecedented. The wider the detailed media coverage, the more the public became aware of the obnoxiousness of the bill. This stimulated unbending opposition to the intentions of the lawmakers. As expected, this bill and the legislative activities surrounding it received the widest attention by media houses across the nation. Some radio and television houses have done detailed and extensive analysis on it. Much public awareness has been created already. In this example, media played a significant role in eliciting public sentiment and mobilizing advocacy efforts against the legislation.

2.1.5 Legislative Process

Melenhorst (2017) defined Legislative processes as the official deliberations about bills from the moment they are introduced to parliament until they are published in the official law gazette. Cook argues that “the legislative process involves not only enactment of bills, but implementation of their provisions by the executive branch and oversight of the results by Congress”. He broadens the definition by incorporating the moment the bill is passed in the house, signed by the executive or published in the gazette as the formal end of the legislative process. The legislative process according to Melenhorst (2015) should contain potential moments of influence, such as plenary debates, motions, and amendments. Bills are often announced a few months prior to the moment they are introduced, until the day of the final vote in the Upper House (Melenhorst, 2017), this indicates that the process do not commence at the point it is introduced in the house but long before at the point of conceptualisation according to (Melenhorst, 2017).

Pursuant to Section 4(1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) (the “Constitution”), NASS is conferred legislative powers of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. This is the

power to legislate on all matters contained in the Exclusive Legislative List and the Concurrent List for the benefit of peace, order and good government of the nation. The legislative power is typically exercised through bills passed by the NASS and approved by the President. Bills may be introduced in any House of the NASS by a member of the respective House or Executive Branch of Government (Kelechi, 2022). Before a Bill becomes law, it must go through the following process in either chamber of the NASS:

1. Presentation and first reading;
2. Second reading;
3. Committee stage;
4. Third Reading and Passage; and finally

First Reading: As a first step, after the Clerk receives a copy of the Bill, he/she must give notice to the members of the relevant chamber. In the case of a Public Bill, the Clerk must publish a copy of the Bill in the Official Gazette and send a copy to every member of the relevant chamber, while in the case of a Private Bill, the member sponsoring the Bill must move a motion to seek the permission of the Senate President (or the Speaker of the House as the case may be) to present the Bill and publish same in two (2) successive issues of the Official Gazette (Streams, 2022). After its publication, a copy of the first issue must be sent to each member of the relevant chamber. At the first reading stage, the Clerk reads the short title of the Bill(s), provides a brief statement on what the Bill aims to achieve, and puts it before the Senate President or the Speaker of the House of Representatives depending on the chamber the Bill is presented in. The purpose of the first reading stage is simply to inform legislators of the Bill(s) introduced. There are no discussions or debates at this stage (PLAC, 2017).

Second Reading: The merits of the bill are discussed and debated at second stage. This process begins when a member who supports the bill proposes a reread of the bill. As part of this motion, members

want to emphasize the bill's purpose, its general principles, and its merits when explaining why the bill should come into force. To proceed to the second reading, the movement in question must be supported by another legislator. If motion is not supported, it will be considered rejected and will not proceed to the second read. Once a motion is drafted and supported, the bill is debated by members of the House of Representatives and voted on whether to go to committee. If a simple majority of the members of the relevant Houses support the bill, the bill advances to the committee stage for further consideration.

Committee Stage: After a second reading, the bill will be referred to the relevant standing committees of the relevant chambers. At the commission stage, the commission may hold public hearings to encourage value-adding to the bill and to involve key stakeholders and the public. The committees' role is to make proposals, amendments, and recommendations (if any) to bills and report them to the relevant subcommittee for further consideration. The head of the committee will report the progress of the bill, through the Committee of the Whole, continue to consider the bill. At the end of this phase, a motion may be passed for the Bill to be read for a third time.

Generally, no amendment can be made once the bill has passed the third reading stage. However, in certain circumstances if a legislator wishes to suggest an amendment, s/he must move a motion before the third reading stage that the bill be 're-committed' to the Committee stage for the purposes of including the amendment. If the motion is agreed upon, the Senate/House will dissolve at plenary to discuss the amendment(s). After all necessary amendments, the Senate/House will then proceed to third reading and passage. (Lawpadi, 2017).

Third Reading and Passage: At the third reading, the bill is read again and members vote to adopt it. At this point, a clean copy of the bill with all amendments is made and signed by the clerk and either the Speaker of the House or the Speaker of the Senate. The endorsed Bill is forwarded to the Clerk of the other chamber with a message requesting its concurrence. The receiving chamber may accept the bill

as received and announce its approval without amendment. However, if receiving chamber do not agree with the provisions of the original bill or wish to change it, Harmonization/Conference Committee will be constituted by the Speaker and the Speaker to resolve any differences with the bill. The Harmonization Committee is usually made up of members from both houses and has the duty to propose a unified position that both houses can adopt.

Assent or Veto: If both Houses accept the Harmonization Committee's report, the secretary of the original House will make a complete copy of the Harmonization Bill to send to the President for approval. A bill does not become law until it is signed by the President. During the approval stage, the president has 30 days to approve or reject/oppose the bill after receiving it. If the President vetoes the bill or does not give his consent within the time specified, the NASS shall, by his two-thirds majority of both houses, overrule the veto and pass the law. In this instance the bill become law without executive assent. Kelechi, (2022) explains that notwithstanding the standard process, there is an exclusion cases. For instance during the proposing constitutional amendments, the amendment Bill must be supported by a 2/3rd majority of the members of each chamber of the NASS before it can be read for a third time. Once the Federal Legislature approves of the Bill, same must also be approved by a 2/3rd majority of the 36 State Houses of Assembly

Kelechi, (2022) further noted that the legislative process is a nuanced process with inherent complexities. The multi-step process can be lengthy and time-consuming, ultimately resulting in a limited number of bills being enacted. A total of 1,005 bills passed both houses of his NASS between June 1999 and June 2015. 390 bills in the Senate and 615 bills in the House. There are many factors prolonging this process, including the large number of bills introduced by his 469 members of NASS, the low reliance on technology, the high turnover of legislators, and the NASS's competing priorities. The NASS chamber must debate and pass resolutions based on

petitions from the public, or reconcile the excesses of other branches of government.

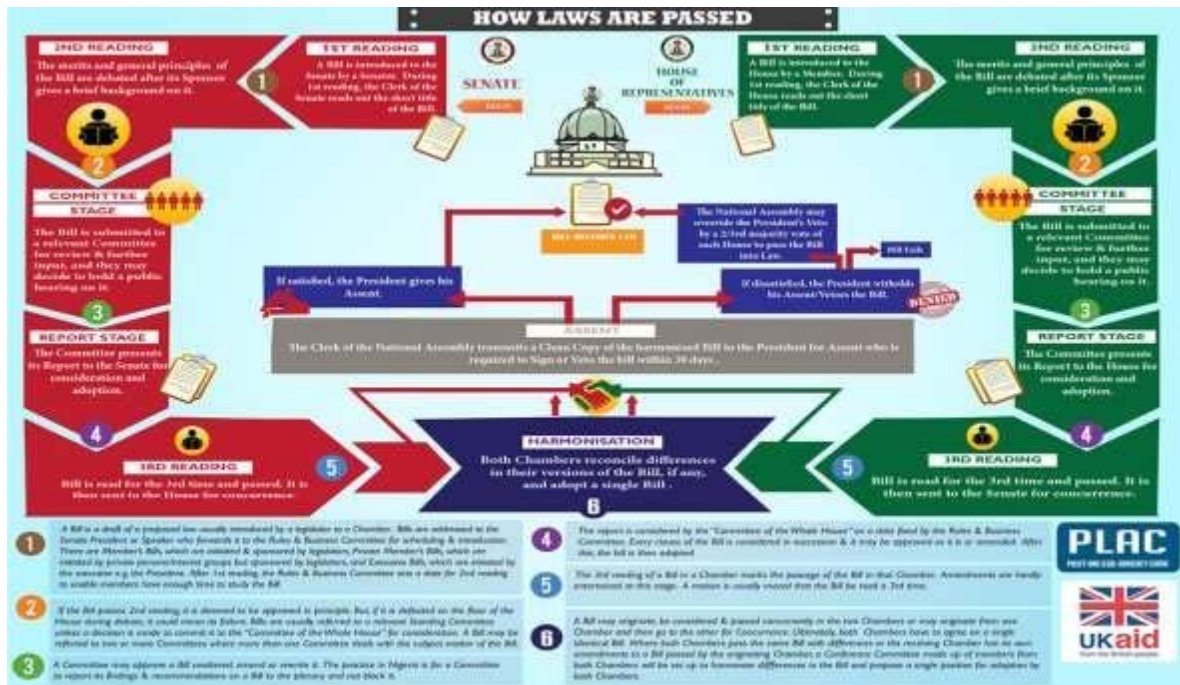


Figure 1: Graphical description of legislative process

Source: PLAC 2021

2.1.6 Oversight Functions of the Legislature

The use of the term "Oversight" is credited to Professor Woodrow Wilson, who defined it as "the duty of representative bodies to consider carefully all matters of government and to speak broadly about what they see". The whole essence is to be the eyes, the voice and the embodiment of the will and wisdom of public. It is also defined as "the review, supervision and monitoring of governments and public bodies, including the implementation of policies and laws." Oyewo (2007) defines oversight as "the exercise of constitutional rights by the legislature to verify or control the exercise of constitutional rights by other branches of government, and more specifically, to verify or control the exercise of executive powers or to make executive accountable to the electorate." Heywood, (2007) referred to legislative oversight function as scrutiny. While Cosmeus (2016), opined that the primary role of every parliament is that they are

responsible for holding governments accountable in their decisions and they scrutinize the actions of government. Lately, the lawmakers have become progressively a scrutinizing institution of the executive in a bid to engender responsible and accountable government (Nwogwugwu and Ishola, 2019). It was argued that “oversight can be done before, during the design and implementation of a program or policy, as well as after implementation”. Hence, Madue (2012) in defining oversight stated that oversight entails the informal and formal, watchful, strategic and structured scrutiny exercised by legislatures in respect of the implementation of laws, the application of the budget, the strict observance of statutes and the constitution”.

Madue (2012) described legislative oversight as a process of overseeing the activities of government agencies, particularly the executive branch, on behalf of the Nigerian people, draws public attention to what the executive branch is doing and provides an opportunity for voters to determine whether civil servants are truly serving their collective interests (PLAC, 2016). Legislators derive their legislative oversight function from the constitution in most democracies and this legal backing enables parliaments to monitor the activities of the executive branch and its agencies to determine if public policies, projects or programmes are being adequately executed in the interest of the public (Nwogwugwu and Ishola, 2019). In other words, the oversight function of the legislature connotes making sure that laws, legislation and government policies are implemented effectively (Saiegh, 2014).

Therefore, legislative control refers to the power of the legislature to review, control, and supervise the agencies, programs, activities, and strategies of implementing policies of the executive branch. This is to ensure that the branch maintains good governance principles, remains responsive, transparent and accountable to voters. The committee structure of the House of

Representatives and the Senate are used to exercise oversight and ensure that the activities of the executive branch and agencies of government are always monitored by the legislature. Although the Parliament's investigative oversight powers are provided for in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in Articles 88, 89, 128 and 129. However, it should be noted that the agency's legislative oversight power is not absolute (PLAC 2016).

In *TONY MOMOH v. SENATE OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY* (1982) NCLR, 105 the court held that the legislature had no right to usurp the general investigative function of the executive branch nor the adjudicative function of the judiciary. Therefore, any invitation by the legislator to any person other than the purpose defined in the relevant section is invalid. In addition, the prosecution of those convicted of corruption or serious omissions or misconduct in the performance of their official duties is entrusted to law enforcement. In addition, any investigation that is solely intended to expose or mock people, especially their privacy matters, without any legal purpose, will not be considered.

Oversight Tools

The most common oversight tools are oversight visits, committee hearings (public/investigative), hearings in plenary sessions of the parliament, the creation of commissions of inquiry, questions, the public account committees, auditors general, interpolation and ombudsman. Standing legislative committees are responsible for the ongoing review of MDA's work in their respective regions. Legislatures have also established special and permanent committees to evaluate their operations and performance. In addition, Congress can review the rules and regulations made by the executive branch. The personal qualities of competent and trained members of the legislature are of utmost importance in the performance of their legislative oversight functions. Committee

hearings are avenues for citizens to become involved in the parliamentary business of legislative oversight. Experts can be heard in or become advisers; committees can invite interested parties to hearings or invite members via public hearings and so on.

The floor of the Senate or House of Representatives is also a means of conducting legislative oversight because the legislature can hear ministers and government officials and discuss all aspects of government policy. Also, section 89 of the 1999 Constitution provides a list of guidelines and powers that are to assist the legislature in carrying out this function. These include issuing summons, warrants and fines when its orders, as approved by the Constitution, are violated. Other tools or ways the legislature can conduct oversight include the following:

- i. The legislature can simply ask the government for information.
- ii. The legislature can ask the government for public clarification of policy.
- iii. The legislature can obtain information from sources outside the government.
- iv. The legislature can express its view to the government and the public.
- v. The legislature can undertake informal meetings with executive officials

2.1.7 The Nigerian 9th National Assembly

Fagbohun, (2010) as cited in Khadijah and Agboola (2017) relate that Nigeria's present day National Assembly/Legislature is the apex law-making body in the country and has its origin in the colonial era, especially when the powers of the executive councils of the then Lagos colony were reduced to the status of a Legislature that can only make laws without implementation.

According to Khadijah and Agboola (2017), the Nigerian Parliament is legally known as the

National Assembly. It is one of the three branches of government, with executive and judiciary. The assembly reflects a bicameral system, which simply means that there are two chambers, the Senate and the House of Representatives, and is apparently modeled after the American legislative structure. The Senate is made up of 109 members (three from each of the 36 states and one from Abuja) and the House of Representatives is made up of 360 members. The term of office of the National Assembly is four years from the first session after the general election. The current parliament, which was inaugurated on 11th June 2019, is the ninth parliament in Nigeria's post-independence legislative history. The Senate is presided by the Speaker of the Nigerian Senate, and the House of Representatives is headed by the Speaker.

The National Assembly derives its statutory duties from 1999 constitution which makes it the only body capable of legislation in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, where national legislative sovereignty exists. Section 4 (subsections 1, 2, 3, and 4) of the Constitution of Nigeria, found in Part II, states: The legislative powers of the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be vested in a National Assembly for the Federation, which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives. The National Assembly shall have power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Federation or any part thereof with respect to any matter included in the Exclusive Legislative List set out in Part I of the Second Schedule to this Constitution. The power of the National Assembly to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Federation with respect to any matter included in the Exclusive Legislative List shall, save as otherwise provided in this Constitution, be to the exclusion of the Houses of Assembly of States.

In particular, the provisions of Section 4 of the Nigerian Constitution grant the National Assembly separate legislative powers, different from those exercised by the State Houses of Representatives,

whose powers concurrently cover only the following issues: issues on the Legislative concurrent list and thus, can legislate only on their matters. The respective countries, as provided for in Article 4(5) of the Constitution, must comply with and abide by the provisions of the National Assembly.

Taye Odewale (2021) while examining the score card of the Ninth National Assembly, remarked the constructive engagements with the executive arm of government, particularly, the presidency, is the required style for results – oriented relationship as against antagonistic style adopted by eighth assemblies in recent past mistaken for practice of the doctrine of separation of powers cum checks and balances. This is evident in the declarative speech of the Senate president during the inaugural speech “Within us as a Senate, our leadership will commit to partnership rather than partisanship and between us and the executive arm of government, we will choose unity of purpose over conflict and discord while also working towards further strengthening and guaranteeing our independence and that of the judiciary...” As a result of the collaboration the legislature have successfully reverted the yearly budget cycle to January – December as against June – May yearly cycle it was, in the past; amended and passed the Deep Off-Shore and Inland Basin Production Sharing Contracts Act Cap D3 LFN 2004 (Amendment Bill 2009); which was specifically geared towards increasing collectable revenues from proceeds of crude sales; and the Public Procurement 2007 (amendment) bill 2019, Companies and Allied Matters Act, Cap C20 LFN 2004 (Repeal and Re-enactment) Bill 2019; the passage and Presidential Assent to the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB), Electoral Act (Amendment) 2021; Ahmed Lawan also Cited the ‘Not Too Young To Run (Age Reduction) Bill’ passed by the National Assembly and signed by President Muhammadu Buhari on May 31, 2018 (Leadership Newspaper Wednesday, December 28, 2022).

However, some Nigerians regards the parley between legislature and executive arm of government as for good governance and portray legislature as a mere rubber stamp. Barrister Daramola Bade expressed his concern during a one – day group focused discussions on citizens’ expectations from the 9th National Assembly that “Approving all proposals forwarded by the executive without coming up with robust legislation that will transform the country for good, will make public perception to be more of a rubber-stamp than an autonomous arm of government “, He specifically mentioned that for the 9th National Assembly to be taken seriously by Nigerians, far reaching constitution amendments that will make Nigeria,a development – driven federation and not an over centralized one , should be carried out.

Senate President addressed the concern of Barrister Daramola Bade that the continued complaints of Nigerians who pick inherent flaws in the current 1999 Constitution cannot be ignored by the legislature thus the need to review the constitution “Constitution review is another legislative activity that we must entertain and we are amending the constitution because Nigerians are complaining about so many things inthe constitution or so many other things that are not in the constitution (Leadership Newspaper Wednesday,December 28,2022). This is yet to see the light of the day as the 9th assembly is winding up ((Leadership Newspaper Wednesday, December 28, 2022).

2.2 Empirical Framework

Edith, Nduka and Ruth (2022) investigated the patterns of reportage of Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly in their study “Reporting the parliament: a Nigerian case study”. A content analysis of the news bulleting / reportage of the House between 2018 and 2019 by three Uyo-based FM radio stations:Comfort 95.1 FM, Planet 101.9 FM, and Inspiration 105.9 FM was conducted. Total of one hundred and fifty news bulletins selected through simple random sampling was

studied in the two years. The outcome of the study showed commonalities/differences in the news coverage and reportage approach of Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly. It was discovered that there is no clear case of media agenda-setting was established, as there was little or zero influence the media had on directing the course of the Assembly. Rather, the media's focus was determined by the steps of the lawmakers.

Lotte, (2014) conducted a study on Media and Law Making: A case study analysis of the media's role in legislative processes was presented by at the ECPR Graduate Conference. The presentation was justify on the bases of the little empirical research on the role of media in law making. A case study analyses of the role of media attention in the legislative process that resulted in the legal regulation of (semi-)public officials' remuneration in the Netherlands was the adopted methodology. The study revealed that political actors respond to media attention both directly and indirectly. Coverage of occurrences inspires symbolic political action and contributions to parliamentary debates, which sometimes leads to subsequent substantial political action with consequences for the content of the bill.

Melenhorst, (2017) extensively explore the media's role in legislative processes in his study. He demystified the complex reciprocity relationship between the law makers (members of lower and upper house in the Houses of Parliament) and the media. The study specifically investigated whether and how media play a role in legislative processes. A qualitative and actor-centered research design was adopted by focusing on the behavior of individual political and journalistic actors. The research method focus on an in-depth case study analyses of the behavior of political and journalistic actors in three cases that received significant media coverage were used and a

qualitative content analyses of all parliamentary documents of the legislative process and of all Press, Radio and Television coverage of the (topic of the) bill. Subsequently, analysis of semi-structured interviews with the main political actors, and with (parliamentary) journalists that produced the media coverage of the (topic of the) bills was conducted. The research found out that media coverage played a role in the legislative process, but it did not affect the content of and support for the bill. Media coverage directed politicians' attention to specific topics, but it never served as an autonomous, influential source of information for Members of Parliament (MPs). Overall, however, media coverage has not influenced the legislative outcome of the process.

Sören (1997) did an exploratory report on the awareness of public to parliamentary activities in selected European countries. The study based its argument on the limited effort to disseminate information about the parliamentary process through various publications, the recording of debates and the possibility for journalists to have access to elected officials by people. The report analyses the reasons for communication gap, some of which have to do with the dry and often specific nature of parliamentary work, its unavoidable long procedure which guarantee a democratic functioning, and the attraction of the prominent role of the executive in initiating policy and decision-making. Other reasons are the way media prioritized report to broadcast, which are based on criteria of topicality and constraints in order to attain the broadest audience possible. The report proposed extensive use of the new information technologies, as an important "ingredient" of the policy pursued by parliamentary communication services in the interests of public debate. The proposed solutions in the report are designed to make parliamentary work more responsive to the need for better access to documents, be it for consultation purposes or for ensuring that they are intelligible for non-specialist readers, and for more open committee work,

an improvement of the working conditions of journalists in parliaments and the use of modern means of telecommunications.

Against the backdrop of conflicting opinions by communication scholars on the exact effect of the media on the society, as well as the perceived gulf between Nigerian legislators and members of the public, Khadijat, and Agboola (2017), in their study “online newspapers coverage and audience perception of the 8th National Assembly” comparing online newspapers’ reportage of the 8th National Assembly. The study sought to ascertain the extent to which the contents of online newspapers could influence students, with a view to finding out a tripartite relationship among the Nigerian National Assembly, the media and the public. The research adopted content analysis and survey methods. The study purposively selected fifty (25 each) online editions each of The Punch and The Sun newspapers published between June 9th and August 10th, 2015 for content analysis, and a total of 200 questionnaires was administered on randomly selected tertiary institution students in Osun State. The findings generated from the study reveal a direct correlation between subjects raised in the online newspapers concerning the National Assembly and parliamentary issues awareness among respondents. The study concludes that online newspapers, like the traditional media, have a strong influence on public perception of the National Assembly; this is due to the way they portray them in their reports. It recommends that members of Nigeria’s 8th National Assembly should focus on core legislative duties, make legislative deliberations more people-centered with a view to gaining positive media coverage and favorable public perception.

2.3 Gap in Literature

The existing literature assessing the role of the Media in Lawmaking Process in the National Assembly with a specific focus on the Ninth House of Representatives, reveals several notable

gaps. Firstly, there's a dearth of research specifically delving into the Ninth House of Representatives in Nigeria, which means that we lack a comprehensive understanding of how the media's role may have evolved within this specific legislative context. Secondly, while some studies have scrutinized the media's impact on legislative processes, there's limited exploration of how the electorate can actively participate in these processes through media engagement. This signifies a crucial gap in our understanding of how the media can facilitate citizen involvement in the lawmaking procedures.

Moreover, the literature shows that we still lack a detailed comprehension of how media coverage directly affects the outcomes of legislative procedures in the lower National Assembly. The specific influence of media coverage on the decisions and actions of lawmakers, and how it shapes legislative results, necessitates further investigation. Furthermore, the existing body of knowledge underlines the discord between the modus operandi of the media and the intricate and technical nature of legislative procedures. Yet, there's a deficiency of in-depth analysis regarding the extent of this mismatch and its ramifications on agenda setting and its role in influencing the legislative process.

Lastly, a conspicuous gap in the literature lies in the ambiguity surrounding the media's role in later phases of policymaking, particularly in the legislative arena. While it is generally acknowledged that the mass media has the power to shape political agendas, the mechanics and impact of media involvement in legislative decision-making remain largely unexplored. Therefore, further research is essential to elucidate these aspects, and this study seeks to address these specific gaps in our understanding of the media's role in the Ninth House of Representatives during the specified timeframe.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Agenda-Setting Theory

This study is anchored on Agenda-Setting Theory because of the need to establish the relationship between the media agenda setting's role of public agenda and the law making process of the Legislative arm of the Nigerian government. The Media Agenda, according to Miller (2005), is the set of topics addressed by media sources. Agenda setting, according to Zhu and Blood (1997), is a process whereby the news media lead the public in assigning relative importance to various public issues (Miller, 2005). The agenda setting function of the media is the media's capability, through repeated news coverage, of raising the importance of an issue in public's mind (Severin & Tankard, 2010). The Agenda Setting process is a three linear one. Firstly, the priority of issues to be discussed in the media (the media agenda) is determined; the media agenda in some way affects or interacts in some way with what policy makers consider important (policy agenda) (Littlejohn, 2002). In other words, the media agenda affects the public agenda and the public agenda in turn affects the policy agenda. In other words, Agenda Setting studies like this, as noted by McCombs (2004), investigate the transfer of salience from the media to the public (Griffin, 2009: 359).

Several Agenda-setting studies show that media attention attracts policy attention to public problems and creates a sense of urgency to come up with solutions (Yanovitzky 2002). They also examine media influence on the behavior of political actors such that media influence the beginning of policy processes and symbolic political agendas (Cobb & Elder, 1981; Davis, 2007; Koch-Baumgarten & Voltmer, 2010; Walgrave & Van Aelst, 2006). Agenda settings go beyond symbolic agenda setting and indicate that the media can set or constrain substantial political agendas by shifting policymakers' attention to a policy problem or a particular solution (Wolfe *et al.*, 2013). Studies that go beyond symbolic agenda setting indicate that the media can set or

constrain substantial political agendas by shifting policymakers' attention to a policy problem or a particular solution (Wolfe *et al.*, 2013).

2.2.2 Agenda Setting Model

Preliminary theoretical model that describe the legislative process was developed by Lotte (2014). The starting point of the model is media attention for the (subject of) the bill. On the one hand, political actors may act in response to this media attention. On the other hand, their behavior may generate (more) media attention. The complex interaction between politicians and journalists ultimately have consequences for the content of the bill.

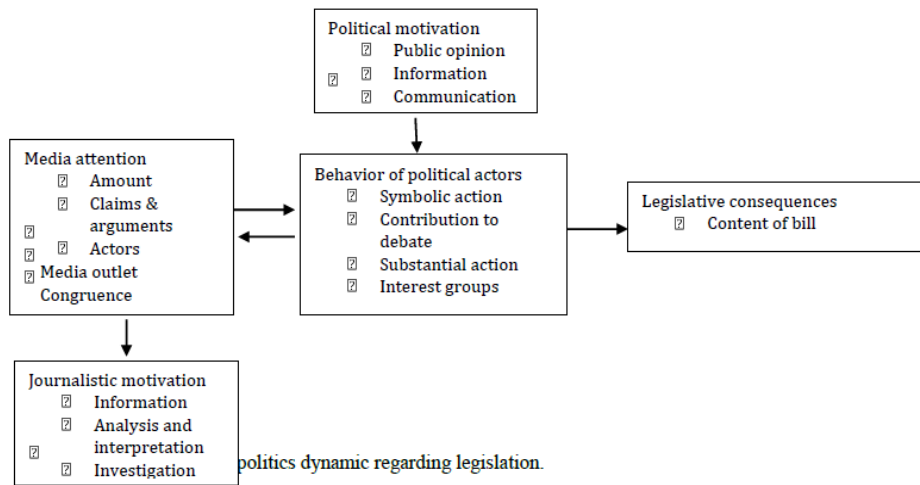


Figure 2: politics dynamic regarding legislation.

The amount of attention for (the subject of) a bill is taken into account, as more media attention may be a stronger incentive for political actors to respond. The claims made and the arguments used reflect what elements of the content are in the public debate, which standpoints are voiced and what justifications are used. Negative coverage is in general expected to have stronger effects (Baumgartner, Jones, & Leech, 1997). What is relevant as well is which media outlets paid attention to the bill and to what extent the coverage is congruent. Because of what is known as ‘intermedia agenda setting’, radio and newspaper coverage are expected to influence television

reporters (Bartels, 1996; Butler, 1998; Roberts & McCombs, 1994) and media effects are expected to be stronger if the various media focus on the same issue, frame it in a similar way and cover it persistently (Eilders, 1997, 2000, 2001). The behaviour of political actors Media attention does not directly influence the content of bills: political actors are the ones that can respond to things that are said or written in the media. This behavior might then have consequences for legislation.

2.2.3 Legislative consequences: Content of the bill

The interaction between media attention and political actors may affect the content of the bill. Journalists may provide legislators with new information, or have directed their attention to a specific aspect or consequence of a proposed bill. Once put forward in Parliament, the content of bills can still be adjusted via governmental and parliamentary amendments. Via motions parliamentarians can ask the government to take something into account when it comes to the implementation of the bill, which can be interpreted as consequential for its content as well. Whether an amendment or motion is passed may be influenced or reinforced by media coverage. The media-politics interaction may thus explain the difference in content between the proposed bill and the content of the actual law. Therefore the fourth sub-question is: does the media-politics dynamic have consequences for the content of the bill? The Agenda Setting Theory is relevant for this study because it establishes the relationship between the media role of setting agenda for the legislative arm of the Nigerian government about the pressing legislative bill to be discussed during the law making process.

2.2.4 Legislative Agenda of the 9th Assembly

In his inaugural speech, the Speaker House of Representatives, RT. Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila mentioned during the presentation of Legislative Agenda for the 9th House of

Representatives (2019 – 2023) that “The Legislative Agenda for the 9th House of Representatives is a declaration of intent to serve Nigeria with dedication, focusing considerable energies on issues that most affect the lives of citizens. The objective of 9th House of Representatives is to deliver on mandate as the peoples’ assembly; efficient, goal-oriented and working tirelessly for the Nigerian people. In order to achieve this, The House of Representatives is committed to conduct holistic overhaul of the operating procedure, standing rules and committee systems, record keeping and archival, as well as the relationship and interaction with the Nigerian citizens. The major departure from the existing practise is a legislative agenda that clearly identify the path to achieve an objective rather than mere setting of the goals.

As an agenda, the 9th house of representative seek to undertake reforms of critical sectors of the Nigerian society and economy with a view to improving the conditions that allow for investment, innovation and economic growth. It will also play a more active role in the management of Nigeria’s national security architecture and take legislative steps to better the ability of the security agencies to deal with present challenges and prepare against future threats.

The assembly recognize appropriation process as a powerful tools available to the government. It is through the appropriations process that determine societal priorities and set out the resource requirements needed to address those priorities. Failure to properly implement the agenda set out in the Appropriations Act and to do so within a set timetable is unsustainable, and unhealthy for the polity. The House of Representatives is therefore committed to returning to a January to December budget cycle. The house of representative plan to collaborate with the Senate and executive arm of Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to deliver a fixed budget cycle and to ensure that the enacted budgets are properly implemented to meet the objectives set out therein.

The activities of 9th House of Representatives will be guided by considerations of the best interest of the Nigerian people. We will pursue an active partnership with the Senate and with the executive arm of government to improve our systems of governance, reform our laws, encourage economic growth and create opportunities for our people to thrive. We will work to improve citizens understanding of the role of the House of Representatives in the legislative process and build confidence in the ability of government to address their needs.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains the research framework and the systematic procedures that guide the study experiment. The research method, validity and reliability test were highlighted.

3.1 Research Design

This study is a quantitative research, which emphasizes measurement and allows observations to

be subjected to statistical analysis. The Survey Methods was adopted for this study. The adoption of the research design was informed from the previous related scientific studies. Hence, it gave room for correlating the role of the media and the outcome of the legislative process of the 9th National Assembly.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised of all Journalists who are members of the press corps of the House of Representatives of the ninth National Assembly covering the period 2019 to 2023. The members of the press corps are representatives of the various media outlets. These are 10 News Paper companies, 22 Radio stations and 7 Television Stations and 3 other media outlets in Abuja the federal capital territory. It is assumed that each of these media houses have at least one political journalist, hence the population of this study is 41.

Population Frame

S/N	Media	Political Journalist
TELEVISION STATION		
1	Independent Television (ITV) Abuja	1
2	Nigerian Television Authority (NTA)	5
3	African Independent Television (AIT)	2
4	SilverBird Television	1
5	Kaftan TV	1
6	Oak TV	1
7	Africa Health TV	1
Radio Channels Media		
8	Human Rights Radio & TV Abuja	1

9	Love FM 104.5FM	1
10	Classic FM 94.3 Abuja	1
11	Vision Fm	1
12	KapitalFM 92.9 Abuja	1
13	Rhythm FM 94.7 Abuja	1
14	WE FM ABUJA	1
15	Soundcity Radio 96.3, Abuja	1
16	Boss FM 95.5	1
17	Marataba Fm station 88.9	1
18	Aso Radio FM 93.5 Abuja	1
19	Brila FM 88.9 Abuja	1
20	Cool FM 96.9 Abuja	1
21	FRCN Abuja National Station	1
22	Hot FM 98.3 Abuja	1
23	Kiss FM 99.9 Abuja	1
24	Love FM 104.5, Abuja (Former Crowther)	1
25	Nigeriainfo FM 95.1 Abuja	1
26	Ray Power FM 100.5	1
27	Wazobia FM 99.5 Abuja	1
28	Zuma FM 88.50 Abuja	1
https://www.abujagalleria.com > Radio_Stations		
NEWSPAPER		

29	Champion News Paper Limited	1
30	Daily Trust	1
31	Media Trust Limited	1
32	Guardian Newspapers Limited	1
33	New Nigerian News Papers Limited	1
34	Abuja This Evening	1
35	The Premium Times Nigeria	1
36	This Day Newspaper	1
37	The Abuja Inquirer	1
38	Nigeria Pilot Newspaper	1
	OTHERS	
39	Word Craft Communication Limited	3
40	Social Media Digest Summit	4
41	Nigeria Custom Broadcasting Network	4

Source: National Assembly Press Corps

3.4 Sample Technique and Sample Size

A purposive sampling technique was used to select the representative media in the study. The criteria for the selection was that there is at least one political journalist in of the representative media. The first stage of sampling was to determine and choose the media from all media stations where the respondents (Journalist) would emanate from. The media stations that appear first on the

search engine were selected. The political journalists from the press corps were the respondents in the study. Since search engine algorithm rank the subject through Search Engine Optimization (SEO), the researcher believed that the first set of media houses are more relevant in search engine and therefore valid to be use in the study.

3.5 Research Instrument

A semi structured questionnaire was designed to collect information from the respondent. The questionnaire is divided into 2 parts. Part A is the demographic data of the respondent and section B contains the questions that relate to the research questions. Personal information about the respondent such as Gender, Marital Status, Profession, Place of work/the media organization, form the content of the demographic data in section A. The theory (Agenda Settings) upon which this study was based and the review of previous study informed the construction and formulation of the questions contained in the section B.

Section B contain 16 questions structured in a likert scale model. Question 6 – 9 seek to answer research question relating to the role of the media. Question 10i – 10iii relate to the influence of the role of the media and the legislative process. Question relating to the effect of the media role on the legislative process are contained in question 11i – 11iii. Question 12i – 12iii relate to the effect of the media coverage on the legislative process and question 13i – 13iii relate the effect of media attention on legislative process.

The online research instrument designed and used to collect response for the study. A goggle form was used to design the questionnaire. After the design, the link of the instrument was sent to the relevant target respondents to open, complete and submit. I received the responses from my mail where it was collated for analysis.

The contact of the respondent were collected through various sources such as their professional colleague,online through the media website or from the article they published and a phone call was made to solicit their cooperation to be part of the study. Thereafter, the link of the instrument were sent to them for completion.

3.6 Validity

Validity expresses the degree to which a measurement measures what it purports to measure. It is the extent to which the questions contain in research instrument provide expected response or outcome to the problem of study. Several varieties have been described, including face validity, construct validity, content validity and criterion validity (which could be concurrent and predictive validity) (Oladimeji, 2016).

The instrument was presented to the media practitioner (political journalist) and the member of the parliament for vetting and adjustment was made accordingly. Besides, the previous measurement on the related study also serve as a bench mark and guide for the instrument. Another way of measuring the validity in this study was the careful consideration of the proxy in the theoretical postulation adopted in the study as well as the sequential process involve in the law making process. The heuristic model that connect the media role in legislative process identify Amount/ quantity of publicity, Claims and arguments of media concerning political agenda and the political actor were used as a proxy for Media attention. The Media outlet/channel and Congruence are all factors to consider in measuring media coverage of a particular legislation.

3.7. Reliability

Reliability is an extent to which a questionnaire, test, observation or any measurement procedure

produce the same results on repeated trials. In short, it is the stability or consistency of scores over time. Reliability could be assessed in three major forms; test-retest reliability, alternate-form reliability and internal consistency reliability (Oladimeji, 2016).

The pilot study was carried out on a small sample, made up of 5 political reporters in NTA Network, NTA parliament, NTA Channel 5) to complete the instrument. The result was compared and its result was compared.

A test retest measure was also conducted by administering the same instrument to the same set of respondent about two weeks after the pilot study was done. The correlation coefficient (r) value was 0.81.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistical analysis was carried out to establish frequencies while explanation building was applied to analyse data qualitatively. This entailed offering robust explanations to substantiate a given result (Yin, 2009). Content analysis was done with the use LexisNexis, articles and items published in all online newspapers and magazines that discuss the selected bills that were processed and passed for the first time or amended) are taken into consideration.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Outcome of the survey will be presented and analyzed in this section. The online questionnaires were administered to 41 journalists in the Newspaper, Radio, Television and other media houses who are members of the press corps of the ninth House of Representatives of the National Assembly. Only 36

questionnaires were returned and collated for the analysis. However, not all the questions were answered by the respondents. The analysis will be done based on the aggregate number of questions answered by the respondent. The questionnaire was broadly divided into two parts; section A and Section B. Section A contains the demography of the respondent while section B contains questions relation to the research question. Frequency distribution table was used to summarize the responses and analyze the response in the questionnaire.

4.1 Demography

Table 1: Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	%
Male	20	55.5
Female	16	44.5
Total	36	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 1 showed that majority of respondents that participated in the survey are male. They make up to 55.5% of the sample population.

Table 2: Media Sector respondents

Gender	Frequency	%
Public/Government	21	58.3
Private	15	41.7
Total	36	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 2 shows 21(58.3%) of respondents work in public or government media while 15 (41.7%) respondents work in private media organizations. Fairly majority of respondents work in public media organizations.

Table 3: Media Organization respondents

Media Organizations	Frequency	%
NTA	8	22.5
Channels	5	13.8
Radio Nigeria	7	19.4
Vanguard	5	13.8
Wordcraft Communication Ltd	3	8.3
Social Media Digest Summit	4	11.1
Nigeria Custom Broadcasting Network	4	11.1
Total	36	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 3 shows the number of respondents that complete the research instrument from different media organizations. 8 (22.5%) Respondents from Nigerian Television Authority completed the questionnaire, followed by 7 (19.4%) respondents from Radio

Nigeria. 5 (13.8%) respondents each from Channels and Vanguard Newspaper submitted their questionnaires. Respondents from Wordcraft communication Ltd, Social Media digest and Nigeria Custom Broadcasting Network have the lowest number of respondents.

4.2 Specific Objectives Analysis

4.2.1 Objective 1: Role of the media in the legislative process of the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly

In the legislative process of the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly, the media plays a pivotal and multifaceted role. It serves as a primary means of disseminating information on legislative activities, setting the legislative agenda by highlighting key issues, promoting transparency and accountability by reporting on legislative actions, engaging the public in debates and discussions, influencing policy outcomes through public opinion and pressure, educating the public about complex legislative matters, and facilitating dialogue between various stakeholders. This comprehensive involvement of the media contributes to a more informed, participatory, and accountable legislative system, ensuring that citizens are well-informed about the actions and decisions of their elected representatives. It is in view of this, the researcher sought to explore the media's role in the legislative process of the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly and assess whether it effectively fulfills this functions. The tables below analyses the questions addressing this objective.

Table 4: Role of the Media: what do you think is the prominent role of the media in the 9th National Assembly?

Responses	Frequency	%
Strongly Agreed	5	13.8
Agreed	10	27.7
Neutral	11	30.8
Disagreed	6	16.6
Strongly Disagreed	4	11.1
Total	36	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 4 shows that 15 (41.5%) majority of the agreed that media is consistent in setting agenda during the legislative process in the lower chamber of 9th National Assembly, while 27.7% disagreed that the media contributed on the whole. More respondents agreed that the media play critical role in setting legislative agenda, while 41% agreed that the media contributed. On the whole, more respondent agreed that media play critical role in setting legislative agenda.

Table 5: The Media performed its role of adequate coverage of legislative processes in the lower chamber of 9th National Assembly.

Responses	Frequency	%
Strongly Agreed	10	27.7
Agreed	17	47.2
Neutral	4	11.1

Disagreed	2	5.5
Strongly Disagreed	3	8.5
Total	36	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 5 demonstrates that 27 (74.9%) respondents agree that media do adequate coverage of the legislative processes in the lower chamber of 9th National Assembly. This further buttresses the fact that the media is a major stakeholder in the legislative process.

Table 6: The Media pays adequate attention to agenda setting during the legislative process in the lower chamber of 9th National Assembly.

Responses	Frequency	%
Strongly Agreed	7	19.4
Agreed	9	25
Neutral	18	50
Disagreed	2	5.5
Strongly Disagreed	0	0
Total	36	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 6 indicate that 18 (50%) of respondent are not sure that media pay adequate attention to agenda settings in the legislative process of lower chamber of 9th National Assembly, while 16 (44.4%) agreed that media pay attention to legislative process.

4.2.2 Objective 2: Examine if the role of the media influences legislative process of

the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly

The media plays a vital and influential role in shaping the legislative process of the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly. Through its capacity to disseminate information, set the legislative agenda, foster public engagement, and influence policy outcomes, it significantly impacts the legislative landscape. By covering legislative activities comprehensively, the media informs the public, raises awareness, and holds elected representatives accountable for their actions. This influence often prompts lawmakers to address pressing issues and adapt legislation in response to public concerns. The media's role in framing public discourse and shaping public opinion further magnifies its impact, ultimately promoting transparency and accountability within the legislative process. By facilitating dialogue and encouraging public participation, the media enriches the democratic functioning of the lower chamber, contributing to its responsiveness and effectiveness in representing the citizenry. This objective sought to identify and examine, if any, the influences the media has over the legislative process of the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly. The tables below provides analysis into this objective.

Table 8: Influence of the role of the media and legislative process

Responses	Frequency	%
Strongly Agreed	6	16.6
Agreed	15	41.6
Neutral	8	22.4
Disagreed	3	8.3
Strongly Disagreed	4	11.1
Total	36	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 8 showed that 21(58.2%) majority of respondent agreed that Media Agenda Setting roles influence the legislative process in the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly.

Table 9: Media coverage influences legislative process in the 9th National Assembly.

Responses	Frequency	%
Strongly Agreed	7	19.4
Agreed	16	44.4
Neutral	8	22.5
Disagreed	2	5.5
Strongly Disagreed	3	8.3
Total	36	100

Source: Field work, 2023

Table 9 show that 23 (63.8%) majority of respondents agree that media coverage influence legislative process in the 9th National Assembly.

Table 10: Media attention influences the legislative process in the 9th National Assembly.

Responses	Frequency	%
Strongly Agreed	6	16.2
Agreed	17	48.6
Neutral	8	18.9
Disagreed	2	5.4
Strongly Disagreed	3	8

Total	36	100
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Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 10 show that majority 23(64.8%) of respondent agreed that Media attention influences the legislative process in the 9th National Assembly while 5(13.4%) disagreed that media attention influence legislative process.

Table 11: Rate the influence of your activities as a member of the media on the following legislative activities.

Legislative Activities	Very High		High		Normal		Very Low		Low		Total	
	frq	%	Frq	%	frq	%	frq	%	Frq	%	frq	%
Process of submission of bills to National Assembly*	5	13.4	3	8.4	8	22.4	10	27.9	10	27.9	36	100
Process of reading bills in the Plenary	9	25	8	22.4	5	13.8	9	25	5	13.8	36	100
Public hearing	10	27.7	7	19.4	8	22.4	6	16.7	5	13.8	36	100
Final passage and assent of Bills	5	13.8	6	16.6	9	25.1	9	25.1	7	19.4	36	100
Oversight visit and hearing*	7	19.4	6	16.6	9	25.1	9	25.1	5	13.8	36	100
Investigative hearing*	3	8.3	4	11.3	10	27.7	9	25	10	27.7	36	100
Constituency meeting	5	13.8	6	16.6	8	22.4	12	33.4	5	13.8	36	100
Enlightenment/awareness Program	7	19.4	10	27.7	7	19.4	8	22.2	4	11.3	36	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

The data in Table 11 revealed the media influence on different legislative activities. It shows that (55.4%), (52.7%), (57.2%), (44.4%) and (38.8%) majority of the respondent asserted that media has a low influence on the submission of bills to National Assembly, investigative journalism, constituency meeting, final passage of the bill and oversight visit and hearing respectively. At the

same time, Most respondents (47.2%),(47.1%) and (47.1%) believed that media has high influence on the process of reading bills in the plenary,public hearing and enlightenment and awareness program respectively.

4.2.3 Objective 3: Determine the effect of the role of media on the outcome of legislative process in the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly

The role of media in the legislative process of the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly can have a significant impact on the outcome. Media serves as a crucial bridge between lawmakers and the public, influencing public opinion and, subsequently, the decisions and actions of legislators. Through news coverage, social media, and various forms of communication, the media can shape the narrative around legislative issues, amplify public pressure, and hold lawmakers accountable for their actions. It can also play a role in agenda setting, helping to prioritize certain issues and pushing them to the forefront of the legislative process. As a result, media's influence can lead to increased transparency, public engagement, and responsiveness of legislators to their constituents, ultimately affecting the legislative outcomes in the lower chamber. This objective sought to determine the actual effect of the media on the lower chamber of the 9th national assembly.

Table 12: Agenda setting affects the sponsorship of a bill in the lower chamber of 9th National Assembly

Responses	Frequency	%
Strongly Agreed	4	11.1
Agreed	15	41.6
Neutral	8	22.4
Disagreed	6	16.6
Strongly Disagreed	3	8.3

Total	36	100
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Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 12 showed that majority 19 respondents comprising of 52.7% of the total sample size agreed that Agenda settings affect the sponsorship of a bill in the lower chamber of 9th National Assembly.

Table 13: Agenda setting affects the plenary debate of a bill in the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly.

Responses	Frequency	%
Strongly Agreed	3	8.3
Agreed	18	50
Neutral	4	11.3
Disagreed	5	13.8
Strongly Disagreed	6	16.6
Total	36	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 13 shows that majority of the respondents 21 representing 58.3% of the total sampled respondent agreed that Agenda Setting affects the debate of a bill in plenary in the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly.

Table 14: Agenda setting affects legislative amendment of a bill in the lower chamber of 9th National Assembly

Responses	Frequency	%
Strongly Agreed	2	5.4
Agreed	17	47.2
Neutral	9	25

Disagreed	4	11.2
Strongly Disagreed	4	11.2
Total	36	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 14 shows that majority respondent (19) representing 52.6% of the total sampled respondent agreed that Agenda settings affect legislative amendment of a bill in the lower chamber of 9th National Assembly

Table 15 Media coverage affects the sponsorship of a bill in the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly

Responses	Frequency	%
Strongly Agreed	5	13.8
Agreed	15	41.6
Neutral	9	25
Disagreed	5	13.8
Strongly Disagreed	2	5.5
Total	36	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 15 shows that majority of respondents (20) representing 55.4% of the total sampled respondents agreed that media coverage affect the sponsorship of a bill in the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly.

Table 16: Media coverage affects the plenary debate of a bill in the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly

Responses	Frequency	%
Strongly Agreed	3	8.3
Agreed	20	55.5
Neutral	8	22.4
Disagreed	5	13.8
Strongly Disagreed	0	-
Total	36	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 16 shows that majority of respondent (23) representing 63.8% of the total sampled respondent agreed that media coverage affects the plenary debate of a bill in the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly

Table 17: media coverage affects legislative amendment of a bill in the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly

Responses	Frequency	%
Strongly Agreed	2	6.5
Agreed	18	50.3
Neutral	9	26.4
Disagreed	3	8.4
Strongly Disagreed	3	8.4
Total	36	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 17 shows that majority of respondents (20) representing 56.8% of the total sampled respondents agreed that media coverage affects legislative amendment of a bill in the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly.

Media Attention and legislative process

Table 18: Agenda settings affects the legislative amendment of a bill in the lower chamber of 9th National Assembly.

Responses	Frequency	%
Strongly Agreed	3	8.4
Agreed	18	50
Neutral	9	24.8
Disagreed	3	8.4
Strongly Disagreed	3	8.4
Total	36	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 18 shows that majority of respondents (21) representing 58.4% of the total respondents sampled agreed that agenda setting affects legislative amendment of a bill in the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly

Table 19: Media Attention affects the debate of a bill in plenary in the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly

Responses	Frequency	%
Strongly Agreed	3	8.3
Agreed	17	47.2
Neutral	9	25
Disagreed	2	5.7
Strongly Disagreed	5	13.8
Total	36	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 19 shows that majority of respondent 20 representing 55.5% of the total sampled respondent agreed that media attention affects the plenary debate of a bill in the lower

chamber of 9th National Assembly

Table 20: Media Attention affect the legislative amendment of a bill in the lower chamber of 9th National Assembly

Responses	Frequency	%
Strongly Agreed	5	13.9
Agreed	14	37.9
Neutral	10	28.4
Disagreed	2	5.9
Strongly Disagreed	5	13.9
Total	36	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 20 shows that majority of respondents (19) representing 54% of the total respondents sampled agreed that media attention affects the legislative amendment of a bill in the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly.

4.3 Analysis of Data

Research Question 1: The media played a prominent role in the legislative process of the lower chamber of 9th National Assembly.

Tables 4, 5 and 6 are used to answer the prominent role of the media in the legislative process.

Table 4 and Table 6 show that majority of the respondents are neutral and indifferent in their responses to the role of the media as an agenda setter, paying adequate attention to the legislative process. Meanwhile, Table 5 shows that majority of respondents agree that the media do more of adequate coverage of the legislative process. This study is in consonance with the study conducted by Edith et al (2022). The outcome of the study showed commonalities and differences in the news

coverage and the approach of the reportage of the AkwaIbom State House of Assembly. It was discovered that there was no clear case of media agenda-setting as the media had little or no influence in directing the course of the Assembly. Rather, the focus of the media was determined by the steps of the lawmakers.

According to Lotte (2015) incident-driven coverage served as a source for questions and was strategically used by members of parliament (MPs) in legislative debates to substantiate and illustrate their position. More indirectly, long-term trends in media coverage for specific topics contributed to the introduction of and support for amendments to a bill.

Research Question 2: The media influence the legislative process of the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly.

Tables 8, 9 and 10 reveal that majority of respondents agreed that the role of the media influenced the legislative process of the lower chamber of 9th National Assembly. This result is in line with the (Wolfe, 2012) opinion that the media sends signals about the relevance of interests and arguments to political actors involved in legislative processes, and “as an input into the political system that reweighs information, the media can exert a large influence on the policy process. Media coverage directed politicians’ attention to specific topics, however it doesn’t serve as an autonomous, influential source of information for Members of Parliament (MPs). Overall, however, media coverage has not influenced the legislative outcome of the process” (Melenhorst, 2017).

Melenhorst, (2017) argued that the media’s influence on law making is mainly an emphasizing effect: media coverage puts emphasis on issues, arguments or actors. As one of many sources of information political actors have at their disposal, the media can highlight the consequences of a

bill, a particular argument, or the position of an expert. Media coverage is also and primarily used as a rhetorical instrument in legislative debates and helps to emphasize the topicality of an issue, to influence the direction of the debate, and show the validity or relevancy of an argument.

Research Question 3: What is the effect of the role of the media on the outcome of legislative process in the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly?

Table 11, 12 and 13 were used to answer the effect of media role on the legislative process. A significant number of respondents agreed that the role of the media affects legislative process. The judgement of Khadijat and Agboola (2017) in their study coincide with the outcome of the study that the media strongly affects the legislative process of the lower chamber of the 9th National Assembly. The study reveals a direct correlation between the subjects raised in the online newspapers concerning the National Assembly and parliamentary issues awareness among respondents. The outcome of the study shows that online newspapers, like the traditional media, have a strong effect on public perception of the National Assembly; this is due to the way they portray them in their reports.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter aims to provide a concise overview of the study, derive conclusions from its findings, and subsequently offer recommendations based on those conclusions.

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

The central significance of media coverage in the legislative process underscores the importance of enhancing media focus and reporting on legislative proceedings to ensure public awareness of legislative activities. The study also revealed a prevalent sense of neutrality or indifference regarding the media's capacity to set legislative agendas, suggesting a constrained influence in shaping legislative priorities.

Another findings of the study indicates that the media significantly influenced the legislative process in the 9th Lower Assembly, in line with Wolfe's notion that media serves as an influential signal conduit to political actors. However, it's crucial to recognize that media coverage primarily emphasizes issues and acts as a rhetorical tool in legislative debates, rather than functioning as an autonomous information source for Members of Parliament.

The study also revealed that the media exerts minimal influence over various legislative activities, including bill submissions, investigative journalism, constituency meetings, the final passage of bills, and oversight functions.

5.2 Recommendations

The study underscores the pivotal role of media coverage in the legislative process, emphasizing the need for proactive engagement between legislative bodies and the media to ensure transparent and comprehensive reporting. Establishing clear communication channels, conducting regular press briefings, offering open access to legislative proceedings, and timely distribution of relevant information are vital steps to facilitate better public understanding of legislative activities through

collaborative efforts.

To address the apparent neutrality or indifference within the media regarding their role in shaping legislative agendas, it is imperative to initiate training and awareness programs for media professionals. This education can provide journalists and editors with a deeper comprehension of the media's influence and its potential in shaping public opinion. Strengthening this understanding will encourage more constructive interactions between media practitioners and lawmakers, fostering improved collaboration and communication.

The study also underscores the media's limited influence over various legislative functions, particularly in oversight activities. Legislative bodies should address this by enhancing their capacity for effective oversight, including training legislators on how to effectively utilize media coverage to scrutinize government actions and public policies, ensuring transparency and accountability.

Furthermore, the study recommends the promotion of investigative journalism to enhance the media's role in legislative processes. Legislative bodies should facilitate access to information and data for investigative journalists, enabling them to uncover crucial issues and stimulate legislative action, thereby promoting transparency and responsiveness to public concerns.

To counteract the perceived neutrality or indifference regarding the media's agenda-setting role, legislative bodies should introduce public engagement initiatives. These initiatives, including town hall meetings, surveys, and public consultations, allow citizens to express their legislative priorities and concerns. By aligning media coverage more closely with public interests, these initiatives can play a significant role in shaping the legislative agenda effectively. It is vital for legislative bodies to recognize the media's potential to enhance civic engagement and improve democratic representation and, therefore, regard legislative reporting as part of their corporate

social responsibility, ensuring the public remains well-informed about the legislative process.

5.3 Conclusions

This research has shed light on the crucial role of media coverage in the legislative process, emphasizing the need for enhanced media focus and reporting on legislative proceedings to ensure public awareness of legislative activities. It has also revealed a prevailing sense of neutrality or indifference within the media regarding their capacity to shape legislative agendas, indicating a limited influence in setting legislative priorities.

Moreover, the study has highlighted the media's significant impact on the legislative process, in line with the concept that media serves as a potent conduit for influencing political actors, as expounded by Wolfe. However, it's essential to acknowledge that media coverage primarily serves to emphasize issues and act as a rhetorical tool in legislative debates, rather than serving as an independent source of information for Members of Parliament.

Additionally, the research has unveiled the media's limited influence on various legislative activities, including bill submissions, investigative journalism, constituency meetings, the final passage of bills, and oversight functions. To address these challenges and optimize the media's role, a set of recommendations has been proposed, emphasizing proactive engagement between legislative bodies and the media, training and awareness programs for media professionals, improved oversight capacity, and the promotion of investigative journalism.

Furthermore, public engagement initiatives have been suggested to bridge the gap between the media and legislative priorities, ensuring that public interests are closely aligned with legislative agendas. Recognizing the media's potential to enhance civic engagement and democratic representation, it is imperative for legislative bodies to view legislative reporting as an integral part of their corporate social responsibility, thereby ensuring that the public remains well-informed

about the legislative process. This research provides valuable insights for policymakers, media organizations, and legislators, offering a pathway towards a more informed, engaged, and transparent legislative process.

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APPENDIX I

**QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN LAWMAKING PROCESS IN THE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Section A: Bio data

Date _____

Please kindly answer the following questions by ticking your chosen options to the statements.

1. Area of residence _____
2. What is your gender? **Male** **Female**
3. Occupation _____

Section B: Role of media in lawmaking process in the National Assembly

Instruction: Please kindly choose a suitable option of your choice to indicate your level of agreement.

1. The media played a prominent role in the legislative process of the 9th National Assembly.
 - Qi. In your own opinion, what do you think is the prominent role of the media in the 9th National Assembly?
 - a. Agenda Setting b. Media Coverage c. Media Attention
 - Qii. Does media perform its role of setting agenda during the legislative process in the 9th National Assembly?
 - Qiii. Does media perform its role of adequate coverage of agenda during the legislative process in the 9th National Assembly?
 - Qiv. Does media pay adequate attention to agenda during the legislative process in the 9th National Assembly?

2. What influence does media role has on the Legislative process of the 9th National Assembly?

Qv. Does agenda settings influence the legislative process in the 9th National Assembly?

Qvi. Does media coverage influence the legislative process in the 9th National Assembly?

Qvii. Qv. Does media attention influence the legislative process in the 9th National Assembly?

3. Rate the influence of your activities as a member of the media on the following legislative activities.

S/N	Legislative Activities	Very High	High	Normal	Very Low	Low
1.	Process of submission of bills to National Assembly					
2.	Process of reading bills in the Plenary					
3.	Public hearing					
4.	Final passage and assent of Bills					
5.	Oversight visit and hearing					
6.	Investigative hearing					
7.	Constituency meeting					
8.	Enlightenment/awareness program					

4. What is the effect of the role of media on the outcome of legislative process in 9th National Assembly?

Qviii. Does agenda settings has any effect on the sponsorship of a bill in the 9th

National Assembly?Qix. Does agenda settings has any effect on the plenary debate of a bill in the 9th National Assembly?

Qx. Does agenda settings has any effect on the legislative amendment of a bill in the 9th National Assembly?

Qx. Does Media coverage has any effect on the sponsorship of a bill in the 9th National Assembly?Qxi. Does Media Coverage has any effect on the plenary debate of a bill in the 9th National Assembly?

Qxii. Does Media Coverage has any effect on the legislative amendment of a bill in the 9th National Assembly?

Qxiii. Does Media Attention has any effect on the sponsorship of a bill in the 9th National Assembly?

Qiv. Does Media Attention has any effect on the plenary debate of a bill in the 9th National Assembly?

Qv. Does Media Attention has any effect on the legislative amendment of a bill in the 9th National Assembly?