**PRESS PERFORMANCE, LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES AND CITIZENS’ SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN LAGOS STATE OF NIGERIA (1999-2003): AN ASSESSMENT**

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**ABSTRACT**

*A regular assessment of media performance is necessary in order to determine what influence the practice of journalism is having on the society. This paper evaluates the performance of the press in the coverage of the Lagos House of Assembly and the influence of that coverage on Lagos State residents. Based on a reliable recall process and using media coverage as the criterion of performance, this study was carried out within the framework of Development Media Theory, which compels the media to support a government in its development efforts and the Hybrid Performance Assessment Model which evaluates the media performance based on empirically justifiable normative principles. The contents of two newspapers – The Punch and Eko Today were analyzed while respondents expressed their opinion about these contents. Findings show that newspapers actually performed but when this performance was assessed in terms of yearly and monthly averages, it became unimpressive. Moreover, the ratings of this level of performance as a promoter of political participation and unity among the cosmopolitan residents of Lagos State were also seen as not reliable because they could have strongly been influenced by the contents published by the same newspapers on the executive arm of government.*