

News Media and Engaged Citizenship: The Nigerian Niger Delta Experiment

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This paper presents an analysis of the study on the news media and citizens engagement in public life in the Delta of Nigeria. One research question was: how does the news media connect its journalistic functions to the goal of citizen engagement. For this study, the real work began with an examination of the process of gathering, defining and distribution of information on issues affecting the delta region in selected Nigerian news outlets. The method of news framing, which is essentially the presentation a spectrum of definitions and choices about a problem in the news, was used as the technique for appraising the impact of Nigerian news media vis-à-vis citizen engagement, as the people addressed challenges arising from the exploration of oil and gas in their community. The study explored how the news media was able to provide the vital public with the usable knowledge that enabled citizens and other non-state actors to deliberate on complex issues associated with their communities and engage in civic life.

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