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Newspaper Coverage of FeesMustFall Students' Protests in Eastern Cape Universities: A Content Analysis of Daily Dispatch

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ABSTRACT The press as the agenda setter in the society should relay accurate information on issues of public interest. This study evaluated the coverage of FeesMustFall students' protests in Eastern Cape Universities in South Africa by Daily Dispatch. The study employed a purposive sampling technique in which data were collected and analyzed through content analysis of Daily Dispatch. The study revealed that 31 stories were reported by the newspaper during the period of the protests, out of which 10 percent were opinions while 90 percent were news stories. About 93.5 percent were reported on the front page while the remaining 6.5 percent were reported on the middle and back pages, respectively. Averagely, the stories were made up of 19 paragraphs, which indicated that the protest was given prominence. Furthermore, the tone of the stories suggested that Daily Dispatch was objective in its reportage of the protests in Eastern-Cape Universities.