

A Decolonial analysis of the post-apartheid media representation of student protests in institutions of higher learning in South Africa.

by

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I declare that the above dissertation is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the dissertation to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all the people who supported me during my period of study, these include my friends and my colleagues. To my late parents, Ms Velephi Mnisi, and Alfred Mthimunye, thank you for being my mom and dad, I am who I am because of your love and encouragement. To my daughter Gugulethu Mnisi, thank you for your support. I would also like to mention my siblings, my brother Samson Mnisi, and sisters Thobile and, Zanele Mnisi, and all my nieces and nephews, I love all of you. You are a shining light in my life and a constant reminder of why I am alive. Thank you for loving and supporting me unconditionally.

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative research explores the post-apartheid traditional news media representations of student protests in institutions of higher learning. The study focuses on three institutions of higher learning in Pretoria. These are the University of South Africa (UNISA), University of Pretoria (UP) and Tshwane University of Technology (TUT). The study argues that colonially derived de-humanising media frames were used by mainstream news media which in turn desensitized the public from legitimate student grievances. The research focuses on how the press news media covered and represented the protests that took place in institutions of higher learning between 2015 and 2023. The qualitative study is an offshoot and a reaction to constantly debated news representations where it pertains to these prevalent protests by the marginalised. The protests' intermittent eruptions in various institutions of higher learning in the country since October 2015, have posed a lot of questions and an exposure of how the post-apartheid establishment has failed to completely eradicate the inherent colonial social structure. This study employs the decolonial epistemic perspective, a humanising pedagogy, and the critical political economy of the media approach as the theoretical lens aimed at illuminating conversations on the perpetual epistemic hegemony perpetrated by the established status quo through the post-apartheid traditional media outlets in the representation of student of protests in institutions of higher learning.

KEY TERMS: Post-apartheid traditional news media, student protests, media representation, qualitative research study, decolonial qualitative research, decolonial epistemic approach, humanising pedagogy, the critical political economy of the media

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
CPEM	Critical political economy of the media
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
ENCA	eNews Channel Africa
EWN	Eyewitness News
FFPLUS	Freedom Front Plus
HBU	Historically Black Universities
HWU	Historically White Universities
ICASA	Independent Communications Authority of South Africa
IEB	Independent Examination Board
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
NPA	National Prosecuting Authority
NSFAS	National Students Financial Aids Scheme
ODL	Open Distance Learning
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SABINET	SA Media
SAPA	South African Press Association
SASCO	South African Student Congress
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
SMS	Short message service
SRCs	Student Representative Councils
TUT	Tshwane University of Technology
TV	Television
UCT	University of Cape Town
UJ	University of Johannesburg
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UNISA	University of South Africa
UP	University of Pretoria
WITS:	Witwatersrand University

Chapter one : General introduction

1.1 Introduction of the study

This study argues that dehumanising and invisibilising frames adopted by South African mainstream news media in representations of student protests are an artifact of coloniality. It buttresses this claim by foregrounding how South African post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protests in institutions of higher learning. The research focuses on how the mainstream traditional news media, especially the press news media represented student protests that took place in institutions of higher learning from 2015 to 2023. The study is an offshoot and a reaction to constantly debated news representations of the prevalent protests. The protests' intermittent eruptions in various institutions of higher learning in the country have brought a lot of questions and exposed the current government's failure to transform the "colonial social structure inherited from apartheid and colonialism" that continues to bifurcate the country's society (Idahosa and Vincent 2019: 147).

Manifestations of protests always expose the magnitude of social inequalities ingrained within the country's social systems (Bawa, 2019; Stanley, 2018, Idahosa and Vincent 2019). Furthermore, the student protests also exposed flaws embedded within "the education system which continually perpetuates division and inequalities between the poor and rich students in post-apartheid South Africa" (Bawa 2019: 235). Therefore, the study addresses the question; *"How does the post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protests in institutions of higher learning"*. The study interrogates how configurations of colonial power entrenched within the education system, in print news media influence the portrayal of these protests and perpetrate continuous structural inequalities and social injustice in the country's institutions of higher learning.

This study employs the decolonial epistemic perspective, a humanising pedagogy, and the critical political economy of the media approach as its theoretical frameworks to deepen the understanding of media representation of student protests. The critical political economy of the media approach is aimed at "connecting the study of news media representations to the broader patterns of human social existence and question the inequitable allocation of resources" in post-apartheid South Africa (Hardy 2014: 14). It is an approach with a profound influence on understanding power, domination, and socioeconomic inequalities in societies. (Hardy

2014: 15). The decolonial epistemic perspective lends to the study lens to interrogating the perpetual epistemic injustices perpetrated by the post-apartheid traditional media against the poor when representing student protests. The approach is appropriate in investigating how the hegemony of coloniality of power, knowledge, and being manifests itself in media content. These two theories tend to inquire about the ability to understand and contribute tools of analysis that eschew discrimination, and overt and subtle racism to create a climate that is sympathetic to progressions of equality, diversity, integration, and giving voices to the marginalised.

The study is divided into six chapters. Chapter One outlines the study's main aim, the history of student protests, and their representation in the news media. Chapter two focuses on the theoretical framework and the literature review with chapter three being the methodology study. Chapter four concentrates on the data findings of the study and chapter five presents the analysis of the data and the interpretation of findings. Chapter six is the conclusion which includes recommendations.

1.2 Student protests in South Africa: A background

In South Africa protests date back to the apartheid era when the country experienced waves of protests be they political, labour, and student protests. They manifested themselves in various ways which ranged from the loss of lives to extensive damage to property. The challenges drew the attention of the news media which has buttressed the stereotypical ideology that they are nothing of substance but a manifestation of anti-social behavior. Their meaning has also been subjected to fragmenting and polarising interpretations. For decades, South African press news media played a pivotal role in helping the government to subject black people to institutional racism instilled by news values and routines that enabled them to create content that maintained the same status quo.

The 2015 student protests in the country's institutions of higher learning became a stark reminder of where South Africa has been, and questions where it is now in terms of racism, social inequalities, and social injustice in institutions of higher learning. However, it is not the first time the country experienced protests of such a large magnitude. Inclusive of the historic 1976 Soweto protests, where students marched against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in their schools, before that, South Africa experienced many other widely publicised student protests such as the Lovedale College instabilities in the Eastern Cape in 1946(Stanley

2018: 104), and the notable 1968 protest at UCT where students and staff protested against the University council's decision to reverse the appointment of Archie Mafeje a senior lecturer (Kulik 2023).

While the demographics of students who entered universities in post-apartheid South Africa may have changed, racial discrimination, social inequalities, and perceptions that continuously promote white privilege are still deeply entrenched in the educational system. Albertus (2019:7) argues that the “change of legislation failed to eradicate the culture of institutional racism in institutions of higher learning”. Instead of dealing with these perennial problems, they have been made issues that are not acknowledged, not talked about, and not even engaged with (Albertus 2019).

However, what distinguishes the protests from the 2015 to 2023 student protests from previous ones, is that contemporary protests are organised by a new generation of student protestors who may never have experienced the oppression their forbearers endured during apartheid, yet their daily lived experience in institutions of higher learning is marred by both covert and overt racism. The veiled racial discrimination, which includes financial exclusion, gave birth to various protests in the country's institutions of higher learning. Amongst them are the *#Feesmustfall* campaign, the *Rhodesmustfall* campaign, and the *Open Stellenbosch* campaign. Makunga (2018:81) states that in the *#Feesmustfall* campaign, a student protest that started at Wits University in October 2015, students demanded: “free education, students who were still owing the institution to be allowed to register, and government to change the funding subsidy system.”

Despite the challenge against the high cost of higher education, students were also against “patterns of coloniality that still define the epistemic and socio-cultural makeup of the University space” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018 cited in Nombona, Gwala, and Sibanda 2023: 6). Also, before the notable *#Feesmustfall* campaign was the: *Rhodesmustfall* campaign which started earlier in 2015 when students at the University of Cape Town called for the removal of the Cecil John Rhodes statue from their campus. The Rhodes statue, which was a noteworthy figure in the institution for years to the new cohorts of students, was a symbol of colonialism that needed complete demolition and destruction. Also, the launch of the *OpenStellenbosch* campaign attested to the country's institutions of higher learning situation in post-apartheid. Their campaign was to challenge the hegemony of white Afrikaans culture and the exclusions of black students and staff in the institution (Open Collective 2015:1). This was seen as a fight

to change the status quo, and to restore the dignity of every black person which was destroyed by the usage of Afrikaans as a tool to enforce “oppressive institutional culture in the institution” (Open collective 2015: 2). It also became a means to eradicate the continuation of students “pain and humiliation of being subjugated to the hostile environment and culture of white Afrikanerdom”, as many black students are forced to understand and converse in the language they do not understand and relate to (Open collective 2015:3).

The students’ call for the eradication of colonial structures which are the source of racial inequalities and financial exclusion in their institutions of higher learning has continued into 2023 during the write-up of the study. Recently, black students who are underfunded by the National Students Financial Aids Scheme (NSFAS) at the University of Pretoria found themselves in the very same predicament where they had to fight for their recognition and stay in this institution. The students, mainly black, had to endure “sleeping outside their institution’s residences because they did not have enough funds to pay for their accommodation” (Koka: 2023:1). Many student protests that take place at historically black universities tend to be violent due to the “police heavy-handedness, which also leads to students’ injuries and their arrests” (Zimbizi: 2017:3). These protests which are against socio-economic injustices which continue unabated in the country’s public spaces are reported daily in the news media.

As the country’s 2015 student protests garnered national and international media attention in social spaces, critics bemoaned the way they were covered and represented in mainstream news media especially when they manifested in historically black universities. The media coverage of the protests and their representation raised concerns about the dichotomous ways in which they were covered and represented in historically black universities (HBU), and historically white universities (HWU). However, to understand the history of news media representation of student protests in South Africa, it is important to understand the historical context within which news media representation took place in the country during apartheid.

1.2.1 Media Representation and the South African socio-historical Context

The study also takes a historical approach to dissect the apartheid ideology that shaped the traditional news media in South Africa. Society still regards traditional mainstream news media such as broadcast and the press as the most important source of information dissemination in the world. Over the years, academics and researchers have always attempted to conduct both theoretical and empirical types of research, to discover the substantial role, the press and broadcast news media play in representing issues of public concern such as social protests in

various communities. Smith *et al* (2001) note that protests are a means that communities use to highlight issues they are concerned about, and when they want them to be included in public debates and government agenda. It is through news media that their voices can be heard. Whilst it is also through the news media that socially marginalised communities can challenge the status quo and be afforded an audience with those in power, however, the success or failure of their actions highly depends on how their issues are reported, portrayed, and interpreted by society at large (Mpofu 2017:352).

Kilgo and Harlow (2019), are of the view that, while it is the right of every individual who is frustrated to use protests to garner public support when their actions are meant to challenge the prevailing social order, and the capitalist system that affects their everyday existence, however, in many cases their protests are more likely not to get the desired outcome. This is due to the powers that control the mass media, especially the news media such as the press and broadcast media which in turn dictate what kind of information should be disseminated to the public. In the South African context to understand news media representation and dissemination of information in post-apartheid, one needs to first dissect its colonial and apartheid history. Shepperson & Tomasselli (2009: 479) state that during colonialism and apartheid, the South African government used various legal systems that forced both the press and broadcast news media to “align themselves with different political sectors to further the “ideology of apartheid which perpetuated segregation.” The scholars further buttress the argument by noting that it is through the many oppressive laws and policies that, the apartheid systems which perpetuated racial discrimination and unequal distribution of resources, power, and wealth between black and white South Africans thrived. The broadcast news media, primarily the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), and the Citizen newspaper as they were both under the ownership of the state were completely under the influence of the apartheid regime and used as the government’s mouthpiece to further the ideology of apartheid.

The mainstream public broadcast news media and the press, having no legal arm to counteract the country’s status quo, had no choice but to become party to a “system that promoted racial capitalism and structural ideologies which segregated and oppressed the black majority” (Berger 2002:2). The incessant censorship put them in a position where their accountability towards people of colour was completely obliterated, as they moved towards employing news values and routines that “justified the actions of those in authority and reproducing the same status quo” (Choteau, Hoynes, and Millan 2014:42). Private ownership of some of the news media such as the press may have saved them from being subjected to the same regulations that

the apartheid government used to control the SABC and the Citizen newspaper, however, companies that owned them ensured that, “the country’s society was represented in a singular hegemonic perspective” (Steenveld 2012:). The press, and particularly the white press, became a party to the marginalisation and subjugation of the black majority as they promoted the perspectives of those in power and the elite status quo.

In line with the views mentioned above, it can be noted that the ruling elite used these tools to justify the acts of its repressive and ideological state apparatuses such as the news media and institutions of higher learning to further the discrimination of other races. In that vein, the study sought to unravel more about how these systems have shaped and continue the South African traditional news media landscape in the quagmire that it finds itself. In 1994, when the government of the African National Congress (ANC) took full control of the country’s administrations, there was a need for transformation that was supposed to completely overhaul apartheid social structures and bring in new edifices that would eradicate discrimination and unite society. However, the government failed to do that and instead, it only abandoned “the legal control of the press” and left everything unchanged (Berger 1999:99). Government failed to make legislation that would completely get rid of apartheid systems that had always legitimise the bifurcation of the country’s society that relegated the black majority to the margins. The press’s decision to self-regulate which was meant to stop the government’s interference with its work in post-apartheid South Africa, is seen as a major contributor to the segregation of the country’s society, as “it creates content that is completely unrepresentative of the country’s society” (Wasserman, Chuma, and Bosch: 2014:17). Steenveld (2012) suggests that the privatisation of the press news media and other broadcast news media in post-apartheid South Africa increased the space of commodified news content which proved to be detrimental to the poor who had no financial means to either buy newspapers or access other private broadcast media content. This again channeled the privatised news media, especially the press to revert to the place where they had to consider their advertisers first and create content that favours those who support them financially and discriminate against the poor.

The transformation processes also took place in the institutions of higher learning when the government took massive steps when creating policy frameworks meant to end “patterns of fragmentation, inequality” increase access for black students, and “generate the curricula and methods of learning that will accommodate a large and diverse population of students” (Bawa 2019: 254). Idahosa and Vincent (2009) note that whatever transformation the government implemented never culminated in any positive changes. The status quo stayed the same, as the

historically underfunded black institutions remained underfunded, while the historically white institutions continued to thrive as they were already well-resourced and well-funded. Due to unchanged socioeconomic conditions in the country's various institutions, many South Africans find themselves being subjected to all kinds of racial discrimination in different spheres of life, be it at the workplace or institutions of higher learning (Nombona, Gwala, and Sibanda 2023: 2). Decades after apartheid, South Africans still find themselves being socially, structurally, and culturally marginalised by the unchanged systems. In the same breath, South African students continue to be frustrated by the pervasive nature of the apartheid system that continues to privilege white minorities who benefited from colonialism and apartheid in their institutions of higher learning. To try to bring change by challenging the status quo, they resort to protests.

According to Sibanda (2023) years before the notable #Rhodesmustfall and #Feesmustfall campaigns, protests were rife in historically black universities (HBU) such as the University of Fort Hare and Tshwane University of Technology (TUT). Students' protests were against financial and academic exclusions in these institutions, but they never got much attention from the public and the media. Furthermore, when protests erupted in institutions of higher learning in 2015, they garnered national and international media attention as they spread across all institutions of higher learning in South Africa, including the historically white universities (HWU) such as Wits University, University of Pretoria (UP) and University of Cape Town (UCT) (Zimbizi 2017:2).

The protests generated debates about how they were to be framed and portrayed in the news media. Social protests are "highly rooted in challenging inequalities and unequal distribution of resources in society" as stated by Smith et al (2001:1402). Mpofu (2017:388) noticed that the news media used news values and routines that promoted "middle-class bias which perpetuated suburban views and narratives in their coverage and representation of the student protests". It is, therefore, under these assumptions that the study sought to critically analyse how the protests were reported by the press news media to understand the ideology behind their representation and how the colonial matrix of power shapes these contours. The analysis was done through the critical political economy of the media lens and the decolonial epistemic perspective approach. The two approaches are appropriate for studying media representation in a country where the level of socio-economic inequalities is high and, all the means of production and power are still controlled by the minority class which has substantial economic resources and power. It is through, the critical political economy of the media approach that

the study was able to investigate and critically examine the power and ideology that influence the news media in their representation of student protests in post-apartheid South Africa. As an approach that studies power relations that impact the production, distribution, and consumption of media content in societies, the critical political economy of the media approach, is useful in understanding power configurations and inequalities that influence media representations in the country.

(Hodskinson (2017) argues that South Africa continues to be a country with exploitative policies which hinder the equal distribution of economic wealth and promote the marginalisation and subjectivity of the poor. Ultimately, the news media play a major role in supporting the established status quo. The critical political economy of the media approach states that in such a society, the mass media is more likely to reflect the interests of their financiers and those who buy advertising space in their papers (Chiumbu and Radebe 2020:18). The decolonial epistemic perspective deepens the study by laying bare how coloniality is an invisible power that shapes knowledge in the interests of those in positions of political and economic power (Chiumbu 2016). The approach was used to examine the topic of the study by focusing on the three concepts: coloniality power, knowledge, and being.

1.3 The research problem

Polit and Beck (2010) define a research problem as an enigmatic or troubling condition that researchers identify within a broad topic area of interest that needs to be solved by a study or at least contribute to its solution. In post-apartheid, traditional news media such as the SABC was tasked with nation-building (Fourie 2002, Chuma, Bosch, Wasserman, and Pointer 2017). Whilst other traditional news media such as the press were trying to de-link from their historical apartheid patterns and routines in the representation of the marginalised. Shepperson and Tomaselli (2009:479) point out that the history of South African traditional news media is “a case of apartheid ideology and neocolonialism”. During apartheid, the news media had to endure many laws and regulations that supported the segregation of white people from other races called “apartheid” and the ideology of racism. They had no legal means to counteract the status quo, “self-censorship and self-regulation became the only method for them to survive” (Steenveld 2012: 125). They also became a party to a system that racialised and oppressed the black majority (Berger 2002:2). However, in the 1990s when apartheid ended nothing changed, the socio-economic status of many black South Africans remained the same.

The gap between the rich and the poor has been widening ever since a situation that has made those who are becoming poorer disillusioned and try to effect change through various protests. While the news media has always been at the centre of their coverage, it has always seemed as if their representation is never consistent with the message the protestors are trying to send to those in power and decision-makers (Smith *et al* 2015:3). Important questions, therefore, remain about the transformation of the news media and their reporting patterns about those who were previously marginalised by the colonial and apartheid systems.

The study is very important in a country like South Africa due to its historical background of colonisation and apartheid. Its motivation is based on the observation and the view that post-apartheid, South Africans are fragmented by high economic inequalities which are not accurately reflected in news media representations. The media may be failing to be the voice that the poor can use to challenge the status quo. However, the study is not only aiming to highlight these core issues but also to expose racial asymmetrical power relations that continue to act as a hindrance that guards against the news media for being a fourth estate and a credible voice for the poor.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to present an interpretive understanding of news media representation of student protests in higher education institutions in South Africa. The intention is to understand how power influences the post-apartheid traditional press news media in their representation of student protest in higher education institutions by deploying the critical political economy of the media and the decolonial epistemic perspective approach as interpretive frames. According to Avram and First (2010:483), the media constitute a crucial site for the construction of reality where political and social agendas are created. The critical political economy of the media approach seeks to demonstrate that media representation of student protests is shaped by nothing else, but by obscured power configurations and persistent inequalities that characterise the South African media space.

The decolonial epistemic perspective would retrieve the concealed objectification of students in modern South Africa. The theory in general and the decolonial epistemic perspective explores a hubris of zero point, a modern epistemology that seems to be anchoring the country's news media into being a detached observer in their own country (Mignolo 2009). Post-

apartheid South Africa did not result in the complete abolition of capitalist strongholds left by the country's previous imperial masters. These strongholds continue to disseminate ideologies that constantly marginalise black South Africans, racially rank them as non-beings, and deny their full humanity. The study assumes that news media representation of student protests in institutions of higher learning is influenced by the coloniality of power from an internal and external point of view. That is why the study looks at the historical and modern practices of the country's news media in post-apartheid South Africa. To interrogate and expose asymmetrical power relations that influence the country's media, there is a need to expose their ways of coverage and representation that continue to infringe on the rights of the marginalised. This is because post-apartheid black South Africans have experienced the same fate of being racially marginalised just like during apartheid, where they were conceptualised as inferior beings and objectified in media representation.

1.5 The research objectives and questions

The main aim of this interpretive-inclined study is descriptive and explorative. The study is aimed at gaining knowledge and understanding of how South African press news media represented student protests in institutions of higher learning. The descriptive objective is aimed at giving an in-depth description report on how higher education students' protests were reported and represented by the press news media. The exploratory objective is aimed at exploring whether the October 2015 to 2023 student protest events were not influenced by any hegemonic power that influences social inequalities.

To achieve the above aim the following specific objectives will be used which are:

- To identify the characterisation of student protests, and the views and attitudes expressed about them in the media.
- To unravel patterns of colonial power that control the media content, their operations, and their influence on the representation front.
- To explore whether in post-apartheid South Africa, student protests are justified and how should they be portrayed by the news media.
- To analyse whether the discourses of media representation of protests in South Africa are located within the coloniality of power, knowledge, and being.

1.6 Main research question

How does the post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protest in institutions of higher learning?

1.6.1 Sub-questions

- Does power play a role in influencing news coverage and representation of student protests in institutions of higher learning?
- Which news values and routines inform news media's coverage of protests in institutions of higher learning?
- To what extent are the representations of student protests by the traditional news media linked to power and structural inequalities?
- How does the traditional news media's political economy influence how these protests are covered and portrayed?

1.7. Conclusion

South Africa's post-apartheid media representation of various issues including student protests has changed drastically over the years. The traditional news media and institutions of higher learning have been domains of coloniality and apartheid through enduring patterns of racialised inequalities inherited from the apartheid system. The chapter gave a historical account of student protests during and post-apartheid South Africa. This was captured in the background of the study as the researcher explained how the historical ideology that shaped the media is a residue of historical processes. The chapter also outlined the research problem, questions, and the study objectives. The next chapter explores literature in greater detail.

Chapter two: Literature review and theoretical framework.

2 Introduction

The previous chapter has highlighted the brief background of student protests in South Africa, with a focus on its evolution over the years and the background of the study of media representation. This chapter explores questions raised by different schools of thought about the representation of various protests and the theoretical underpinnings in literature. According to Munro (2019), citizens have been using various kinds of protests to voice their frustrations either with the government of the day or to change the status quo in various institutions. However, there has been a major concern about how they are either not covered or not accurately represented by the country's traditional news media. Haith (2015: 3) observes that coverage of protests especially student protests create "a narrative of otherness" as the media vilifies protestors and depicts them as a nuisance to society. The discourse about media coverage and representation of protests in South Africa has always been located within the historical structural inequalities that have perpetuated social injustices caused by the racial divide in the country. However, Lee (2015) argues that this has nothing to do with social inequalities and that the protests are not positively reported, it is because of the frequency within which they recur, that has created the media's apathy and ambivalence towards them and various factors that inform traditional news media representation of student protests.

Scholars such as Smith, McPhail, McCarthy, and Augustine (2001:1400) note that there is always a description bias that is in place when the news media covers and represents protests. While Smith *et al* (2001:1) are of the idea that objective matters such as the number of people who may be part of the protests may play no role in influencing media coverage. However, both believe that it is the operations and the organisation of media institutions that foretell what events get covered and which may not get coverage (Smith et al 2001: 4). Serbia (2015:12) points out that at times accurate coverage of protests may be hindered by the so-called gatekeepers that are used to pass through the information that represents the company's ideologies and its beliefs. Smith, Wilcock, and Condello (2015) concur that the gates are internal processes that dictate to the media organisations which protest actions should be covered and how should the public engage with the content.

Kilgo and Harlow (2019) observe that there is a hierarchy of social struggle in news media coverage and representation of student protests. They also agree that the organisational structures within the news media companies tend to marginalise and de-legitimise their protests. This means that student protests may not get their desired outcome if they are deemed not to have the characteristics of being newsworthy. Smith et al (2001) argues that, although, eventful social protests may be considered newsworthy, however, the media may use “description bias to reinforce ideas and interpretations that support the existing power structure”. To understand these claims it is important to discuss the attendant literature in the critical political economy of the media, and the decolonial epistemic lens.

2.1 Theoretical literature review

The critical political economy of the media and the decolonial epistemic lens are the theoretical tools that lend analytical weight to the study of news media representation of student protests in post-apartheid South Africa. According to Hardy (2014), the critical political economy of the media highlights four areas of concern. First, it seeks to demonstrate that student protest representation is shaped by obfuscated power configurations and enduring inequalities that characterise South Africa’s media space. Secondly, chiming with decoloniality the theory retrieves the concealed objectivation of students on the other side of modernity. Thirdly, power, knowledge, and identity centre these media representations. Fourth and final, the critical political economy of the media in general and the decolonial epistemic lens, explore the “hubris of the zero point”, a position that anchors the media in both the Global South and the Global North. The Hubris of the zero point is the assumed “detached and neutral point of observation where the knowing subject maps the world and its problems, classifies people, and projects what is good for them”.

2.2 Power configurations and inequalities in student representation

Post-apartheid, South Africa is still facing enduring social and economic power-related problems that may be a direct result of its historical colonial and apartheid past. Subreenduth (2013:215) notes, that the pervasive “hegemonic white power and control” that South Africa is experiencing is protected by the cooperative relationship between colonialism and apartheid. The skewed distribution of resources and unequal access to various important institutions such as higher education and the media continue to privilege the few and alienate the poor (Gumede 2014:5). The study is of the view that social inequalities that have engulfed multiple social and

economic spheres of the country are a contributing factor into the discrimination of the poor and the way their issues are reported and portrayed in the media.

Critical political economy approaches focus on the “unequal distribution of power and arrangements that continue to reproduce such inequalities” (Hardy 2016: 6). The unequal distribution of wealth and power in the country is manifested in a state where media ownership is concentrated in few hands “not even representative of the country’s demographics” (Gumede 2014:8). The location of the media structure and ownership in the capitalist relations of power play a significant role in “reproducing the exploitative socio-economic order by reflecting the interests of those in power” through their content (Furish 2009:395). This is despite the media institutions being part of the negotiations that happened during the processes of transformation (Kabwato 2016).

In the post-apartheid South African media landscape, “media structure allows them to be easily manipulated by those in power which are their so-called reliable sources which in many cases results in the dissemination of distorted information that further discriminate the poor” (Dahlgreen 1995:18). This has been observed many times during protests events, where the voices of the poor are not heard, and their issues are not accurately represented in media content. Various institutions in societies act as either “defenders or legitimisers of the status quo”, but the mass media especially the news has been used as a core system for distributing ideology as Fung (2000) opines the media can create and disseminate content that is oriented toward middle-class or neo-liberal perspectives (Hardy 2014: 12). The critical political economy of the media approach can connect the media to a broader social reality by questioning how the unequal allocation of resources in the production of cultural meaning enables society to understand and behave in the world.

South Africa is facing a prevailing socio-economic order which constantly dehumanises the poor and makes them ultimate victims. This is largely attributed to the news media which has become part of social structures that perpetuate the agenda of the “established powerful interests” (Hodskinson 2017:150). This critical political economy of the media approach assumes that the content carried by the media reflects the interests of their sponsors and advertisers (Chiumbu and Radebe 20220).

The critical political economy of the media approach can examine how the interests of those in power are kept alive and sustained through communication systems that favour the elite (Hardy 2014: 11). While remarkable strides were made concerning diversification and control of the

media by the inclusion of black ownership during transformation, however, their political economy and ideological influence have not changed (Kabwato 2016:). For example, in gatekeeping processes, several black editors are part of the newsroom, but they are given limited power to influence the content. Chiumbu and Radebe (2020:2) believe that the way the country's media is organised and funded has relevance to how content is structured and reported and "who gets to speak, and which stories get to be silenced".

The South African traditional news media owners employ and use gatekeepers to continue the ideology of the dominant class in attempts to silence dissidents (Furisch 2010). The country's largest audience share maybe with the broadcast media, but it is still the privately-owned media, especially the Press that sets the agenda (Kabwato 2016:14). The critical political economy of the media approach argues that the media content produced under such a capitalist system is motivated by nothing except profits and the attraction of more audiences (Doyle 2001:1). Profit-oriented media companies like the Press are in the business of maximizing their profit, and this can be attained by any form of persuasion including maintaining the status quo. The critical political economy of the media approach argues that the media are enablers of the exploitative socio-economic social orders and are an appropriate tool in examining the impact of power configuration and inequalities in media representation of student protests.

Looking at the history of South Africa, the historical considerations of the approach can be easily used as an instrument to analyse the post-apartheid news media representation of student protests. The approach acknowledges that through their gatekeepers such as editors, journalists, and writers, the media may have variable choices in choosing content, however, their choices may be structured within the "parameters of unequal distribution of material and resources in society" (Golding and Murdock 1996: 78). Critics of the critical political economy of the media approach, believe that though it may be useful in understanding ideologies, class, and power structures that influence media and its operation, however, it fails to deal with issues of race and social injustice suffered by the former colonised and apartheid territories (Chiumbu 2014:). Moyo (2020), suggests that the critical political economy of the media approach's location in the West makes it part and parcel of Eurocentric knowledge and ideologies that are indifferent to the problems of social inequalities caused by race, colonialism, and colonial differences in the formerly colonised territories. While Mignolo, (2007) argues that the critical political economy of the media as a Marxist project may be liberating but it is rooted within the local history of Europe, where it deals with class oppression and exploitation of labour,

therefore it is inappropriate in dealing with issues of the former colonised hence it is an extension of epistemic configurations that characterise modernity.

2.3 Objectification of students on the other side of modernity

Epistemic violence which projects itself as protests in many parts of the formerly colonised territories including South Africa, is the visible remnant of the deeply entrenched systems of colonialism and apartheid which have refused to be eradicated. Postcolonial and apartheid, South Africa has institutions such as higher education and news media operate as apparatuses involved in the perpetuating colonial and apartheid status quo. According to Bhabra (2014:118), there is an “enduring pattern of power system that has survived colonialism called ‘coloniality’ that is still in existence. It is through coloniality that “colonial forms of domination, exploitation, and racialisation of people by the dominant group continues in a postcolonial era”, (Chiumbu and Radebe 2020:3).

According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013:4), “coloniality - also known as modernity - which survived colonialism, is kept alive in books, education systems, the self-image of people, aspirations of self, and in all areas of the modern world”. Modernity which is also known as colonialism - is a concept based on Eurocentric ideologies and deeply entrenched in “structures of colonial dominance of the world”, (Bhabra 2014: 119). It is through coloniality/modernity that structures that were used to “dispossess lands from Africans, remove them physically, psychologically and delegate them to places of subordination” are hard to eradicate (Subrenduth 2013: 216).

Coloniality exists as the “invisible power of exploitation, domination, and racialisation of black people post-colonially” (Chiumbu and Radebe 2020:3). As Stroud and Kerfoot (2020: 4) state, coloniality can produce subjects that are socially located on the oppressed side to think and act like the ones in dominant positions. The media and higher education institutions have proven to be domains of coloniality that continue to protect and reproduce colonial power ideologies that promote ‘whiteness’ in South Africa (Bawa 2019:253). Such institutions are used as postcolonial institutions of authority that continue to privilege whiteness over ‘blackness’, cast black students to the periphery, and perpetuate the disaggregation of their humanity on the other side of modernity. It is through the media and education institutions that “colonial ideologies and practices of language that undermined black people and rationalized the cruelties of colonial dispossession” and racial hierarchisation of people still exists (Ndlovu-Gatsheni

2013). They are used as a means of constructing hegemonic messages of power through languages of colonialism and apartheid.

According to Stroud and Kerfoot (2013:11), also colonial languages were used as important tools in the “interpellation of colonial others, and displacement of indigenous languages in public spaces to control the interaction between the colonised and their masters”. It is through decoloniality that all “structures that still legitimise racial oppression, operations, and objectification of students on the other side of modernity can be destroyed (Subreenduth 2013: 217). Decoloniality differs from coloniality in the way that it is meant to liberate former colonised countries/peoples and disengage them from their colonisers. It is through decoloniality, that the formerly colonised countries can reject the perpetual asymmetrical world order that is still “sustained by the pedagogies and epistemologies of equilibrium that continue to produce alienated Africans, who are continuously socialised into despising the Africa that produced and natures them”, and adore the Europe and America, that have always rejected them (Ndlovu-Gatsheni: 2013:13).

Decoloniality is a critical social theory aimed at disengaging the former colonized parts of the world from global coloniality (Mignolo 2007: 5). It stemmed from the crisis brought by modernity/coloniality which doubted and questioned the humanity of black people and allowed their story to be told from the views of slavery, imperialism, and colonialism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: 13). Mignolo (2007: 13) contends that decoloniality allows “radical reframing of the original apparatus of enunciation and questions the modern foundation of control of knowledge and allows the former colonized to create their knowledge and tell their story as they know it”. Decoloniality allows for the excavation of the “epistemological hierarchies that have privileged Western knowledge over non-Western bodies and tradition of knowledge” (Zembyals 2018: 1). Decoloniality is a means for radical disruptions of former “apparatus of enunciation such as the media” Mignolo 2007:3).

2.4 Understanding power, knowledge, and identity in media representation

In contemporary South Africa, there is an expectation to have media and education institutions that act as agents of change and promote the liberation of the marginalised by ensuring that the continuous domination of the poor and their exploitation comes to an end. However, these institutions which are part of a global system that was created to subjugate the poor, have

continued to perpetuate Eurocentric views and ideologies that discriminate against those who are not from the Global North (Moyo 2020). Systems of representation such as the media and institutions of higher learning are constructed and developed through a Eurocentric point of view (Chiumbu 2013:12). As a result, representation of people and issues is then influenced by “global ethno-racial hierarchies and power structures that privilege one race over another” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: 3). The media create and produce content that still promotes dominant ideologies through a selection of news values and routines that safeguard principles of coloniality which continues to bifurcate the country’s society (Mignolo 2007).

Therefore, there is a need for decolonization, a method that can be used to critique the colonial systems used by the media to create content that is pro-colonialist and pro-apartheid. Decolonisation of media institutions may help in dealing with issues of skewed classification of the country’s society in media representation. Decolonisation is the only means that “coloniality can be completely resisted and total transformation from the transcendental imperialist systems can be realised on the other side of modernity by the former-colonized” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: 18). It is through decolonisation that the “epistemological hierarchisation of western knowledge that devalues non-western knowledge through coloniality” in higher education institutions and the media can be excavated (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: 11). The study argues that to expose coloniality in media representation of student protests there is a need to deploy a decolonial epistemic perspective approach. The decolonial epistemic perspective highlights that “coloniality is the invisible power and an integral part of the darker side of modernity” (Mignolo cited in Chiumbu 2016: 420).

The decolonial epistemic approach can critique the modern capitalist order by arguing that, in the media, there are asymmetrical power relations that control the representation of society. The main objective of the decolonial epistemic approach is to analyse discourses of representation from the view of the former colonised. What makes the approach different from dominant Eurocentric approaches is its location in “geographical spaces, borders, and peripheries of empires that suffered negative consequences of modernity such as apartheid and neo-colonialism” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2012:51). Representation is one of those colonial power matrices meant to control the objectification and subjectivities of black people, especially those who are poor. The decolonial epistemic perspective is based on three concepts of coloniality which are power, knowledge, and being. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2014:), the three concepts have buttressed each other in producing and sustaining global coloniality that works as a hidden power matrix that configures and sustains unequal power relations between the

Global North and the Global South. The study would use the three concepts to critique both media representation and the making of higher education institutions - the institution of objectification of students in South Africa.

The decolonial epistemic approach resists and exposes the invisible colonial power matrix that has destroyed “Institutions of knowledge, the cultural socialisation of African people, and their being in the Global South” (Moyo 2020: 133). It has been through the media that Europe and America have continued to maintain their presence in the Global South and exercise the power of exploitation and domination in the current modern world. They use the media to communicate and control the “modern classification of culture, race, and control” (Moyo 2020: 134). The capitalist elite uses the structure and their ownership of the media “to expand in space and create an environment that promotes capital exploitation and accumulation of wealth that has led to global influence” (Chiumbu and Radebe 2020: 3). The capitalist ownership structure of the media is connected to the kind of text structure of the media. It can be argued that what reporters gather and put in their content are the results of how their media company is shaped and how they use the agenda-setting of their funders. The study argues that there is a coloniality of power in the media and other institutions in South Africa. The concept of coloniality of power allows the study to understand and contextualise media ownership and its production of content from a world that is inherently capitalist and is centered on Eurocentric views about representation. Like in any other former colonised country, the media’s ways of reporting and creating content are closely linked to the economics, politics, and commercial interests of their former imperialist masters. They continue to create and disseminate stories that undermine the poor and legitimise the status quo by “enforcing the legacy of colonialism, neoliberalism, and modernity” (Nunez Pardo 2020: 119).

The language that is used in the media in addition, has a role in reproducing ways of knowledge that easily silence the voices of the subjects who occupy the lowest echelon in society. Coloniality of power in the media controls representation of issues which leads to objectification and subjectivities of black people, especially students of higher education institutions during protests. The media perpetuate Western ideologies that lead to racial stereotyping of black people (Moyo 2020: 315). It is through the media and institutions of learning that the self-value and lives of “people of colour are diminished, while Eurocentric – American life is treated as sacrosanct” (Moyo 2020: 136).

Decolonial theorists use the “coloniality of power to analyse how the systems of the modern world are used to continue the oppression of the poor” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2012: 52). The concept speaks to the issues of location and locus of enunciation as Chiumbu and Radebe (2020:3) state. The concept is important in analysing media ownership and organisation by looking deeper into the roots of asymmetrical power relations in South Africa and how the current modern South African media ownership influences the representation of student protests. Coloniality of power allows researchers to read and understand media ownership, production, and content from the capitalist Eurocentric view. The second concept embedded within the colonial matrix of power is the coloniality of knowledge. Coloniality of knowledge is concerned with “processes of knowledge production that are aimed at privileging Eurocentric views over others” (Bhabra 2014: 115). Coloniality of knowledge explains why in the modern world even in post-apartheid South Africa, “knowledge production in subjects such as History, views, and voices of the former marginalised are still silenced in historical narratives” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: 15). Chiumbu notes that it refers to “how African modes of knowledge production have been subordinated to Euro-American knowledge that assumes it represents universal proportion and truth as opposed to other world alternatives” (2016: 443).

According to Moyo (2020: 138), the coloniality of knowledge is seen through the Eurocentric patterns that have shown themselves as “universal, objective and neutral point(s) of view”. What is important about the coloniality of knowledge is that it speaks to the locus of enunciation. In Africa, the media are unable to extricate themselves from their former imperial masters, they address African issues from a Eurocentric social location. For example, gatekeepers and journalists may be geographically located in Africa, but they articulate issues that affect African subjects from a Euro-American point of view (Chiumbu and Radebe 2022) Due to the legacy of colonialism and apartheid, the media’s ways of coverage and representation of the country’s society have not transformed. The media is still able to hide its locus on enunciation by “speaking and following historical processes that inform their knowledge” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2012:5). Coloniality of knowledge is important in understanding how African knowledge has either been made obsolete or transformed into the knowledge that disempowers its citizens instead of empowering them.

The last and final concept entrenched in the colonial of power matrices is coloniality of being, Coloniality of being is speaking about the coloniality of power relations that have left deep-seated scars in ways humans previously suppressed understand themselves; and it “refers to the various forms of ontological exclusions” (Chiumbu 2016: 421). The concept is about Franz

Fanon's (1974) ideas of the wretchedness of the earth or, the curse of the earth. It talks about beings who are being socially excluded and have been moved away from the mainstream fold of society. These are beings who are found on the peripheries and "wastelands of the empire and sustained by a colonial matrix of power" (Mignolo 2007: 257). In the classification of society, coloniality of being puts marginalised people into the realms of nonbeing and never being offered opportunities to express their views in their everyday lived experiences. It is, for example, about the objectification, dehumanisation, and diminishing of voices of black students during protests about higher educational institutions in South Africa.

In media institutions, the coloniality of being is manifested in the unequal distribution of resources where they continue to disseminate and reproduce information that legitimises exploitation of the under-resourced. Media practitioners deny the poor access to their agency by not allowing political commentators and business elites to speak on their behalf. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (20019: 17) notes, that the coloniality of being is useful in analysing how "African humanity is questioned, and which processes have contributed towards their objectification, *thingification*, and commodification".

2.5 Hubris of zero point

Post-apartheid South Africa can be viewed as a country entangled with racism which perpetuates poverty that was perpetrated by colonialism and apartheid against black people. The end of colonialism and apartheid did not instantly obliterate colonial structures that kept black people in the peripheries of rich society and into the realm of poverty. There is still a hidden level of colonial power that exists and manifests itself as a form of racial discrimination that needs to be exposed in the media and other institutions of authority; such occurrences need to be observed from a neutral and detached point of view - a point of view described by Santiago, Castro Gomez as the "hubris of zero-point" (Mignolo: 2009:160). The media's zero point of observation takes the form of universal principles of objectivity, neutrality, and impartiality. For these reasons, to the formerly colonised territories, the hubris of zero-point became a sacred hidden space, as it "allowed journalists to hide from a neutral place of impartiality, that moved them away from their everyday experience and history to be objective and neutral" in their news reports, and into a compromised biased representation (Chiumbu 2013:13). The coloniality of knowledge in the media supports this point of observation and becomes successful in silencing the voices of the poor and relegating them to the margins of mainstream society.

To interrogate the coloniality of power that is a major cause of asymmetrical power that represents and manifests itself in news media content, there is a need to unveil the modern knowledge of reporting that continues to devalue the rights of the marginalised. This view is expressed by Mignolo (2009:19) who notes that racial hierarchy was conceptualised by the “West as the knowledge that configures certain bodies as inferior to others and those inferior bodies have inferior intellectual capabilities.” The media seemingly presents poor people as inferior and as humans with no intellectual capacity. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2010:52) states that at the core of media representation is the coloniality of power that ensures that South Africans are negatively represented by being “classified according to racial and economic status”.

To engage media representation discourse in post-apartheid South Africa, there is a need for the news media to disengage from Eurocentric methods of telling African stories. African news media need to let go of the Western ways of creating content that continues to “marginalise and exclude subjects of origin” (Nunez Pardo 2021: 118). The decolonial epistemic perspective is the dehumanising approach that can assist in freeing the African subject by allowing the enunciator to shift from the Euro-American point of view and speak from the locus of enunciation (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2010:3). The objective of the decolonial epistemic perspective is to reveal the epistemic injustices that continuously contribute to the subjectification of African people. The post-apartheid news media content is submerged in the zero-point epistemology by continuously favouring the views of the upper class. The media need to wake up from the transcendental Western universalism of being an “observer who is detached from the point they are observing” (Mignolo 2009: 3).

2.6 Conclusion

This theoretical literature review chapter has explored the critical political economy of the media, and the decolonial epistemic lens, the theoretical tools that lend analytical weight to the study of media representation of student protests in post-apartheid South Africa. The chapter has explored the four key strands of the critical political economy of the media and how the obfuscated power configurations and enduring inequalities shape South Africa’s media space and its representations. Secondly, chiming and intersecting with the critical political economy of the media is the decolonial epistemic lens. Using three concepts of coloniality of power, knowledge, and identity the chapter attempts to explore scholarly conversations on how racial inequalities can shape dehumanising frames in these media representations. The next chapter presents the methods section.

Chapter three: Research design

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology, data collection, and analysis process as well as a description of the methods that were used to compile and conduct this research study. In addition, it discusses qualitative research design, which is an approach used in the study. The population and sampling methods employed in this study are discussed in this chapter. The chapter also explains how data was collected and analysed. In subsequent sections validity, reliability, and ethical issues are discussed in detail.

3.2 Research design.

According to Scotland (2012: 09) “a paradigm is a set of beliefs consisting of components of ontology, epistemology, and methods.” A paradigm aims to explore the relationship between these components. As a result, the present study is also built upon the ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions of both interpretive and critical paradigms. The interpretive paradigm is concerned with understanding the world from the subjective experience of individuals (Deetz 1982).

Interpretive methods can give a “detailed understanding of behaviours and explain actions from the participant’s perspective” (Scotland 2012:12). An interpretive paradigm is appropriate for shedding light on news media representations of student protests in institutions of higher learning because it is through this form of paradigm that the researcher could better understand how news media coverage and their portrayal of issues are influenced by the ideologies of the dominant power interests. The paradigm will help in the thematic analysis of the stories of student protests in institutions of higher learning that were published by various newspapers in South Africa.

The critical paradigm’s assumptions are based on historical realism which is shaped by “social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender values” (Scotland 2012: 13). Methodologies of the critical paradigm are directed at exposing hegemony, and social injustice and challenge the conventional social structures. Scotland (2012: 14) notes that the critical paradigm,

however, “is not often accepted by existing powers as it exposes the way political ideology is inseparably intertwined with knowledge”.

3.3 Research approach

This study has used a qualitative research approach to answer the main question of media representation of student protests. The qualitative research approach is an “inductive, narrative inquiry strategy that enables a researcher to approach a setting without any predetermined hypothesis” and preconceived ideas about the objects of their study (Devos, Strydom, Fouche, and Delport (2011). The qualitative research approach has not only been chosen for its ability to study “human behaviours and their attitudes in their natural setting ‘without any external influence and interference’ but also for its ‘distinctive features in attempting to view the world through the eyes of the actor’s themselves’” (Babbie and Mouton 2011: 2017).

The approach emphasizes that researchers should be an integral part of the study by being active observers instead of just mere observers. Guest, Namey, and Mitchell (2013:09) explain the approach as, an “inductive thematic analysis strategy with defining features which involves identifying and coding emergent themes within data collected through open-ended questions”. Thus, the qualitative research approach was aimed at “locating, covering, and understanding” the phenomenon of media representation of student protest in institutions of higher learning between 2015 and 2023 and getting the views and convictions of people who were involved in the protests (Babbie and Mouton 2011). The qualitative research approach consists of two research designs which are exploratory and descriptive. The study uses both exploratory and descriptive designs. The designs are used through the theoretical frameworks of the critical political economy of the media and the decolonial epistemic perspective approach. The two theoretical frameworks have been used to explore the role that is played by power in influencing the media’s representation of student protests in institutions of higher learning. They have been used to examine how coloniality influences the making of subjectivities of students on the other side of modernity. That is because qualitative research designs can give an in-depth explanation of socially constructed meaning beyond a mere description of an event. Semi-structured interviews and document analysis were used to collect data for the study. The semi-structured interviews were chosen because the researcher aimed at “gaining a detailed picture of the participant’s beliefs or perceptions” about media representation of student protests (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, and Delport 2011:353). In addition, due to its “narrative

inquiry nature,” semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to approach a setting without preconceived ideas about the subjects of their study (Devos et al. 2011: 353).

The qualitative document analysis approach was used due to its multi-disciplinary nature. It can use many techniques that may include narrative, textual, and discourse analysis (Marrying 2000). The approach can be “used in all sorts of recorded communication be they transcriptions of interviews, discourses, videotapes, newspaper articles and including documents” (Marrying 2000: 13). The qualitative document dimension of the study is envisioned to be able to “provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomena under study” which is the representation of student protests by the media (Fang-Hsieh and Shannon 2005: 127). Researchers undertaking qualitative document studies to obtain data for their inquiry can use targeted questions after the open-ended ones.

3.4 Population and Sampling

This study has adopted qualitative research methods in which semi-structured interviews and document analysis were used to investigate the representation of student protests in institutions of higher learning from 2015 to 2023. Qualitative research is mainly concerned with discovering meaning to uncover multiple realities and not to generalise to a target population (Gunnarsson and Warren-Stomberg, 2009). Therefore, it follows that this form of research pursues types of sampling that both enhance information-rich data to maximise the understanding of a phenomenon and select settings with great potential for information richness.

The population of the study is all students who attended higher education institutions from 2015 to 2023 when the student protests occurred; all reporters from various news media houses who reported about them when they occurred; and all newspaper articles who reported about them. However, its target population is students who attended and were part of the student governance of three institutions of higher learning in Pretoria from 2015 to 2023 which are UNISA, UP, and TUT, and fifteen reporters who were assigned to cover these protests, and eighteen different newspaper articles. Two non-probability sampling methods - namely purposive and snowball/chain sampling were chosen for the study. The purposive sampling in this study adopted two key purposive sampling strategies which in turn determined the study’s inclusion and exclusion criteria. The two strategies are intensity sampling and criterion sampling. Intensity samples involve “information-rich cases that manifest the phenomenon of

interest intensely” (Polit and Beck 2012). Student Representative Councils (SRCs) in different universities were part of student governance and may have decided that protesting was necessary due to some unresolved issues in their institutions, and they would be well-versed in their goals and strategies. Therefore, in this case, the study only included students who were in the respective student representative council between 2015 and 2023 and excluded any students who were not in those councils. Criterion sampling involves selecting cases that meet a predetermined criterion of importance and are fertile with experiential information on the phenomenon of interest (Hildebrandt, 2009). Journalists who covered and wrote stories about the protests for different newspapers are viewed as the most important respondents for the study, due to their experience in covering the protests. The snowball sampling method, also known as the referral sampling method, was chosen due to the researcher’s knowledge of the sample frame. It was a means to help locate the respondents who would be used as participants for the study especially those who were part of the news production processes that the researcher might not have been aware of.

In total, fifteen respondents, nine student representative council members from three institutions of higher learning in Pretoria, and fifteen journalists from different media houses were selected. The SRC members were part of student governance between 2015 and 2023 at the University of South Africa (UNISA), the University of Pretoria (UP), and the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT). The researcher ensured that she got at least three respondents from each university who were supposed to participate and six journalists who covered the protests. The study did not include current journalists who may have covered the higher learning student protests after 2015 and 2023, while the student representative council members were those who were part of leadership between 2015 and 2023 when the student protests occurred. The journalists were selected based on their experience and that they covered the protests irrespective of the media house they worked for.

For document analysis, using the purposive sampling method the research purposively selected nineteen news articles from national and provincial newspapers which were published daily and weekly between 2015 and 2023. The newspaper articles were randomly selected because they covered student protests between 2015 and 2023. The randomly selected articles were from The Star, Sowetan, Business Day, and Pretoria News. The newspaper articles were accessed on SA Media (SABINET) through the University of South Africa libraries (<https://0-discover-sabinet-co-za.oasis.unisa.ac.za/search?Search>).

This was done by looking at the fact that, South African press media has come a long way from during apartheid when it was controlled by all forms of policies that ensured that black people do not get information and their stories are not accurately covered and represented (Bauer 2009). These restrictive policies also cascaded in media markets concerning ownership and state censorship. Post-apartheid South Africa, the newspaper industry is still dominated by Four Media companies which is Media24, Caxton/CTP, Independent News & Media, and Avusa (Angelopulo, Potgieter, Noam and Mutter 2016::989). After 1994, there may have been a measure of shake-up in the industry due to the ownership and newspaper circulations, but these media groups still dominate the markets. For example, Media 24 publishes over fifty newspaper titles in the country, among them the Daily Sun which is one of the bestselling newspapers in the country. While Caxton/CPT publishes more than eighty newspaper articles many of them being community newspapers. The Star and Pretoria News are part of the newspaper group owned by Independent Media. Other newspaper articles that were used in the study were: City Press and Sowetan, Sunday Times, and Business Day which belong to Arena Holdings. All these newspaper articles were chosen with the knowledge that they cater to a different market which is the rich and middle class excluding the poor.

3. 5 Data collection

Researchers conducting research informed by critical research design “draw on analysis model used in humanities” (Wimmer and Dominick 2011: 115). “The data collection method in qualitative research can be in various forms such as field observation, focus group, semi-structured and unstructured interviews, case study, document analysis, and ethnography” (Wimmer and Dominick 2011: 25). However, data for this study was collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews and document study. The in-depth interviews were in the form of a formalised conversation between the participant and the researcher intended to understand the lived experience of the participants concerning student protests in institutions of higher learning and the meanings they made about media coverage and portrayal of those protests.

3.5.1 Units of Analysis

Once the semi-interviews were done the researcher transcribed the interviews and used the transcripts as units of analysis and stories about student protests that took place in institutions

of higher learning from 2015 to 2023 which were published in newspaper articles within the related time frame. Analysis of mass media documents, especially newspaper articles include coding content into themes to interpret them and gain an understanding of how the protests were reported and portrayed.

3.6 Methods of data collection

Data collection in qualitative research can be achieved through various methods, among them “field observations, focus groups, in-depth or semi-structured interviews, case studies, document analysis, and ethnography” (Wimmer and Dominick 2011: 124). For the present study, data was collected through document analysis and semi-structured interviews. The two qualitative data collection methods were used to understand the experience and to get the views of the participants about the traditional post-apartheid news media representation of student protests in institutions of higher learning.

3.6.1 Semi-structured interviews

Devos, Strydom, Fouche, and Delport (2011: 319) explain in-depth or semi-structured interviews as an “extension of formalised interaction and a conversation between individuals to understand other people’s experiences and the meaning they make of their experiences”. There are various reasons behind qualitative data being collected through semi-structured interviews. Firstly, they use a small purposive sample, with the intention not to generalise the results of the findings of the study to the general population. Secondly, it is a flexible method that allows for lengthy observations of participants' non-verbal responses. Thirdly, they can be customised according to an individual respondent. Finally, it is through semi-structured interviews, that a researcher can ask open-ended questions which allow the participants to elaborate on their responses and are not as close-ended as those of quantitative methods.

In this study, all the semi-structured interviews were supposed to be conducted through a virtual communication tool, MS Teams. Since the start of Covid 19, virtual communication tools such as Zoom, WhatsApp, and Facebook have become alternative data collection tools for many researchers (Sah, Singh, and Sah 2020). The tool was chosen due to its cost-effectiveness and that participants would be able to participate in the interviews in the comfort of their homes. However, due to various factors such as load shedding, other participants were not able to

access their Microsoft Teams. As a result, the interviews were then conducted through Microsoft Team telephone calls.

The interviews were aimed at investigating and understanding factors that influence news media representation of student protests at institutions of higher learning in post-apartheid South Africa. The researcher asked open-ended and probing questions which allowed the respondents time to think and elaborate on their responses by giving detailed narratives of their experiences of the protests and their thoughts on how they thought the protests were covered and portrayed in the news media. While some of the interviews were virtual, they were recorded through an audio recording device and a cell phone sound recorder to capture the full details of the interviews, and a notepad was used to take notes that were later transcribed for analysis (Mayring 2000). For data saturation, during the analysis of the data, the researcher used theoretical sampling to develop categories and emerging theory, so that the researcher could be able to return to the same participants should additional data and information be needed (De Vox, 2011:392).

3.6.2 Selection of participants and the reason behind their selection

The selection of the participants in the study was carefully made to ensure its quality. At first, the researcher intended to select thirty-two participants for the research, however, due to the unavailability of many participants she ended up recruiting fifteen available participants among them, 9 current and former SRC members from three institutions of higher learning, UNISA, UP, and TUT; and six journalists, from different news media houses. The SRC members were chosen because they were part of student governance when the protests took place in institutions of higher learning between 2015 and 2023 and understood the strategies and the goals of their institutions as part of student leadership. The journalists were chosen because they were at the forefront of the coverage of the student protests between 2015 and 2023. Their selection was not based on the media house they work for. Some of them were chosen because they were seasoned journalists who had been in the field for quite some time who knew and understood the news production cycle very well. The chosen SRC members were all young people who came from various social and family backgrounds and some of them could have experienced the challenges that were faced by many students in institutions of higher learning in the country.

In selecting the number of participants, the researcher had to look at the two most important criteria of appropriate participants - which are sufficiency and saturation. In the criterion of sufficiency, the researcher considered whether the number of participants chosen for the study represented the population of the sample of the study that is outside and those who may have a chance to connect with the experiences of those who were chosen (Devos et al 2011). Saturation means a point where the interviewer will begin to hear the same information repeated to the point where no new information will come up.

3.6.3 Details of SRC members who participated in the study.

NAMES	GENDER	INSTITUTION	INTERVIEW
SRC 1	Male	UP	Microsoft Team call
SRC 2	Male	UNISA	Microsoft Team call
SRC 3	Female	UP	Microsoft Teams call
SRC 4	Male	UNISA	Microsoft Teams
SRC 5	Male	TUT	Microsoft Teams
SRC 6	Male	TUT	Microsoft Teams
SRC 7	Female	TUT	Microsoft Teams
SRC 8	Female	UNISA	Microsoft Teams
SRC 9	Male	UP	Microsoft Teams

3.6.4 Details of journalists who participated in the study.

NAME	GENDER	INTERVIEW
Journalist 1	Male	Microsoft Teams
Journalist 2	Male	Microsoft Teams
Journalist 3	Male	Microsoft Teams

Journalist 4	Male	Microsoft Teams
Journalist 5	Female	Microsoft Teams
Journalist 6	Male	Microsoft Teams

3.6.5 The importance of the interviews

According to Babbie and Mouton (2011:289), qualitative interviews are meant to be an “interaction between a researcher and an interviewee, where the interviewer will have a set of questions, she will ask in a particular order”. Qualitative interviews are “flexible, iterative and continuous” as they are not prepared ahead of time (Babbie and Mouton 2011: 289). Qualitative interviews are also explained by Devos et al. (2011:343) as, “a social relationship designed to trade information between a researcher and a participant”. The semi-structured interviews used in the study were a guide that the researcher used to obtain information about media representation of student protest in institutions of higher learning. It was a means to understand the experience of the participants who were either part of the protests by organising them or who were covering them for their media houses. “Semi-structured interviews are not only used for the researcher to get detailed information from the participants about their experiences with a certain topic, but they also view the respondents as experts on the subject who need to be given enough opportunity to tell their stories” (Devos et al. 2011: 350). Through the semi-structured interviews, the researcher was able to engage deeply with the topic of the study which is “media representation of student protests in institutions of higher learning” without being subjective or detached.

3.6.6 The interview process

The first contact with the participants was made via e-mails, phone calls, and WhatsApp. For the participants who were contacted via e-mail, a letter detailing the study was sent to them and asked them to be participants in the study. However, most of them did not reply to the letters. The researcher then decided to contact them via phone calls and e-mails. She started by either calling or sending a WhatsApp message to SRC members of the three higher education institutions which are, UNISA, University of Pretoria, and Tshwane Technology University.

Still, the SRC members of the University of South Africa and UP were hard to reach until the researcher contacted people, she knows from these institutions and asked for their help. The first interview was with the three TUT SRC members who agreed to participate.

While the interview was in progress, the researcher sent WhatsApp messages to the UNISA SRC members, some of them initially agreed to participate, but they later ignored the researcher's messages. They were finally located through their Sunnyside office in Pretoria South Africa, where the researcher got a contact of one SRC member. The contact with journalists was not that difficult because the researcher was familiar with the industry. The most difficult part in planning an interview with a field journalist is that they are not able to give a researcher a specific time frame of their availability due to the kind of work they do. For those who agreed, a list of questions was sent to them via e-mail with deadlines for response. All the interviews were meant to be via Microsoft Teams. However, for SRC members there were times when it was difficult for them to join the interview on Microsoft Teams due to either being in rural areas where there was no network, or in areas where there was frequent load-shedding. In such instances the researcher used Microsoft Team call to call them directly and put them on Microsoft Teams. While some journalists preferred the interviews to be conducted through Microsoft Team calls, however all of them when conducted through Microsoft Team meetings. Most of the interviews which were supposed to take an hour took a little longer than an hour. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis later.

3.6.7 Document study

Another form of data collection method used in the study was document study. According to (Davos et al. 2005:377), "the source of document study as a method of collecting data varies according to data criteria". The category of document study that was used in the present research to collect data was the mass media. The form of mass media documents that were collected for analysis were newspaper articles that documented protests of students in institutions of higher learning between October 2015 and 2023. The newspaper articles that were used in the study were primarily written with the perspective of informing the public about these student protests. This qualitative data collection approach enabled the researcher to obtain a significant amount of data that was critically analysed through thematic analysis.

For the document study, the researcher purposively selected different editions of national and provincial newspaper articles clippings about student protests which were published either

daily or weekly between October 2015 and 2023. Among the national daily newspaper editions clippings that were targeted and randomly selected for the study were: The Star, Sowetan, City Press, Pretoria News, Sunday Times, and Business Day. The clippings of the newspaper articles were accessed on the SA Media (SABINET) website through the University of South Africa libraries (<https://0-discover-sabinet-co-za.oasis.unisa.ac.za/search/Search>). During the selection of the newspaper clippings on the website, the researcher used a list of keywords such as “#Feesmustfall campaign”, “Student protests “and Protests in institutions of higher education”. Through the technique, the researcher managed to get more than 40 newspaper clippings about student protests in institutions of higher learning and selected only nineteen which were saved in a folder for analysis later.

3.7 Data analysis

Data analysis is a “process of breaking raw data into small segments and reassembling it to transform it into findings” (Boeije 2010:102). According to Grbich (2010: 25), data analysis allows the researcher to engage with the data by “checking and tracking it to see what is coming out of it and maybe identifying areas which may need follow up.” It is a dimensional process that allows a researcher to use “multiple methodological frameworks to analyse data” (Devos et al. 2022: 401). Qualitative data analysis in qualitative research involves identifying themes and patterns that appear in the data. Therefore, to address the main questions of the study, the data that was collected through the semi-structured interviews and document study was critically analysed through thematic analysis. This is because according to Maguire and Delahunt (2017:3352), the advantage of using thematic analysis as a method of analysis is that “it is not tied to a particular epistemology or theoretical perspective”.

As the study did not intend to use qualitative content analysis, through thematic analysis the researcher used the method to identify patterns, extract codes, and search for themes that could be used to address the research questions and fulfil the objectives of the study. In terms of the semi-structured interviews, analysis of the data once transcribed, six steps of thematic data analysis were followed. Firstly, familiarise oneself with the data by reading and rereading the transcripts; this phase entails the researcher taking notes and writing down her early impressions of the data (Maguire and Delahunt 2017). After that, the data was organised in

systematic ways and coded. This was meant to reduce the data into small chunks. After coding the data, the researcher started to look for themes and review them to see if they made sense and colour-coded data that was associated with each code. Finally, the themes were refined with the “aim of identifying the essence of what each theme is about” (Maguire and Delahut 2017: 3311). The same process was used during the analysis of newspaper articles.

3.8 Qualitative research

In qualitative research, “researchers must ensure that all conventional criteria of good research are followed” (Devos et al 2011: 419). Qualitative researchers are expected to immerse themselves in the entire process of research by always thinking about the quality of their research. This should be done by ensuring that their study covers the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. To ensure the criterion of credibility, the researcher had to ensure that the “findings of the study were presented clearly and in a meaningful manner” (Kitto, Chesters, and Grbich 2008: 243). Qualitative researchers need to make sure that different methods of data collection are used to ensure the credibility of their study. In this research, the researcher used semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Data collected from different sources would help to support the research.

The researcher in addition made sure that she debriefed her peers about every step taken during the process of the research. Another step was to make sure that her work was checked by other people in the same field to ensure its credibility. Data obtained through qualitative research methods were shared with other academic peers and her supervisor. The criteria of transferability would be achieved by ensuring that the findings of the study could be transferred to other settings. This would be done by referring to the theoretical framework to explain how data collection was affected and guided by every concept and model that was used. The criteria of dependability would be ensured by including all accounts of activities taken in the study so that others could make their judgment that the results of the study could be trusted and if the entire investigation could be repeated with the same method.

3.8.1 Ethical considerations

“It is every researcher's responsibility to ensure that, their research is ethically sound, and it always protects the participants. Qualitative researchers need to make sure that they honour the

“ethical issues that are associated with data collection in an instance where they would be interviewing people” (Devos et al. 2011: 348). To meet the above-mentioned standards the researcher requested permission and explained to the participant how their information would be used and with what intention. The researcher was obliged to ensure that participants consented to the study.

The participants were told that they were not obliged to participate in the study if they did not want to. They were made aware that the study was voluntary and there was no monetary compensation to be obtained. Among other issues, it was clarified that the study did not intend to collect sensitive or high-risk data. The data collected was solely used for this research. The participants were informed that their responses would not be reused for other projects.

Participants were allowed to ask questions before they committed themselves to the study. The researcher explained every detail requested by the participants to allay their fears about being part of this study. No participant was forced or tricked to be part of this study. During the information collection process, participants were constantly reminded that if they did not feel like continuing to be part of this study they were not compelled to do so. The researcher ensured that the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants were guaranteed and respected.

3.9 Summary

Chapter 3 has outlined the research designs used in the study. The kind of data collection method which was semi-structured interviews and document study was explained, as well as the kind of sampling method that was used. The chapter in addition unpacked relevant methods for data analysis, how participants were selected, and the interview process was explained in detail. Chapter 3 concluded with the ethical considerations of the study. The next chapter is a presentation of the study findings.

Chapter four: A presentation of research findings

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the data gathered from various sources of information meant to investigate post-apartheid media representation of student protests in institutions of higher learning which are linked to reviews of relevant literature. The data for the study was qualitatively collected through document analysis and semi-structured interviews. The findings in the fourth chapter are presented according to the five themes that emerged from the recurring patterns observed when the data obtained from document study and semi-structured interviews were coded. The themes were media coverage and representation of protests, Racial divide as a form of discrimination in representation, Ownership of the media, Power influence in the representation of protests, and decolonisation of the media.

4.2. Findings

4.2.1 Media coverage and representation of protests

When the 2015 student protests started in South Africa's institutions of higher learning, many questions were raised about the way the traditional post-apartheid news media covered and represented them. The findings of the data that was collected and analysed through thematic analysis indicated that coverage and their depiction in the media seemed to have been different and challenging according to the views of some of the participants and the data obtained from document analysis. The interview with an SRC 5 participant confirmed that there was a difference in the way the protests that happened at the historically black institutions were covered and represented compared to those that took place at the historically white institutions:

I think that will depend on which institution you are talking about, I have seen that there is a difference in the way our protests here at TUT, are covered when we compare to other institutions that are financially better than here.

This informant response is reflected by the *Sunday Times* article written by Hyman and Laganparsad (2016:1) titled “*Death, serious injuries mar demos*” which focuses more on what was happening and calls it a battle that has turned into violence instead of saying it is a protest where students are calling for free education:

There were multiple casualties on both sides of the battle for free tertiary education this week, with protests becoming increasingly violent on university campuses. Tshwane University of Technology student died after being hit by car, student leader was admitted to hospital after being shot in the back 13 times with rubber bullets at the University of the Witwaters- Rand, and two security guards at the University of Cape Town were seriously injured by students. Police say 567 people have been arrested in connection with student protests over the past eight months.

The article’s focus deviates the public’s attention on why there is so much chaos in these institutions and what has happened before these incidents and delves deeper into issues that affect students in these institutions. The very same sentiment is echoed by SRC 6 and 7 from the same institutions who believe that their issues are never contextualised and accurately covered:

You know, TUT students protest almost every year at the start of the academic year, we protest for so many reasons which may include financial exclusion, a situation where a student is struggling to register for a new semester because they owe the institution money, and other issues, but issues like that are hardly mentioned in the media, our protests are never covered accurately. I feel like the media sort of look at what they want and how they want their story to be and use that, and just say one line about what the students are complaining about. What, I mean is that our issues are never covered accurately.

For example, it is always different when students from my Institution TUT, protest, because we may start our protest on Monday at 5 am, and continue until maybe late in the afternoon, but to be honest with you no media will show up to cover our protests, they will come only if we burn things, that is then we will get their attention. But when the same thing happens in other institutions like the University of Pretoria or Wits trust

me their protest will be covered, and they will be all over our TV screens. I mean this shows that there is a difference in the way that these protests are covered and portrayed. In places like TUT, most students who study there come from disadvantaged backgrounds, so it seems as if their problems are not taken seriously.

The data also showed that even students and SRC members from other institutions especially the historically white institutions are aware that there is a difference in the way that the media covers and represents student protests in the two different institutions. SRC 6 from the University of Pretoria, concur that these protests were covered and represented differently according to their intensity, the more intense they were, they had more chances of being recognised and covered by the media:

If you talk about student protests that happened in different institutions, I will say, the way the media represent them differs. Also, it may be about the intensity of the protests itself. If the protests are violent, you are likely to see them represented that way in the media. But a big but, when protests are peaceful, the media seem not to be interested.

Interestingly, some journalists echoed similar sentiments and believed that media coverage of protests including student protests in post-apartheid South Africa still covered the same way they were covered during apartheid when the country and its institutions were divided between Black and White, Journalist 1, had this to say during the interviews:

You remember South Africa was divided into two, we had institutions of higher learning that were solely meant for black people, the Historically Black universities, and those who were predominantly white. Now you see, you need to strike a balance there as to ... OK, fine, how were they covered because I am not even sure. After all, before even the media was divided. You have someone telling us that even the Sowetan was catering to black people and the Citizen was catering to the pro-Whites.

Journalists from different media houses believe that the different ways of coverage of the events might have been caused by traditional news values of journalism such as proximity, sourcing, and novelty. Two former Media 24 reporters, both agreed that factors such as geographical proximity played a role, in the coverage and representation of the protests, as Journalists 6 stated that, assignment editors assign journalists to stories that were closer to their media houses because “if the protests are at Wits, it will be useless for editors to assign someone who is in Pretoria to go cover that protest”. Journalist 5 remembered a protest that was not covered by

any media house, “as they were not aware of it until students started burning tires and holding staff hostage”:

But what I have also noticed is that last year, there were protests at the Agricultural College in Vaalbank; they protested for many days their protests were not covered because that area is rural and is also far-flung, it took a while for media houses to pick up what was going on. So, eh – eh – eh! The students had to intensify their protests, so if they were closer to the media house than where they were, their protests could have been covered earlier because they had to protest for a few months before they were recognised.

According to journalists, for student protests to be covered on time, their sources in tertiary institutions have a responsibility to tell them on time that there are protests that have been planned because SRC leaders have contact numbers of all journalists. It is upon the students or their leaders to make reporters aware if they are planning to protest, Journalist 3 reported:

Remember as journalists we have sources. You may find that for instance, at UNISA I have three sources or four sources that always brief me about the happenings in the institutions. For example, back in the day, it was difficult to get stories of kids that were raped at universities but now everything that happens is relayed to a journalist who would get either from social media or because she already knows someone from that institution.

The claim is repeated by Journalist 6, who remembers a time when he was working for print media and the role the media played in telling the stories of protestors:

I worked for print myself. It was a very hectic time because as a journalist you have your source. Your source would let you know about what is happening, you know like sort of update you, about what would be happening then. You know again, I think the media both print and broadcast played a major role in telling the stories of the students. And even now, I believe that, if there is a protest, it is because of the media that people know what is happening in those institutions.

However, SRC 5 utters a contrary assertion, as he believes that the reason student protests are covered differently is because of their frequent occurrence especially when the new academic year starts, when students protest for reasons which may include financial exclusions; as a result, the media seem not interested in covering them because they would not be new events

but a repeat of previous year's happenings, so they are no longer something new. While the media claim that they use student leaders as their sources of information during protests, however, the data has shown that their immediate source of information is the elite, such as the Department of Education spokesperson or the institutions' management whom they refer to as credible sources who give them factual information about student's issues. The information that was published in *The Star* (2015) newspaper article supports the claim that the media prefers the views of those in power as it published the views of the Department of Education and silenced the voice of the protestors:

The Higher Education Department says it is disturbed by the violent protests which erupted at the University of KwaZulu-Natal on Sunday night and yesterday, and saw the Westville Campus forced to shut its gates. According to university spokesperson Nonnah Zondo, the university is profoundly troubled by the violence, staff intimidation, and property destruction.

The articles show that the journalist's first point of contact seems to have been the Department of Education instead of the students themselves since departmental views have been reported first. While the views expressed by journalists and SRC members about the media coverage and representation of the 2015 to 2023 student protests may differ according to institutions, however, there is consensus among SRC members that media coverage of protests is important because it may at times help to expose problems that beset students in institutions of higher learning. For that to happen, good coverage of protests may be needed so that people or companies may be encouraged to financially help the struggling students. SRC 1 argues:

We might get sponsorship from people who are watching and might realise that these students are struggling, and they should help. For instance, last year there were problems with NSFAS, but if we had media on our side we could have opted for better decisions. I mean proper media coverage. I think we might have gotten a lot of sponsorship that could have helped students in need.

The bone of contention about the protests is not only the way they are covered; it is also the way they are represented in the media and the way protestors are characterised. SRC members do not endorse the way protests are portrayed in the media. SRC 2 expresses her views on the way the post-apartheid traditional news media report read, especially student protests:

Look, we are not naïve about the media and its role in terms of disseminating information in society. But we also know that we are living in a society that is highly

polarised and of course, we have a media that is extremely biased in terms of reporting issues that affect the public. Eh, our media in general is not as independent as one would like it to be, it does not report fairly, and what you hear and see in the media is different from what you see on the ground.

Students complain that they are not happy about media biases towards a certain class of students whose protests are presented as less important but as instances of vandalism. Students would be demonised by being called vigilantes and allowing management officials to call them using names such as hooligans, miscreants, and malcontents; just as in the Sowetan article published in 2023 where the institution spokesperson called the protestors hooligans when interviewed by the media: “Negotiating with hooligans is a futile exercise as they do not engage in good faith”. Such an utterance is derogatory and frustrating because it shows that the media do not know what students go through in these institutions. According to SRC 2 and 9 respectively, SRC 2:

Students do not just go and burn buildings or shut down universities. We revolt because we cannot breathe anymore, the revolution is because management does not hear our specific cry, you know. So, there are many ways that students can get attention, by burning tires and so forth, but management can be extremely arrogant at times because they protect resources instead; they can frustrate students by drafting extra security on campus. So, as leaders and students, we are sometimes pushed to the edge in terms of what kind of protests we should engage in - get management's or the government's attention because if we cannot get the attention of the management of the universities, we have to get the attention of other stakeholders and of course, if burning tires would be what brings about attention to our issues, then let the tires burn!”

SRC 9:

Tell me what happened during the #Fees Must Fall era. What happened there? For those students, the only thing they did was just to be able to access education and to be able to get an education and hopefully become something in life. But what were the media saying about them, what were they saying about those black students? Radio stations were busy calling students anarchists. How can you say a poor black student who is trying to ensure that their voice is heard is an anarchist? When would be the time when a black person tried to negotiate peacefully and succeed? Now it seems as if

they have learned from their fathers and their forefathers that if a person wants something to be done, they need to protest so that they are heard.

SRC 1, who was a student at the University of Pretoria at the time of the research, said they had never experienced any problem with the media before,

The media came to cover our protests regardless of who was protesting. We had two strikes in 2021, and in 2022 we had two, but I could not participate in them anymore because I was busy with my practical. Last year we had one huge protest and of course, the media did cover our story. I would like to believe that they did not look at the name of the institutions, or whether they had money or not.

4.2.2 Racial divide as a form of discrimination in media representation

The news media are regarded as the most important source of information in society. However, in South Africa, the post-apartheid news media have been seen as the main arbiter of the segregation of the country's society splitting them “ between citizens who can easily access platforms where they can make their voices heard and influence policy and those who are completely excluded from the public domain” (Wasserman and Chuma 2018: 3) The pervasive racial divide in the country's society is not only visible in many institutions such as those of higher learning but they can also be seen in the way issues and events are covered and represented in the media, as per the observation of participants 3 and 9, SRC at TUT and UNISA members who have given reasons, why they think racial division in this country is not only racial discrimination but is also financial discrimination because it happens in Historically Black Institutions which are attended by many black students. These views are shared by SRC 3 and 9:

The problem with the Historically Black Institutions is that they are populated by students who are a product of SASSA, who come to the institutions and apply for NSFAS, while the Historically White Institutions, like your Wits and UCT are populated by students who are products of either private schools or elite government schools.

It is through the lens of the country's racial inequalities that SRC members view and dissect the coverage and representation of protests in institutions of higher learning in South Africa;

according to the explanation of Participant 9, an SRC member who gave the following response:

I believe the media is working for a certain class of people. Just as I have said, South Africa is a class country, we are classified not only according to our race but also according to our ability to afford or not to afford a certain lifestyle. Ask yourself questions like, who buy the Sunday Times or the Business Day?

Another perception is that it is not only in the institutions of higher learning where one finds a racial division that fuels unequal treatment of the country's society, but it is also in magazines and other forms of representation where one finds that certain media prefers to put certain individuals in their magazines than those who are poor and this shows that there is no media interested in portraying the poor black person in a positive light, as Participant 9 states:

And again, in South Africa, there are certain types of media creating certain types of information. So, now, if a student appears in FORBES under 30, she is there for the good time, she is there as a member of a certain class. And when she appears in those farm magazines and farming newsletters, it is good because it covers news that is particularly for that niche. But now when it comes to students, which media is responsible for covering student stories?

It is the pain that is caused by the preservation of the previously normalised practices in historically white universities that reproduce the same status quo, that make students feel disgruntled because of being marginalised and disregarded; as SRC 6 who studied at the University of Pretoria, elaborates:

When studying at an institution like UP, your poverty becomes exposed because everyone will know that you are from a poor family. What I am saying is that it would be not only the White and Indian students who come from rich families who do not understand your situation but their kind as well. There are also other black students, I am not talking about international students, I am talking about our black sisters and brothers who are from rich families who may not understand one's poverty. So, just imagine, if your people do not understand, tell me how the media, a former white capitalist institution can understand man-made black poverty.

Some believe that the distinction between the rich and the poor in the country is more visible in institutions of higher learning, where many students who are from poor rural families must

depend solely on the government for financial assistance while others are financed by their rich families. Journalist 6 explains:

I must admit that in South Africa, now we live in a much-divided society because some are rich, and others are poor. These issues are seen in these institutions. A student from a far-flung rural area, maybe Limpopo, who comes to study at Wits or TUT or any other institution, they are going to have it hard if they are not from a rich family. They would have to depend on NSFAS, and we have heard how students who depend on NSFAS struggle these days. I think what a pity that is; it is just that those deeper issues are not reflected in the media. I believe that maybe the media could do better and tell the story behind what we see, behind what is happening.

The perception of racial division is also seen in an article written by Macupe (2016) where a democratic student organisation, a student organisation that belongs to the country's elite and is mostly populated by white students, advised its members not to engage in the potential shutdown over fees must fall as it will disadvantage them and waste learning and teaching time:

The Democratic Alliance Student Organisation (Daso) has advised students not to participate in potential campus shutdowns over fees as this will disadvantage them and waste learning and teaching time. Daso leader Yusuf Cassim said the organization was "strongly opposed to campus shutdowns". He said the shutdown would not solve the problem. "Such a move will only make the situation worse for all students, especially those from poor backgrounds, by disrupting valuable academic teaching and support," Cassim said.

This is an indication of opposing thoughts and views between the rich and poor about the student protests. It also broke open the fact that there was a serious racial division between black and white students when it came to financial exclusions and inclusion in these institutions especially the Historically White ones. Most of the students who belong to the organisation are those who do not worry about where the money to finance their studies would come from, a point that is supported by SRC 8 which believes that rich students do not need financial support from the government:

I think that what we could also understand is that the rich students would never strike, why would they strike because they have everything they need? So, now those who do not have and whose voices are not heard would resort to protests.

Some journalists and SRC members express similar views that the representation of student protests is more racially inclined, a form of racial division in institutions of higher learning where protests are represented as a black face. Journalist 5 states the following:

You know as a person who has been out there in the field seeing students when covering those stories, what I have seen is that most students who protest are black. So that is what you see in the media – a black representation that is how they are represented in the media, they sought to have like a black face. Whenever there is a protest t, you go there and find black students, and you seldom see white students, Indian students, or Coloured students. It is always a blackface fighting for whatever cause, they might be fighting for.

All of this is an eye-opener on how divided students in the institutions of higher learning are. There seems to be a wide gap between students who do not worry about how they are going to finance their studies and those who must fight for funding each year in post-apartheid South Africa due to poverty. However, such issues were never reported in detail in many newspaper reports. For example, in an article that was published by The Citizen in 2016, the protests were not viewed holistically and no contexts behind them were given, instead the newspaper article made them look like they were meant to target historically white institutions such as Wits University, information that may not have made sense to some readers because the audience because it would not have had made sense for students to target an institution where they study. While it is understandable that the connection between institutions of higher learning and government subsidies can never be taken lightly, however, student issues must take precedence in media reports, as it is the media's responsibility to ensure that the public gets clear information about issues of public interest.

4.2.3 Ownership of the media

The pattern of concentration of media ownership in South Africa indicates that the newspaper industry is owned and controlled by four media companies that are dominant in the publishing market, including Avusa, Naspers, Independent News and Media which are owned by Sekunjalo Investments, and CTP/Caxton. (Angelopoulos and Potgieter 2013: 303). These companies control almost the greatest share of the market, with Media 24 publishing more than

fifty newspaper titles which include Your Daily Sun and Sowetan, newspapers that are mostly meant for the black market (Angelopoulos and Potgieter 2013: 304).

This pattern indicates a situation that is more likely to enable an environment where some newspapers meant for the black market can be accessible to only black suburban middle class, and they will be the only ones who can articulate their feelings and voice their opinions by using the commercial mass media that is at their disposal because they can afford to pay for their content. The rest of the country's society - especially the poor - would still have to contend with using other means such as protests, to voice their opinions and "to attract the attention of the media if they want their issues to be featured on both commercial and public spaces" (Tomaselli and Tomaselli 2019: 46). This cements the idea that while the ownership of the media is still in the hands of the few elites, who may not care about most of the country's society, it is still the few people - especially the white minority - who own the media, especially the newspaper industry. A situation that has not changed much, and resembles the apartheid era as SRC 9 alludes:

Remember in South Africa, we had media organisations that were owned by white people before, and who were used against black people. Do you think that has changed; I do not think so. We may be a democratic country now, but I tell you, not many black people own the media. For instance, let us look at the SABC, there was a time when we heard that the government interfered with its content. I believe that if it happens in a public media institution like SABC, it is more likely to happen to others as well.

There is also a belief that the capitalist structure of the country's economy has a major influence on how the news media should be expected to structure their stories and present them to the public, a situation that does not favour many black students in institutions of higher learning. This is why some students believe that the country's news media would never be capable of representing their issues fairly because they are under a corporate monopoly. SRC 2 states:

All media houses in South Africa are owned by the same person you know. So, that tells you that the narration of the stories that are told is aligned. Just look at your Enca, Sowetan and then Daily Sun, these are all media publications that are under one house. Let us look for instance at other media houses like Newsroom Africa, its ownership is still in question that is linked to power because it takes only one rich man to generate the stories that we are told in the media, and capitalism is so brutal because it can monopolize everything, you know; that is why we try to alter that because we

understand that once everything is in the hands of capitalism, we would not have any credible news source if one looks at the SABC, it is the only independent (public?) media house because it belongs to the government of South Africa, but the rest of the media houses in the country belong to the capitalist monopoly, they depend on capitalism to sustain themselves.

Media ownership has a way of influencing the content that is produced and disseminated by the media to the public, especially the news media. It can affect the “diversity of messages that need to be sent to the public and the kind of views and opinions that particular news media may want to present to the public” (Mukherjee 2015: 277). While there may be a difference in the kind of media ownership in society, however, the mission of private media ownership is to make a profit and to fulfil other interests that serve them and their purse (Mukherjee 2015). While workers of privately owned media companies, including journalists, may seem to be oblivious to how their institutions make money, however, it seems to be easy for the public to be aware that their main intention is to make a profit just as SRC members blame the media, especially the country’s privately owned Print media, for being a profit-making institution that focuses on their economic aspects by using selective methods to cover and represent issues according to the views that supports their masters and their financiers just as SRC 3 states:

The media like all institutions, are money-making institutions. Yes, they may tell you that they are objective and independent, but they are never objective, they have a way of being biased. They tell the public what their masters tell them to say. You know what is sad, it is that these things are taught in the very same institutions of higher learning. Journalists are taught in these institutions, and especially these days there are a lot of black journalists, ask yourself if they remember, how they suffered when they were students. Most of them do not because now they are practicing how they were taught at these institutions. That is what I can say about the political economy of the news media.

Such a claim may legitimise the claims the students of institutions of higher learning make about news media not being able to accurately cover and represent their issues correctly due to financial association, especially the privately owned media. This is because those who have financial power may be able to dictate the content of the media and decide what the public should read and hear. One of the journalists who were interviewed in the study, Journalist 1, said that they were taught at school, that if a company they worked for was involved in some

form of a scandal they should find a better way to tell that story without damaging the reputation of the company they work for:

We were taught that if the organization that you work for, may have ties with SAA, then a big scandal at SAA, yes, they would not say, “Do not cover that story,” but they will find a way to say, “let us do it this way, so we are not going to say the SAA boss is corrupt because they stole the money”. We will say, “No, no eh! SAA! Eh! You know SAA now is looking at the way they can, you know”. You should find a way a nice way to say it.

4.2.4. Power influence in the representation of protests

Various powers may be influential in the news coverage and representation of various protests including those that happen in the institutions of higher learning. However, the competition between which agenda should be put forth is not only found in news media companies that aim to push forward their ideologies, but it may also be found within institutions of higher learning. This is evident in some of the newspaper articles which were published between 2015 and 2023 about the student protests that took place in institutions of higher learning which insinuated that “there might be some hidden forces driving a certain agenda behind these protests”, an allegation that was never covered/proved by the news media (Tau 2016: 1). Some journalists and SRC agree that the student protests might have been genuine and needed proper coverage and representation from the news media, but they also complained that the infiltration of party politics in institutions of higher learning may hinder their proper coverage and representation. They believe that when news reports are politically driven, they can always jeopardise the needs of students who might be political and just need financial assistance. SRC 1:

One of the issues that we have as black students we do not get as much attention when it comes to bursaries, but the media never talked about that. For, instance. NSFAS may cover some of the things that you need as a student, but you do not hear that in the media. The media do not give attention to the most important issues that affect the poor, like when NSFAS decides to defund certain students who have no money to continue, those issues are not seen or heard of in the media.

Media houses also believe that at times political parties play a role in influencing the direction of protests because the student leadership might have been elected under the banner of certain political parties, and after graduation, these students would join the national parties and forget about the student's needs. SRC 1 and Journalist 5 use a similar approach in their arguments:

And again, let us look back at the #Feesmustfall protests; if you remember the students who were the face of #Feesmustfall, where are they now? That one, Vuyani Pambo, is with EFF, and the other one went to the ANC, and both were given party positions. I remember there once were unconfirmed reports that alleged that the #Feesmustfall protests were funded by some political parties. For instance, the EFF has won many elections in institutions of higher learning, I am not sure, I will have to check, but in most universities, EFF is winning. It has taken over from the ANC, seats which were previously won by SASCO, because according to common knowledge, SASCO is ANC, so those protests were influenced by politics because the young ones were and are politically affiliated; some of them belong to EFF while others belong to ANC. Now in my time, we were led by the ANC student association and these people were the ones who were leading the strikes and SRC.

SRC 1 expresses similar views to Journalist 5 that the protests might look like they were a fight for genuine student causes but there may have been some sinister forces behind them because student movements are infiltrated by political parties and their politics:

You know me, I was part of the SRC, but I was never affiliated with any political party. Even in the SRC, there is always political affiliation. Also, there is competition because everyone would want the side of their political party agenda first so that they influence the content.

Such claims have been confirmed by the Sowetan article written by (Gwala 2019: 1) entitled “#Feesmustfall elite rewarded but higher education is still not free: ANC, EFF show their bias in favour of Historically White universities”. The article details how the names of student leaders who were the face of protests at Wits among them Nomcebo Mkhathshwa and Fasha Hassan appeared in the Parliamentary list of the ANC candidates while other student leaders, Vuyani Pambo, currently the EFF spokesperson, and Naledi Chirwa joined the leadership of EFF. Developments like these, sort of legitimise claims that many young people use student leadership and protests as stepping stones for their future political aspirations. Other claims from the student leadership were that the media sometimes caused division among student

leaders by excluding the views and opinions of student leaders who were not members of the party that governed the country. SRC 6 states a similar view:

And when you check the news later, their opinions of other structures are not represented in the content. So, there is a form of bias and there is a form of the media not being completely neutral when they approach student protest.

The issue of political power influencing coverage and representation of student protests in institutions of higher learning has also been highlighted by Journalist 3, who said they started observing it during the 2015 #Feesmustfall campaigns:

During those protests, the #Feesmustfall protests, everyone started saying this group was EFF, that one ANC, and the third was DA. But they came together and fought one fight. I remember, at the height of the #Feesmustfall protests at Wits, I saw a video where a white girl was fighting police at the entrance, to us journalists that was something so amazing and you know, I was shocked, but I ended up saying wow, this means they see that there must be a change for everyone.

4.2.5 Decolonisation of the South African media

Since the beginning of the 2015 student protests, among what the students wanted to happen in their institutions was the decolonisation of their institutions including the curricula. However, on the issue of decolonising the news media, both SRC participants and journalists had different views, on how that should be undertaken because some were scared that South Africa was a very young country that had just come out of apartheid; any sudden transformation might endanger or jeopardize the trajectory of where it was heading, as the people had not yet found their self-identity. SRC 6 had the opinion:

When you talk about decolonization, you mean decolonized to what? First, I do not think that as black people we know ourselves and we are serious about wanting to know ourselves. I say if there is a decolonization that needs to happen, it needs to start with us first, and then after that, we can tackle these colonial institutions. But apart from that, you may want the media to be decolonized, but you also must know, what you want it to be decolonized to, that is what I say.

However, others believe that it is important that the traditional news media be decolonised because that would help all South Africans from the way they perceive themselves through the

media, especially African individuals. There was also a belief that when media was decolonised, issues affecting the country would get equal coverage and fair representation in the media. However, they state that it would be very important to put proper systems in place when measures like that are taken. SRC 1 stated his views:

The media do not give attention to the most important issues that affect the poor, like when NSFAS decides to defund certain students who have no money to continue paying for their studies, those issues are not seen or heard of in the media. That is why I say that the media also needs to be decolonised, that will mean that all races in South Africa would be represented equally in South Africa. Because we need a media that would cover our stories completely not to attend to bits and pieces of what is happening.

The majority of SRC participants believe that there was a need to start by creating a system and a social environment that allowed processes like that to take place because currently, the country has inherited an ineffective system. They thought that it would be futile to start with decolonising the media if one did not even have proper resources in place. It would also be important to transform everything including the education system in a way that journalists learn about things that affect black people at school and are taught how to write about them correctly and stop protecting the status quo. SRC 2 and 4 spoke as follows:

SRC 2:

The social environment must change, and if there is decolonization that needs to happen, it must start within the institutions of higher education. It must also happen at the government level, you know. You cannot have a government that is not in full control of the country. I mean we do not even own the South African Reserve Bank; we are told that 80% of the land is in the hands of the minority and those are the kinds of things when we speak decoloniality that must be dealt with first. The most important thing is to get the basics right you know, because if you do not start at the basic level, you cannot get it right. Yes, our education system also must change, for instance, where is the consciousness of a black journalist who seeks to write black stories that seek to protect the establishment and not to protect the black middle and lower classes? So, I think we need reconstruction of the entire system so that we can be able to get it right. That will allow us to rebuild the country.

SRC 4:

I believe that no system would allow something like that to happen. We have inherited a system that is ineffective and would not allow something like that to happen. Look it

is not only the media who need decolonisation, even the universities, the companies, and everything in South Africa. I think that is the topic for another day.

While the student leaders saw a need to decolonise the media after a major transformation, however, journalists have opposing views about the need for decolonising the media. Among those views were those who thought it might be a good idea to decolonise the media because as it is currently, it is not owned by black people. To those who thought it was not a good idea because the journalism principles they were using currently were working just fine. Any changes that could be made might result in the distortion of information,

Journalist 5:

Yes, it should, who owns the media, especially the private media? It is only within the SABC where a little bit of transformation happened after 1994. Now I believe that maybe things are a little bit better there. But when you go to these private media who are the decision-makers, they are also white, they have the capital. If one is not their friend, one is more likely to be negatively represented and funny, even as South Africans we still believe in what is written in newspapers.

Journalist 4:

I think that maybe there are certain media houses, hopefully I would not be quoted on this. I could say that in the company that I work for, I do not think that there is anything of that nature, we are not told how to write stories, and we are not instructed on what to include and exclude and what stories we should cover and what stories we should not. But maybe I stand to be corrected, but maybe certain media houses, want to be pushing certain agendas or not but certainly not the company that I work for.

Participant Journalists 2 and 3, think that it is not necessary to make changes where they are not needed because the kind of journalism principles, they follow right now, are scientific.

Journalist 2

The principle that we are using is real journalism because when you look at African ways of telling stories our stories were never written down, instead they are narratives. They were a situation where a grandfather would tell his son and the information would go down for ages not written down, it would always be verbal and the unfortunate part about a verbal thing is that when it trickles down it becomes distorted when we tell stories that way. The way things are done now is real journalism because one cannot change the wording and once one does that, one changes the information. Journalism is science where one needs facts to back up whatever information one has, elements

like neutrality, objectivity, and being impartial may be Western concepts, but they are crucial to journalism, they make journalism what it is.

Journalist 3

I do not think that should happen, because that will hinder the freedom of speech. Remember in the olden days the old government was the one that was in control of the SABC, where they used to hide everything. They used the media to perpetuate racism. I think that, if the media is decolonized, there would be more censorship like it used to happen before, by doing that the media will be openly serving the interests of their masters.

4.3 Conclusion

The findings of the study were presented according to the five themes that emerged from the recurring patterns observed when the data obtained from document study and semi-structured interviews were coded. The themes were: media coverage and representation of protests, racial divide as a form of discrimination in representation, ownership of the media, power influence in the representation of protests, and decolonisation of the media. The findings showed that these five themes had an impact on the coverage and representation of student protests that occurred between 2015 and 2023. The findings also showed that student leadership in institutions of higher learning, especially the former Historically Black institutions believed that the news media was biased when covering their protests and did not contextualise student concerns they were supposed to. However, the difference was in the coverage, the SRC members from the Historically Black Institutions believed that the media ignored their protests, and reporters only came when students burned tires and took other dramatic action. However, it was not the case with the former Historically White Institutions where their SRC members said when there was a protest, the media would cover them.

Chapter five: Data analysis and interpretation.

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 presents data analysis and interpretation the data gathered from different primary sources and secondary sources has been deciphered in this section below for easy interpretation. The data of the study was analysed through the critical political economy of the media approach and the decolonial epistemic approach. The two theories were used to fulfil the two primary goals of the study which were: First, to provide an in-depth understanding of how higher education students experienced media coverage of their protests, and second, to examine how these protests were represented in the media. Exploratory objectives included investigating whether the October 2015 to 2023 student protests were influenced by any hegemonic power structures that perpetuated social inequalities and colonial legacies of power, knowledge, and being that influenced the coverage and representation of the student protests.

The aim of the analysis was also to answer the main research question and its sub-questions:

Main question:

How does the post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protest in institutions of higher learning?

Sub-questions.

Does power play a role in influencing media coverage and representation of student protests in higher education institutions?

Which news values and routines inform the media's coverage of protests in higher education institutions?

To what extent are the representations of student protests in the media linked to power and structural inequalities?

Is there any role played by racial inequalities when the news media cover and represent student protests?

How does the traditional news media's political economy influence how these protests are covered and portrayed?

The critical political economy of the media and the decolonial lens were used to demonstrate the four areas of concern which are, (a) to find out whether the student protests were shaped by obfuscated power configurations and the enduring inequalities that shaped and characterise South Africa's media space. (b) To retrieve the concealed objectivation of students on the other side of modernity. (c) To find out whether the coverage and representation of student protests are centred on the coloniality of power, knowledge, and being. (d) the theories were used to explore the "hubris of the zero point", a position that anchors the media in both the Global South and the Global North. The hubris of the zero point is the "detached and neutral point of observation where the knowing subject maps the world and its problems, classifies people, and projects what is good for them. The findings will be discussed under five thematic categories which were derived from the thematic analysis. The chapter is structured in the following themes: Media coverage and representation of protests, Racial divide as a form of discrimination in media representation, Ownership of the media, Power influence in the representation of protests, and Decolonisation of the South African media.

5.1.1 Media coverage and representation of protests

The study has revealed that student protests that happened in historically black institutions were not covered and represented in the same way as those that occurred in historically white institutions. In historically black institutions students could protest for days without their event being recognised and get coverage in the media until students begin to take dramatic actions such as burning tires, holding staff hostage, or other perform other dramatic actions that may attract attention. It has also found that their students and the protests were negatively reported by the post-apartheid traditional news media. Several participants, particularly those in the SRC category in both institutions of learning, contended that the news media exhibited a double standard shaped by various factors such as politics, economics, and the country's racial dynamics when it came to the coverage and representation of student protests. SRC 2 explains why this is the case:

I think it is because institutions are different, the difference is in how the class is grouped, as we live in an unequal society, and in an unequal society there is classification, and once you classify then the issue of sovereignty comes forth. Look once you shut down the University of Pretoria where there are white learners, if you

shut down the gates, the media will be more interested because now you are targeting a different class of people, and so we live in a society that classifies us in terms of race and social standing in society. For instance, at the University of Wits, it is kids of the ministers and businesspeople and so forth. So, there is a class difference and in predominantly black universities like TUT and other universities of technologies, we do not get that approach because most students are from poor disadvantaged families. While at Wits you get kids who went to IEB Schools. So, students who study at historically black universities are from government schools, so the media does not care that much about them.

According to respondents, when black students engaged in certain actions, the media was quick to recognise and cover their protests negatively, while their white counterparts enjoyed a level of protection from the media. They believe that they were hardly negatively represented in the media because they hardly protested. The participants also asserted that the media tended to associate protests by black students with vandalism and hooliganism. Additionally, they noted that the news media often neglected to cover serious issues such as poverty among tertiary institution students, including instances where students were forced to eat discarded food from trash cans. Instead, the media would focus on negative stories involving black students burning tires. However, if an institution was considered elite, its protests were less likely to receive negative media coverage and attention. They believe that this was just like when powerful politicians or white people with significant financial and political clout were implicated in some form of scandal, the news media either poorly reported on them or failed to report on them entirely. SRC 8:

I think there is also a need for equality in terms of broadcasting. For instance, let's say there is a story of a black person who has stolen 14 million Rand from a government institution, the media would reveal all their details to the public even where he/she is coming from and even their identity number. But if it is the other race that stole that money, and they will never get the same and equal treatment from the media, that means there is no equality. That is why, I am saying that we are in the new era of apartheid. We should not fool ourselves by believing that apartheid is over, because you have been sold a false idea that you are in charge and you will never be in charge as a black person, because the media support the status quo. They support whoever owns them be they the government or whoever.

It was a result of the preservation of the previously normalised practices in historically white universities that reproduced the same status quo, which made students feel marginalised and disregarded according to SRC 6 who studied at the University of Pretoria:

When studying, at an institution like UP, your poverty becomes exposed because everyone will know that you are from a poor family. What I am saying is that it would be not only the white and Indian students who come from rich families who do not understand your situation but your kin as well. There are also other black students, I am not talking about international students, and I am talking about our black sisters and brothers who are from rich families who may not understand your poverty. So, just imagine, if your people do not understand, tell me how the media, a former white capitalist institution understands man-made black poverty.

The literature that was reviewed in chapter two of the study backed up the findings by highlighting that, South Africa has pervasive hegemonic power that is always protected by the cooperative relationship between the country's previous past, which is apartheid and colonialism (Subreenduth 13:215). The issue of negative media coverage and representation of protests in institutions of higher learning, especially historically black institutions can be explained through the critical political economy of the media. It is connected to a broader day-to-day social experience of many South Africans who are affected by poverty and unequal allocation of resources in the production of cultural meaning. The media which is still in the hands of capital has become part of the social structure that continues to perpetuate the agenda of the "established powerful interests" and not only divide the representation of institutions of higher learning into black and white but also segregate their students according to their colour and race. News coverage and representation of student protests perpetuate the agenda of the established status quo by failing to deeply engage with the students' issues and report them just like the way some participants and respondents in the study stated: Journalist 5 and SRC 1

For instance, if the students embark on peaceful protests, their protests hardly make front-page headlines on the Star or Sowetan or breaking stories on TV or radio. This means negativity sells, we all know that scandals sell. Just imagine, if the students at TUT stage a sit-in, the media normally are not interested in that, the answer will be that is not a story. But if they burn a hall, Jonker Hall, the media will go there. Let me not

only talk about TUT, because TUT is mainly black. Let us look at Wits and the University of Pretoria where are the white students, and Indians during protests? The media is wired to sell negative news, and we South Africans also love negative news, so when they publish negative news, their stories sell.

Let me say this, first TUT used to be a university that was pro-white, and still today, it is dominated by white individuals, but the problem is that even during the fees must fall protest, the protests started at TUT before it became a national issue, in the black only institutions, for instance, we have to strike for almost a week and our protests need to trend and all those things, But if the institution that is mainly filled with white students even if they can strike for 2hrs, their media coverage will be huge. I want to also take you back on something, remember I think it was last year when there was a President of Wits who was suspended, that story ran almost a month because he was a president of Wits or something and that story was covered by the media. But at the same time, we were fighting with the branch leadership, and one of our leaders was suspended and no media covered that story.

In addition, forms of knowing were shaped by the reactive media that is premised and hides behind the problematic 'hubris of the zero-point' which dove-tails with the rigid academic bureaucracy that eschews any form of activism. For example, the findings of the data obtained from the newspaper articles show similar patterns with the interview data on the way the protests were represented in the media. The message disseminated by the newspapers seems to "sustain the status quo by pushing the interests, the perspectives, and the ideologies of those in power" (Altheide 2000:8). This is evidenced in the Sowetan (2016:1) article by Shanaaz Jamal, titled "Hold off fees increase says, the ANC":

The ANC has called on the government to hold off on the fee increment for the 2017 academic year until all parties have found an economically viable solution. The statement came after student leaders threatened to bring universities to a standstill and embark on, yet another #FeesMustFall protest should a fee increment be implemented. Yesterday ANC secretary-general Gwede Mantashe, addressing a press conference in Pretoria, said there were discussions in the national executive committee on the fee increments and the debate was to be taken to cabinet. "We are not saying fee increments are banned but this should not be rushed until all stakeholders and consultations have

been concluded because whatever we do must be economically viable and affordable for education.

This is surely evidence that the location of the country's media as a source of information dissemination that is still based in the hands of the rich capitalists has a major influence on how these protests were covered and portrayed. The news media unintentionally or intentionally used their so-called reliable sources to disseminate information that may be palatable to their masters and financiers. This is illustrated in an article published by *The Citizen* (2016:1) titled "Another Marikana Looms". The article draws attention away from the intention of the protests and the protestors, instead, it allows its sources to deviate the protests from what it was meant to be into focusing on violence that has occurred and the unverified allegations that there may be sinister forces behind these protests, by using Senior Researcher at Institute of Race Relations, Johan Burger, who believed that these protests are politically motivated:

Burger said that the violence that had marred the protests, especially at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), strengthened the belief that, hidden forces were driving a certain agenda. "Rumours suggest some people are instigating the violence, and there may be some truth in that," Burger said.

The same idea was supported by Political analyst, Andre Duvenage, who was used as a source in the same article: Duvenage believed that the protests were not about what the students were saying they were about, he also thought they were politically motivated:

The minister's announcement is like the state throwing the universities to the wolves, and I don't see the student protests dying out anytime soon because there is also a strong political momentum behind them, which will be difficult to stop.

This kind of coverage gives the impression that there is a deliberate plan to attack the institutions of higher learning, students are not genuine about what they need. Also, what was written and portrayed in these newspaper articles confirmed the SRC's assumptions and other journalists, that student protests are covered and reported differently according to the institutions where they occur. For example, in an article run by *Sowetan* (2016) titled "Tug of War", the newspaper's headline insinuates that there was a war between white and black students in these institutions. This is illustrated in a way in its article about the University of Pretoria, and the University of Free State. Former historically white institutions where Afrikaans was used as a medium of instruction during apartheid, its focus was not on financial

exclusion and other factors that may have disadvantaged poor students in these institutions but on the war between language and race:

Afrikaner political party Front Nasionaal and the SA Students Congress (Sasco) all claim that protests at the universities of Pretoria and Free State are not about race but language. The three say they are looking for an amicable solution to the language talky - on whether Afrikaans is to be used as a medium of instruction -but progress has been halted by the FFF, who they insist are inciting the violence.

In their continuing battle for the abolishment of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction at the university, students took their protest to a rugby match in a bid to attract management's attention, they said. But they didn't expect white rugby spectators to turn on them. "They pounced on us, and I stood them thinking they won't touch me because I am a woman, but I was wrong," said SRC deputy president Mpho Khati. "I was slapped and kicked even after.

The issue of race and language in these institutions was not supposed to be left unreported as it is important in South Africa now, but the newspaper should have also paid attention to what led to this “tug of war” as it states. Despite the above-mentioned issues in these historically white institutions, there are other challenges such as poverty and feeling discriminated against that black students face daily which are not mentioned in the article. This is what Journalist 5, had to say about the education system:

You know what, again just a personal story when I was still a student, I felt abused by the system because we stood in long queues, we had to apply for the whole week you just stood there. Imagine, you stand there the whole day, and when it is your time to get the service, you are told we are closing and come back tomorrow, just like that, the higher education financial aid systems do not favour black children. So, NSFAS on its own is very emotionally and physically abusive towards a black child who is dependent on it. So, when they are not satisfied with it, they get frustrated and go to the streets, and when the media comes to cover the event, they cover what they see, a black child protesting, and they do not tell the whole story.

The glaring difference between media coverage and representation of these protests in historically white institutions and historically black institutions became visible when the same

article reported about protests that took place at the University of North West. Its coverage focused more on what happened to the students, as it is a justified consequence of what they did. The article also gave the impression that by standing against issues that discriminate against them in these institutions, what was happening to them was justified, they deserved it:

Thousands of students were left stranded on Thursday when the university gave those three hours to leave after violent protests. Students disrupted the inauguration of an SRC appointed by management after it dissolved the elected body and dashed with private security. They torched buildings and several students and staff were injured.

While it may be important for the media not to turn a blind eye to violence when it happens during protests in these institutions focusing too much on it distorts and discredits the messages of the protestors. It also took the public sympathy away from the protestors and delegitimise their concerns. The findings of the data analysis of the newspaper articles have also revealed the dehumanisation and objectification of students who were arrested, prosecuted and others expelled from their studies during these protests. The fact that the news media took their pictures when they were in court and disseminated them to the entire world, to the public they no longer looked like students who were fighting for a good course. A certain public perception and narrative was created about these students. Their innocence of being mere students who wanted students to be given opportunities to study and their humanity was eroded by the way they were portrayed by the media. The public saw the faces of criminals or thugs who deserved to be in jail. The more they appeared in court, the more the public was reminded why they were in court and what kind of charges they were facing:

Amos "Am Monageng, an EFF Student Command leader suspended indefinitely from the University of Pretoria (UP), was arrested and charged in 2016 and continues to appear at the Pretoria magistrate's court. Monageng was barred from continuing his informatics degree studies. He was doing his second year at the time. He faced charges including malicious damage to property, incitement of violence, and assault.

The way their story was covered and portrayed gave prominence to violence and property damage, implying that they were arrested because they were anarchists, violent, and criminals. The same sentiment is echoed by SRC 9:

The media when it comes to Africans, it ensures that it depicts them in the most negative light. Tell me what happened during the Fees Must Fall era. What happened there? For those students, the only thing they did was just to be able to access education and to be

able to get an education and become something in life. But what were the media saying about them, what were they saying about those black students? Radio stations were busy calling students' anarchists, how can you say a poor black student who is trying to ensure that their voice is heard calls them anarchists? When is the time when a black person tries to negotiate peacefully and succeed? Now it seems as if they have learned from their fathers and their forefathers that if you want something to be done you need to protest so that they hear. So, there is no other language that can be heard except language, and that is also the language that the media would cover. The media would cover violence, and the media covered those protests from day one up until students like Mcebo Dlamini who were arrested during the protests appeared in court and were imprisoned, they were covered even when they were in prison. Some of the black students were arrested for crimes they did not even commit, so they penalised them from being educated.

To build some form of credibility in justifying that the students were supposed to be arrested and that they do not deserve to be free because they act like criminals, *The Star* (2018:2) newspaper article, titled "Calls to drop charges against fee protestors": saw it fit to use the credible elite voice of the spokesperson of the National Prosecuting Authority in Gauteng, Phindi Mjonondwana to explain to the public why they will not be pardoned:

Much as we agree that the protests were for a worthy cause, the NPA is, however, more concerned about the criminal elements that were detected during the protests," she told The Star. "(It) would be failing in its mandate if it were to withdraw cases with evidence that acts of criminality may have been committed. "The NPA respects the rights of citizens to protest but those protests should be within the confines of the law," Louw-Mjonondwane said.

The newspaper article 's decision to choose such an elite source to balance their story and give reasons why these students will not be freed gave prominence to those who are in power. While it is understandable for journalists to use a source to balance and make their stories credible elite sources in many cases become the mouthpiece of the status quo, they show to have no student's interests at heart, they must protect the powers that be. The data findings have also revealed that the media failed to get to the core of what was happening in institutions of higher learning including the struggle of students who came from poor families and came to these institutions for one goal only to get an education to better their family social standing. However,

when they protest to voice out their frustrations about their situation, the media use language that takes away their humanity and dehumanise them by calling them hooligans and criminals when reporting their stories:

The perennial disruptions to the academic program and its attendant damage and burning of university property, represent a serious threat to the survival and sustainability of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) if student hooliganism is not rooted out. For the umpteenth time, the UKZN experienced another bout of wanton destruction when the William O'Brien (WOB) examination venue was gutted when hooligans masquerading as students went on the rampage, ostensibly protesting the new direct payment Tenet Technology adopted by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS).

The findings support the information obtained when the researcher analysed data that was obtained from the semi-structured interviews where participants stated that when they were still students, they felt humiliated and exposed because of their poverty and that everyone could see their pains that they were from poor families. They also stated that their issues which were more than student protesting but also about financial inclusion were either poorly or never reported by the media. All of these are results of inequalities that the government may find it difficult to eradicate without first addressing socio-economic disparities that were created by the apartheid racial systems (Albertus 2015: 5) . Another point of interest in the study was the discovery that students who study in historically black institutions believe that they are getting an inferior education compared to their counterparts who study in historically white institutions like Wits, the University of Pretoria, and the University of Cape Town. In a study that was done by the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation published by Sowetan (2017:1) in the article titled “Behind #Feesmustfall Protests” students who were calling for decolonisation of the higher education institutions thought that the education they get from their institutions was inferior compared to that obtained from other institutions:

The study also uncovered that free, decolonised education in the #FeesMustFall movement is not homogeneous and means different things on different campuses as Musawenkosi Malabela, who conducted the research at the University of Limpopo, found that for students at Turfloop, decolonised education means getting a good quality education, like that taught at Wits, including improved infrastructure and quality

academic staff. “Students who were interviewed said they felt that they received inferior education at their institutions.

The same sentiments were shared by SRC members who believed that these institutions are classified by the media and wanted to put their agenda by parading students who did very well in historically white institutions and ignoring those who did well in historically black institutions:

If there is a student who has done well at TUT, and there is a great function to congratulate him or her for doing well, the media would never leave their offices and go cover that story. It is the duty of the media and their journalists to cover negativity. They will never see any good, especially in certain Universities that are classified in whatever way they are classified right. You will never see journalists coming to our institutions to ask how many students you have helped to pay off their student debts, how many students have you helped to graduate, and how many students you have generally helped.

By reflecting on these instances of student protests and the media representations thereof, it is apparent how media and institutional violence make it impossible to dismantle or challenge the hegemonic power structures that continue to dehumanise students and at the same time limit the imagination of the audience through prejudiced frames. This is because the country’s social systems which include academia, and the media remain performative and loyal to power. Students from poor backgrounds still feel marginalised and discriminated but the media do not report accurately about their marginalisation and discrimination, as SRC 2 states:

I feel like also the national news media plays a huge role in avoiding our strike, for instance, in the institutions of higher learning we have lots of statues that are about white people, but there is no one questioning that, the media when they see these statues they will not even question you how you feel about it. So, they are there to create their narrative, they are driving a certain narrative. That is why I am saying the national media do not come to our strike, they take two days to come and if they come in that day, they will not focus on what is happening and that is how we suffer at TUT.

The country’s traditional news media seem to be enablers in perpetrating social inequalities that are still found in the social and economic spheres that deny black people any form of economic reprieve and continue to ground them in their status of being black and poor. It is through the media that the interests of the white minority and the privileged few are kept alive

by the reproduction of the exploitative socio-economic systems that are conspicuously reflected in their content. It is the news media in post-apartheid South Africa that is used as a tool to mute the cries and pains of poor students who are from historically black institutions who decry the pervasive racism that was caused by apartheid in their institutions of higher learning.

5.1.2 Racial divide as a form of discrimination in media representation

The data analysis has revealed that there is systemic racism which is a legacy of apartheid that continues the racial division line in institutions of higher learning, and which is visible in the news media coverage and representation of protests and protestors according to their race and social status. Racial discrimination seems to be still the most problematic issue among students who study at the former historically black institutions. The participants in the study decried racial divides that are prevalent in institutions of higher learning and are never identified by the news media. The participants brought to light the lack of proper mechanisms they could use to fully express their views about their day-to-day lived experience in institutions of higher learning without being negatively depicted by the media. SRC 2:

We have about 33 thousand students right now who do not have money to study because, they were defunded by NSFAS last year and they also owe the institution, because the government has made budget cuts on NSFAS so those who cannot afford would not have access to education. I am not counting other universities, where the government has cut its budget so those who cannot afford to pay would not be able to get an education. But you will never hear about those problems in the media, they will just push their narrative.

They are also of the opinion that the entire structure of learning and acquiring better education in the institutions of higher learning is racially constructed in a way that still privileges one race and places black students on the periphery. They said that what was problematic about the system was that it divides institutions, into historically black institutions where students are poor and the historically white institutions where rich and middle-class students study. The students who studied in historically black institutions came from rural areas and used NSFAS to try to better their lives and their families, while those who studied in historically white

institutions did not need financial assistance. The pain of many student's feelings of being devalued and discriminated against by the education system is not mentioned in the media.

Participants who expressed their views about the humiliation and exposure they went through when they were still students, Journalist 5 and SRC 3, both indicated that the process of getting financial help from the institution of higher learning was racist, emotionally, and physically abusive because they felt exposed, and they felt like other students could see that they came from poor families. However, those problems that students encountered were never mentioned by the news media. The critical political economy approach explains how the news media would always carry content that reflected the interests of those in power and marginalize the poor (Chiumbu and Radebe 2022: 18). The prevailing socio-economic order constantly dehumanizes the poor and makes them ultimate victims kept alive by the systems of racism which were created during the apartheid era. As supported by literature, the news media and institutions of higher learning in post-apartheid South Africa are used as instruments of representation that continue to privilege whiteness over blackness, cast black students to the periphery, and perpetuate the disaggregation of their humanity on the other side of modernity (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: 4). It is through these institutions that structures that were used to "dispossess lands from Africans, remove them physically, psychologically and delegate them to places of subordination" are hard to eradicate (Subreenduth 2013: 216). SRC participants believed that the media was working only for a certain class of people.

5.1.3 Ownership of the media

The media industry in South Africa, especially print, is dominated by four big companies which are: Avusa, Naspers, Independent News and Media owned by Sekunjalo Investments, and CTP/Caxton. (Angelopulo and Potgieter 2013: 303). According to the Mail and Guardian (2019) report the media industry in South Africa is mostly owned by white people who are also decision-makers. Broadcast media space is dominated by private companies such as PRIMEDIA and MSG Africa Group, except the South African Broadcast Corporation (SABC) which is partially state-owned. Most of the newspaper clippings used in the study and the journalists who were participants were employed by Media 24.

The analysis of the study has again revealed that there are some journalists and SRC participants who believe that ownership and control of the media matter in the coverage and representation of student protests. According to Participant 9, the news media department at TUT did not care about their issues, they instead served the interests of their owners who were the management of the institution. He further stated that national news media such as the SABC, and Newzroom Africa, intentionally destroyed student protests by deliberately misrepresenting their issues because of their ownership, as SRC 2 states:

You look at your Enca, Sowetan and then Daily Sun, these are all media houses that are under one house. Let us look for instance at other media houses like Newsroom Africa, its ownership is still in question, that is linked to power because it takes only one rich man to generate the stories that we are told in the media, and capitalism is so brutal because it can monopolize everything you know, that is why we try to alter that, because we understand that once everything is in the hands of capitalism we would not have any credible news source if you look at the SABC it is the only independent media house because it belongs to the government of South Africa, but the rest of the media houses in the country belongs to the capitalist monopoly, they depend on capitalism to sustain themselves. You know we have Power FM which is a black-owned station but if you look at how they started and how they are moving forward now, it tells you that when the going gets tough, one has to try to survive, that is why they are dependent on donors, because as a black person the only place you can get donors is from white capitalists, they will give you money and also tell you the kind of stories that you need to tell. So, in South Africa, the media is operating under capitalists in the system, and as we are living in an unequal society those with money will have the power to control what the media disseminates.

The analysis has also found that the media are considered profit-oriented institutions that do not care about the issues of the public but only serve the interests of their masters, by making a profit for themselves and their owners. Their approach shows that the way their content especially that of print news media is organised and financed has relevance on whose voice is to be heard and whose voice would be silenced. The location of their structure and ownership is in the capitalist relation of power which plays a significant role in reproducing the ideologies of the sponsors and their advertisers. This argument confirms the claim through the *Business Day* article titled: “Delays rob housing providers rent” (Anderson 2016:1).

Delays in registration, along with the late sitting of exams at many tertiary institutions following last year's student fees protests, have placed student accommodation providers under pressure. Some providers have missed out on rent for the first and/or second month of the year. This is while the overall bed -shortage grows. Recent estimates put the shortage at academic institutions at more than 200,000 beds. The University of Pretoria has an 8,000-bed capacity, of which 2,500 are available for new students. On average, 35,000 students apply for accommodation every year. This mirrors the level of demand at other universities. Craig McMurray, CEO

This is evidence that the media company did not care about the issues that were affecting students in institutions of higher learning. It is interesting that the newspaper instead of focusing on student issues, focuses on the rent that would be lost by businesses from renting out their houses to students. Journalist 6 and SRC 1 both expressed similar sentiments that the media was like any other company that needed to make money for themselves as an institution. Journalist 6 believed that there were people who owned the media and who wanted their companies to bring them profit, because in their line of work as journalists they had seen some stories being dropped with no reason offered.

5.1.4 Power influence in the coverage and representation of protests

The data has shown that some hidden power structures may be controlling the direction of media coverage and representation of protests in institutions of higher learning. The kind of power that may have infiltrated these institutions may be in various forms such as politics, economic power, or the media being captured as per the observations of some participants. They have observed that there is political power that shows up in the form of student formations who belong to certain political parties who always want to promote not only the ideologies of their party but also sway the direction of the message of the protests. One participant, an SRC member who was not a member of any political party said there was always a competition among SRC members because they all wanted to make sure that their agenda was put forth and was part of the content:

I would say that there is political power that is happening in the universities, because look, the student formation in these institutions tends to promote the ideologies of their political parties. But we are not there. I believe that it may not look like it but believe me everything is linked to some form of power in South Africa, it may be politics, finances, or even ownership because we see that, and experience it daily.

Another power that has been mentioned which fuels the socio-economic inequalities in the country that the news media uses to classify the students according to their race, is the financial power of the institutions and the media itself. It is constructed as a power that discriminates in a way that the representation of protests in the news media has a blackface but has no other race. It is also the power that represents poverty as violent, aggressive, and beyond control, that is the face of black students at the forefront of student protests. SRC 4:

We need to understand that it may be displayed that Universities are public institutions, but I think we must not allow ourselves to be lied to, because something that may be viewed as public, may not be that public. To me, Universities are private institutions because there are students who still pay money to study in these institutions even though they are called public. But it is always those who come from poor families who suffer because when you go to the university you want to achieve certain objectives, you want to move from one point to the other. I think that media and universities are exactly not what we see, they discriminate against the poor financially.

Students in institutions of higher learning in South Africa, go through all these challenges because of colonialism and the country's apartheid past. Institutions such as higher education and the media are still operating with Eurocentric policies that continue to push the kind of dominance that favours only one race, the white people. It is through these policies that black students feel exploited, prejudiced, and racialised by institutions that are expected to liberate them. This form of discrimination has survived colonialism as it is kept alive in books, education systems, the way South Africans see themselves, and their aspirations of self, and in all areas of their modern world lives.

5.1.5 Decolonisation of the South African media

The analysis of the gathered data revealed that some students felt that it was important for the media to be decolonised so that they would acknowledge the significance of black people and their daily struggles. SRC participants' observation is that the current media does not prioritize the interests of the black communities and that is why they highlight the need for decolonisation. They desire to see an African-centric (Afro-centric) media, which will focus more on issues that affect Africans and promote their languages and views. SRC 4:

Decolonisation would look like we have media that are completely black-owned and should cover everything in the media. And in terms of languages, they must be able to use languages that are spoken in the whole country. Unlike now when we find that there are media houses that use a language that caters to a certain race only.

The current media landscape is not prioritizing the interests of the black community, thus highlighting the pressing need for decolonization efforts. In addition, it has been observed that students often express their desire for media to be more Afro-centric and inclusive of the interests and perspectives of African students. This highlights the importance of promoting diversity and representation in media, particularly in academic settings. SRC6:

I feel that in the institutions of higher learning, there is a huge issue of decolonization that needs to happen, for instance in there are many buildings in these institutions that are named after white people, and even though I may spend a week without seeing one white person, but their names are all over the institution. In these institutions, we have almost fourteen if not fifteen buildings that are named after different white people. So, for me, decolonization should also happen in the media and in changing the names of the buildings of the institutions and changing the streets inside the university because the names have an impact on us. Someone who comes from a deeply rural area does not see themselves as they are not represented in the institution. Most companies that are in the country control the narrative in the media. Institutions like your ICASA which regulates our media institutions are the main problems they all need to be decolonized and create policies that promote neutral representation and equal treatment of every race.

However, decolonising the media would need that the country starts at the basic level. To explain this finding, the following participant SRC 2 responded in the following manner:

The most important thing is to get the basics right, you know because if one does not start at the basic level, one cannot get it right. Yes, our education system also must change, for instance, where is the consciousness of a black journalist who seeks to write black stories that seek to protect the establishment and not to protect the black middle and lower classes? So, we need reconstruction of the entire system so that we can be able to get it right. That will allow us to rebuild the country.

Contrary to the SRC participant's perceptions, the data shows that journalists think that it is not a good idea to decolonize the media. They believe that the principles of journalism they use right now are appropriate and professional enough not to warrant the decolonization of the media. They insist that these principles are real journalism, decolonizing the media would interfere with the way stories are structured and told. The data showed that the journalists do not see the decolonization of the media as a good idea. Others believe that there may be some media outlets that may need to be decolonised but not all media. They fear that decolonisation would mean changing some of the important aspects of journalism such as neutrality, objectivity, and impartiality - that is the sentiment of Journalist 2:

Journalism is science. You need facts to back up whatever information you have, elements like neutrality, objectivity, and impartiality may be Western concepts but they are crucial to journalism; they make journalism what it is.

According to decoloniality, this will show the detachment of these journalists from their locus of enunciation. They enable their companies to create and produce content that still promotes dominant ideologies through a selection of news values and routines that safeguard principles of coloniality which continue to bifurcate the country's society. (Mignolo 2007).

5.1.6 Conclusion

The finding of the study was interpreted through the critical political economy of the media and the decolonial epistemic approach. The critical political economy of the media approach assumes that economic and the political status of the media influences how the 2015 to 2023 student protests were covered and represented in the media. The approach argues that the media that operates under a capitalist economy will always carry content that will reflect the interests

of those in power and marginalize the poor (Chiumbi and Radebe 20220). This has seemed to be the case with the coverage and representation of the protests of the institutions of higher learning during student protests. The coverage and representation of these protests are located within the coloniality of the power matrix that is meant to control the objectification discourse of African subjects. Europe and America have used the news media to continue their dominance of power that exploits the poor and maintains their presence in the global South. The decolonial epistemic Approach critiques such arrangements. The decolonial epistemic approach is a humanising pedagogy that is aimed at disengaging the former colonised parts of the world and the African subjects from global coloniality (Mignolo 2007: 5). The decolonial epistemic approach as a humanising pedagogy can remove the Eurocentric patterns of power that have envisaged itself as a “universal, objective and neutral point of view” where the representation of people is concerned.

The concept speaks to the issues of location and locus of enunciation as Chiumbu and Radebe (2020) state. It is a concept that is important in analysing news media ownership and their organisation by looking deeper into the roots of asymmetrical power relations that was prevalent during apartheid, and how the current modern South African media ownership and their organisation influence the representation of student protests. The inability of journalists to see that it is important for the news media to be decolonised to serve South Africans from an African perspective makes it clear that they are operating from a neutral and detached point of view described by Santiago Castro-Gomez as the hubris of zero point,

Chapter six: Conclusion and recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

Chapter 6 concludes with answering the main research question of the study which is “*How does the post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protest in institutions of higher learning?*” The findings of the research based on the data collected and analysed conclude that the traditional post-apartheid news media failed to cover the protests on time and have in fact, negatively represented them. Furthermore, the findings show that the media has applied biased coverage and reporting of these protests and as a result, the events have been prejudiced.

What has also been noticed in the findings were three key takeaways that came from the interview with participants. Firstly, news media outlets seem to lack a sense of urgency and importance when it comes to helping students address challenges that beset them in institutions of higher learning by not contextualizing their issues and making them understandable to the public at large when they report on them. Additionally, there seems to be a pattern of characterising their protests, labeling the protestors and describing them as anarchists, hooligans, and any other demeaning names to cast a negative light in the eyes of the public about their actions. The media also perpetuates harmful and dangerous stereotyping that furthers the notion that black people are inherently violent. Lastly, news media especially the press news media seem not to be as completely independent and impartial as they claim. They are influenced by various factors such as having a close link with those in power, and other outside influences such as being associated with the elites and politics of the day.

The findings also indicated that the press news media industry is also not free from being influenced by both external and internal forces when protests are covered. They also highlight a need to have news media houses that are owned by black people and support the marginalised by helping them in their fights to eradicate the status quo and prioritise other issues that affect the poor, to make the country a better space for them as well. They have also revealed the frustrations of black students from previously historically black institutions who feel they are not being accurately represented by the press news media when they protest. News media houses in post-apartheid South Africa, especially the press may have black ownership status,

but they are still financed by a few white minorities. This may mean that the current news media structure represents the interests of the few capitalist individuals and is prone to privilege the white minority over the black majority. It is also disturbing to learn that the press news media do not attend the protests that occur in the former historically black institutions the same way they attend those that occurred in the former historically white institutions. These findings have significant implications for the press news media as they indicate a need to focus on creating a media ownership environment that is human centred and will see the importance of promoting diversity and inclusivity in the country.

6.2 Recommendations and Conclusion

As the findings have revealed that, student protests that are happening at institutions of higher learning every year are not covered and represented accurately in the news media. The news media especially the press fail to give the full context of what student protests are about, and when the protestors expect their answer from those in power. The researcher recommends that, once they have covered and reported the story about the protest, they need to work with student leaders to demand accountability from those who are in power by writing a follow-up story. In their coverage, the news media should also refrain from using demeaning words that describe the emotions of protestors such as angry, politically charged, frustrated, violent, and anarchists because they dehumanize them, take away their human level, and animalise them. The researcher recommends that the news media should tone down their ways of writing and humanising protestors because they are fighting for a genuine course. The researcher also recommends that the media refrain from using catchy headlines, like “A violent tug-of-war” (City Press 12 February 2016), and “Another Marikana Looms” (The Citizen, 23 September 2016). A protest stems from an unfulfilled need, it is an action that needs to be addressed, and it can never be a war. The Marikana issue is well documented, and everyone knows what happened, hopefully, there will never be a protest like that, and the country may not need to be reminded about that tragedy.

There is also a need for media houses to retrain and remind their journalists to understand the country’s apartheid past and where the country is now so that they can tell the story better and write from a South African context. Many studies were conducted about student protests; however, few have focussed on their coverage and representation in the press news media by using decolonial epistemic and the critical economy of the media approach. This study could be extended and focus more on how journalists can be trained to cover the protest stories

holistically by looking at all angles including the context within which they are taking place. Protests that predominantly address the concerns of black students are likely to be overlooked if the news media remains colonized and biased. The key limitation of the study is methodological. The units of observation and analysis have been two dimensional, that is; first, interviews with journalists and student protestors and second, document/newspaper analysis over a short period. A longitudinal inquiry focusing only on newspapers and their frames could deepen the study's findings. In addition, the study was only confined to big media houses and Gauteng-based universities which makes it a risk, like many qualitative studies, to make categorical generalizations of both the findings and assumptions to the larger academic and media landscape.

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Appendix A: Newspaper clippings

1. Newspaper

clippings

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'Another Marikana looms'

'POLITICALLY CHARGED': VARSITY PROTESTS COULD GET BLOODY IF GOVT FAILS TO ACT

→ **'State has a big role to play. Deploying police is wrong, they don't know anything about fees.'**

Steven Tau

Early indications suggest the ongoing student protests at several universities are politically motivated, according to Johan Burger, a senior researcher at the Institute for Security Studies (ISS).

Burger said the violence that had marred the protests, especially at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), strengthened the belief there were hidden forces driving a certain agenda.

"Rumours suggest some people are instigating the violence, and there may be some truth in that," Burger said.

According to Burger, Higher Education and Training Minister Blade Nzimande's announcement this week that universities were to determine tuition fee increases was tantamount to passing the buck.

The researcher said it did not make sense because universities depended largely on government

subsidies and student fees to keep them running.

"It is unacceptable for government to sit back and leave universities to deal with angry students on their own," he said.

"Deploying police will also not help in terms of addressing the issues of fees because more force from them will just escalate the violence."

He warned that another Marikana or worse was on the horizon if the situation was not handled properly.

"Government has a big role to play in this. Deploying police to deal with the issue is wrong because they don't know anything about fees."

In his Monday announcement, Nzimande said poor students and those falling in the missing-middle category would benefit from a zero tuition fee increase, stressing that hikes by universities were not to exceed 8%.

Moments after Nzimande's announcement, students at Wits University embarked on protest action, demanding free education for all.

Political analyst Andre Duvenhage told *The Citizen* the student protests were a manifestation of what was happening in society.

"We have an unstable society, where there is a lot of anger and frustration," Duvenhage said.

"The minister's announcement is similar to the state throwing the universities to the wolves, and I don't see the student protests dying out anytime soon because there is also a strong political momentum behind them, which will be difficult to stop."

Asked what would be needed to avoid violent student protests, Duvenhage said the political environment would have to be stabilised first.

"Universities have also become praetorian, in the sense that they are now protecting and safeguarding themselves against society," he said.

"We have also witnessed strict access control to some of these institutions, which are also under heavy guard."

When contacted for comment, the department promised to respond to *The Citizen's* queries.

—stevent@citizen.co.za



ANGER GROWS. Students chant at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg on Wednesday. Picture: Rosetta Msimango

A violent tug-of-war

S'THEMBILE CELE
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Three organisations at the forefront of violent student protests this week deny a race war is under way, instead fingering the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), who they say are using the students ahead of local government elections.

Afrikaner civil society organisation AhaForum, Afrikaner political party Front National and the SA Students Congress (Sasco) all claim that protests at the universities of Pretoria and Free State are not about race but language. The three say they are looking for an amicable solution to the language policy - on whether Afrikaans is to be used as a medium of instruction - but progress has been halted by the EFF, who they insist are inciting the violence.

EFF national spokesperson Mbuyiseni Ndlovu said this week's events at campuses around the country was not a race war but "a legitimate protest struggle around transformation".

In an about-face, Sasco - which last month called for protests to stop, along with ANC-aligned student body the Progressive Youth Alliance (PYA) - are now calling for their structures to engage in "campaigns" at Afrikaans universities where there are issues of racism.

Sasco president Thabo Mokoja says they were "misunderstood".

"The protests during registration were about... not allowing for it to proceed and our call then was for students to register and get into the system. We were not saying protests must end altogether. If there are issues of residence or a language policy, of course we must protest."

But a highly placed source in the PYA told City Press that Sasco is out to regain prominence at student protests because the EFF has gained momentum on campuses, and that the PYA is scrambling for visibility.

Mokoja said protests this week had to do with university management's failure to engage on the language policy at Pretoria university, also known as Tufs, and on a broken promise to insource at the University of the Free State (UFS).

"Where there are issues we will lead protests and other engagement, but... not with the opposition. We committed a tactical blunder by having a coalition of student organisations in protests this week. We use different tactics. We want dialogue, with protest as the last resort. The EFF student command sees protest as their first and only option," he said.

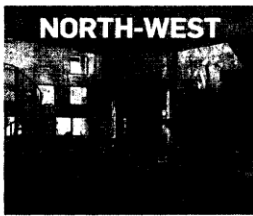
Ndlovu refuted the claim that the EFF were the aggressors and were using the student protests for prominence ahead of local government elections. "Elections are fought in wards not universities. We are there because our universities need to transform," he said.

Mokoja said the fight between UFS students was racist in nature and called for vice-chancellor Jonathan Jansen to step down. Meanwhile, AhaForum Jeug (Youth) national coordinator Morne Mostert said: "We are not the aggressors. We simply want proper consultation with university management around the language policy. We do not only want to protect Afrikaans, we are also promoting Sepedi at Tufs because we believe in mother tongue education for everyone."

"We are officially distancing ourselves from Front National and their actions," he said, alleging that was the party responsible for racially abusing black students this week.

Francois Cloete of Front National said his forefathers built Tufs and were promised by FW de Klerk in 1994 that at least four universities would be reserved for them. "This is not a race war but the EFF is trying to make it one. What comes next after removing Afrikaans?"

Widespread plans to protest this week across the country were foiled by Versity Cup organisers, who postponed all inter-university rugby matches set to take place this week, citing safety concerns following violence at a game at UFS on Monday.



Buildings were set alight at North-West University's Mahikeng campus this week after students protested against the suspension of a former SRC leader. PHOTO: TELLO DJANGMANGALA

'War' coming to NWU

S'THEMBILE CELE

The suspended EFF SRC president at North-West University (NWU) Mahikeng campus has vowed to bring war to the institution, starting with a mass demonstration tomorrow at its Potchefstroom campus.

"We are going to organize the highest level of mass demonstration that has ever been seen before. I will be in Potchefstroom this weekend organising. On Monday we are hitting Potchefstroom by storm," said former SRC president Bena Mabengwane.

He said he would also fight the three-year suspension the university had slapped on him.

Thousands of students were left stranded on Thursday when the university gave them three hours to leave after violent protests. Students disrupted the inauguration of an SRC appointed by management after it dissolved the elected body and clashed with private security.

They torched buildings and a number of students and staff were injured.

Angry students called for their academic programme to be continued at the Vaal and Potchefstroom campuses.

"If they say Potch is not racist then they must use us as a barometer. They must take us there. We are all students of the university," said BA communications student and Sasco branch secretary Dipsan Lorathu.

Many students said they had no racial conflict at Mahikeng campus.

Third-year education student Michael Whitlaker said: "I completely understand what the protest action was about and, as a student, I support it because we must be able to elect our own leaders, but I don't understand at the same time why things had to escalate the way they did."

"I have never at all felt threatened or unwanted being one of a few white students here. But this student eviction is a challenge for me because I can't afford to go home to Johannesburg now."

Sasco urged the university to reopen the undamaged part of the campus.

In president Thabo Mokoja, said students shouldn't be sent to other campuses. "I don't support the fact that because students at Mahikeng burnt the university down and it's closed, they must now go to Potchefstroom."



UFS SRC president Lindokuhle Ntuli believes the university must reflect the demographics on campus, where the majority of students are black but Afrikaans still dominates. PHOTO: LORRY KUNHALO

Born free but still in 1976 shackles

POKOLO TAU

"How do I proudly say I am a born-free South African when on this day I still live in a society that is fighting for educational transformation, which is almost the same thing our parents fought for in 1976? I cannot proudly say I am born-free any more."

So said Free State University student Mpmame Gabela after violence between black and white students left thick clouds of tension over campus this week.

In their continuing battle for the abolishment of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction at the university, students took their protest to a rugby match in a bid to attract management's attention, they said. But they didn't expect white rugby spectators to turn on them.

"They pounced on us and I stood there thinking they won't touch me because I am a woman, but I was wrong," said SRC deputy president Mpho Khani.

"I was slapped and kicked even after I fell to the ground but the real slap on our faces was when the match continued thereafter as if nothing had just happened."

The campus resembled a ghost town this week after daily student demonstrations. More than 20 students were arrested on Thursday.

"Our problem is that UFS in 2016 is still the same as the one in 1977, even after demographics changed with black students now being the vast majority on campus but the culture is still completely white. We want these demographics to reflect on the culture here and not have everything being Afrikaans and buildings bearing colonial names," said SRC president Lindokuhle Ntuli.

"We want to be seen as students all of us and not black or white. Why in this time and age do we still have a policy which dictates that white students can only share a room with a black student if they both give consent to it? This must change, but there is no commitment showing from management."

Reports of revenge started to spread and many whites fled campus this week.

"Students will hold a mass meeting on Monday to decide a way forward because we want to go back to learning. But not under the current circumstances where division is still reigning," Ntuli said.



EFF student command leader Wenzile Madonela says the Afrikaans language issue on campus is likely to cause a war.

'Pseudo rainbow nation won't work'

S'THEMBILE CELE

The EFF Students' Command secretary-general at the University of Pretoria has said there would be war over the use of Afrikaans in universities because white people felt that something had been taken away from them.

"White people are being arrogant, especially white people, there will never be peace. The rainbow nation that [Archbishop Desmond] Tutu and [Nelson] Mandela spoke of is not going to happen," said Wenzile Madonela, daughter of Public Protector Thuli Madonela.

"Society is trying to ensure social justice and the Constitution. But until that is done, it is war. The truth is that it is not going to end here. Afrikaans might fall... but Afrikaans are going to feel that something has been taken from them, and they need it back."

"But black people are going to say 'but no, this is our land'. It has become 'our, our, our'. That pseudo rainbow nation thing won't work."

"If you look at a rainbow nation, all the colours are of an equal amount. There is no equal amount of colour here so until that happens we are not going to rest."

Violent protests rocked the university over its language policy and 27 students were arrested after they had attacked "one another".

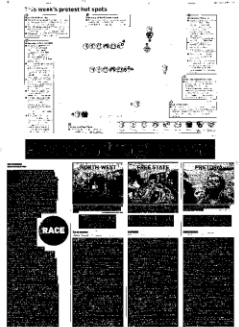
Madonela said she was the first to be assaulted in the confrontation between students last Thursday and she was called a "*****" by an Afrikaans protester.

"This white guy came and took off my beret, slapped me on the shoulder and then security came and appeared to be protecting the white students who were whispering from the other side, '**** monkey' and 'you ma se pr'." She said the protests pointed to a greater crisis.

"Why I release war here is because black people are tired. They're grieved."

"We have seen what happened to our parents over 20 years ago. Now the same thing is happening to us. It can't be correct."

"White people aren't going to let go," she said. "People have been tweeting that the apple has fallen [off] from the tree, but I am not bothered. I know I am standing for the right thing and I am guided by the Constitution, which is my bible."



City Press

Behind the #FeesMustFall protests

Bongekile Macupe

AN ANALYSIS of the #FeesMustFall movement by the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation has found that the protests were a platform for students to unpack many issues affecting them beyond fees.

The centre released a report titled #Hashtag yesterday at Constitution Hill, Johannesburg, where students who conducted research about #FeesMustFall at nine institutions across the country spoke of the experiences they had on campuses.

Marcia Vilakazi, a BA honours student at Wits, who conducted the research at Tshwane University of Technology Soshanguve campus, said the protests exposed real people's struggles and pain.

She said struggles by students from Soshanguve could not only be reduced to #FeesMustFall, but also to students who came from impoverished families who were sent to the university to get educated and change the social standing of their families.

Vilakazi said these were students whose families thought by paying registration fee they had covered all university fees for the year. These students only receive R700 that is supposed to last them for the whole year as pocket money.

"These are students who eat pap and sugar. And you will have up to seven of them sharing a room just to survive in the institution. That's why the protests happened.

"How do you not get angry when at 7am when you wake up you don't know what you're going to eat ... but

you must show up, you must look good and somehow you must stay in this university environment that doesn't seem to accept you and doesn't feel it was made to accept you?" asked Vilakazi.

The study also uncovered that free, decolonised education in the #FeesMustFall movement is not homogeneous and means different things on different campuses as Musawenkosi Malabela, who conducted the research at University of Limpopo, found. "For students at Turfloop, decolonised education means getting a good quality education, like that taught at Wits, including improved infrastructure and quality academic staff."

Students who were interviewed said they felt that they received inferior education at their institutions.

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Burning of property a serious threat to the survival, sustainability of UKZN

It is time universities, law enforcement agencies adopt a hard line against violent protests

The perennial disruptions to the academic programme and its attendant damage and burning of university property, represent a serious threat to the survival and sustainability of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) if student hooliganism is not rooted out.

For the umpteenth time, the UKZN experienced another bout of wanton destruction when the William O'Brien (WOB) examination venue was gutted when hooligans masquerading as students went on the rampage, ostensibly protesting the new direct payment Tenet Technology adopted by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS).

Apparently, NSFAS appointed suppliers to manage the payments, which means universities are no longer involved in the payment process or the appointment of suppliers. In essence, universities are caught in the crossfire for something they do not have jurisdiction, responsibility or any control over.

The protesters claimed that since the new system was adopted, they do not get their allowances in full, leading to some students who stay in private accommodation being evicted due to non-payment of rent. The fire to the examination venue was the second one this month.

Two weeks ago, university cars, including the SRC's,

were burnt and other buildings pelted with stones.

The EFF Student Command released a statement wherein they opposed the continuation of classes as the university management had not listened to their demands. Later, a mass meeting was held, which was followed by protests.

What is not surprising is the deafening silence from EFF, not even condemning or calling to order any of their members who might have been involved.

According to university spokesperson Normah Zondo, the university is profoundly troubled by the violence, staff intimidation and property destruction.

"We condemn these criminal and savage actions at the university. Violence is completely antithetical to our academic mission. There is no justification for the destruction of university assets and infrastructure intended to serve future generations," she said.

The university further stated its commitment to ongoing dialogue with the student leadership and stakeholders who approach the situation with peaceful intentions.

This is where the university gets it wrong as the track record of protests at the university clearly indicates that dialogue has never been the goal of these miscreants.

Their commitment is on sowing mayhem using violence as a bargaining chip to force the university to concede to their demands. It should be borne in mind that during the so-called "Fees Must Fall" protests, between 2015 and 2016, UKZN recorded R262m in damages.

Universities were forced into this unenviable position in the aftermath of the Fees Must Fall protests with former president Jacob Zuma throwing the country a curved ball with the promise of free education.

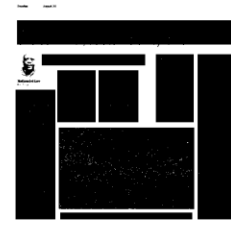
It has become clear there is a lack of capacity and consistency regarding such free education.

Negotiating with hooligans is a futile exercise as they do not engage in good faith.

This also scares off potential donors and investors in the higher education sector.

The time has come for the universities and law enforcement agencies to adopt a hard line against violent protests. The stance adopted by the City of Cape Town against unruly taxi operators is worth emulating as it held steadfast against the warlords in defending the rule of law by doing what the law required in impounding offending taxis.

UKZN may as well shut its doors if authorities do not show zero-tolerance and throw the book at those thugs who damage and destroy property.



What shall we tell our children about this South Africa?

Calls to drop charges against fee protesters

'Government's decision on free education vindicates them'

BONGANI NKOSI
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THERE have been growing calls for the state and universities to pardon the #FeesMustFall activists being prosecuted and expelled from their studies.

Student activists and their sympathisers argue that President Jacob Zuma has vindicated the campaign by declaring free varsity education in December.

Demanding free education, students took to protests at universities across the country during 2015 and 2016.

A number of these protests turned violent, resulting in the arrests of several student leaders and their expulsions from universities.

Those arrested continue to attend different courts, particularly in Pretoria, Joburg, Durban and Cape Town.

Mcebo Dlamini, former Wits University student representative council (SRC) president charged in 2016, recently complained on social media about being "subjected to strenuous court appearances".

Dlamini said he had appeared in court 30 times since his arrest. He faced charges including public violence, assault, theft and damage to property. "I must say, I am tired," he said.

Masixole Mlandu, aUCT student, took to social media yesterday to call for amnesty. He was one of several students set to appear at the Wynberg magistrate's court yesterday.

"As we welcome the announcement of free education, we must also raise our hands up high for charges of all students across the country to be dropped," he said.

"It is our belief that South Africa is a country built on the principle of reconciliation.

"If the government was willing to forgive white people for the slaughter and dispossession of African people, surely the NPA can forgive students

for burning pictures, buildings and disrupting the white establishment," said Mlandu.

Amos "Amla" Monageng, an EFF Student Command leader suspended indefinitely from the University of Pretoria (UP), was arrested and charged in 2016, and continues to appear at the Pretoria magistrate's court.

Monageng was barred from continuing his informatics degree studies. He was doing his second year at the time.

He faced charges including malicious damage of property, incitement of violence and assault.

"I vehemently deny all of them," he told The Star.

Monageng called for amnesty, saying the government's decision to introduce free education proves the students had been embarked on a just struggle.

"They should withdraw the charges unconditionally, given that the government has vindicated our cause by giving us free education.

"It means we were fighting a just cause," he said.

"You remember that the MK (Umkhonto we Sizwe) and Apla (African People's Liberation Army) cadres arrested during apartheid had to be released after the settlement and agreement (to usher in democracy)" said Monageng.

"Given that the president has pronounced on free education, why are we still being prosecuted?"

"We've been vindicated. Let the charges be withdrawn unconditionally, let those expelled from universities go back," he said.

Sthembiso ka Shandu, former student council deputy president at Tshwane University of Technology's (TUT) Soshanguve campus, echoed Monageng's argument.

"The mere fact that President Zuma and Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa now agree free education is feasi-

ble, there must be amnesty for students.

"Whatever we did, we believed it was in the best interest of the country's students," said Shandu.

"Very soon everyone will enjoy the fruits of students who fought. If you're expelled or jailed, you won't benefit from something you fought for."



BACKING: Supporters awaited Masixole Mlandu after he got bail. PICTURE: DAVID RITCHEY/AFRICAN NEWS AGENCY (ANA)

Last week TUT management threw a lifeline to Soshanguve campus student leaders expelled during fees protests.

Those whose expulsions were lifted included former SRC members Mildred Nkhwashu, Hector Singuni and Precious Rapetsoa.

TUT had expelled them for five years in 2016.

The trio pleaded guilty in an internal hearing for organising and participating in an illegal gathering which ended up being marred by clashes between students and security guards.

"We've welcomed the decision of the university. I think the university has been strategic to avoid further protests," said Shandu.

"I believe other universities should follow this example. All students should be brought back."

Boitumelo Senokoane, an academic sympathetic to

#FeesMustFall activists, said he knew a number of students facing jail time or criminal records.

Many others remained expelled by institutions.

"There's no reason for universities to continue victimising these leaders.

"What these leaders fought for has been realised. They have been vindicated by the announcement by President Zuma."

Alex Mdakane, Gauteng secretary of the Young Communist League, said: "To continue with the prosecution and subsequent sentencing of #FeesMustFall activists is a subversion of justice.

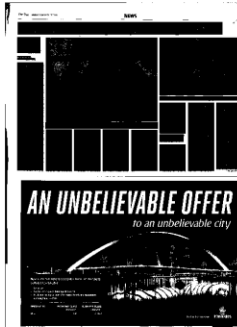
"Their only crime was to call for free education for the poor."

However, the National Prosecuting Authority doesn't believe withdrawing the cases would be in the interest of justice, according to its Gauteng spokesperson Phindi Louw-Mjonondwane.

"Much as we agree that the protests were for a worthy cause, the NPA is however more concerned about the criminal elements that were detected during the protests," she told The Star.

"(It) would be failing in its mandate if it were to withdraw cases with evidence that acts of criminality may have been committed.

"The NPA respects the rights of citizens to protest but those protests should be within the confines of the law," Louw-Mjonondwane said.



Campus gives up on 2016

Steven Tau

In the wake of ongoing student protests which have gripped several universities across the country, the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) says it has now reached a point of no return to save the 2016 academic year.

Following an urgent special meeting of the senate executive committee on Tuesday, a decision was taken to suspend all face-to-face classes on campuses for the year.

"The meeting also resolved that deferred, outstanding and re-assessments will all take place in January 2017.

"We had several fruitful engagements with leaders from the student community and decided more than once on a date to resume classes, but unfortunately this has not been realised until now, quite often due to circumstances beyond our control," acting vice-chancellor Louis Fourie said.

The university conceded that the situation on campus has deteriorated to such an extent that it is impossible to continue with face-to-face academic engagement without compromising the safety of students and staff.

Yesterday, a fire was lit inside the Goodnow Hall at the Wellington campus.

"At this stage an investigation is under way as to whether the incident is directly related to the

current student protest action."

Yesterday's incident came barely hours after a police vehicle and two buses were torched in Braamfontein.

The police could not confirm if the arson attacks were linked to the ongoing student protests.

According to Wits University, 15 people were in one of the buses which was travelling from Esselen Street to Education Park in Parktown before it was set alight.

Elsewhere at the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), no incidents were reported yesterday.

According to spokesperson, Willa de Ruyter, students were in class, writing tests.

She said the memorial service for Benjamin Phehla, a student at the Soshanguve Campus who died on Friday last week after being run over by a vehicle during a protest outside the campus, will be held today from 10am.

Several universities have been gripped by student protests which were sparked by an announcement by Higher Education and Training Minister Blade Nzimande that it was up to universities to determine tuition fee increases.

We had several fruitful engagements with leaders from the student community and decided more than once on a date to resume classes.

Louis Fourie, Acting CPUT vice-chancellor



The Citizen

Campus shut as students run amok

LEANNE JANSEN

THE HIGHER Education Department says it is disturbed by the violent protests which erupted at the University of KwaZulu-Natal on Sunday night and yesterday, and saw the Westville Campus forced to shut its gates.

The building, which houses the office of vice-chancellor Albert van Jaarsveld, was torched, as were two cars.

The protest forced UKZN to suspend classes yesterday and today.

While the South African Students Congress (Sasco) has claimed responsibility for leading the protests, it said it didn't condone the destruction of property and that those responsible should be arrested.

Sasco said the protests, which also flared up at UKZN's Edgewood campus last week, were over financial aid and the need for new student accommodation.

The spokesman for the Higher Education Department, Khaye Nkwanyana, said that while the aggrieved students may have valid reasons for protesting, there could be no justification for the level of

violence perpetrated.

"These are criminal acts and law enforcement agencies must be invited to arrest the culprits. All of them. We encourage the new vice-chancellor to engage with student leadership and seek mutual solutions to the matters. Matters must not be allowed to reach boiling point," said Nkwanyana.

Yvonne Phosa, the chairwoman of the National Assembly's portfolio committee on higher education, said one way to prevent violent protests was for student leaders to be taught conflict management and resolution.

"We encourage the students to utilise the mechanisms in place at the university to raise their concerns. We also urge the university to ensure that they engage with students to hear their grievances and to ensure feedback is given to students on these," Phosa said.

Sasco KZN secretary Pinda Mofokeng said the institution wanted students to attain a 70 percent pass for their modules to qualify for financial aid, but that the National

Student Financial Aid Scheme required only a 50 percent pass.

The other grievance was that the university had not delivered on a promise to build a new residence. Mofokeng said these issues could easily be resolved but that the management of UKZN "did not listen".

"Sasco is not a criminal organisation. Only through dialogue can we find a lasting solution. (But) students get agitated when management refuses to speak to them."

UKZN's central student representative council president, Dithobe Mosana, condemned the destruction of property but argued that students were rightly aggrieved over the proposed new funding qualification criteria and the move by UKZN to review its registration appeals committee policy.

The appeals committee was created to help students by allowing them to pay their fees over two years. But UKZN had found that students who had entered into the arrangement had not paid more than 10 percent of their fees over that

period.

UKZN spokesman Lesiba Seshoka said yesterday the students had not communicated their unhappiness to the university's leadership.

"The university is committed to engaging with students to understand the causes of the unrest and address them. Such issues have not yet been brought to our attention," he said. "Every effort will be made to recover lost time, and academic activities will be rescheduled."

Police spokesman Colonel Jay Naicker confirmed that a case of malicious damage to property and public violence was being investigated.





THE Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University was a no-go area yet again yesterday morning, as has been the case over the past three weeks.

Classes to resume after varsity student protests

GOITSEMANG TLHABYE

THE Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University management maintained yesterday it would be business as usual.

In addition, management said all stakeholders were in agreement the academic calendar should continue without further delays.

This despite the fact that there were fires licking the sign bearing the name of the university at the entrance yesterday morning.

What was evident was that for all the assurance that academic activities were resuming, the university remained closed for the fourth week.

A small contingency of SAPS members were at the scene to try to calm the situation.

But by noon the university had cleared.

University spokesperson Dr Eric

“
 We're still hopeful we'll finish up in time and start exams in November

Dr Eric Pule
 UNIVERSITY SPOKESPERSON

Pule said that following the meeting on Monday, it was decided that the council would return for follow-up engagements.

“But based on what transpired, it seems there were a few students who did not agree with what was tabled. Staff were ready to resume their duties and even as much as 90% of students also want to get on with things.

“It was fewer than 10 students

who caused this raucous and fortunately they tired out eventually.

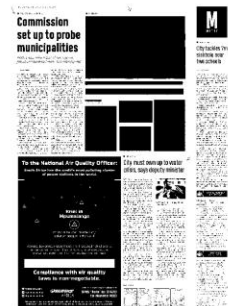
“So after we cleared things up we went to the gate to inform staff and students that everything continues.”

For now, he said, everyone was getting on with the agreed recovery plan.

Students will get cracking with their practicals and will continue until the end of the year.

“We're still hopeful we'll finish up in time and start exams in November. The acting vice-chancellor has already requested a meeting with those few students and other parties to say what issues were left out necessitating the continued disruptions,” Pule added.

Afterwards, the university council would write a formal agreement in response to the memorandum submitted, for all stakeholders to sign.



College campuses stay locked

Lecturers fear losing their jobs

By **Karabo Ledwaba**

Scores of Central Johannesburg College (CJC) students and lecturers are in limbo two months after the college was forced to shut its campuses amid protests.

Campuses in Alexandra, Ellis Park and Parktown were closed in May after several protests by students demanding management of the college to be held accountable for allegedly mismanaging funds.

Nyiko Midaka, 19, an electrical engineering student, said he was worried about his future.

"I don't want to stay idle so I have been trying to find piece jobs.

"I've been helping my father with building and some people with electrical work.

"But, to be honest, most of the time I'm doing nothing,"

Midaka said.

Midaka, of Kaalfontein in Johannesburg, said he could not afford to enrol with any other college because CJC was among the most affordable.

"CJC is my last hope. My mother is unemployed and my father is a builder," he said.

The young student said he was supposed to be a qualified electrician by the end of the year but has now lost out after the college failed to re-open twice.

Student leader Tino Mbele said the college has not been receiving the same attention as universities had during student protests.

"We have burning issues in the college that need to be addressed," Mbele said.

He said the management of CJC has been ignoring many of the issues that the students

had been complaining about for years.

Mbele said one of the major issues was that the environment at the campuses were unclean and therefore not conducive for learning.

Students embarked on indefinite protests in May, accusing college management of maladministration of student funds, lack of infrastructure and delayed payments of allowances.

Frustrated lecturers told Sowetan yesterday they had been waiting outside Ellis Park campus daily, hoping it would be opened.

One lecturer, who did not want to be named, said they came to campus fearing that other staff would be hired in their absence.

"We have been paid for the past few months but we've heard rumours that this might stop."

He said management of the college had not been communicating with them about their future.

Director-general in the Department of Higher Education and Training Gwebinkunda Qonde called on students, academic staff and the college community to abide by the academic calendar.



DASO AGAINST FURTHER STUDENT FEE PROTESTS

Fight must go to Luthuli House

Bongekile Macupe

THE Democratic Alliance Student Organisation (Daso) has advised students not to participate in potential campus shut-downs over fees as this will disadvantage them and waste learning and teaching time.

This follows the SA Union of Students and Pan Africanist Student Movement of Azania's call for students to take to the streets if fees are increased next year.

Daso leader Yusuf Cassim said the organisation was "strongly opposed to campus shut-downs".

He said the shutdown will not solve the problem.

"Such a move will only make the situation worse for all students, especially those from poor backgrounds, by disrupting valuable academic teaching and support," Cassim said.

He said students must stand together and hold government accountable for the fees situation.

"Students' legitimate anger should be channelled at [Higher Education and Training] Minister Blade Nzimande and the ANC. If any place should be shut-down, it's Luthuli House ...

"Daso believes that no qualifying student should be prevented from pursuing education just because they cannot afford to do so.

"It's time that we hold our government accountable for their failure to do so, and find real and workable solutions to address the problem. It's not the time to falsely misdirect blame at our universities," he said.

The University of Cape Town's student representative council (SRC) has also distanced itself from a potential shutdown.

In a letter to students, SRC president Rorisang Moseli said they were not in support of such a move nor will they implement it.

He said despite last year's #FeesMustFall protests producing "notable gains", such as the no-fee increment this year, they also had a negative impact on students, especially poor black students who struggled to achieve desirable academic results.

"We'll continue to meet with university management, government, students and other stakeholders leaving no stone unturned before we meet in the streets," Moseli said.

"Once we have exhausted every avenue available to us, it's then when we'll take active steps to mobilise towards mass protest action mandated to the SRC by the student body.

"We'll keep students abreast with any developments regarding fees both at university council and government."

Institutions such as the University of KwaZulu-Natal and Mangosuthu University of Technology experienced protests this week over fees.

Nzimande called for calm and asked students to wait until the end of the month when an announcement on next year's fees will be made.

However, vice-chancellors have called for an 8% increase and have said that if fees were not raised universities will collapse.

The Council of Higher Education, the body that advises Nzimande, has proposed a 6.3% fee increase.

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STILL ANGRY: Students marched to the Union Buildings last year to protest against tertiary fee increases, and are considering doing so again PHOTO: MADELENE CRONJE



Death, serious injuries mar demos

**ARON HYMAN
and MONICA LAGANPARSAD**

THERE were multiple casualties on both sides of the battle for free tertiary education this week, with protests becoming increasingly violent on university campuses.

A Tshwane University of Technology student died after being hit by a car, a student leader was admitted to hospital after being shot in the back 13 times with rubber bullets at the University of the Witwatersrand, and two security guards at the University of Cape Town were seriously injured by students.

Police say 567 people have been arrested in connection with student protests over the past eight months.

On Friday, the distraught family of TUT student Benjamin Phehla arrived at the university to pack up his belongings in his room in a campus residence.

Phehla, 23, died after a vehicle drove into him during a protest march on Thursday.

His uncle, Simon Mphahlele, director of security services at TUT, said Phehla's family, from Mmamethake in Mpumalanga, was deeply traumatised and that his mother and brother were receiving counselling.

"It's not like he was in hospital with some kind of ailment... he was knocked by a car and he passed away the same day. You can just imagine how difficult this is for the family," he said.

Phehla was a third-year student at the faculty of information and communication technology and a former chairman of the faculty's student council.

Police spokesman Brigadier Sally de Beer said police were investigating a case of culpable homicide. A statement had been taken from the car's driver but no arrests had been made.

"We are also investigating a charge of malicious damage to property after some students went to the driver's home and threw stones, breaking the windows and dragging a mattress out of his house and setting it alight," De Beer said.

Also on Thursday, former Wits student representative council president Shaeera Kalla, a leader of the #FeesMustFall movement, was shot 13 times with rubber bullets by police.

On Friday, family friend Shafee Verachia said Kalla was recovering in hospital.

"We are all relieved she is fine but we are deeply concerned about the police brutality

against young people," he said.

In Cape Town, security guard Quinton Marang, 45, contracted by Vetus Schola Protection Services, was brutally beaten after UCT protesters thought they recognised him from a picture published in a Cape Town newspaper. In the photograph the guard appeared to be holding a female student by her hair.

Marang, who was discharged from hospital on Friday, denied he was the guard in the photo.

He said he had been holding a door shut to restrict access to the library in which security guards had barricaded themselves with two arrested students after protests turned violent on Tuesday.

He said he had been separated from his group and attacked because he was isolated.

"My family were worried about me when they saw on the news what was happening at the universities," said Marang, a sole breadwinner.

"They tried calling the hospital the whole time, asking where I am."

The company's community development manager, Patrick Hall, said Marang had suffered "a knock against his head and he had bleeding between the skin and the skull".

Another guard was admitted to hospital on Wednesday after a rock was dropped on his head from an upper storey of the Steve Biko Students Union building.

A trauma counsellor is assisting all UCT security guards "indefinitely".

Acting national police commissioner Khomotso Phahlane said 567 people had been arrested in connection with protests related to #FeesMustFall over the past eight months, with charges including contravention of interdicts preventing student demonstrations, public violence, malicious damage to property, resisting arrest and assault on police. — *Additional reporting by Yasantha Naidoo*



Sunday Times

DECOLONISING TEACHING PRACTICES

IN SOUTH Africa, student calls for free, quality, decolonised higher education have coincided with demands for the transformation of canons, curricula and pedagogies.

At the height of the protests assembled around the #FeesMustFall movement since 2014, some students at the University of the Witwatersrand formed their own reading group, attempting to develop their own curricula.

They presented memorandums demanding that their disciplines decolonise the universals they base their assumptions upon. Assumptions like the very non-secular secularism that shapes all aspects of what the practice of knowledge is: the separation of nature and culture; and the primacy of Western canons as universal and not particular. Students wanted the university to better reflect their experiences and contexts.

Danai Mupotsa's paper *Knowing from Loss* considers the practice of teaching in the light of these student protests. Aretha Phiri spoke with her.

Aretha Phiri: Your paper is primarily situated in the Fees Must Fall moment. How did the student protests help shape your teaching?

Danai Mupotsa: This paper has had a number of afterlives. I started my first full-time teaching position in 2015 and I was excited about what teaching as a practice means.

In my paper, I give the example of the student in a second-year course on post-independence Africa, who, once we were reading Adaobi Tricia Nwaubani's *I Do Not Come to You by Chance*, was a bit teary. The story is told around Kingsley, who places his hopes in education.

“

An education might not
promise the freedom
the student imagined

Kingsley graduates as an engineer, but education is no longer the language of success in Nigeria. After reading this novel, the student felt that perhaps getting an education might not promise the freedom he imagined – also realising the cost of this education to his family – and he could not reconcile with the narrative and what it might represent.

It made me think about the responsibility that we bear as teachers in contexts of rare optimism. A day later, the university was shut down because of #FeesMustFall protests. I had to think about the spaces that I occupy.

AP: Your paper title, *Knowing from Loss*, references the work of US poet, critic and theorist Fred Moten. Are you attempting to apply his analyses of blackness (in America) to the current “decolonial” South African moment?

DM: My turn to Moten came out of a workshop on literary traditions in the face of decolonisation. There were people who were broadly dismissive of students who were turning to Afropessimism as a line of thought, or to blackness as the condition that oriented their political vocabulary.

Some statements from colleagues I just found reactionary. But there were also those who were dismissive because of their non-expertise in black intellectual traditions such as Moten's, which thinks through the space between black and blackness, experience and our knowledge of that experience.



Delays rob student housing providers of rent

ALISTAIR ANDERSON
Property Writer

DELAYS in registration, along with the late sitting of exams at many tertiary institutions following last year's student fees protests, has placed student accommodation providers under pressure.

Some providers have missed out on rent for the first and/or second month of the year. This is while the overall bed-shortage grows.

Recent estimates put the shortage at academic institutions at more than 200,000 beds.

The University of Pretoria has an 8,000-bed capacity, of which 2,500 are available for new students. On average, 35,000 students apply for accommodation every year. This mirrors the level of demand at other universities.

Craig McMurray, CEO of Respublica, a student accommodation provider in Gauteng, said providers tried to sign up students as early as possible to lock in income for the year.

"But there have been abnormal delays after the fees protests last year, as exams were written late and many results were released late. This means some companies will receive only nine months of income instead of, say, 10, which can damp profits," he said.

Listed property group Redefine Properties owns 51% of Respublica, which is redeveloping Pretoria's Hatfield Square into a multi-use precinct, with an emphasis on student accommodation. The project is worth R850m.

Some analysts say property companies should work at satisfying the strong demand for student accommodation. However, student housing is operationally intensive and requires hands-on staff.

But one such company developing student accommodation in various provinces is Stag African, a Cape Town-based specialised housing developer.

MD John Schooling said delays in the roll-out of student accommodation in this academic year had led to other concerns including a possible effect on students' ability to pass their exams.

"The direct impact and concern is that, beyond having a place to sleep, the shortage of good student accommodation could dramatically impact a student's ability to study, which in turn could result in an even higher dropout rate and pass rate at the end of the year."

He estimates that about 600,000 students will not have access to good accommodation this year. Mr Schooling said the 200,000 bed shortage at universities was exacerbated when a 400,000 shortfall of beds from technical vocational education and training colleges was added.

The University of Pretoria's media specialist, Anna-Retha Bouwer said: "Forty percent of residence spaces are reserved for first-year students.

"The remaining capacity is allocated to senior students who qualify for placement, based primarily on their academic performance.

"The demand for residence accommodation far outstrips the available supply, and competition is thus fierce. Academic merit is the primary criterion for placement."

There have been abnormal delays after the fees protests, as exams were written late and many results were released late



Business Day

Demilitarise learning institutions

Guns have no place on the premises of any institution of learning.

Even during protests, lives should be under real threat for law enforcement agencies to have any justification for using live ammunition.

The Tuesday killing of a Durban University of Technology student during what appears to have been clashes between campus security and a group of protesters once again highlights the urgent need to de-militarise our institutions of higher learning by removing heavily armed guards and policemen from campuses.

Protests and class boycotts are a common feature of student lives across the world. Whether in the so-called developed world or developing countries, university students are prone to challenge authority and force society to confront its shortcomings.

But only in countries with deficient or nonexistent democratic systems do you find such protests often resulting in blood-letting and other forms of violence.

SA is a thriving democracy where the right to protest is constitutionally guaranteed. Yet we still have protesters being shot down. If it is not by the police, it is by trigger-happy and ill-trained security guards.

Why private security guards, whose job is to protect students and the university's property, are allowed to carry guns with live ammunition on campus beats us.

Students are not criminals, they go to university with the aim of furthering their knowledge and securing themselves a better future. Even when they take to the streets, it is mostly with the aim of being heard, rather than that of causing havoc.

But a militaristic approach to such protests by security and the police often causes the tensions to boil over into physical violence.

The deceased student's life would have been spared had DUT, and other institutions of higher learning, banned lethal weapons from being used to quell protests.

We have a long history of violence emanating from decades of national oppression. It is time, 25 years after gaining freedom, we turn our backs on that history.

A key step towards doing that is for those in authority to demilitarise their responses to protests and for demonstrators to engage in peaceful protests.



EFF students threaten chaos

PROTEST FALLOUT: OVER PROSECUTION OF ACTIVISTS

➔ **R800 million in protest damage over past three years at institutions of higher learning – minister.**

Batandwa Malingo

The Economic Freedom Fighters Student Command (EFFSC) is threatening to revolt and make the entire country ungovernable.

That is if the state continues to prosecute student activists involved in the #FeesMustFall protests that started in 2015.

A week ago, Minister of Higher Education and Training Naledi Pandor revealed to the Democrat-

ic Alliance that there had been nearly R800 million in protest damage over the past three financial years at institutions of higher learning.

On Monday, #FeesMustFall activist and Durban University of Technology (DUT) student Bonginkosi Khanyile was convicted on charges of public violence, failing to comply with police orders and possession of a dangerous weapon during extremely violent protests at the university.

On Tuesday night, EFFSC secretary-general Rendani Nemat-swerani noted the Durban High Court's judgment with some displeasure.

He said the student body was aware that there was an effort to

stop student activism with the threat of imprisonment.

"We want to make it clear to the ANC-led government that if this vicious brutalising of student activists continues, that if they continue to hunt our own so mercilessly, it will be met with revolt," Nemat-swerani said.

He said their "radical and militant organisation" would mobilise students across the country to continue the struggle that was started in 2015.

"If it calls for us to make this country ungovernable for our cries to be heard and adhered to, then so be it. A threat to our affiliation as students will be met by direct retaliation," Nemat-swerani said. – batandwam@citizen.co.za





THE Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University was a no-go area yet again yesterday morning, as has been the case over the past three weeks.

Classes to resume after varsity student protests

GOITSEMANG TLHABYE

THE Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University management maintained yesterday it would be business as usual.

In addition, management said all stakeholders were in agreement the academic calendar should continue without further delays.

This despite the fact that there were fires licking the sign bearing the name of the university at the entrance yesterday morning.

What was evident was that for all the assurance that academic activities were resuming, the university remained closed for the fourth week.

A small contingency of SAPS members were at the scene to try to calm the situation.

But by noon the university had cleared.

University spokesperson Dr Eric

“
We're still hopeful we'll finish up in time and start exams in November

Dr Eric Pule
UNIVERSITY SPOKESPERSON

Pule said that following the meeting on Monday, it was decided that the council would return for follow-up engagements.

“But based on what transpired, it seems there were a few students who did not agree with what was tabled. Staff were ready to resume their duties and even as much as 90% of students also want to get on with things.

“It was fewer than 10 students

who caused this raucous and fortunately they tired out eventually.

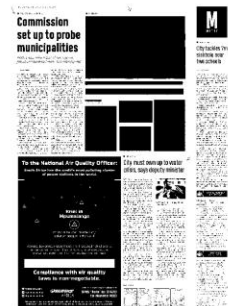
“So after we cleared things up we went to the gate to inform staff and students that everything continues.”

For now, he said, everyone was getting on with the agreed recovery plan.

Students will get cracking with their practicals and will continue until the end of the year.

“We're still hopeful we'll finish up in time and start exams in November. The acting vice-chancellor has already requested a meeting with those few students and other parties to say what issues were left out necessitating the continued disruptions,” Pule added.

Afterwards, the university council would write a formal agreement in response to the memorandum submitted, for all stakeholders to sign.



#FeesMustFall elite rewarded but higher education is still not free

ANC, EFF show their bias in favour of historically 'white' universities

Asemahle Gwala

The date is October 17 2016, a little over 10 months after I first graced the hallowed yet thorny grounds of Nelson Mandela University.

After a fairly peaceful sleep, we woke up to the sounds of stun grenades. The university had triggered an interdict after rolling mass action under the banner of the FeesMustFall protests, which were sweeping across national campuses with the aggression of a volcano.

The genesis of the protests is a highly contested subject matter that has divided students between the suppressed voices from historically black universities who have been inhaling teargas since the turn of the century and the newly minted revolutionaries with vast media coverage.

This is my reflection, three years later, on the lives of those who went to the picket lines for a just cause and ended up with criminal records. Their fellow comrades were rewarded with political careers as gallant "FeesMustFall"

activists by the same band of oppressors they fought against.

I would also like to invoke a sense of consciousness on those who made history on their respective campuses by pushing the wheels of the revolution in favour of insourcing scores of workers only to reverse those gains by wielding the political capital to put themselves at the dinner table.

It would be a fallacy to say there has not been much progress achieved since the first FeesMustFall protests erupted.

This ultimately led to the declaration of free education by former president Jacob Zuma on the eve of the 2017 ANC Nasrec conference.

Although the protests were a necessary precondition to agitate the declaration, it would be naïve to attribute the victory solely behind the hashtag.

Rather, it should be seen as a product of continued struggle in higher education that stretches back many generations.

As it was when the ANC won the first democratic elections in 1994, an elite

class of bureaucratic bourgeoisie emerged while thousands of Umkhonto weSizwe combatants returned to the country to be welcomed by poverty at their doorsteps.

The protests have produced many "leaders" who went on to carve political careers for themselves through the collective plight of South African students.

Wits University, the "main" site of struggle of the FeesMustFall movement (as a result of institutional privilege), has seen its former leaders such as Nompandolo Mkhathshwa and Fasiha Hassan named on the ANC's parliamentary list.

The EFF named other student leaders on its list in the form of Vuyani Pambo and Naledi Chirwa.

It is not incorrect for these young leaders to make the list.

The only thing that raises questions is the institutional privilege that has seen "leaders" of the protests only coming from one strata of South African universities.

If political parties were genuine about wanting the

voice of South African students to be fully represented at the legislative arm of government, they would have been inclusive also of the historically black universities like Fort Hare and Zululand.

After the Bantu Education Act was extended to "black" universities, what they are producing is still undermined.

However, what is different now is that it is undermined by the very people who are claiming to be fighting against it.

Robert Sobukwe once said: "Fort Hare must be to black people what Stellenbosch is to the Afrikaner."

Until total equality is attained in the higher education sector in SA, education is not free.



FEES COMMISSION

Free education unfeasible, says leaked report

Michelle Gumede
and Karl Gernetzky

The long-awaited university fees commission report is expected to be released by President Jacob Zuma this week, but a leaked version of it saying that free education is unfeasible has already sparked fear of more student protests.

City Press reported that the commission, headed by Judge Jonathan Heher, had ruled out universal free education.

Instead, the commission's report makes proposals that include a "cost-sharing model", which would entail increased government subsidies, as well as a "fair and affordable" fee structure regulated by the Council on Higher Education.

Student protests demanding the release of the report shut down some campuses last week and student organisations have been gearing up for further protests this week.

Presidency spokesman Bongani Ngqulunga said consultations with relevant ministries were at an advanced stage and were expected to be finalised this week.

"The president will release the report immediately thereafter," said Ngqulunga.

The South African Students Congress (Sasco) will march on Parliament and the Union Buildings on Tuesday to demand the report be released, while protests have continued at the University of the Free State, the Cape Peninsula University of Technology and the University of Cape Town.

Sasco did not comment at once on the City Press report, but indicated it was aware through sources that there would be no free education.

Its president, Thabo Moloja, said that if this was the case, Zuma must publicly reject that finding and stipulate another way forward. "If the judge got it wrong, he [Zuma] must say so and that he is not going to accept that there is no free education," Moloja said.

There should have been more engagement on the commission's report, as the majority of submissions had argued against universally free education, Education for Social Justice Foundation deputy chairman Hendrick Makaneta said.

"A lot of those voices were against free, high-quality education, but it is not too late," Makaneta said.

The foundation would write to the Presidency and the new higher education minister to request further engagement on issues such as private sector contributions, he said.

The leaking of the report would cause further confusion and concern, said DA higher education spokeswoman Belinda Bozzoli. More protests should be expected.

However, a handful of measures would be popular, such as the scrapping of registration fees, she said.

"But the full report would have to indicate where universities would get their cash flow for the first three months of the academic year without it," Bozzoli said.



Business Day

Racial tension hits Wits

Students nearly come to blows

Ntwaagae Seleka

RACIAL tensions and divisions were exposed yesterday between two groups of Wits University students during the #FeesMustFall protests.

The groups of students – one demanding that lectures resume and other defiant #FeesMustFall members – almost came to blows.

The smaller group, against the protests, was led by Stuart Young.

It marched from the Science Stadium to the Great Hall where they met a large group of #FeesMustFall protesters. On Tuesday, Young was confronted by a large group of #FeesMustFall protesters when he stood carrying a placard demanding lectures resume.

His placard was torn up.

A female police officer was later injured during the fracas.

Later, a large group of #FeesMustFall protesters marched to the west campus where the anti-protests group had earlier gathered, and when they could not find them, marched across the campus chanting struggle songs.

Young, a first-year film and television production student, said he mobilised students to join his silent and nonviolent march.

"We want the academic year to be completed. We don't agree with intimidation, threats and bullying from other students. Over 70% of students want to come back to classes. The majority are not here

to join us. The #FeesMustFall protesters say they're not violent. We're also not violent. We call on them to work together to get a solution," Young said.

Zakhele Xaba, a third-year law student, joined Young and said he was motivated by his bravery.

Xaba said all students have a right to education and were all supporting the call for free education but urged other students to allow those who want to return to class to be allowed to study.

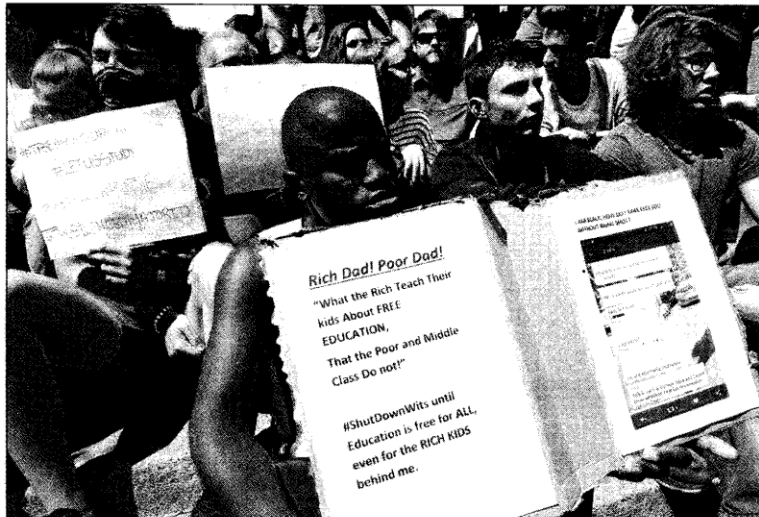
A second-year engineering student, who refused to be identified because he was not part of the #FeesMustFall movement, said their striking peers were wasting their time.

Bishop Jo Seoka said his presence at the university was to ensure that calm is restored.

"The potential is there for confrontation. We call on both groups to meet with us [former student leaders and activists led by Dali Mpofu] to hear their side," said Seoka.

Students and management are expected to meet tomorrow during a general assembly. Learning at the university has been suspended again until Monday.

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Wits University management has closed the institution after running battles between protesting students and police. The university will reopen on Monday.

PHOTO: KIM LUDBROOK/EPA



Sowetan

Appendix B: Transcripts of SRC members

1. Transcripts of SRC interviews

1.1 INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT SRC 1 University of Pretoria

The interview with SRC 1 former SRC member at the University of Pretoria was done on Teams on the 5th of January 2024

Thank you very much again for agreeing to be a participant in the interview,

Interviewer.

Question: Please tell me a little bit about yourself, what you do the institution where you study, and the role you play as an SRC member.

Participant.

Answer. I am from Moloto. I completed my matric in 2017 and I started to study for the Bachelor of Education degree at the University of Pretoria in 2018 and completed it in 2022, in record time, and during my university journey in 2021, I was in the Faculty of Education as part of the Executive Committee. Then 2022, I was at the UP REC, UP REC is very challenging basically what we do is to give back to the students and the committee at large. In 2023 last year I was selected in the SRC, however, I could not finish my term because I got employment. So, I left because I had to go to work. So, since July last year, I have been working in Limpopo at Malebetsa as a teacher.

Question: So, as a student who is in a leadership position and someone who gave back to the students and the community at large when you were studying, according to your observation and your experience,

How does the post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protest in institutions of higher learning?

Participant.

Answer. Well, I think having media representation in student protests is important because it can expose the problems that we are facing in institutions of higher learning. We will also get exposure, not for bad things but for good things that we do for we do for the students at large and not only politically but for everyone. So, I do not think that they look at that, I think, this

is because if the media cover our efforts there might be other people who want to sponsor us. We may get sponsorship from people who are watching and may realize that these students are struggling let me help. For instance, last year there were problems with NSFAS but if we had media. I mean proper media coverage I think we may have gotten a lot of sponsorship that will help students who are in need.

. **Interviewer.** Yoo, thank you Pule.

Question: So, according to your which news values and routines do you think inform the media's coverage and representation of protests in higher education institutions?

Answer: Well in my experience with student protests, I had three student protests that I took part in, and the media came to cover our protest, they did not look at where our institution is, or whether it had money or not. The media came to cover our protests regardless of who was there. We had two strikes in 2021, and in 2022 we had two, but I could not partake because I was busy with my practical. Also, last year we had one huge protest and of course, the media did cover our story. I would like to believe that they did not look at the institutions and whether they had money or not. I would like to believe that I do not even know how to explain this. The media looked at how big is the media, is the story of interest to your problems, and looked it would appeal to their audience. I think that the media when they cover our protests are trying to please their masters and people who watch the news on TV or listen to them on the radio. I believe that they also look at how much our protests will impact the institutions and even the economy of the country especially when students are burning tires and closing the roads. You know, our media especially the traditional media, depending on how the protests are, it is sort of like competing, and they want to be the first who cover the protests.

Interviewer. That is very interesting, thank you for that, ok we move on to the next question.

Question: So, to what extent are the representations of the protests in the media linked to power, and structural inequalities?

Participant.

Answer, honestly, I do not think that the representation of these protests is linked to anything be the power or anything. I do not think that their coverage and representation have to do with any power or anything. I may say that it may be linked with what they are going to gain. For instance, if a media house was the first to come to our protests and cover them, then to them it

is a scoop, they have both a breaking story and they have scooped their peers. We also know that, in institutions, there is also politics, so, if the media may be linked to a political formation that is part of the SRC, they may be interested in what is happening. You know me, I was part of the SRC, but I was never affiliated with any political party. Even in the SRC, there is always political affiliation. Also, there is competition because everyone would want the side of their political party agenda first so that they influence the content.

Interviewer: Thank you again, we are almost done.

Question: Is there any role that is played by students' socio-economic inequalities that may be associated with the way they are represented in the media?

Answer. Eh with us you know because institutions differ, and that will mean each institution differs in the way they look at the budget, in other institutions such as TUT it may be different. Students of TUT may use violence. So, I think the intensity of the strike will determine its outcome, I mean even in the way they are covered and represented. Just like for instance, if you start marching you burn staff and you mobilize other students until they get to maybe a thousand. I do promise you that the media will be all over the place but if it is only 10 or 5 students who are protesting the media would not cover such an event.

Interviewer. Thank you again for that, Pule, we are almost done.

Question: Does the traditional news media's political economy influence how these protests are covered and portrayed?

Participant. Answer. Yes, that does influence the media because the media like institutions of higher learning need money to function. Every company or institution in the country has its way of making money. And I believe that everything they do culminates in the making of profit in whatever way. The media is also like that, it has people who own them, and I am sure that they do have a say on how things should be done. I do not work with them. Yes, I believe that that may have an impact.

Question: Do you think that the traditional post-apartheid media speak from the position of an African subject? (Why)

Participant. Answer. I think they do because if it was not for the media, I am sure that people would not know about what is happening in institutions of higher learning. Asking ourselves, that do they report everything is another topic. However, I can say that the media do what they

can to tell our stories. For instance, recently there have been students who have been defunded by NSFAS, and even the media did talk about it in detail. I remember there was a story about it on Enca. So, the media do cover issues they need to cover for Africans, as much as they cover stories about whites, Indians, and any other races in South Africa, I must admit that there are a lot of things that are happening in institutions of higher education, and the media may not be able to cover and report everything but I would say they do speak from an African subject.

Interviewer, ok very interesting,

Question, so do you think that the traditional post-apartheid news media needs to be decolonised?

Participant. Answer. Ya, I do think that the media must be decolonized because as students you know we go through a lot every day. One of the issues that we have as black students we do not get as much attention when it comes to bursaries, but the media never talked about that. For, instance. NSFAS may cover some of the things that you need as a student, but you do not hear that in the media. The media do not give attention to the most important issues that affect the poor, like when NSFAS decides to defund certain students who have no money to continue, those issues are not seen or heard of in the media. That is why I say that the media also need to be decolonised, which will mean that all races in South Africa are represented equally in South Africa. Because we need a media that will cover our stories completely not to do bits and pieces of what is happening. Yes, decolonisation, I think will help in directing the media to only South African issues. That is my take on this.

1.2 INTERVIEW with SRC 2 UNISA

Thank you very much again for agreeing to be a participant in the interview,

The interview with SRC 2 was done on Microsoft Teams on the 13th of December.

Interviewer. Question: Please tell me a little bit your yourself, what you do the institution where you study, and the role you play as an SRC member.

Participant. Answer. I was born in Pretoria, Mamelodi exactly. I am a LLB student at UNISA. I registered with the University of South Africa in 2017, which was also the year when I joined student politics, the first people I interacted with after I registered were members of different organizations, who were trying to recruit us. But the year before, was the year of the Feesmustfall. I never participated in fees must fell because I was still in high school then. But

when we entered the University field we came with that consciousness where we knew that we wanted to participate in student issues. Eeh, I then join the branch of the EFF student command and started to participate in the branch. I was the one who was helping students around the campus. There is one thing about leadership, you cannot be in student leadership if you do not love people. So, for me, I love students and people in general, and I get joy doing what I am doing. Because UNISA is a long-distance institution, so we help people to know the institution because it is not like other contact universities. I then became a secretary of the EFF student command in UNISA, which is a branch level. I left the branch in 2021, I then became a regional officer in the Tshwane regional office and that was for two years. Then after that, I went on and became a President of the SRC last year. So right now, I am a President of UNISA nationally.

Interviewer. Question: So, as a student who is in a leadership position and someone responsible for organizing student protests, according to your observations and your experience,

How does the post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protest in institutions of higher learning?

Participant. Answer. Look we are not naïve about the media and its role in terms of disseminating information in society. But we also know that we are living in a society that is highly polarised and of course, we have a media that is extremely biased in terms of reporting issues that affect the public. Eeh, our media in general is not as independent as one would like, it does not report fair, and what you hear and see in the media is different from what you see on the ground. And people behind the media may have their agenda you know. The narration in the media is different from what is happening on the ground. There are Media Houses that just wait for anything to happen. So, when we look at the Fees Must Fall story the media narrative was that the media's narration was that they started at Wits University, but the reality is that these protests started in the most dominantly black universities, and then of course there were Rhodesmust Fall which was a precursor to the fees must fall as you know. But look at where the protests began it was at the historically black university like TUT, UNISA itself was one of the first universities to go with this thing you know, because the EFF student command was leading at the time and fighting for the insourcing of workers. But what happened at the time you found that the media distorted the reality of what was happening and the way the story was told? So, the media is there so that it may distort information, the thing is if you leave the media in the wrong hands, they can do what they want to do. But we are grateful now that

because of social media, we can control our narrative, for instance on Twitter, I can post and tell my followers what happened and tell them the truth, we no longer must rely on the mainstream media to tell our story and distort information. So, media is evolving, so I would hope that as the media evolves, also the mainstream media will try to change their mindset. Whether we like it or not the media is highly captured in South Africa, and their reporting is very poor, go and read Sunday papers today. You will realize that the media has one story that peddles the same narrative, all of that. So that is my take on the media.

Interviewer. So, thank you so much, very interesting.

Question. So, do you think that economic power plays a role in influencing media coverage and representation of student protests in higher education institutions?

Participant. Answer. Yes, we live in a capitalist society that is one thing that we cannot deny. To breathe alone is money. So those with enough capital can drive whatever narration they want to drive. You know, Universities are highly commercial institutions, I mean to register for one module is very expensive. We have about 33 thousand students right now who do not have money to study because, they were defunded by NSFAS last year and they also owe the institution, because the government has made budget cuts on NSFAS so those who cannot afford would not have access to education. I am not counting other universities, where the government has cut its budget so those who cannot afford to pay would not be able to get an education. So, that shows that they have commercialized education, and it is a very expensive commodity to have. So, I do believe that even those with exceptional resources can push whatever narrative they want to push about issues.

Interviewer. You, thank you so much, Nathi.

Question: So, according to your which news values and routines do you think inform the media's coverage and representation of protests in higher education institutions?

Participant. Answer. Students just do not go and burn buildings or shut down universities. We revolt because we cannot breathe anymore, the revolution is because management does not hear our specific cry you know. So, there are many ways that students can get attention, by burning tires and so forth but management can be extremely arrogant at times because they oversee resources, and they can frustrate you by putting extra security on campus. So, as leaders and students we are sometimes pushed to the edge in terms of what kind of protests we should have to not only get management's attention but even the government's because if we cannot

get the attention of the management of the universities, we have to get the attention of other stakeholders and of course if burning tires would be what bring attention to our issues. So, without tires, the media would not come but still, the media will come and distort the information that is why the media is important, it has the responsibility to report only the truth to the public because they have the responsibility to help student in the fight for a better environment which is also conducive for their study.

Interviewer. Thank you,

Question: So, to what extent are the representations of the protests in the media linked to power, and structural inequalities?

Participant. Answer, yes, absolutely they are linked because all media houses in South Africa are owned by the same person you know. So, that tells you that the narration of the stories that are told are aligned, you look at your Enca, Sowetan and then Daily Sun, these are all media houses that are under one house. Let us look for instance at other media houses like Newsroom Africa, its ownership is still in question, that is linked to power because it takes only one rich man to generate the stories that we are told in the media, and capitalism is so brutal because it can monopolize everything you know, that is why we try to alter that, because we understand that once everything is in the hands of capitalism we would not have any credible news source if you look at the SABC it is the only independent media house because it belongs to the government of South Africa, but the rest of the media houses in the country belongs to the capitalist monopoly, they depend on capitalism to sustain themselves. You know we have Power FM which is a black-owned station but if you look at how they started and how they are moving forward now, it tells you that when the going gets tough, one has to try to survive, that is why they are dependent on donors, because as a black person the only place you can get donors is from white capitalists, they will give you money and also tell you the kind of stories that you need to tell. So, in South Africa, the media is operating under capitalists in the system, and also as we are living in an unequal society those with money will have the power to control what the media disseminates. That is why alternative media such as social media like Twitter can replace mainstream media you know. They have become an alternative tool where we can inform the people and inform ourselves, it is also a space where people can freely share their opinions without listening to any radio station. So, you cannot divorce capital from controlling the media and the kind of information you get from them. The media is so important to the fact that when we look at every country where there is a military invasion, the first thing they do

they take over the national broadcaster because that is where they have control of information and knowledge. So, we must not forget that resources play a huge role in this society that we live in.

Interviewer, thank you again, we are almost done.

Question: Is there any role that is played by students' socio-economic inequalities that may be associated with the way they are represented in the media?

Answer. I think it is because institutions are different, the difference is in how the class is grouped, as we live in an unequal society, and in an unequal society there is classification, and once you classify then the issue of sovereignty comes forth. Look once you shut down the University of Pretoria where there are white learners, if you shut down the gates, the media will be more interested because now you are targeting a different class of people, and so we live in a society that classifies us in terms of race and social standing in society. For instance, at the University of Wits, it is kids of the ministers and businesspeople and so forth. So, there is a class difference and in predominantly black universities like TUT and other universities of technologies, we do not get that approach because most students are from poor disadvantaged families. While at Wits you get kids who went to IEB Schools. So, students who study at historically black universities are from government schools, so the media does not care that much about them. But at WITS and UCT you find IEB students and people on white people scholarships and so forth. So, that asserts how the media groups them, like I said it is all class and classification. So, the media reports on the class that exists and the inequalities that exist in our societies.

Interviewer. Thank you again for that,

Question: Does the traditional news media's political economy influence how these protests are covered and portrayed?

Interviewer. Thanks again. So

Question: Do you think that the traditional post-apartheid media speak from the position of an African subject? (Why)

Participant. Answer. No, the media serves certain interests, and it speaks from those interests. So, whoever owns the media, the media speaks for them and speaks on their behalf, it protects their interests. My experience with the media is that the media protects the interests of the

ruling class, it does not seek to expose and educate, and the media serves as a propaganda missionary in other words.

Interviewer, ok very interesting,

Question, so do you think that the traditional post-apartheid news media needs to be decolonised?

Participant. Answer: Yes, I think it should, but I think that for that to happen we need to get the basic levels right, like a lot of things. The social environment must change, and if there is decolonization that needs to happen, it has to start within the institutions of higher education, it must also happen at the government level you know, you cannot have a government that is not in true control of the country. I mean we do not even own the South African Reserve Bank we are told that 80% of the land is in the hands of the minority and those are the kinds of things when we speak decoloniality must be dealt with. The most important thing is to get the basics right you know because if you do not start at the basic level, you cannot get it right. Yes, our education system also must change, for instance, where is the consciousness of a black journalist who seeks to write black stories that seek to protect the establishment and not to protect the middle class? So, I think we need reconstruction of the entire system so that we can be able to get it right. That will allow us to rebuild the country.

1.3 INTERVIEW SCRIPT SRC 3 UP

The interview with SRC 3 UP was done on Microsoft Teams on the 22 of November 2023.

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in the interview.

Interviewer. Question: Please tell me a little bit about yourself, who are you, where have you studied, and what role you played as an SRC member.

Participant. Answer. I am from Mpumalanga in a township called Likazi. That is where I was born and went to both primary and secondary school. When I finished my matric I came to Pretoria for the first time to do a BCOMM degree in Marketing at the University of Pretoria and graduated in 2017. I now work as a Marketing manager in a company I would rather not name if you do not mind.

Interviewer. No, do not worry, I think you have given me, enough of who you are. But I would still like to know what made you join SRC when you came to UP.

Participant. Answer. To be honest, there are various things. Joining the SRC was never in my mind when I came to study. My goal was to study get my degree and go out there and get a job. But things changed when I got to UP. What I can tell you is that, in my first year, there were so many things I did not know, and as a news student, it was a bit hard for me to navigate around campus and do other things. It is when I thought it would be a good idea for me to help other students especially those who are not familiar with the university, because the main campus is very big. So, once I became familiar with the institution, and noticed that other students were coming to the university and seemed lost. I then decided to help when I had time. I became invested in helping new students by talking to them and showing them around campus. I think that is exactly what led me to student governance because I thought that is where I could play a bigger role. You also asked about the role, I played in the SRC, in the year I graduated I was part of the Executive Committee, Treasure -General.

Interviewer. Question: So, as you have said you were helping students who are new at UP, and doing what you can to make them feel comfortable in the institutions so tell me, from what you have seen and observed,

How does the post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protest in institutions of higher learning?

Participant. Answer. If you talk about student protests that happened in different institutions, I will say, the way the media represent them differs. Also, it may be about the intensity of the protests itself. If the protests are violent, you are likely to see them represented that way in the media. But a big but, when protests are peaceful, the media seem not to be interested. Maybe that is why, other students decided to burn things just to attract the media's attention. Again, what I have noticed is that, when the protests are violent, there is that notion that student leaders are the ones who cause the violence, which is not true. I feel like, the media do not ask the right questions and talk to the right people about what is happening when students are protesting. They come with their cameras, and some will take pictures with their phones. To be honest, I have no clue what they do because later when you watch the news, or you read a newspaper you will see and hear something that never happened. To be honest, I do not know, how they operate. It seems as if when they come to cover these protests, they already have an agenda, they have already planned what they will include and what they will omit in their content, which is very sad. Because when they do that, the most important information gets lost. That is why students are called all kinds of negative names like hooligans during protests,

I do not know what the media do but they are not doing what is right. They do not even tell the real story, students are suffering in institutions of higher learning, especially black students, but unfortunately, their pain is never detailed in the media, which is so sad.

Interviewer. Ooh ok,

Question: So, according to you, which news values and routines do you think inform media coverage and representation of the protests?

Participant. Answer. You know, I think that the media cover student protests because they either violence or their story appeal to their listeners or readers. Also, I do not think that these media houses are for the poor, they operate as a business, and because of that, they may have ulterior motives when they cover student protests. Yes, I studied at the University of Pretoria where there are white students, but if you really want to know how student protests are represented in the media look at the way protests that are happening at TUT, and other former black-only universities, and then you will see that the media is another institution which is not pro-black or for the poor. . It seems as if they are out to get black people. In other words, what I am trying to say, is that the content they create is not good for the image of black students and their future. Just imagine if you were one of those students who was seen burning a building or a car during protests, where are you going to work, after university? I feel like the media like to sensationalize the protests and by doing that, they may be destroying young people's future. I believe that they do all of these because they are trying to create content that caters to certain people in certain spaces. That is why I say is one of those institutions which is against black people, especially students.

Interviewer. Very interesting.

Question: So, to what extent are the representations of the protests in the media linked to power, and structural inequalities?

Participant. Answer. I think that we all know the economy of South Africa, many parents especially black parents send us to university to an end, they expect you to pass and go back home and help your family. It has become a norm for many of us when we start working, the first thing we will do is either fix or build our parents a house. So, something like that is what you see in the media when they represent student protests because all kinds of protests in South Africa have a black face. It was only during the Feesmusftfall protests when even white students were part of the protests but other than that, white students do not have to protest, so

why should they? They have generational wealth; they do not go to class hungry or have slept in the library. It is only black students who go through that but believe you mean; you will never hear about those challenges that students face in the media. The fact that during student protests, white students are nowhere to be seen to me is when we talk about structural inequalities in the country, a system of fuels racial discrimination. I do not know if I have answered you correctly.

Interviewer: No, thank you, you did, I thank you for that.

Question: Is there any role that is played by students' socio-economic inequalities that may be associated with the way they are represented in the media?

Participant. Answer. Yes, of course, I think what you are asking me, is like what you have asked me before. I told you that poverty in South Africa has a black face that is what we see and is represented in the media. Again, I would say that in the media, poverty is shown as violent, aggressive, and uncontrollable. It is all these that are seen in the media about black students. Again, I would go back to what I have said before, even when I was a student, during protests white and Indian students were never part of our protests, we were always on our own. Studying, at an institution like UP, your poverty becomes exposed because everyone will know that you are from a poor family. What I am saying is that it would be not only the white and Indian students who come from rich families who do not understand your situation. There are also other black students, I am not talking about international students, and I am talking about our black sisters and brothers who are from rich families who may not understand your poverty. So, just imagine, if your people do not understand, tell me how the media, a former white capitalist institution understands man-made black poverty. I do not think they will.

Interviewer. Thank you again for that. Let us continue.

Question: Does the traditional news media's political economy influence how these protests are covered and portrayed?

Participant. Answer. Yes, the media like all institutions, are money-making institutions. Yes, they may tell you that they are objective and independent, but they are never objective, they have a way of being biased. They tell the public what their masters tell them what to say. You know what is sad, it is that these things are taught in the very same institutions of higher learning. Journalists are taught in these institutions, and especially these days there are a lot of black journalists, ask yourself do they remember, how they suffered when they were students.

Most of them do not because now they are practicing how they were taught at these institutions. That is what I can say about the political economy of the news media.

Interviewer. Thanks again, and then tell me,

Question: Do you think that the traditional post-apartheid media speak from the position of an African subject? (Why)

Participant. Answer. No, that is a complete no-no. I told you before that the media is not for black people. It depicts black people as criminals, violent, out of control, and thugs. It is what you see in the media about black people. This is not only a South African problem. It is a global problem look at what happened in America, during the Black Lives Matter protests. It is the same everywhere.

Interviewer. Ok very interesting,

Question. So, do you think that the traditional post-apartheid news media needs to be decolonised?

Participant. Answer. I can say yes or no. I am saying, this because when you talk about decolonization, you mean decolonized to what? First, I do not think that as black people we know ourselves and we are serious about wanting to know ourselves. I say if there is a decolonization that needs to happen, it needs to start with us first, and then after that, we can tackle these colonial institutions. But apart from that, you may want the media to be decolonized, but you also must know, what you want it to be decolonized to what, that is what I say.

1.4 INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT SRC 4 (UNISA)

The interview with SRC 4 UNISA was done on Teams on the 15th of December 2023.

Interviewer. Thank you very much again for agreeing to be a participant in the interview,

Question: Please tell me a little bit about yourself, what you do the institution where you study, and the role you play as an SRC member.

Participant. Answer. I am the former Treasurer-general Secretary of the National SRC. Eeh, I graduated from the University of South Africa with a diploma in Law first, and then I went on to do a Bachelor of Law. I am currently doing a master's student. I come from Limpopo in the Vhembe district in a small village called Makhado. I am a Venda speaking person.

Question. That is very interesting, so what role did you play as an SRC member?

Answer. I started being invested in the lower structures of SRC, where I was helping the South African students who came to study at Unisa, and then I became a Deputy chairperson and then later and then I got to be a Treasurer before I went to be a Treasure-General Secretary of the National SRC. My role was based on monitoring how the budget was used and overseeing the national SRC budget. I also presided over the financial committee of the University where we looked at the NSFAS issues and all that. I also, worked with the committee that dealt with students at UNISA whereby we cleared the student's debt, so that the students who owed the institution may get their certificates. Also, we started a campaign that is still ongoing currently that encourages people to donate funds that may assist the students to pay their tuition. Also, I was one of the students who was selected by UNISA to attend the summit that took place in Rome, Italy sometime around last year in July. So, that is my background in student leadership.

Question: That is a very interesting background. So, as a student who has always been in a leadership position and who made sure that student's needs were met when they came to the university, according to your observation and your experience,

How does the post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protest in institutions of higher learning?

Participant.

Answer. Well, look, I can say, since post-COVID most of the Universities have migrated to online learning, but as SRC at UNISA, we still have been able to invite the media to come cover our protests when we were protesting. I think, they only do badly with the narratives in terms of not delivering the message that we are trying to send to the public accurately, and then we become the headlines in terms of what the students are doing, and not telling what the students are going through. But one of the biggest challenges is that they are there just an hour or so, and they also do not do follow-up, in terms of coming back to us and finding out if the issues we were complaining about were resolved according to the students' expectations. But I think that they just come and decide on the catchy headline, but we still appreciate that they are still able to highlight a little bit the challenges that students are facing. The media is also able to see that during the protests even student organisations can unite against one cause by trying to resolve the issues that are affecting students, especially black children. However, I believe that the media play a special role in terms of telling the public about the student's challenges and telling them about what is happening, especially at UNISA where students are

denied access to education because of the challenges that they face. But one issue that the media miss in their coverage is the relationship between the universities and the students because even if the students can protest and highlight their issues to management, the management will tell them that everything must be done online.

Interviewer. Thank you Gudani, I appreciate your answer.

Question: So, according to you, which news values and routines do you think inform the media's coverage and representation of protests in higher education institutions?

Answer: To be honest, the media always comes when we burn tires. I have never seen a situation whereby the media or a media house send a journalist to our universities unless there is something that is happening and just to show the community that we are everywhere we are showing you, what is happening especially if the situation is out of control. You hardly see media people coming to Universities just to engage them and to find out how were their issues resolved. They always come when it is the most difficult time when the tires are burning, and when students are on strike, that is where you will see the media in our institutions.

Interviewer. That is very interesting, thank you for that,

Question: So, tell me, to what extent do you think the media representation of these protests may be linked to power and structural inequalities?

Participant. Answer. Obvious structural inequalities and political power play a role in the way these protests are covered. We need to understand that it may be displayed that Universities are public institutions, but I think we must not allow ourselves to be lied to, because something that may be viewed as public, may not be that public. To me, Universities are private institutions because there are students who still pay money to study in these institutions even though they are called public. But it is always those who come from poor families who suffer because when you go to the university you want to achieve certain objectives, you want to move from one point to the other. I think that media and universities are exactly not what we see. We see that those who have the means they receive the best. The majority of these politician's children do not even study at these historically black universities if you check you may find that they are studying out of the country and at times out of Africa. When I talked about the issue that these institutions are portrayed as public is not like a student may go there without paying anything, they need to pay. It is also now, that the NSFAS has been made a

grant and it does look like there are inequalities that separate us in these institutions that categorise us as us and them.

Interviewer: Thank you a lot Gudani.

Question: Is there any role that is played by students' socio-economic inequalities that may be associated with the way they are represented in the media?

Answer. I would say, that in South Africa, we now know that many students come from different parts of the country. Many are coming from rural areas, and they are coming to these institutions with nothing but the hope of getting an education. So, when they get to these institutions, they find that they are not getting what they expected. That brings frustrations and the start of protests. However, when their protests are covered in the media, they find that they are called by name. For example, we have not seen many white students joining their black counterparts in fighting against financial exclusion and even accommodation. Some students do not have places to sleep, and you never hear about that in the media. Yes, I do think that what is happening between the rich and the poor in these institutions does play a role.

Interviewer. Thanks again Gudani. I appreciate this.

Question: Does the traditional news media's political economy influence how these protests are covered and portrayed?

Participant. Answer. I will go back to what I was saying earlier on that, the media is an influential tool in terms of society, and what it reports. It plays a very important role in terms of telling people what is happening at these institutions. But you will find that there is a certain media that wants to cover certain parts where want to cover the burning of tires but does not cover everything behind the protests. When they come to us, they seem to be more interested in showing that the students are angry with the University management, not anything else.

Interviewer. Thanks again. We are almost done.

Question: Do you think that the traditional post-apartheid media speak from the position of an African subject? (Why)

Participant. Answer. Media houses differ, some are unconscious about Africans, and even those who want to speak from a position of an African subject, when they get to the office where they write and publish their stories to publish them, and things change. The owners of these media houses become selective on what must be published, they select what should the

public see, read, and hear. It is not all the media houses speak from the position of African subjects. So, they are selective because if you check many media houses are owned by individual people who control the narratives and the stories that are told in South Africa. I would not say that the media speak from the position of the African subject, especially the African child. As black people, we do not control the media, our brothers and sisters are there in terms of doing whatever they need to do, even if they see that what may have been important but the bodies that own the media may tell them what to publish and what not to. Even if something is published or reported the managers still have the power to go and remove it.

Interviewer, ok that is very interesting.

Question, in closing, Do You think that the traditional post-apartheid news media needs to be decolonised?

Participant. Answer. Yes, I believe that they need to. I am a pioneer of decolonisation at the university where I speak about decolonisation. I think that there should be decolonisation, but I have seen some media houses which are black-conscious, they sort of know what needs to be published or not. The reason, I do not go further on decolonisation is that it is too broad in terms of what we are engaging in right now. But if we can have media houses that are decolonised, I think the public would be much more educated in terms of what is important to them.

Interview. So, if you talk about decolonised media how do you think it should be and look like?

Participant. Answer. For me, the media must be able to publish everything. It should not conceal and sugarcoat things, they should expose them as they are, they should not be at the point where they are now, where they are protective of other people. They must not put the public in a position where they start second-guessing issues, the public must truly know, what is happening. Decolonisation would look like we have media that are completely black-owned and should cover everything in the media. And in terms of languages, they must be able to use languages that are spoken in the whole country. Unlike now when we find that there are media houses that use a language that caters to a certain race only.

1.5 INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT 5 SRC TUT

The interview with SRC 5 TUT was done on a Microsoft Team call on the 23rd of November 2023.

I would like to thank you again for agreeing to participate in the research. Before we officially start the interview could you tell me a little bit about yourself?

Participant. Answer. I am a final-year student at TUT. I am doing a Diploma in Tourism management.

Interviewer. That is interesting, just for clarification what do you like about tourism and what do you study?

Participant. Answer. OK, in Tourism we study a lot of things, like hospitality, traveling, and there are lots of things man, it includes the business management of the tourist industry.

Interviewer. Thank you for the clarification. So, let us get straight to the interview. As a student who is currently involved in student leadership, tell me.

Question. How does the post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protest in higher education institutions?

Participant. Answer. Eh you know, to be honest, according to what I have observed, it does not look like the media is interested in student protests as stories. This is because in most cases they portrayed students as hooligans and chaotic who do not want to study and are only interested in disturbing those students who are serious about their education, I guess that is why they portray them as hooligans and just some students who are out of order.

Interviewer. Ooh, ok a very interesting point.

Question. Do you think that power plays a role in influencing media coverage and representation of student protests in institutions of higher learning?

Participant. Answer. Eish, you know, I think it does, because it looks like the way they are covered is not the same.

Interviewer. Question. Can you elaborate on that, what do you mean, they are not covered the same?

Participant. Answer. OK, for example, it is always different when a student from my Institution TUT, protests, because we may start our protest on Monday at 5 am, and continue until maybe late in the afternoon, but to be honest with you no media will show up to cover our

protests, they will come only if we burn things, that is then we will get their attention. But when the same thing happens in other institutions like the University of Pretoria or Wits trust me their protest will be covered, and they will be all over our TV screens. I mean this shows that power does play a role in the coverage. In places like TUT, most students who study there come from disadvantaged backgrounds, so it seems as if their problems are not taken seriously.

Interviewer. Question. That is very interesting, so in other words do you think the media deliberately ignore your protests because of your social backgrounds?

Participant. Answer. Look, I cannot answer for them, I may say it is, and that may not be true as it is only my observation. But again, it is not all media, for instance, Newsroom Africa tends to show some interest in student issues, and its journalists tend to go in-depth when they cover our protests, and they also invite students for further clarification. But I cannot say the same with other media because, ever since I became a student here, it is what has been happening, as students we strike for various issues in this institution, but it seems as if not everyone cares or is interested in our issues.

Interviewer. Question. So, which news values and routines do you think inform their coverage and representation in the media?

Participant. Answer. I do not understand the question but let me answer this way. I think that depends on whom the protests are directed at and the impact they have on the institutions, let us say for instance, if it is the beginning of the year we are protesting about the financial exclusion of other students because it is the beginning of the year, many media would not cover our story because it seems as if they think that it is a norm for us to protest whenever the new academic year begins. I hope I have answered your question correctly.

Interviewer. Question. Yes, you did, thank you. So, I would like to know. To what extent are the representations of student protests in the media linked to the institution's financial position according to you?

Participant, Answer. No, not really, I do not think that representation of student protests is linked to any financial position of the institution. Most universities are now populated by black students, and it is them who embark on protests. I think media houses look at whether the event is newsworthy or not. If they think, there is not much to get from it, they will decide not to cover it. And, we have been protesting for a long time for financial inclusion, but the media is now tired of reporting on the same issue over and over again. And maybe some of the issues

that we protest about are very sensitive and may affect lots of powerful people and individuals, and so they become political to them, and they make sure that the media is guided on what to say on what to publish.

Interviewer. Question. OK, is there any role that may be played by socio-economic inequalities in media coverage and representation of these protests?

Participant. Answer. Can you please clarify that question?

Interviewer. Noh, ok, when I talk about socio-economic inequalities, I talk about maybe the number of students who come from the well-to-do, and those who come from the disadvantaged communities, or I may say marginalized communities.

Participant. Answer. As I have stated before, it depends on the impact, and as student leaders, we must go the extra mile to make sure that our issues get attention from the media, but also sometimes it helps when we know journalists that we can contact directly.

Interviewer. Question. What do you mean, contact directly?

Participant. Answer. I mean making the journalist aware that there will be protests in our institution.

Interviewer. So, you mean you become their source of information?

Participant. Answer. Yeah, something like that.

Interviewer. Question. How does the traditional news media's political economy influence how these protests are covered and portrayed?

Participant. Question. I do not understand, what you mean by the media's political economy.

Interviewer. Answer. Oh, I am sorry. how do I put this, what I mean is the way the media work and the way it makes a profit, like financing themselves, if you know what I mean.

Participant. Answer. OK, now, I understand, I believe that we all know that the media has more power because whatever is on the media people believe it. So, I believe that it does have an influence. That will mean if we as students are burning tires during protests, and if the media focus on what is happening and do not want to understand why we are doing that, trust me people will believe what they see. So, I believe that it does have influence.

Just in closing, two questions for clarification

Interviewer. Just in closing, I would like to ask you two questions for clarification.

Question... Do you think that the news media's audience landscape plays a role in the kind of protest events that may be covered?

Participant. Answer. Maybe or maybe not. Look, I may not have an answer for that, maybe before the media decide on covering protests, they look at how the story appeals to their audience. To be honest, I do not know as I have stated before when I answer your question about the impact.

Interviewer. Question. OK. Thank you, have you ever been in a situation where you look at your protest story that was covered by the media and you see that it was covered differently?

Participant. Answer. That has happened many times. You know sometimes when journalists come to our protests, they will want to interview us. We talk to them and tell them why we are protesting and what we want the outcome of the protests should be, but when they publish or air their story you find that the information that is on the newspaper or radio or TV is completely different from what you have told the journalists. I think that student issues have become a by-the-way issue to the media and as a result, they interpret and represent them incorrectly.

1. INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT SRC 6 TUT

The interview with SRC was done on Microsoft Teams on the 28th of November 2023.

Thank you again for agreeing to be a participant in the study.

Q: So, tell me a little bit about yourself, I understand that you are a member of SRC, and what kind of role did you play in it?

A. I am from Limpopo, and I am doing my second Advanced Diploma in Project Management at TUT and Supply Chain.

Q. Thank you for that, now I would like to know the role that you play in the Student Representative Council of the institutions.

A. I have been in positions of leadership for quite some time now since I came to the institution. Among those roles is being a leader of the unit that represents the minority groups.

A. As a point of interest, if you are saying you were representing a minority community in that institution, how were you representing them?

A. The way I represent them is to make sure that I come up with ideas and programs where we speak about gender-based violence and what caused it and try to find solutions to gender-based violence issues. We also try to get people who can assist us to make sure that any issue of gender-based violence is addressed and gets to court. I once worked on a project Men's Conference where we invited all men of TUT for a walk from point A to point B to declare that we are against gender-based violence. I also worked with the disability unit to find ways how we can help disabled students. We also make sure that we help them to be included in the institution.

Q. As someone who is part of leadership, how does the post-apartheid news media represent student protests in institutions of higher learning?

Participant. Answer. Thank you so much for that question because it is an eye-opening question for me, what I can say is that, in institutions of higher learning media coverage is linked with the media part of the institution and the journalism courses that are offered by the institution, but now it then becomes problematic as it becomes difficult for student leaders to carry out their duties because most those media houses which are within the institutions of higher learning are then used as a form of tool to protect the institution. For instance, the purpose of journalism being offered in the institution is for the independent thinking of journalists, but now we find it difficult as student leaders when we organize a strike to demonstrate about maybe hot water and we know that management does not have money to buy geysers for hot water. However, the management would use those media houses to protect their institutions. 2. They will even shy away from the problems that students are facing, they will instead support management. But now as student leadership, we find it difficult to always deal with this department as they are pro-management. They do not ask us why we decided to protest, we are put to a corner to fight the attitude and the arrogance of these media houses, and at the same time the management of the institution.

As student leaders we are often attacked as we move forward, you find that you can even be suspended for protesting the violation of basic human rights such as getting clean and hot water, as it is also a student's right to protest for those things. The media houses that we have in our institution have a way of portraying student protests as something that is not. So now, as leadership, I see that we need to have the media houses that when we strike

for the legitimate need of students will support us and focus on the core issues, rather than focusing on violence that has occurred during that strike because a demonstration is a demonstration at some point no one knows what may happen, as no formula explains how demonstration should be led. Also, when you check in my time in the leadership of the SRC, I have found that for our issue to be covered by the media, it takes 2 to five days for our protests to be recognized by the media, especially here at TUT, we can strike for the entire week, you will not see even one media house covering our protests. For instance, in the institution, we have our in-house media house which is BUA you will never see them joining the protests.

Q. So, as you have said many journalists who work for national news media houses were trained by your institutions so, tell me, what do you think, Does economic power play a role in influencing media coverage and representation of these protests?

A. On the part of the national media from what I have observed is that they are the ones that mostly destroy student leadership protests because when the national media comes. Take for instance your SABC, or Newsroom Africa, and all other national news media when they come to our protests, they can interview me for one hour but at the end of time, they will not focus on what we are fighting for or what we are explaining to them, and if one of the leaders say something that it is not a representation of what they see, they then take a certain part of what has been said and put it in their content. So, the national media their target population when they come to our institutions when they cover protests are not the student leaders who have insights on what is happening. Instead, they will target a mere student who is doing his/her first year and does not even understand what is happening and who just came into the institution and ask them questions about the strike. So, the media has a funny way of putting people who have no idea about what is happening and making them representative of the entire strike. Remember, some people have initiated the strike, who can tell them more about the strike? I feel like also the national news media plays a huge role in avoiding our strike, for instance, in the institutions of higher learning we have lots of statues that are about white people, but there is no one questioning that, the media when they see these statues, they will not even question you how you feel about it. So, they are there to create their narrative, they are driving a certain narrative. That is why I am saying the national media do not come to our strike, they take two days to come and if they come in that day, they will not focus on what is happening and that is how we suffer at TUT.

Q. So, in other words, does it mean that the media do not contextualize your issue, they do not talk about your core problem?

Answer. Yes, that is what I am trying to say, the media does not delve deeper when they report our protest.

Interviewer, ok, then let us move on, which news values and routines do you think inform the media's coverage and representation of protests in higher education institutions?

Participant. Answer. Media houses can come to TUT when we protest, and they will be told that this is the SRC, but still, after they interviewed one member of the SRC, they will turn to other things that are not even part of the protest. Remember that we also go check these interviews after we have been interviewed but where we are mostly vulnerable is when they come late when the protest has started around 5 am and they come around 3 o'clock, chances are that the SRC leadership will no longer be there, then they will grab anyone and interview them. Sometimes media houses falsify the information about these protests and what is happening in institutions of higher learning and claim that they have engaged with the SRC this is what they have told them. Also, the media perpetuate segregation especially when they come and find that the SRC on that campus is not of the party that is in power, they will not even be interviewed just to hear their views about the institutions and try to find out the constitution of their structure. So, as much as we are student leaders, who are coming from different structures so that when the media comes, they choose who they want to interact with and who they do not want to interact with. And when you check the news later their opinions of other structures are not represented in the content. So, there is a form of bias and there is a form of the media not being completely neutral when they approach student protest.

Q. In your view to what extent are the representations of the protests in the media linked to power, and structural inequalities?

A. Let me say this, first TUT used to be a university that was pro-white, and still today, it is dominated by white individuals, but the problem is that even during the fees must fall protest, the protests started at TUT before it became a national issue, in the black only institutions, for instance, we have to strike for almost a week and our protests need to trend and all those things, But if the institution that is mainly filled with white students even if they can strike for 2hrs, their media coverage will be huge. I want to also take you back on something, remember I think it was last year when there was a President of Wits who was suspended, that story ran almost a month because he was a president of Wits or something

and that story was covered by the media. But at the same time, we were fighting with the branch leadership, and one of our leaders was suspended and no media covered that story. I feel that in the institutions of higher learning, there is a huge issue of decolonization that needs to happen, as I have mentioned before there are many buildings in these institutions that are named after white people, even though I may spend a week without seeing one white person, but their names are all over the institution. In these institutions, we have almost fourteen if not fifteen buildings that are named after different white people. So, for me, decolonization should also happen in the media and in changing the names of the buildings of the institutions and changing the streets inside the university because the names have an impact on us. Someone who comes from a deeply rural area does not see themselves as they are not represented in the institution. Most companies that are in the country control the narrative in the media. Institutions like your ICASA which regulates our media institutions are the main problems they all need to be decolonized and create policies that promote neutralisation of propaganda and equal treatment of every race.

Question, in closing tell me, is there any role that is played by students' socio-economic inequalities that may be associated with the way they are represented in the media?

Answer. I think there is, as I have stated above in my answers about the kind of students who study at TUT. Also, the fact that there are not many white students who study in this institution anymore. As I have said before, sometimes you see them when they graduate, but you do not know how they come to class and when. It is only black students who are visible during protests.

Interview transcripts (SRC Members)

1.7 INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT SRC 7 TUT SRC

The interview with SRC 7 was done on a Microsoft telephone call on 23 November 2023.

Thank you again for agreeing to participate in the study, I appreciate it.

Interviewer.

Q: So, can you tell me a little bit about yourself, I understand that you are a member of SRC, and what kind of role did you play in it?

Participant.

B. I come from Mpumalanga, eMalahleni. That is where I was born and attended primary and high school. Currently, I am doing my final year of my Diploma in Accounting.

Interviewer

Q. Thank you for that, now I would like to know what your role in student leadership at TUT is.

Participant. I am a bit new to student leadership, it is only my first year, but I am enjoying it. Ok, what I do, is even though I am studying accounting, I deal with student affairs, meaning, I deal with the issues that students deal with daily. They come to me, and I help them in any way I can, and I love what I am doing.

Interviewer. Ok, that is interesting, do you find that fulfilling?

Participant. An Ooh, yes of course. It is fulfilling because I know that I am contributing positively to other students who may be coming from the same background as I am. So that fulfils me, it makes me feel like I am doing something important.

Interviewer. Q. OK, that is very interesting to know that you are doing something good for others. So, tell me, I believe that ever since you came to TUT, and became part of leadership, you have been part of decision-making. So, when it comes to student protests, and according to your perspective, **how do you think, the traditional post-apartheid media represents student protests of institutions of higher learning in South Africa?**

A. Ooh, my God, I think that will depend on which institution you are talking about, I have seen that there is a difference in the way our protests here at TUT, are covered when we compare to other institutions that are financially better than here.

Q. What do you mean by financially better than here?

A. I mean the institutions like Wits, maybe UCT, and others who can get sponsorship from big companies.

Q. ooh ok, so tell me, does power play a role in influencing media coverage and representation of student protests in institutions of higher learning?

A. Yes, I have stated that protests are covered differently in institutions, there may be also some power that influences the way they are covered, but I do not know. Because when I think about

power it may not be about money only. Sometimes it may include political power and the rest. Look and sometimes you may find that, maybe some people have interests in some of these institutions maybe that is why their protests are covered the way they are covered.

Interviewer.

Q. ooh, ok. What do you mean by interests, you mean money?

A. Maybe, because look, many students who study at TUT come from disadvantaged backgrounds and most of them are products of SASSA. You grow up with grants and you come here you apply for NSFAS, you get what I mean. And you can ask yourself, what was going to happen to these students if their studies were not funded because their parents do not have money, I think students suffer because maybe there is no big company that may be willing to help institutions like TUT, where there are many black students?

Interviewer.

Q. Ooh, ya, I get what you mean so does that mean, that is why they are covered differently? What do you mean by covered differently so that I may understand?

Participant.

A. You know, TUT students protest almost every year at the start of the academic year, we protest for so many reasons which may include financial exclusion, a situation where a student is struggling to register for a new semester because they owe the institution money, and other issues, but issues like that are hardly mentioned in the media, our protests are never covered accurately. I feel like the media sort of look at what they want and how they want their story to be and use that, and just say one line about what the students are complaining about. What, I mean is that our issues are never covered accurately.

Interviewer.

Q. OK, so let us move on. Tell me. Which news values and routines inform the media's coverage of protests in higher education institutions?

Participant

A. Honestly, I do not know, how the media works. I am an accounting student, but it may be that the media cover student protests because they are good for their content or just for the sake of covering them. It can be maybe the protests are close by. Maybe that can be what influences their choice, I have no idea.

Interviewer.

Q. OK, thank you for that, and tell me. To what extent are the representations of student protests in the media linked to power and structural inequalities?

Participant

A. I think I did talk a lot about power before, but I would say, we all know that many colleges and universities in South Africa, are subsidized by the government. So, you find the previously white-only universities that have more money than us getting better coverage than a protest that will happen here. This may be because, the university does not generate money or the media does not get more audience, I do not know. And again, students have been protesting since I was at school not even thinking that I would be here, but nothing has changed. Things are still the same, poor students continue to protest even today.

Interviewer

Q. Ooh ok, So, Is there any role played by socio-economic inequalities when the news media cover and represent student protests?

Participant

A. I do not think so because I do not see many students of other races on our campuses. Most of them are at Wits, UCT, and maybe UP. If they are here, I do not see them often. Our situation is almost like protests that happened at other former black-only institutions like your University of Limpopo, and Fort Hare where there are not many white students. Those protests are not covered the way other former white institutions were covered, because when they get to be covered, we tend to see more violence. While, as students we know what those protests are about. Look we also want our institutions to be decolonised, but I have never heard the media accurately explain and report that or just sit with one student leader and make them explain what they mean.

Interviewer.

Q. Interesting, Finally, I would like to know,

How does the traditional news media's political economy influence how these protests are covered and portrayed?

Participant

A. Well, I think the media also want to make money, unfortunately they may want their product to sell. So, would you sell your product to a person you know very well, who does not have money to pay you? I do not think so. So, I think that the competition in the media industry especially when we look at print and broadcast as you have said before makes them compete among themselves. Another thing, I also believe that the media is also competing with the news social media like your Twitter. In situations like that, I am sure they are forced to innovate and make sure they give their audience the content they need, or otherwise, they may lose them to social media.

Interviewer. Thank you so much for your time. I have enjoyed talking to you.

1.8 INTERVIEW SCRIPT 8 UNISA.

The interview with SRC 8 was done on Microsoft Teams on the 13th of January 2024.

Thank you very much again for participating in the interview.

Interviewer. Question: Please tell me a little bit about yourself, what you do the institution where you study, and the role you play as an SRC member.

Participant. Answer. I am a woman, and I am almost 29 years old this year. I am currently enrolled in UNISA. I am doing LLB, and this is my fourth year, I am also serving in the National SRC as a Treasury-general. I think, I am also a very firm person and very decisive, and I can come across as arrogant, but I would like to believe that I am funny. So, that is a little bit about me.

Interview. Question. Just a point of interest what has made you decide to be part of the SRC?

Participant. Answer. Eeh, I would like to believe that my law interest and SRC go hand in hand with the law because SRC is about social justice, equality, accessibility of resources, and equal

affordability of resources. That is why, I developed an interest in student leadership, because I saw that it is equally relevant to the degree that I am currently studying.

Interviewer. Question: So, as a student who is in a leadership position and someone dedicated to taking care of other students' needs, I am sure you were once part of the decision where student protests were organized. So, tell me, according to your experience,

How does the post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protest in institutions of higher learning?

Participant. Answer. Oh, alright thank you. I feel that the media is not doing justice to student protests as you have said that post-apartheid. I would like to say that from what I have seen and experienced on how the media portrays students, especially black students, it is very different compared to students of other races. If you were to highlight a scenario in the issue of a lady where NSFAS gave her more than what she was supposed to get, she had to face criminal charges, while she was exposed and all. The media decided to criminalize her based on an error that was not made by her. So, I think when coming to issues concerning black students really, they are not doing good, based on race number one, and also in trying to create a narrative that black students are violent, black students are anarchists, they are incompetent, and they always resort to violence. So that is a media connotation when it comes to black students, it does not have the same connotation when it comes to the other racial groups in terms of how they behave and how they castigate those who are much different due to racism and whatnot. I feel that the media is not doing justice to black students. Eeh, it does not, I do not know when the last time the print and broadcast media would cover and report about the good things that the students are doing especially in Limpopo. For instance, in the University of Limpopo, a black student who was an SRC managed to raise almost four million to cover tuition for the students that are called the missing middle -those who are too poor to pay their tuition and too rich to be covered by NSFAS. So, those are the things the media would look at, the media would instead concentrate on negative things, and would try to cast the black student in a most negative light. So that is how I feel about both the broadcast and print media. They will never cover a black student positively and I have never also seen black students being crowned to say they have done well and write good articles about them and seeing their names in these big print media like your IOL. The media would never do that for black students.

Interviewer. Question. Hmm, tell me. Does the economic power play a role in influencing media coverage and representation of these protests?

Participant. Answer. I would say most definitely. I feel like protests that are happening at the University of Western Cape, or Wits would be given more attention than the protests that are happening at UNISA, a protest that is happening at UJ, or TUT. I feel like students at UCT and Stellenbosch University would be given much attention when there is a protest compared to TUT students. I feel that at the same time, there is a level of stereotyping, also a level of classism when it comes to these institutions. You know when you come from these institutions, even in the corporate world, if you come from Stellenbosch, UCT, and you are at UP, you are most likely to be taken seriously compared to students that are coming from TUT, students that are coming from UNISA, students that are coming from the University of Limpopo. Especially, UL I feel like they also look at the economic aspect of that institution and how the institution is rather. you know, that is why. Also, I, feel that at the same time, they understand that the more they focus on certain institutions like your Wits, it also gives them confirmation about certain things. It also, let us take, for instance, the SABC is owned by the government, and so in a company like that, people who would be managing an institution like that would be hired from the top. So just imagine people there would not want to offend their masters, meaning what TUT would benefit them. I also feel that if they write good articles about institutions like TUT, what would be the benefit what would that article or story do, and how would they benefit from that? So now, that is why they would classify these institutions that way and push their agenda. For instance, there was a white student who was touted as a student who did very well in matric, last year in 2023. However, some students did very well in Mpumalanga, and students who did very well in Limpopo, just those learners were black, and they are from rural areas they were not from a certain economic class they were not going to be given the coverage they deserved, and but if you are white, it is quite clear that you are going to get good coverage. Never got to grace our beautiful newspaper. These things are happening every year.

Interviewer. Question: Oohk, So, according to you, which news values and routines do you think inform the media's coverage and representation of protests in higher education institutions?

Participant. Answer. So, if you are talking about the proximity of the media houses and the institutions that is also another point, because it can be correct to a certain level. After all, it would remain that, ooh, let me say this if there would be action, if there would strike and property damage, if there would be serious protest, I tell you, newsrooms would send their journalists to TUT right. But if there is a student who has done well at TUT, and there is a great function to congratulate him or her for doing well, the media would never leave their offices

and go cover that story. It is the duty of the media and their journalists to cover negativity. They will never see any good, especially in certain Universities that are classified in whatever way they are classified right. You will never see journalists coming to our institutions to ask how many students you have helped to pay off their student debts, how many students have you helped to graduate, and how many students you have generally helped. You understand you will never get that but the moment something negative in any form appears in these institutions that are classified because remember the system is configured in a way that those institutions that are classified should not amount to anything and is to make sure that also students from those institutions do not amount to anything. That is the purpose of the media and government to say, we cannot now do that, because if we are going to cover every good thing that these universities are doing, that would mean that the group that we are looking at would not be able to have peace in this country. So, I feel like the purpose is to alienate, the purpose is to classify, and curtail more black students from being educated, and to ensure that after graduation you will go back home as a black student. I feel is part of the entire plan, it is tied together.

Interviewer. Question: Ooh ok, so, gain tell me, to what extent are the representations of the protests in the media linked to power, and structural inequalities?

Participant. Answer. I think that what we would also understand is that the rich students would never strike, why would they strike because they have everything they need? So, now those who do not have their voices heard resort to protests. Look when a black student is in the middle gap whose parent is working probably as a police officer and he is a student at UP which is also white in terms of rich universities, along with Wits and other universities such as UCT, that student would be expected to pay accommodation buy food and pay for tuition. Now tell me, these students the way they are going to protest is going to be different because they come from a point of frustration, they come from a point of anger where they say I want to be something, but the system does not allow me to become what I want to be.

Interviewer: Very interesting, thank you again.

Question: Is there any role that is played by students' socio-economic inequalities that may be associated with the way they are represented in the media?

Participant. Answer. Just like, as I have said before. We find many black students in institutions like your Unisa, TUT, and the University of Limpopo. While other races are found

in your University of Western Cape, your UCT may be Wits. That on its own divides us as students. Chances the media may not be interested in information that comes from institutions like ours, they would only come to cover our stories because they want to appeal to a certain market. The media on their own are profit-making companies. Like, tell me when they may focus on our stories as black and disadvantaged communities who will pay them. I believe they are working for a certain class of people. Just as I have said, South Africa is a classified country, we are classified not only according to our race but also according to our affordability. Ask yourself questions like, who buy the Sunday Times or the Business Day? Look like as a black person you would have to choose between feeding your children and buying that newspaper, and also you cannot afford to subscribe. So that shows that our economic inequalities affect us everywhere. The media would not waste their time with me when they know that I am not even their market. They want to sell their paper and make money. I would say, socio-economic inequalities play a role in the way these protests are covered because you may find that the same story was covered but it is not told the same way.

Interviewer. Thank you again for that.

Question: Does the traditional news media's political economy influence how these protests are covered and portrayed?

Participant. Answer. Hence, I have said in the beginning of our interview that the media tends to like publishing what is negative. And again, in South Africa, there are certain types of media creating certain types of information. So, now, if you appear in FORBES under 30 you are there for the good time, you are there as a representation of a certain class. And when you appear in those farm magazines and farming newsletters, it is good because it covers news that is particularly for that niche. But now when it comes to students, which media is responsible for covering student stories? No newspaper in the life of South Africa focuses on the development of students that focuses on the skills and achievement of the students. We would like to buy those newspapers where they talk about a master's student who graduated from Unisa and went on to do very well for themselves. But you never get stories like that. That kind of news is not covered because they do not suit their narrative, they do not suit what they want to achieve. So, now the government would decide to let us have a slot at SABC where we cover students' difficulties and whatnot. I once was interviewed with the SABC, and they would always focus on governmental issues such as load-shedding, and the NPA, on what is supposed to be done, then you ask yourself, is there any media house that is concerned about student

issues? There is none that I know of, and that would also answer your question, that the media only regards those it wants to regard, it does not regard everyone. It would be those who have an economic clout, coming from a certain economic class right, because there is a benefit there. What will they benefit from a UNISA or TUT student? Look the system is configured in a way that, certain students from certain universities are smarter than those they deem as important. This is what we see because the media is showing us that. So, tell me then if Wits would open applications and 330-something students apply at Wits and reject hundred and thirty-something and only take 132. That tells you that they are guarding their qualification. The institutions want their qualification to be precious, they want their qualification to belong to a certain class of people not to everyone. Those are the people or students that the media would cover, and they will get employment right. It is systematic racism, economic racism, and all of those things.

Interviewer. You have a very interesting point.

Question: Do you think that the traditional post-apartheid media speak from the position of an African subject? (Why)

Participant. Answer. Never, why would the media bother about an African, what would they benefit from? This is because another thing that we need to understand is that we have not moved from apartheid, we have entered a new form of apartheid. Unfortunately, we are in a restructured modernised apartheid which is configured in a way that makes you think and feel you are free, but the truth is we are in an economic crisis. There is no post-apartheid freedom, look if I cannot comfortably sit next to a white person in the Gautrain, what does it tell you about our post-apartheid era? You know you enter a Gautrain train, and you see a space next to a white person, and you tell yourself no, let me go look for another space where I can sit. So, this should tell you that as a country we are not yet where we are supposed to be. I tell you we must look at whether are these post-apartheid media serving Africans and Whites equally, and that is the question we should ask ourselves as Africans. There is no point, what are they going to gain? As an African, I do not know what you should do, you need to work a hundred times more than a white person, but you are still going to get different treatment from your white counterparts and get a lesser salary. You are going just be black, irrespective of whether you have worked a hundred times more than the other racial group. I also do not think that the media is for Africans. The media when it comes to Africans, it ensures that it depicts them in the most negative light. Tell me what happened during the Fees Must Fall era. What happened

there? For those students, the only thing they did was just to be able to access education and to be able to get an education and become something in life. But what were the media saying about them, what were they saying about those black students? Radio stations were busy calling students' anarchists, how can you say a poor black student who is trying to ensure that their voice is heard calls them anarchists? When is the time when a black person tries to negotiate peacefully and succeed? Now it seems as if they have learned from their fathers and their forefathers that if you want something to be done you need to protest so that they hear. So, there is no other language that can be heard except language, and that is also the language that the media would cover. The media would cover violence, and the media covered those protests from day one up until students like Mcebo Dlamini who were arrested during the protests appeared in court and were imprisoned, they were covered even when they were in prison. Some of the black students were arrested for crimes they did not even commit, so they penalise them from being educated only in the name of We would show you who we are, and you cannot come here and do as you, please. How dare, you try to destabilize our institutions by wanting free education. What we would do with you when you pass with flying colors. you want us to be forced to absorb you in a system that was never meant for you. That is what the purpose of the media for black students is. It is used to discredit black students to the point where they lose their identity. In terms of wanting the media to support Africans, it is not possible it has never happened.

Interviewer, ok very interesting, we are done, final question.

Question, So Do You think that the traditional post-apartheid news media needs to be decolonised?

Participant. Answer. Ooh. I think as we also all of us need to decolonize ourselves by changing the way we see ourselves as black Africans, also the media needs decolonization. It is through the media that we see ourselves. I think there is also a need for equality in terms of broadcasting. For instance, let's say there is a story of a black person who has stolen 14 million Rand from a government institution, the media would reveal all their details to the public even where he/she is coming from and even their identity number. But if it is the other race that stole that money, and they will never get the same and equal treatment from the media that means there is no equality. That is why, I am saying that we are in the new era of apartheid. We should not fool ourselves by believing that apartheid is over, because you have been sold a false idea that you are in charge and you will never be in charge as a black person, because the media

support the status quo. They support whoever owns them be they the government or whoever. They sort of control them on what to be covered and what needs to be excluded, more like an Instagram where you are supposed to post this and not that, and what you want people to see and what you want them not to see.

1. 9 INTERVIEW SCRIPT SRC 9 UP

The interview with SRC 9 was done on Microsoft Teams on the 13th of January 2024.

Thank you very much again for participating in the interview.

Interviewer. Question: Please tell me a little bit about yourself, what you do the institution where you study, and the role you play as an SRC member.

Participant. Answer. Thank you for inviting me, to this interview. I was born in Standerton, Mpumalanga. I am currently studying International Law, at the University of Pretoria. In my first year in this institution, when I started in 2019, I wanted to join student leadership, but I did not know how to go about it, because I wanted to help other students. When I was doing my second year, I then spoke to one student who was involved in SRC about what I would like to do, because I enjoyed helping other students. Through his guidance, I started helping new students who were coming into the institution. I later became part of the Safety and Security Committee where we ensure the safety of the students on campus. When my term ended last year, I was serving as a deputy secretary in the faculty of facilities, safety, and securities. That is the information about me.

Interviewer. Question: So, as a student who is in a leadership position and someone dedicated to taking care of other students' needs, I am sure you were once part of the decision where student protests were organized. So, tell me, according to your experience,

How does the post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protest in institutions of higher learning?

Participant. Answer. Eeh, you know if I may say, there are a lot of student protests. It is more than what people see in the media. Look students do not just wake up and decide to go and close the gates. I must tell you, there is a lot that is happening in institutions of higher education in South Africa. Especially for someone who is coming from such a remote area like where I am from, the reason you come to these institutions is to be educated. It is then very hard when you get here as a black person and realize that it is not as easy as you thought it would be. You know, concerning the media, I would like to believe that, when they come to cover our protests,

they are looking for a scoop. I do not think that they are genuinely interested in telling our story. I have also realized that journalists are doing their jobs as they are employed by different media houses. But I would say, the media do not tell the public exactly what is happening in these institutions. I must tell you, a lot is happening, things that you do not see or hear about in the media.

Interviewer. Question. So, what do you mean when you say, a lot is happening? What is it that the media do not tell the public?

Participant. Answer. I mean the media do not tell the people of South Africa, the reality of what is happening in universities. When they come to cover our protests, I mean the journalists when they come, they talk to us as student leaders and organizers of the protests and later talk to management. And once they speak to management, they will sort of downplay our issues, I feel as if what will be in the media takes the management's side, instead of telling the public the truth about what the students are going through. I am not saying it is true, but to me, it looks like the media will support what the management said about the protests and sort of make our issues not as important.

Interviewer. Question: Oohk, So, according to you, which news values and routines do you think inform the media's coverage and representation of protests in higher education institutions?

Participant. Answer. You know as I have said before they may be looking for a scoop. When there is a protest, we let the media know, that there will be protests and what it will be about. But I think, when they get here, they look at how can they tell the story by broadcasting and publishing what we do as students not what we told them. They will focus on our march, and when we close the gates and burn tires that will be a story, the story will never be about what our protests are about. When you go read a paper the next morning, you will find words such as "we will never tolerate the hooliganism that is taking place in our institution", those would be words straight from the management. So, that is why I think, the way the media cover our protests is as if they want to sell their content and make a profit.

Interviewer. Question: Ooh ok, so, gain tell me, to what extent are the representations of the protests in the media linked to power, and structural inequalities?

Participant. Answer. I would say that there is political power that is happening in the universities, because look, the student formation in these institutions tends to promote the

ideologies of their political parties. But we are not there. I believe that it may not look like it but believe me everything is linked to some form of power in South Africa, it may be politics, finances, or even ownership because we see that, and experience it daily. Another thing is, that many black students who come to study in these institutions come from disadvantaged communities, and education can be the only means that may help their families. They get here and apply for NSFAS which is not an easy process, and while their rich counterpart 's tuition is paid for by their rich parents or they are sponsored by rich companies owned by their parents or relatives. It is very tough to see that, and it is always a black person who goes through that. As I have said before, those are things you do not see in the media. We have students who sleep in the library and have no food to eat but that is not in the media. It is only we student leaders who know and have to deal with that because even if you tell the journalist about that, it may be edited out and later you hear a different story.

Interviewer: Thank you so much, that is very interesting.

Question: Is there any role that is played by students' socio-economic inequalities that may be associated with the way they are represented in the media?

Participant. Answer. I may say that management plays a role in the way the student protests are represented. Look, I am sure that the way the university is managed and who is managing it may have a role in that. The reason, I am saying this, I am not to say it is true, but it is what I think I have seen. When students protest at TUT, it sometimes takes time for the media to cover them, it is mostly when they burn tires or fight with the police when their protests get prominence. You know why I know, is because my brother used to study there. And when you look at your historically white universities, like your Wits, Stellenbosch, UCT, and even the UP, their protests are covered differently because these institutions may be populated by many black students and academics, but the management is still white. So, I will say, in South Africa, everywhere we have systems that are pro-white.

Interviewer. Thank you again for that.

Question: Does the traditional news media's political economy influence how these protests are covered and portrayed?

Participant. Answer. Yes, I think they do, the media whether be they radio, TV, or print, at the end of the day need to make money. Remember in South Africa, we have media organisations that were owned by white people before, and who were used against black people.

Do you think that has changed; I do not think so. We may be a democratic country now, but I tell you, not many black people own the media. For instance, let us look at the SABC, there was a time when we heard that the government interfered with its content. I believe that if it happens in a public media institution like SABC, it is more likely to happen to others as well.

Interviewer. Yoo, ok. let us move on.

Question: Do you think that the traditional post-apartheid media speak from the position of an African subject? (Why)

Participant. Answer. I do not think so. OK, ask yourself these questions, who is poor in South Africa, and who has financial capital? It is not me and you as black people but those with money dictate what should be in the media and what the public should be told. I do not think that even the journalists, or media houses are aware of that because what they do, is their daily work. Look, I do not blame the media for not speaking from my point of view as a black child, it is the system. If we want something like that to happen, we need to change the country completely.

Interviewer, ok very interesting, we are done, final question.

Question, So Do You think that the traditional post-apartheid news media needs to be decolonised?

Participant. Answer. Yes, as a black person, I may want the media to be decolonised, but I do not know how. This is because I would not even know what decolonisation in the media would look like because I believe that no system would allow something like that to happen. We have inherited a system that is ineffective and would not allow something like that to happen. Look it is not only the media who need decolonisation, even the universities, the companies, and everything in South Africa. I think that is the topic for another day.

2 Interview Scripts for Journalists

Appendix C: Transcripts of journalists

2. Transcripts of journalists

Participant 1: SENIOR REPORTER

The interview with journalist 1 was done on Microsoft Teams on the 14th of November 2023.

Interviewer. Thank you again for agreeing to be a participant. Could you tell me a little bit about yourself and the media company you work for?

Participant. Answer. I am a senior reporter at the SABC. I was born and raised in Makgatho Limpopo, and it is where I attended my primary and secondary school. When I finished school my matric, I went to TUT, where I studied for a diploma in Journalism. So, after, I finished my diploma, I went for an internship at the SABC Limpopo as a journalist. I then moved to Joburg, where I am based now.

Interviewer. Ooh great.

Question. For how long have you been a journalist?

Participant. Answer. I have been a journalist for twenty years now, and I enjoy what I am doing.

Interviewer. Oo ok. I would like to know then, since you have been in the industry for so long, according to your experience,

Question. How does the post-apartheid news media represent student protests in institutions of higher learning?

Participant. Answer. I think it is a bit of a difficult one in this context because if we say traditional one must go back and look at what was happening before apartheid, how was the coverage, was even the protests covered. I mean you will remember that the institutions if I got your question right, are you saying traditional media post-apartheid just to be sure? So, here is my point, the question that we should be asking ourselves first is, before apartheid, 1. How was

the coverage, 2 was there even any coverage? You remember South Africa was divided into two, we had institutions of higher learning that were solely meant for black people, the Historically Black Universities, and those who were predominantly white. Now you see, you need to strike a balance there as to ok, fine be those were covered by certain because I am not even sure. After all, before then even the media was divided. You have someone telling you that even the Sowetan was catering to black people and the Citizen was catering to the Whites. So, if you want to put that together, there also could be other questions that they should be asked first such as. Do the problems of those higher institutions differ in similarities or what, because there is a lot?

Interviewer. Question. So, according to you, as a journalist from what you have seen and observed when you cover your stories, does the economic power of the media itself and the institutions where there is a protest, do they play a role in how those protests will be covered and represented?

Participant. Answer. Yes of course, it is not just about these institutions it is about anything, people who have financial power are listened to when they speak, and even with these protests I mean you can take it from the bottom to the top, the same thing happen, I mean, I studied 20 years ago, before that, I know my brother went to the University of Venda for example, you will know that in the University of Venda back in the 90's when he was there, until the early 2000s, I mean that is a historically black institution. You will know that every year there will be a protest every early year and the protests will be about the fees. Eh, you talk about the former TNG, which is today TUT In Soshanguve that is where I went, I remember people were shot with rubber bullets and had rubber bullet marks on their bodies because of these protests. You talk about Fort Hare, you talk about some in KwaZulu-Natal, and those that I know the University of Limpopo, and this thing is not new, it has always been there. I want to get to the point, so those things have been going on, and it is that is where you find that, some people are really in need of financial assistance, and their struggles might be valid you understand, then it took all those years until one day it happened at Wits University, then when it happened at Wits then it is seen as a serious matter and Luthuli House open their doors and everybody is now listened to, and then boom boom everyone who led that thing(student protests) they are politicians , as we speak they are in Parliament, and then now as the media those who have been treating them as by the way, we know come January, they are going to start protesting, so it was already normalized but until it happened at Wits every one, I even told some of our colleagues years ago when we use to have a vibrant news room a good working one, ehh where

I once told my colleagues that ,you know what the way you are sending us to Wits ,it is like now even if a small fly moves at Wits, we gonna cover Wits and to this day, it is still the same, anything that moves at Wits every media house wants to go there .

Q: So, according to you what do you think makes the previously White Institutions only being the only one who gets media coverage than other institutions (or more than the former black institutions)?

A: Who are they? It is a question of the haves and have-nots who they are, to this day, there is still that gap you know. Ok, fine, now some of the things we hear could be that worse here at UJ, former RAU, which was predominantly Afrikaans, ok now then since they are here, we get to see these things you understand? Now that, the media that serves the interests of those former RAU students may want to see. Ok, you see ehh, since we gave them this now, this is what they do to our beloved institutions. Also, there is this thing in the media that is very disturbing, ehh, there seems to be since the development of these 24-hour news channels, news has taken a total of 360(have completely changed). Like, ten years ago, you would pitch a story and go do it. Like, I feel like people no longer go to study the problem, they wait for the problem to surface, for example, if today, there is probably a child that cannot write or can write exams, they may probably write but in January when they supposed to get their results, they are not going to get them because they owe the institution. There is never going to be a media house that will go and visit the student to say and highlight that, since our job as the media is to push the people in power to act. Suppose we go now to the University of Limpopo we would say you did not graduate because you lost your mother, your mother is deceased due to cancer or whatever chronic ailment, you cannot, but then why, they will say because the NSFAS did not pay. Also, some kids have been sleeping in toilets, there are so many heartbreaking stories that one will hear if you want to, but you will never even if you pitch that story because there is no editor that is going to take that story until these kids start burning tires which is a good spot for 24 hrs. News channels because that day, they will have news bulletins for the whole day. So, another thing that has happened now concerning coverage, is to look at the Senzo Meyiwa trial, for the media the Senzo Meyiwa is a good thing because they will have a full broadcast of the trial, they have airtime to play you understand. The same thing #Feesmust fall they will take all their trucks and park those among the students and once the students see their cameras, they will start throwing stones at the police then they have news. I think

the news shape now is no longer looking at the problem and reporting about it, you wait for the problem to become serious and that is when you write your news.

Q: So, do you think that also, the ownership of the media meaning who owns the media, does it have an impact on how stories are covered?

A: Yes, obviously you start something to push your agenda. I mean wherever I went, there are stories that you go to, and you ask yourself why I am here you know, it is like it is there. That one no one is going to say no to it. I mean I studied this at school, ya, I was taught that at school. We were taught that if the organization that you work for, may have ties with SAA, then a big scandal at SAA yes, they would not say do not cover that story, but they will find a way to say, let us do it this way, so we are not going to say the SAA boss is corrupt because they stole the money. We will say no eeh SAA ehh you know SAA now is looking at the way how they can you know. You should find a way a nice way to say it, for instance when a person is dead, we do not say that person is dead you must find other ways of reporting that story. I have seen it happen, there are so many stories I have done, and I feel fine, I am doing it because I have to do it, I was taught from school that you are going to come across things like these. You are going to come across the stuff that you cannot do and the stuff that you can do. I mean even the level of questioning, if you sit down with people of different media houses like people from EWN of ENCA, they have their ways of asking questions that got those who come from pro-governments, it is there?

Q. So, do you think that the way that journalism is taught at school and the practical part is different?

A: No, no, we need honesty. I feel like another problem we have is what I have noticed is that you can go to a full journalism class and be taught by people who have never been journalists themselves that is the challenge that we have. People go there and some were there because of whom they met, I do not know, sorry to say but it seems like If you going to study further and further and do a Master's and whatnot you become a favourite to those institutions, you get at a job as a teacher, but you know nothing about what you are teaching. You have never been on the field and the same thing does apply even in organisations, they can hire you and find that you working with people who do not know what you did before, they only check your CV and start assigning you to the staff that you know best, the ones they think you are a pro in them. So, in terms of the training, since I was trained, I benefited a lot, and luckily the guys who were teaching me journalism have been in the industry, but

what you are taught in theory and what you going to apply when you get here is a different thing. That is why some kids become frustrated when they start working because when they come into the industry, they find something different from what they were taught.

Q: So, is there any difference between the print and broadcast media and the way they cover issues?

A: No, you cannot differentiate between what is what, let us look at the newspaper sales, now the industry is trying to force us to get a subscription which also does not work because news is easily available, and like broadcast media they will put their story whole night, the traditional print media house because they did survive of, I feel like today, say sales rest in advertising than anything else, so you have to have a side, let us forget about that, print media is dead, I heard about print media being dead in 2000 when I went to a conference in 2005 and the guy anticipated that it will be dead and in 2015, I was still a student and I went to my lecturer and told him that print is dead and he wanted to slaughter me, but it is dead because everything now is online, we access our things online. I feel like, there is not much of a difference today, because you go out with print journalists, and you all record and they have videos like it is one media now. People are just hanging on to the idea that they used to be print media, but it is completely dead because today you need to have the visuals, you need to have everything, it is now multimedia. So, to say that I am print or this I feel like the people are just.

Q. So now meaning the print media has become more profit-driven because they no longer make money?

A. Yes you know via selling, I was watching a documentary someone made that documentary and made an example about porn you know pornography is a leading money maker, it is there in your face, and then someone asked why because it is freely available online where people are now, somebody say no actually those sites they are big on advertising you understand. So instead of forcing people to subscribe which nobody wants to subscribe to because there is no guarantee that if you subscribe to this media house, for instance, media 24 you will have the scoops, today, the news can be on SABC and tomorrow can be somewhere else you never know whose is who, sometimes you follow each other, hence these days many people use X former Twitter as their source of information but it is also troublesome because everybody wants to play a journalist, there seems to be too many bitter people who are living where people behave in unacceptable

ways but the subscription part does not win you see but I feel like you have content that you running advertising in newspapers, radio and tv we depend on them because the entire media depends on advertising but now you need to find the right channels to do it. For example, we journalists used to have it very nice 10 years ago we were it people we would be invited to because the newsmakers needed you closer, that thing has changed now it is influencers I keep on telling these new kids that they should have a tick-tock account, they have to have followers to be relevant where ad sells. You go to Facebook now there is an advert on Facebook, and your followers are people who will come to you and say come you are the one that we need for our product.

Q: So, does it mean that the traffic is going to influencers online?

A: Yes, it is gone, I mean for example, Corona the beer company bought an island in Columbia you will see one journalist there, they had our SABC journalist but from Trends, she went with the camera person, it was only them, the rest were influencers you see because now in business influencers are the ones who sell because businesses want to see their products trending.

2.2 INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT 2 JOURNALIST

The interview with SRC was done on Microsoft Teams on the 24th of November 2023

Interviewer. Question. Thank you again for agreeing to be a participant in the interview. Before we start, can you briefly tell me about yourself?

Participant. Answer. I was born and raised in Soshanguve, north of Pretoria. I attended both my primary school and my secondary school there. When I finished my matric, I enrolled for a diploma in Journalism at Tshwane University of Technology. It is there where I was trained as a journalist. My journey as a full-time journalist started with my internship at the SABC in 2010. I think I was lucky in a way that when I finished my internship, the SABC absorbed me as a journalist. I have been working since then, for both radio and Television.

Q. How does the post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protests in institutions of higher learning?

Participant.

A. Oh, I believe that you know we are dedicated and deliver to their cause because some of us are the same products of the previously disadvantaged students. Eeh, but to a certain extent, I believe that the media in post-apartheid has been sympathetic towards the struggle for free education and against the police using too much force and being too heavy-handed on people who are seen as the future leaders of this country. So to a certain extent, there was so much coverage of the issue because it was a cause that was fought by the youth who to a certain extent cause that t by the youth who were disappointed by the dispensation of the ANC, if I may say so, for lack of a better word, there was something that they anticipated to a certain extent and when it happened, it was the previous generation who did not stand up and fight against it, you know as media we thought that maybe it was something, like how can I put it, a worthy cause hence the coverage.

Interviewer. Q. So, according to you, as a journalist from what you have seen and observed when you cover your stories, does the economic power of the media itself and the institutions where there is a protest, do they play a role in how those protests will be covered and represented?

Some of the SRCs and students say that the media do not speak to the right people when they come to cover their protests.

Participant. Maybe that could be the case but in most cases every information that we get as media will be verified, even the people who are calling will be calling you using their cellphones. And those people that we interact with will be the people who are leading the cause like the leadership of the SRC, for instance, the SRC President. So, we do verify. Yeah, we talk to the students and make sure that all our facts are correct but sometimes we speak to the leaders who are representing the students, and they tell us the story and we build the scenario of what they are talking about through a case study.

Interviewer,

Q. Another question is that, according to my observations these protests happen differently from different institutions by this, I mean your Wits, TUT, UP. So, as a journalist do you think that the economic power of that institution has an impact on how these protests are covered and portrayed in the media?

Participant. A, Yeah, I would not say, it is economic power that has an impact, I think it is more of the severity and the seriousness of the story. I think you know, we have a phrase in

journalism circles “that says if it bleeds it bleeds”, so the more the drama, the more the action, that is exactly what makes front-page news unfortunately. Yeah, it is not about economic power because you find that, maybe at TUT they burn things and their protest will be so dramatic, and sometimes it will be even dangerous for journalists to go there, because you may find that you are talking to the wrong people. You need to talk to the right people because you will need someone to go to the student leadership to tell them that the journalists are here. So that does not mean that economic power influences the coverage of the story.

Interviewer. Q. Ohh, even the ownership of the media you think that they also do not have an impact on how these protest stories are covered?

Participant. Yeah, not really, sometimes it does not because even journalists would like to come up with our own stories because I believe that we always verify stories for each other, and amongst ourselves, we bounce off ideas and share our experiences. For instance, if I see students getting arrested, I will ask another journalist whether they saw students being arrested and they may confirm the incident. We would also go to the police; the police will issue a statement that confirms the number of students that have been arrested. Yeah, as journalists we cover and report the story as it is, there is not much influence on what we cover, especially for me as a journalist because I will be with people from other media houses, and the important thing for all of us is to get the story right, because it is devastating to get the story wrong, while all your colleagues got it right. We all follow the news on what we going to disseminate the following day because so many of us are there, the moment you have an internal influence in terms of the media house you work for, that will show because all of us will be going left, and you will be going right. I may understand students who may think that their stories are not covered accurately because maybe they may be students who were hard done by, and we do not get the information that they are protesting on time. Students should know that newspapers have a number and an email address where you can send them information about your protests before they happen so that the media would also be able to prepare for its coverage. This is because, many news media houses have limited resources, and also people use social media and TikTok to consume content, only to find that the traditional news media do not have many resources to get the information beforehand and be able to plan for it. Sometimes you find that it is a spare-of-the-moment decision, the students start blockading the road and burning tires but the media do not know that they are protesting, those are stories that we miss sometimes.

The news media work with diaries, the story needs to be in the diary ahead of time before it is done.

Interviewer

Q. Another question is, do socioeconomic and structural inequalities play a role in the coverage of the protests and the way they are covered?

Participant A. I would not say, is there any role played in this because to a certain extent if information comes and the editor approves the story there is a whole process before the story is given a go-ahead to go do the story. Sometimes a journalist would come with the story and make the editor aware that there is a story like this, or sometimes people are coming from where they come from and they saw something and they tell the editor what they saw, the editor will look at it, and see if there is a story there or is there any newsworthiness on the information, and if there is one they will assign someone to go do it. Some protocols need to be followed when doing a story, someone needs to approve and dispatch you that level of objectivity must be there because it must pass all the tests and be able to make it to the headlines. Every story that you may hear on the radio and see on TV, they all had to pass the test for them to be covered. And maybe there may be an issue about the language barrier or cultural shock because some junior black journalists especially those coming from our historically black universities are not used to interacting with some of these white people, then you may find that they are a bit scared to approach these white people because of language problems and they just need some training to make them relax so that they may be able to speak to the newsmakers or sometimes a person may be from the other side, the newsmaker themselves you may find that they are not open to journalists, sometimes it may come from the news maker themselves where there is language barrier and cultural indifference. I remember a scenario where one of my colleagues, went to cover the story about Afriforum it was a media statement where the organization was going to lay charges against the EFF President Julius Malema for firing a gun and I think in one of their gatherings I cannot remember where it was, I think it was in the Free State if I remember correctly. So, my colleague tried to play devil's advocate and started asking very difficult questions he asked the organization if they have not seen it coming out and supporting any blacks when they protest against any form of racism or when a white farmer has shot one of their black employees after being mistaken to be a baboon and they have never seen them carrying placards and supporting those causes now that Julius Malema has just fired

a gun now all of a sudden you are taking him to court, and there was so much noise the supporters of the FFPLUS blamed him for not being objective and he is also not being impartial he is an EFF supporter. Also on his then Twitter account he had a picture of a red shirt, they lambasted him and said he was not objective he was taking Malema's side, If you listen to this he was just playing his part as a journalist but because he was asking all of these questions he was misinterpreted and was also seen as someone who supports the party but I do not think he supports the party he was just trying to draw a certain reaction from them.

Interviewer Q. Ooh another question is, as a journalist how much influence do you have on the story you are sent to cover?

Participant A. Hmm, I believe that as a journalist you have your style because whatever environment you grew up in does give you a certain perspective, the facts may be all the same but there is a certain way that each other's background allows you to cover and portray a story you know. So, yes there is a certain influence that you have on a story because as a journalist just to be there to cover the story, there is some form of influence because you will be able to cover whatever conflict that might be there, that people are trying to resolve.

Interviewer Q. OK so there has ever been a story that you were sent to cover when you got there you thought it could have been covered differently?

Participant A. Yes, it has happened in my hometown in Garankuwa, there was going to be a shutdown there because the residents were complaining about the services being not so great. Instead of the Editor assigning me, they felt like knew, the story was too close to home they decided to assign someone else you know. When he got there the story became shallow, it became a story of protests about service delivery the story lost most of its elements because the people were blocking the road, and the police were there but in the story, all of these events were not there. It was just a mere protest delivery story but all the issues that the protestors were protesting about were never part of the story. So, the story was so shallow, I felt that I could have done the story better and given it justice because the things they were protesting about were my learned experience.

Interviewer. Q, Hmmm, so tell me do you think that the traditional news media like your print and radio, speak from a position of a black person's perspective?

Participant A. Yaa, you try not to put your institution into disrepute based on your vendetta, prejudices, or whatever lived experience you may have heard. So, you try by all means you try to be transparent and objective I have mentioned before, we as journalists tell the story as it is, irrespective of whether you are a black or white journalist.

Interview Q. ooh okay. Our last question then, do you think that the South African traditional news media needs to be decolonised?

Participant A. Ohh decolonizes, you know that question can you repeat it and simplify it a little bit what does that mean for the South African media to be decolonized?

Participant A. Oh, that is a great question but the principles that we are using that is real journalism because when you look at African ways of telling stories our stories were never written down, instead they were narratives. They were a situation where a grandfather would tell his son and the information would go down for ages not written down, it will always be verbal and the unfortunate part about a verbal thing is that when it trickles down it becomes distorted when we tell stories that way, The way things are done now it is real journalism because you cannot change the wording and once you do that, you can change the information. Journalism is science you need facts to back up whatever information you have, elements like neutrality, objectivity, and being impartial may be Western concepts but they are crucial to journalism they make journalism what it is, these days we have different platforms where people tell their stories but it is dangerous out there if no one is following the right protocol and we decide to decolonize the media we will have problems. That is why in Journalism school you are trained for three years and there are also issues of ethics of journalism, it is journalism when you deviate from the real ethics of journalism. We have seen some foreign media who deviated from the ethics of journalism and what they reported was not factual and correct. It would be dangerous to decolonise the media but if you want to decolonise it ok go ahead and do it, but you will lose the most important concepts like your objectivity and neutrality and what are you going to replace them with? Journalism will be boring it will never be journalism anymore.

2.3 INTERVIEW WITH JOURNALIST 3

The interview with Journalist 3 was done on Microsoft Teams on the 5th of January 2024.

Interviewer. Thank you again for agreeing to be a participant. Could you tell me a little bit about yourself and the media company you work for?

Participant: Answer. I work for Media 24. I work for the Sowetan newspaper. I have been with the company for the past 18 years. I started working in a community newspaper. I studied at Allenby College; I studied journalism there. I also did short courses with SA UJ. And, when I started, I started working there was a community newspaper in Katorous, which was called Sunbeam. Before, we continue, let me tell you how I became a journalist. When I grew up, I used to watch the news, read newspapers, and whenever something was happening in the area where I live, Vosloorus, where I was born. Whenever, something was happening whether there was an accident or something, or police came to our area to arrest people, I would use my hand as a microphone to ask people what happened and what have they seen. I believe by then; I was between the ages of 12 to 15. On many occasions when I saw journalists who were covering stories in my area, I would go to one of them. I remember one of them was Pule Motloung, who used to work for SAPA if you know SAPA. He also used to work for The Star Newspaper, he was a freelancer in those newspapers. So, basically when he came to our area, to cover a story about Monde and Nomombe the co-joined twins. When he was interviewing the mother of the twins, I sat there with him and after that, I told him that I wanted to be a journalist. He told me that, I needed to study journalism, read newspapers and magazines, books and everything. But the funny thing is that I later became his boss. And again between 1998 and 1999, I met a white lady who was an Editor for Citivision, her name was Maritha, and I forgot her surname. She was told to cover stories in the township. When I met her, I told her that, I am a journalist. She said I should send her stories and pictures, I did that, and that is how I found a job at Citivision which was under Media 24 as a freelancer. You know, what is funny, I remember the first story that I wrote at Citivision, and my father cut the copy and framed it that was the moment.

Interviewer. Yoo, I can tell how passionate you are about your job.

Interview. Question: So, because you have said you have been in the industry for 18 years. Can you tell me according to your perception and experience?

How does the post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protest in institutions of higher learning?

Participant: Answer. I was not yet a journalist in the era of apartheid but let us start there a little bit. I used to read a lot of newspapers just to find out what was happening around me. So

what I noticed was that writers used to write differently, for instance, others wrote an in-depth story while others would just write a light story, highlights basically. In 1976, I was still young, but I used to go to the library and read what was happening. So, fast forward, there have been many student protests in the country, but the most notable one, was the Fees Must Fall, we then noticed how black people were suffering at the universities. For, example, when I wrote my stories, I did some research by talking to the university kids, they would tell you that, at times they would go study the whole night, and I would remain at the rest and wait for all who ate, when they were done, they put their food in the dustbin, when they were gone, I will then go open the dustbin and took their leftovers. I remember, there was one story of this girl who told me that, she used to sleep in the car or something like that up until someone saw her and offered her a place to stay. So, as print journalists those are some of the stories we got from students. They exposed the pain of many black students who were from impoverished families. So, as journalists, we would try to cover all angles to give our readers what was happening inside and outside the universities. As journalists, we were able to tell exactly how students were suffering in these institutions and all the challenges they were facing.

Interviewer, Question. Very interesting, and thank you for that, so tell me,

Does economic power play a role in influencing media coverage and representation of student protests in higher education institutions?

Participant: Answer. When you look at how student protests are covered, I would say it is different. Let me make an example, for instance, an institution like UNISA, an ODL institution. I may not know, now, but during student protests when I made my assessments, I felt it was a bit different the way the protests were covered in a way that it looked like everyone was minding their own business and no one cared about someone else. What I saw at UNISA, at that time was that it may be students who were struggling to pay their tuition fees and maybe those who could not register again because they owed the institution. And there were those individuals who had access to the media, who could tell the journalist that they were planning something they should come to cover their protests. When I looked at what was happening, stories about student protests that were happening at UNISA, were very few in the media. Again, now in these institutions of higher learning, we have different students, we have students who belong to different political parties, such as your ANC and the EFF. And what is funny enough, they fight and at the same time, they come together and fight for the same cause.

Interviewer, Ook that is very interesting.

Participant Answer. Ya, this is how we started seeing this fee must fall protests, everyone will say this group is EFF, is ANC, and this was DA. But they came together and fought one fight. I remember, at the height of the feesmustfall protests at Wits I saw a video where a white girl was fighting police at the entrance, to us journalists that was something so amazing and you know, I was shocked, but I ended up saying wow, this means they see that there must be a change for everyone.

Interviewer, Oo ok, very interesting. So according to your experience,

Question: Which news values and routines inform the media's coverage of protests in higher education institutions?

Participant: Answer. So, are you talking about specific media or media in general?

Interviewer. Answer. I am talking about the media in general.

Participant, Answer. Remember as journalists we have sources. You may find that for instance, at UNISA I have three sources or four sources that always brief you about the happenings in the institutions. For example, back in the day, it was difficult to get stories of kids that are raped at universities but now everything that happens to you as a journalist you will get either from social media or because you know someone from that institution.

Interviewer that is a very interesting point, so again tell me.

Question: To what extent are the representations of student protests in the media linked to power, and structural inequalities?

Participant, Interviewer: I would try to answer it, the way I understand it but to me, it sounds very broad. For example, you may find people who say no, I rather go to **RAPPORT, THE STAR,** or **Business Day.** And then on the other side, you will find people who say no, I want my story to be covered by either Sowetan or Daily Sun. This means the power of the media is vast in such a way that whenever something happens someone will pick up a phone and call their choice of media to ask them to tell their story the way they want them to be told.

Question: Is there any role that is played by students' socio-economic inequalities during the coverage and representation of the protests?

Participant. Answer. I do not think that the student's socioeconomic status has something to do with media coverage of their protests. Look we can both agree that universities in South Africa, are populated by black students as they are a majority in this country. So, when there is

a protest in whatever university we as journalists go and cover the story as it is. I do not see any influence on my side because as media especially as print, we can give details of the student's situations and details about the protests and why students are protesting. I do not know if I have answered the question correctly.

Interview. Ooh yes, your answer is perfect. We can continue.

Question: Does the traditional news media's political economy influence how these protests are covered and portrayed?

Participant: Answer. The protests are different in the sense that you can go to cover a story with different media houses, for instance, you are journalists from different media houses, you are in the same story, you see the same thing, but your writings will be different. In terms of what is published, each media house may choose what works for them, because look, there are also issues of audience, whom are you writing for. For me, I write for people who buy and read Sowetan whether online or they buy physical paper. Let me make an example for you, for instance, when I see a black person fighting or manhandling a police officer, I will take that as a story, it will be my angle. But if it is Rapport or Business Day when they see a white girl throwing a stone or any object towards the police, that will be their story because to them it will be fascinating to see a white girl doing such a thing. So, that is why I say it differs. And with radio and TV, remember radio they are deadline-oriented, for instance, your Newsroom Africa, or Enca, their reports are current and now, they show what is happening now. But with us is different in a way that my copy cannot go to print without all the voices of the people that make the news. Radio and Television journalists are expected to report every hour, while you will get our story the following day.

Interviewer: Ohh great so, it is very interesting.

Question: Do you think that the traditional post-apartheid media speak from the position of an African subject? (Why).

Participant: Answer. Remember, the news media's mandate is to report what they see and tell stories as they are. Again, when we get to the protest story, we need someone who will speak on behalf of the protestors, I mean their representative with a mindset that they will speak on their behalf. For example, if you can interview different people in different hours, you may find that the story is the same thing but written differently. That does not mean that it does not say what the newsmaker is saying. Remember, during protests, all protestors are newsmakers,

you cannot single out one person and talk for them, they are a collective. That is why you will find that the same copy that is on Mail and Guardian differs from the one written for Business Day or Daily Sun, even though we are reporting about one thing.

Interviewer: Question. Do you think that the traditional media needs to be decolonized as well, if so why and how?

Participant: Answer. No, I do not think that should happen, because that will hinder the freedom of speech. Remember in the olden days the old government was the one that was in control of the SABC, where they used to hide everything. They use the media to perpetuate racism. I think that, if the media is decolonized, there will be more censorship like it used to happen before, by doing that the media will be openly serving the interests of their masters. Let us take for example, you write a story about me, and I am the one who finances your company, and I do not like what I wrote. Before I know, you will call me and tell me how to tell your story. I think that the media should stay as it is because I am afraid that if the media is decolonized it will be controlled. For instance, let us look at what was happening in Zimbabwe, the soldiers used to beat up journalists who exposed the state of the country especially those who were from private media houses.

2.4. INTERVIEW WITH PARTICIPANT JOURNALIST 4

The interview with Journalist 4 was done on Microsoft Teams on the 5th of January 2024.

Question: Thank you again for agreeing to be a participant. Could you tell me a little bit about yourself and the media company you work for?

Participant: Answer. My name is Sashin Naidoo, and I grew up in Durban KZN, I went to Winden High School, in the suburb called Shallcross. I finished my matric in 2010, and then I went on to further my studies at the Durban University of Technology from 2011 and 2013. So from then, I moved on to doing my internship at the SABC in Johannesburg at the Radio news department from July 2013 until December 2013. Eh, that is where I first started my journalism career. I was tutored and mentored by several prominent journalists in the industry, many of whom have moved on to other fields so far, among them was Edwin Ntsidi, he was my mentor, ehh, my very first instructor into the world of journalism, and I also had quite a lot of mentors such as Melanie Moses, the Zola Ntuthu and quite several others, too many to name.

Question: So, for how long have you worked in the industry?

Participant: Answer. Eh, since 2014, I have been a journalist at the SABC in Johannesburg for radio news, and since last year, it has been both radio and television.

Question: Oh, are you enjoying your job?

Participant: Answer. Yes, yes, it is a great job especially after you have learned what to do. It is an exciting job, but it is never the same thing. Eeh, daily, we are doing something new. It is very interesting and very fun, but it is also quite challenging at times.

Interview. Question: So, because you have said you have been in the industry since 2014. So can you tell me according to your perception and experience?

How does the post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protest in institutions of higher learning?

Participant: Answer. So, the student protests I have covered quite substantially from the onset, especially around the Johannesburg Gauteng area, and you know both broadcast and print had quite an impact in terms of moving the issues of students forward, so that they reach the end goal, but you know, each at the end of the day politics she has the last say. So, I guess as well as both print and broadcast both had quite a substantial coverage of the protests.

Interviewer, Question. Very interesting, so tell me,

Does economic power play a role in influencing media coverage and representation of student protests in higher education institutions?

Participant: Answer. All I can say is no, it does not have any influence on the coverage of the protests, each as you would not know, as a journalist you must be you know, objective, independent and not take sides, and you have to give all sides of the story. So, I would not say that anything could influence its coverage, but you know from my point of view, I would say that covering such protests you would have to look at all sides of the story, you can't just go ahead with one student, thinking that they are always right at the point of protesting. There are quite a lot of angles that you must look at, such as the institution's finances, whether they can afford it, whether would it be viable for them, which you know to entertain the student's grievances and concerns. You also had to look at the political side of it, whether the government could support by subsidising the institution. So, there is quite

a lot that must be taken into consideration in terms of coverage of such protests. Eeh, and such stories of course would, you know of course of such importance such as fees must fall.

Interviewer, Ooh very interesting, and thank you so much for your explanation.

Question: Which news values and routines inform the media's coverage of protests in higher education institutions?

Participant: Answer. Oh yes of course, as a journalist you also must keep abreast of what is happening in current affairs and so on. So, in terms of that, it could either be you know an editor finding a journalist to cover a specific story or whether we as journalists put forward one of our ideas that we would like to pursue, and so on. But in terms of the Editorial policy around the coverage, you know that a story moves at a fast pace, so you would not get an instruction that specifically says you need to follow a certain idea or a certain angle. We report on what is happening at the time, and then, so we cannot predict or say you know what we are going to be writing about certain things, we just go with how the protests go, how it moves in terms of whether they will start at the campus, or whether they would be the protesting for a specific reason and then moving from them we would look at whether the students are getting the answers that they want, but sometimes these protests would become violent or the students would block the roads, and pelt cars with stones and so on we will look at that. So, reporting from a situation of protests you just have to follow the protests you know, you cannot go with the preconceived idea of what they are, and what you think you will be writing on, or anything of that nature.

Interviewer. Oh, thank you again for that information.

Question: To what extent are the representations of student protests in the media linked to power, and structural inequalities?

No, they do not, it does not at all. I can safely say that because I have covered fees must face protests and other protests at the majority of the Universities in Gauteng, at TUT and Wits, and quite a few of them such as the Tshwane University of Technology so quite a lot. So, it depends on the resources that we have as media at the time because it does not always happen that you have a full contingent of journalists that can be deployed to all the universities that are protesting at the same time. But also, it does take variety in terms of where the protests are heightened and where more actions are happening for example, there

could be a burning down happening in the street just outside the gate. Just for an example, we must look at that, and obviously, we have to look at whether the protests at Wits it is a little more volatile or what could be happening at TUT. But to be honest we cover all universities equally. I certainly went to all of them throughout the time of fees must fall and other protests, it just depends on what is happening and what you can do as a journalist at that stage.

Interviewer: Thank you again.

Question: Is there any role that is played by students' socio-economic inequalities during the coverage and representation of the protests?

Question: Does the traditional news media's political economy influence how these protests are covered and portrayed?

Participant: Answer

Eh basically, the main thing would be as broadcasters, news broadcast is immediate, it is now for both our radio and television, and now that we have channel 404. In terms of print media, the story can be found the morning after, however also today we have online media, so we are seeing stories being uploaded by print for almost an immediate basis as well, such as news24, your IOL, and even SABC, EWN, and all these other broadcast media have a print format online as well. So, I will say that it is quite a fair field for broadcast and print media. However, as you would know online media and so on Twitter are now the most immediate form of news. You could say that maybe in a day five or six stories are on our radio news channel, and then we came out with the 24-hour news channel, the online newspapers, and now we have immediate Twitter, something happens on the street and in the next 10 seconds is on Twitter. So that is the quickest access to news which is meant to inform everyone across the world now.

Interviewer: Ohh great so,

Question: Do you think that the traditional post-apartheid media speak from the position of an African subject? (Why).

Participant: Answer. I believe that the media does speak from the position of everyone who has grievances in higher education institutions. It is not upon the media to choose which story to tell and which one to leave. Eeh, especially as broadcast media, it is our

mandate to tell all South African stories equally by not looking at the race of the newsmaker. I can assure you that journalists in the company ensure that everyone who has a grievance whether with the institutions where they study or the government, we try to support them by speaking from their position and articulating their story from their position also.

Interviewer: Question. Do you think that the traditional media needs to be decolonized as well, if so why and how?

Participant: Answer. No, I do not think that maybe there are certain media houses hopefully I would not be quoted on this. I could say that, in the company that I work for, I do not think that there is anything of that nature, we are not told how to write stories, and we are not instructed on what to include and exclude and what stories we should cover and what stories we should not. But maybe I stand to be corrected but maybe certain media houses want to be pushing certain agendas or not but certainly not the company that I work for.

2.5 INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT JOURNALIST 5

The interview with Journalist 5 former Daily Sun reporter was done on Teams on November 30th, 2023.

Interviewer. Thank you for availing yourself of this interview.

Question. Could you kindly tell me a little bit about yourself and your background as a journalist?

Thank you so much for inviting me to this interview. I hope my participation will contribute to your study. I am from Delmas in Mpumalanga. It is where I attended my primary and high school. after my matric, I applied for a Diploma in Journalism at TUT. After that, I was lucky to have an internship at Media24 because. After my internship, I was lucky enough to start my journalism career in 2012, and then I left the industry in 2020 before the start of Covid.

Interviewer. Question. Ok so you say you left the industry in 2020, but did you ever cover student protests while you were a journalist?

Participant. Answer. Ooh yes, yes. Remember, I have spent eight years in my journalism career. Again, after I finished my internship, I became a field journalist. You know I started

as a junior journalist, and that is where you cover those kinds of stories, once you become a senior journalist or reporter you are then assigned to a specific niche according to your experience. What I am trying to say, your work become more focused like covering only political stories or economics. You specialize, and unfortunately, I got another opportunity that took me out of the industry before I became a senior specialist journalist.

Question: Among all the careers that are out there why did you choose journalism as a career?

Participant. Answer. I always wanted to be a journalist. When I was young, I used to watch the news on TV with my father, I guess that is where the journalism bug bit me. I always thought journalism was a fascinating career. I loved it.

Interviewer. Question: So, this means you have been in the industry for quite some time. Tell me, according to your observation and your experience, **how does the post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protest in institutions of higher learning?**

Participant. Answer. I do not understand the question, do you mean the way journalists go out there to cover stories or do you mean the final product?

Interviewer. Oh sorry, I mean the final product, the way the protests are covered and represented.

Participant. Answer, you know as a person who has been out there in the field seeing students when covering those stories, what I have seen is that most students who protest are black, so that is what you see in the media that is how they are represented in the media, they sought of have like a blackface. Whenever there is a student, you go there and find black students, and you seldom see white students, Indian students, or coloured students. Always have a black face fighting for whatever cause, they may be fighting for. We only saw them in 2015 Feesmustfall when the protests even went to parliament, that is when we could all see all the other races fighting for one cause which was the fees must fall but generally wherever you are in South Africa, whether you work for print or broadcast media when you are going to cover student protests, it is always black students in the forefront, fighting for whatever they fighting for, be it accommodation, be it fees or whatever, we all see a black child burning a tire.

Interviewer. Question. Ok, that is interesting, so. Does economic power play a role in influencing media coverage and representation of student protests in higher education institutions?

Participant. Answer. Ehh, a lot of students in higher institutions in South Africa are black and most of them are funded by NSFAS, so if the institutions increase their fees it poses a threat to their education because NSFAS may say we not going to fund this, and recently you would have heard that NSFAS has disqualified few courses from being funded by them, and it has released a list which explains which courses it would not cover. So, if these fees are increasing or a lot of students cannot pay because they are coming from disadvantaged families. So, I think economic power does play a role in the coverage of the protests. I remember during my time as a student around about 2007 and 2008, there was a time when the Department of Higher Learning allowed the institutions to increase their fees which affected us as black students, and in the media, it was us in the forefront. So, it does play a role if you going to increase fees it takes away our dream of being educated and so, economic power does have an impact. You know what, again just a personal story when I was still a student, I felt abused by the system because we stood in long queues, and we had to apply for the whole week you just stood there. Imagine, you stand there the whole day, and when it is your time to get the service, you are told we are closing and come back tomorrow, just like that, the higher education financial aid systems do not favour black children. So, NSFAS on its own is very emotionally and physically abusive towards a black child who is dependent on it. So, when they are not satisfied with it, they get frustrated and go to the streets, and when the media comes to cover the event, they cover what they see, a black child protesting. We all know, the history of South Africa, that there is an economic divide between the poor and the rich, where we have white people having money and black people suffering. It is a system that was created long before we were born. So, when white people have money, they can self-fund their other races, including their children but a black child does not have that. For, instance. As a black child when you get a job after varsity, what do you do, you must start with the black tax, and we must fix our homes and do everything. So, the other races get a head start in life, so that is why always when we talk about student protests it is a black child that protests because we do not have trust funds that we can use for our study.

Interviewer.Question: Yoo, that is very interesting. So, according to you, which news values and routines inform the media's coverage of protests in higher education institutions?

Participant. Answer. Well, for instance, many Media Houses are in Joburg. For instance, if there is a protest at Wits surely all the Media Houses in Joburg may cover that story because of its proximity. The same when there is a protest at TUT, the media in Pretoria will cover their protests because it is closer to them, and then it is like, it is a neighbourhood thing. For instance, if students are burning tires at TUT, and the media does not know yet, and people call and ask them whether they are aware that students are protesting, journalists will be sent there. But what I have also noticed is that last year, there were protests at the Agricultural College in Vaalbank, they protested for many days their protests were not covered because that area is rural and is also far-flung, it took a while for media houses to pick up what is going on. So, eh, the student had to intensify their protests, so if it were closer to the media house than where they are, their protests could have been covered earlier because they had to protest for a few months. For them to get media attention they had to burn a lot of things, holding hostage some of the staff of the college just to get media attention. The proximity of these high institutions to media houses does play a role in them being covered.

Interviewer. Question: To what extent are the representations of student protests in the media linked to power, and structural inequalities?

Participant. Answer. You know if I understand you about structural inequalities, I did talk about the rich and the people where you find that there is a gap between the rich and the poor students in these institutions. As I have said before the very same people who are financing the institutions are those who are rich and they may also own the media, to me that will be both political and economic power. And again, let us look back at the Feesmustfall protests, if you remember the students who were the face of fees must fall, where they are now, the other one, Vuyani Pambo is with EFF, and the other one went to the ANC and other got other positions. I remember there once were unconfirmed reports that alleged that the fees must fall protests were funded by some political parties. For instance, the EFF has won many elections in institutions of higher learning, I am not sure, I will have to check but, in most universities, EFF is winning. It has taken over from the ANC, which was previously won by SASCO, because according to knowledge SASCO is

ANC, So those protests are influenced by politics because the young ones are politically affiliated, some of them belong to EFF some of them belong to ANC, now in my time we were led by the ANC student association and these people were the ones who were leading the strikes. As a normal student, you could have never said Hey guys let us go out and protest, these SRC guys who belong to political parties are politicians in training.

Interviewer. Question: Very interesting, hmm ok, is there any role that is played by students' socio-economic inequalities during the coverage and representation of the protests?

Participant. Answer. I think I have covered that mostly in my previous answers because I did talk about poor students who are the ones who are protesting. And again, from what I have realised is that the media do not go deep into the student's issues. When they send you to do a story, you already have a brief, and you must follow that brief. If there are burning tires, then you may lose the brief and come back to it later and start with the breaking news. So that is how the system works, it is about what is happening and what the students are doing. All these are happening while white students are nowhere to be found. I am sure that the media could have done better if the protestors were mostly white students.

Interviewer. Question: Does the traditional news media's political economy influence how these protests are covered and portrayed?

Participant. Answer. Negativity sells in South Africa. Eh, for instance, if the students embark on peaceful protests, their protests hardly make front-page headlines on the Star or Sowetan or breaking stories on TV or radio. This means negativity sells, we all know that scandals sell. Just imagine, if the students at TUT stage a sit-in, the media normally are not interested in that, the answer will be that is not a story. But if they burn a hall, Jonker Hall, the media will go there. Let me not only talk about TUT, because TUT is mainly black. Let us look at Wits and the University of Pretoria where the white students, and Indians are during protests. The media is wired to sell negative news, and we South Africans also love negative news, so when they publish negative news, their stories sell.

Interviewer. Question: OK, So, do you think that the traditional post-apartheid media speak from the position of an African subject? (Why).

Participant. Answer. No, I do not think so. No as media we use a blanket approach. South African Media be they broadcast, and Print do an almost blanket approach. They are

entangled in chasing breaking stories just to make sure that we get the breaking stories we beat other media houses. When there is a story that is breaking, we run to the talking heads, like the Spokesperson of Education, SRCs, and traffic, and even talk to the motorists about how they are affected by the protests. So, when we have talked to another talking head such as an SRC leader what they will tell you, is that management is very arrogant, and they will tell you why they have started this strike. But we fail to talk to normal students, like a student who is doing medicine, why don't we ask them what are their challenges? We seldom see students like that in the news, there is the SRC, the Department of Education spokesperson, and the metro police officers, and it seems as if we can speak to everyone else except the African child.

Interviewer. Question. OK, finally tell me, do you think that the media needs to be decolonised, if so how and why?

Participant. Answer. Yes, it should, who owns the media, especially the private media? It is only within the SABC where a little bit of transformation happened after 1994, now I believe that maybe things are a little bit better there. But when you go to these private media who are the decision-makers, they are also white, they have the capital. If you are not their friend, you are more likely to be negatively represented and funny even as South Africans we still believe in what is written in newspapers.

2.6 INTERVIEW WITH PARTICIPANT JOURNALIST 6

The interview with Journalist 6 was done on Microsoft Teams on the 24th of November 2023

Question: Thank you again for agreeing to be a participant. Could you tell me a little bit about yourself and the media company you work for?

Participant: Answer

Thank you for inviting me to participate in your research. I now work for an institution I would not like to mention by name. I am from KwaMhlanga, former KwaNdebele, I was born and grew up there, and even went to high school. When I finished my matric, I enrolled for a Diploma in Journalism at Tshwane University of Technology, from 2009 to 2011. After I graduated, I did my internship at the SABC in Pretoria. They used to have an office there, I do not know whether it is still operating. But I did my internship there. When my internship ended, I heard from someone who was working at Media 24 at that time, that they were looking for a

journalist who was going to do entertainment news, I applied and got the job. I did entertainment a little bit, while I was doing entertainment another journalist left, and my then-line manager asked if I would not be interested in filling his position, and I accepted. That is where my experience in student protest coverage stems from, but I have since left the industry last year.

Question: So, for how long have you worked in the industry?

Participant: Answer. OK, let me see, I started in 2012 and then left the industry completely last year. It will be 11 years, although I was not aware that it was that long. Yes, I have been a journalist that long.

Question: So, did you enjoy being a journalist?

Participant: Answer. Ooh, yes, journalism is a great career. I loved every bit of my being there. It was very fulfilling to know that you are contributing to the community by telling their stories. You know that in journalism, there is no money. It is one of those careers where you give yourself in doing well for the people. But to be honest it is very challenging at times because you always must think on your feet. And another thing is you are always on the road. You wake up in the morning, you go to the office, and you have no idea where you will be sent to. That is what is fascinating about journalism, you do not have a clear diary. What is fascinating about it, is that you may be preparing to go to the office and your boss calls you and tells you that taxi drivers are striking in Mamelodi, please go there and see what is happening, and you go there guess what you find yourself spending the entire day there, because of the strike. That is the life of a journalist.

Interview. Question: Ok tell me having been a journalist for more than ten years, tell me according to your experience,

How does the post-apartheid traditional news media represent student protest in institutions of higher learning?

Participant: Answer. Ooh, yes, I have covered student protests extensively myself. I mean I, remember the 2015 Feesmustfall protests it was one of a kind. You know, now that we are talking about student protests, I feel blessed that I was there as a journalist covering those protests during that time. It was a very interesting time in South Africa, especially in those institutions where those protests happened. To answer your question, well I worked for print myself. It was a very hectic time because as a journalist you have your source. Your source will

let you know about what is happening, you know like sort of update you, about what is happening now. You know again, I think the media both print and broadcast played a major role in telling the stories of the students. And even now, I believe that, if there is a protest, it is because of the media that people know what is happening in these institutions. If it was not for the media we would not have known, that so many things are happening in these institutions. I think what was funny though, I am one of those who studied through NSFAS, and I felt for the students, their cries were genuine. I think it is a pity though, that as journalists we go there, listen to what the students are saying, and balance our story by talking to management and taking other voices, but I always felt that there was something more that we were missing as journalists. Again, remember, journalists have limited time, they must go back to their offices and file stories for the next day, but hey-ya, that was something. But I still feel something more was happening there. Look because at TUT, we used to have protests when I was still a student, but they were never that intense.

Interviewer, Question. Thank you, for that information, so tell me,

Does economic power play a role in influencing media coverage and representation of student protests in higher education institutions?

Participant: Question. What do you mean by economic power do you mean the universities or the media, can you please clarify?

Interviewer. Answer. Oh, I mean the economics of the news, I mean of the media company that the journalist works for.

Participant. Answer. Look, I do not think so. As a journalist you are assigned to go cover a story, and you go there to cover story and look at the angle you can take after that you send it to your editor, who looks at it files it and it published, Again while you are in the field you are not influenced by anything, you are influenced by what is happening at the scene, your duty is not to take sides, you should be objective and not take sides, you write what you see and what Is happening in the scene. I honestly believe that they do not influence any kind of coverage. I mean but while you are doing all that, you make sure you tell the truth. If there was a protest, and students were burning tires, and your copy said students were burning tires, it is the truth, it is what happened. I seriously believe that there is nothing that influences coverage because as a journalist you will also speak to the Minister of Education or his spokesperson. That is what journalists do, they balance their stories, and they are not influenced by anything. Look,

I may have my own opinion as an individual, but when I am at work, I have to follow the ethics and principles of journalism and not include my opinion in my copy. That is how it works.

Interviewer, Ooh very interesting, and thank you so much for your explanation.

Question: Which news values and routines inform the media's coverage of protests in higher education institutions?

Participant: Answer. Ok, you know as a journalist, you are always in touch with other journalists, we keep each other's contacts, so when something is happening maybe at TUT, or UP and I am in Joburg, another journalist maybe from SABC or Newzroom Africa, may SMS or WhatsApp me to let me know there is a protest there. So, we help each other as journalists. And again, it depends on where the media house is and where is the protests happening. For instance, if the protest may be at Wits, it will be useless for editors to assign someone who is in Pretoria to go cover that protest. A journalist in Joburg because they are closer to the institution may be sent to cover the protest. That is how it works; I hope that answers your question.

Interviewer. Oh, thank you, it does. So,

Question: To what extent are the representations of student protests in the media linked to power, and structural inequalities?

Participant. Answer. I do not think that they are linked to power. But I must admit that the institutions of higher education I infiltrated with politics. I mean there are so many political formations within these institutions. Maybe that can influence, their coverage but I do not think from the media's side, maybe from the political side because look now, by having these different political parties in these institutions surely there may be some influence. Journalists cover what they see, but we do not know what is happening behind them. For instance, it seems as if the institutions of higher education have been made a training ground for future politicians. We have seen students who were very active in Feesmustfall protests go on and become full politicians after that. So, when I think that the protests themselves may be influenced by politics in other cases, but not from the media's side. Again, when we look at the way these institutions are, and at the structure of the country's economy, I would say many black students study at your UNISA, TUT, and other institutions such as Limpopo because they are not that expensive like your Wits and UCT. And again, what I have seen is that, in these institutions, the students

protest more, you know why because they depend on the government for funding. The NSFAS is no longer enough maybe to fund everyone.

Interviewer: OK, let us continue

Question: Is there any role that is played by students' socio-economic inequalities during the coverage and representation of the protests?

Participant. Answer. You know, I must admit that in South Africa, now we live in a much-divided society because some are rich and others are poor. These issues are seen in these institutions. A student from a far-flung rural area may be Limpopo, who comes to study at Wits or TUT or any other institution, they are going to have it hard if they are not from a rich family. They would have to depend on NSFAS, and we have heard how students who depend on NSFAS struggle these days. I think what a pity is though, is just that those deeper issues are not reflected in the media. I believe that maybe the media can do better and tell the story behind what we see, behind what is happening. This is because, for someone who comes from where I come from passing matric with flying colours may be something exciting, but you are still going to struggle when the government is paying for your study. Look, what we have seen about the Mpumalanga students who were studying medicine in Russia, their issues were resolved after it was reported in the media. I believe that there are many stories like this, but they are not told because we do not see them in the media we think are not happening.

Question: Does the traditional news media's political economy influence how these protests are covered and portrayed?

Participant: Answer. I would say maybe or maybe not, because you know as a journalist you are assigned to a story you do that story, you are done, and you are paid at the end of the month. But I believe that because media institutions are like any company that at the end of the day have to make a profit, surely the owners of that company may want to create content that may bring them something. As the owner of the newspaper, for instance, you will want people to buy advertisement space in your paper, so I think that may also influence coverage of issues not only student protests but other issues as well. In my experience as a journalist, I have seen stories being dropped and no one will tell you why they were dropped. Asking if the political economy of the media influences the coverage of the protests, may be a correct answer. Let us take for instance, SABC is supposed to be financed by the government with public money, if there is a story that is written about a certain Minister, they think they have a right to call and tell them to drop the story because they are partially funded by the government. I think the way

a media house or institution is run and who finances it does have a role in what is considered the final product of the news production process. I may be wrong, I do not know, because as a journalist, you hear rumors like so and so phoned, but you do not take them seriously you continue with your work.

Interviewer: OK, thank you again

Question: Do you think that the traditional post-apartheid media speak from the position of an African subject? (Why).

Participant: Answer. Look, I believe that the media be they print, or broadcast do what they can to tell people stories be they black or white. It is a pity that now we are in an era where people think it is much better to use social media to tell your story, but unfortunately, I think that social media may be dangerous to our well-being because people can post stories without verification. You know, the journalist must ensure that every story is verified. Yes, I do believe that the media speak from the position of an African subject. Again, in South Africa, if I am not mistaken, we seem to have more black journalists than journalists of other races. So, that would mean that surely, they must know how to tell a story about a black person from a black person's view without breaking the rules and ethics of journalism. I would say yes.

Interviewer: Question. Do you think that the traditional media needs to be decolonized as well, if so why and how?

Participant: Answer. You know when it comes to that, I do not know where I stand, and maybe I am in the middle because I do not think we know what decolonisation is. I have heard even students saying that the same thing needs to happen in their institutions. As a black person, I may agree with that, but I am a little apprehensive to say, as there is no strategy in place, on how that should happen, who should do it, and how would it be done. Because if we can rely completely on the government to decolonize these institutions including the media, government would decolonize them for its benefit. We have seen that happening over and over again. With decolonisation, I do not think it is time yet, maybe we need more time to know who we are as a country before we try that.

