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FUNDZA'S ONLINE READING COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS - DECEMBER 2016

FunDza's Online Reading Community

Results of the December 2016 survey

In December 2015, FunDza conducted a survey of its readers on the fundza.mobi platform. The organisation repeated the survey in December 2016 – and it plans to continue to repeat the exercise annually in the future – to get feedback from readers and to see any changes in the make-up of its readership base over time.

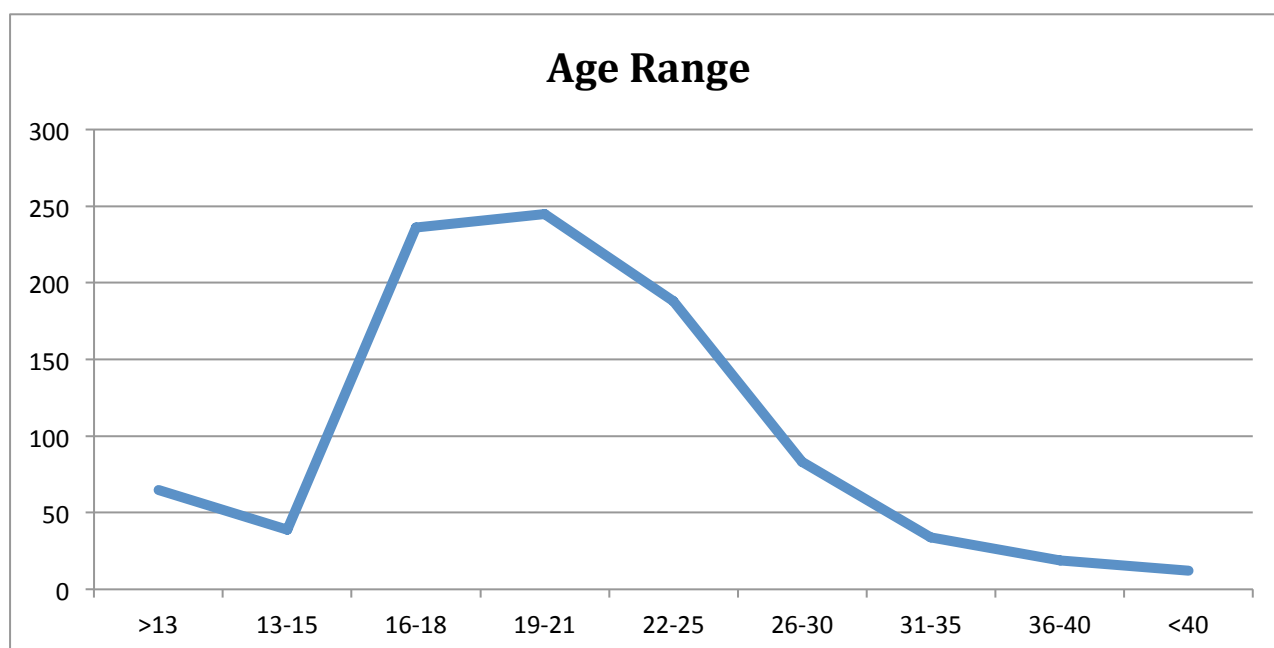
The intention of the survey is to get demographic data from readers, understand how they are accessing content, learn about the challenges they face in terms of access, and get feedback on what hooks them into reading more and how we can be more responsive to their needs.

There were 940 respondents to the survey. In the previous year, there had been 855 respondents. Then the vast majority (85%) were accessing the fundza.mobi content through Mxit. In October 2016, the Mxit servers were closed down, which meant that many of the original and dedicated fundza.mobi readers were no longer able to access the portal. The vast majority of readers now access fundza.mobi through the FreeBasics.com portal. This, however, is only accessible in South Africa to users on the Cell C network.

This report refers back to the 2015 report, where applicable, to illustrate changes to reader needs and make-up.

Demographics

The average age of respondents was 21.5 years. This shows that the readership is on average younger than it had been in 2015, which was then 24 years. 84% of the respondents were within the 13-25 year old target age range. But there was a long 'tail' – with the majority of other readers being older than 25 and 2% being older than 40 years. Again this demonstrates that fundza.mobi content holds broad appeal to a range of age groups.



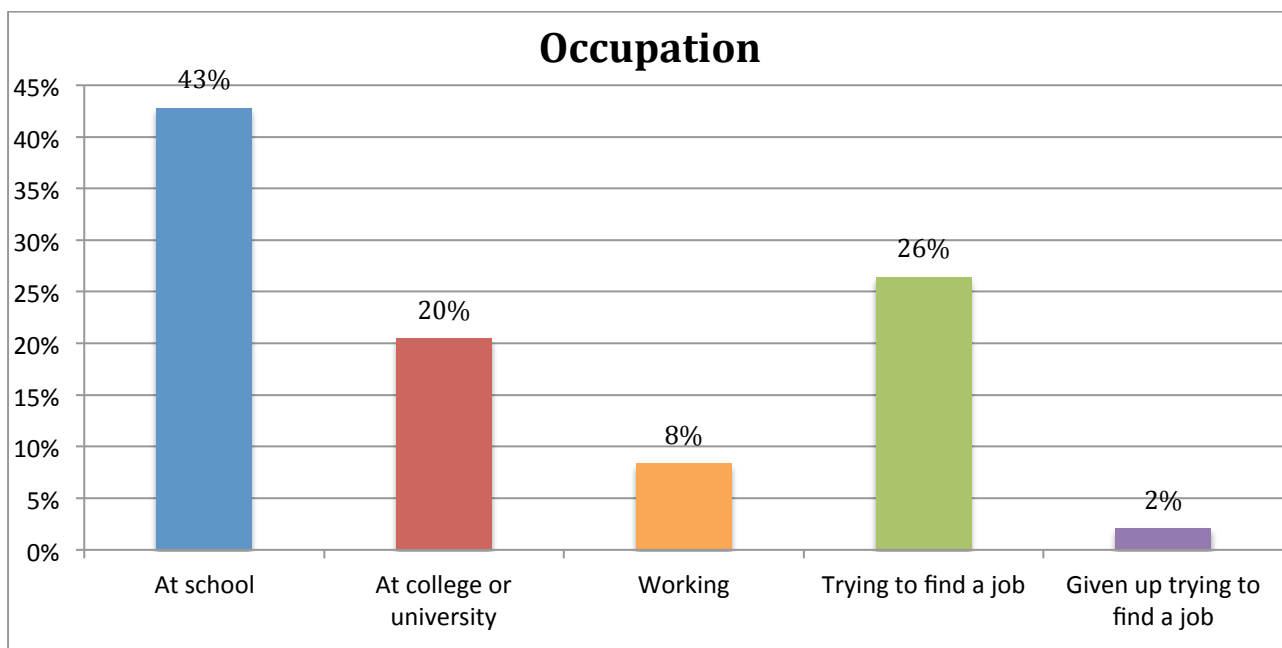
Geographic location

81% of readers were from within South Africa but there is a growing readership from outside the country. The most popular other countries were (in order of frequency): Malawi, Nigeria, Ghana, Zambia and Rwanda. Fundza.mobi is available to FreeBasics.com users in a variety of African countries. This extended reach outside of South Africa's borders points to the popularity of FreeBasics.com, and the subsequent discovery of fundza.mobi by users within these countries. In addition, it shows that fundza.mobi content – even though designed to appeal specifically to the needs of South African youth – is applicable to the needs of others in different geographic locations.

Occupation

43% of the respondents were at school and 20% were at college or university. 8% were working, 26% were trying to find a job and a further 2% were no longer looking for a job.

In the previous year 43% of respondents had been trying to find a job, and 2% were no longer looking for a job. Thus, unemployment was highlighted as a major challenge. This year's survey shows an improvement in the unemployment rate – from a total of 45% to 28%. However, given the reduction in average age – from 24 years to 21.5 years – it may just be the selection of respondents who answered the survey are simply younger and therefore more likely to be studying than working or trying to find work.



Accessing fundza.mobi

A very high 86% of respondents said that they were accessing FunDza through FreeBasics.com. The next highest portal space was the website fundza.mobi, which garnered 8% of respondents. This is a major change in terms of access point from the previous year, when around 85% of readers were accessing fundza.mobi through the Mxit app.

Importantly, Mxit was accessible to users of a wide range of low-end devices. Since the closure of the Mxit servers, FunDza was able to convert a large number of readers to the FreeBasics.com service but as this was only accessible to Cell C users (in South Africa) and to only some low-end devices, the Mxit closure did mean attrition of some of FunDza's most dedicated long-term readers.

Growth in Android

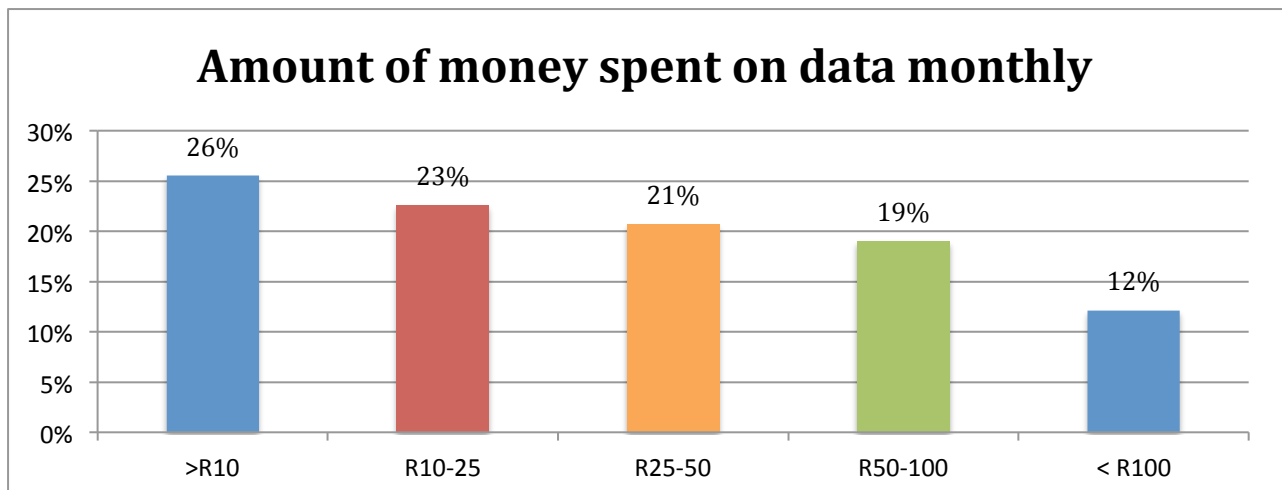
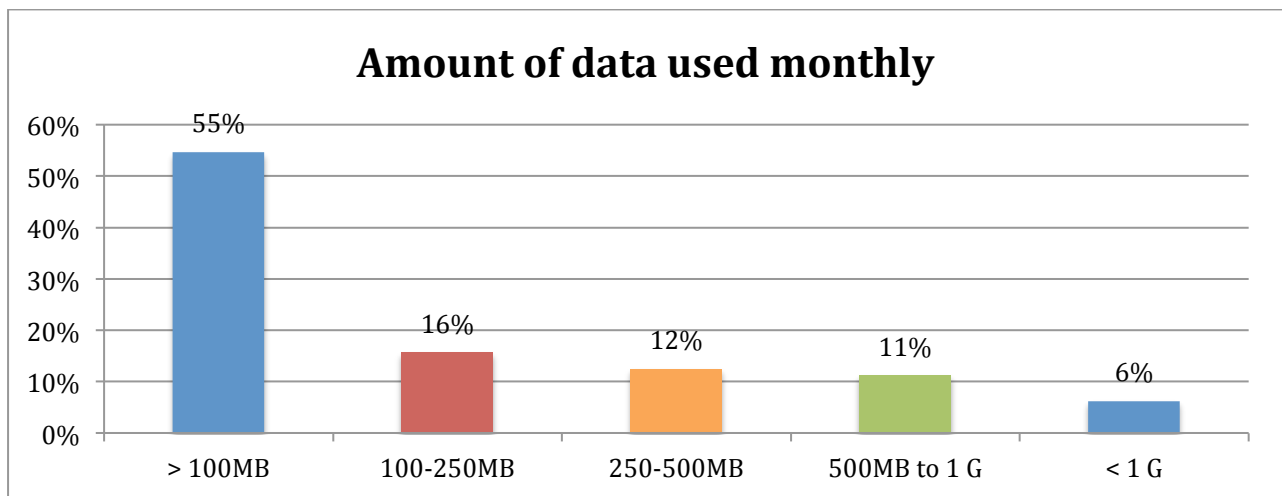
The survey marked a huge upsurge in Android users – this time 59% of users were accessing FunDza through an Android device with the next highest device mentioned being a Nokia phone at 17%.

In December 2015, 56% of readers were using a feature phone or very low-end device to access fundza.mobi. This marked change could also be attributed to the closure of Mxit, which – as mentioned in the point about the accessing of fundza.mobi above – had enabled people with very low-end devices to access fundza.mobi. While FreeBasics.com does accommodate some low-end devices, it doesn't accommodate the full range that Mxit had been able to reach.

Data usage

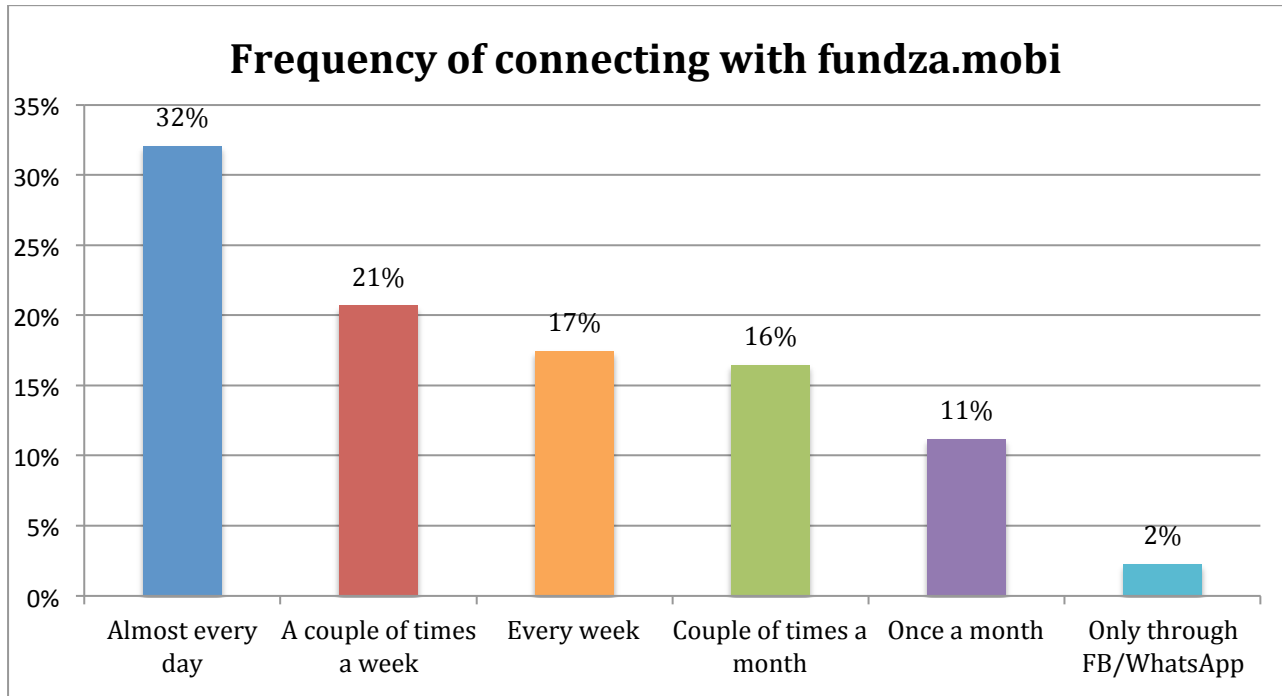
Given that the vast majority of users were accessing FunDza via FreeBasics (which is free to users of Cell C or other partner mobile operators in the rest of Africa), it is unsurprising that 61% reported that the cost of data did not limit their reading time. 16% said that it did limit their reading time, while 12% said that it did sometimes limit their reading time. A mere 11% reported that data costs were never a consideration to them.

This is underscored by the fact that many reported to not have access to large amounts of data, as shown in the charts below. 55% said that they used less than 100MB each month and 59% said that they spent R25 or less on data each month, and 70% having R50 or less to spend on data monthly.

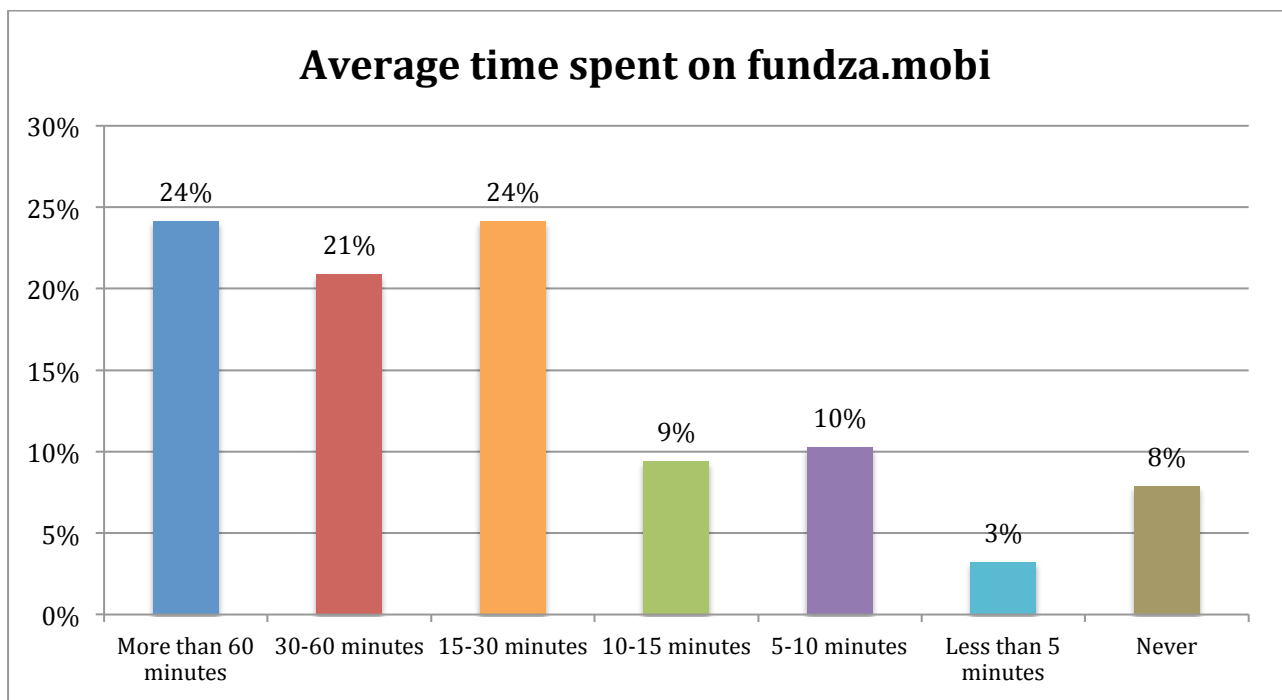


Dedicated readers

32% of the respondents claimed to visit fundza.mobi almost every day, with 21% saying they visited a couple of times a week, and 17% at least once a week. Thus, approximately 70% of readers were accessing fundza.mobi at least every week.



According to the respondents, they also read for significant periods of time – 24% said they spent more than an hour at a time reading, while a further 21% said they read for half an hour or more at a time.



Languages

Readers were asked what languages they would like to read stories in on FunDza. This was an open-ended question so readers could include whatever languages they would like. The highest demand was for English – with 85% of respondents including the word English in their open-ended answer.

Aside from this, there was demand for a number of other languages. This largest demand was for isiZulu content by 14% of readers, followed by these languages in order of frequency: Xhosa (8%), Setswana (4.5%), Sesotho (4.5%), Afrikaans (4%), Sepedi (2%).

Interestingly, there was also some demand for content in languages from the rest of Africa (Swahili, Igbo, Chichewa, Shona, Bemba, Twi, amongst others) as well as content in European languages such as Portuguese, Spanish, French, German, and Greek, as well as, surprisingly to us, Japanese.

Usage of other services

Respondents were questioned about their experience of other FunDza services: 1) submitting writing as a Fanz writer and being published on fundza.mobi; 2) receiving FunDza's broadcast messages about latest content via WhatsApp; 3) registration for and usage of the open online courses, which had been introduced to fundza.mobi towards the end of 2016. Interestingly, many respondents were either not aware of these services or didn't know how to access them.

In terms of the Fanz writing, very few respondents (12%) had submitted writing as a Fanz writer. This was similar to the results of the 2015 survey with just 13% of respondents submitting their work. 15% reported that they were not interested in submitting writing but a high 73% said that they would like to submit writing but were not certain how to go about doing so.

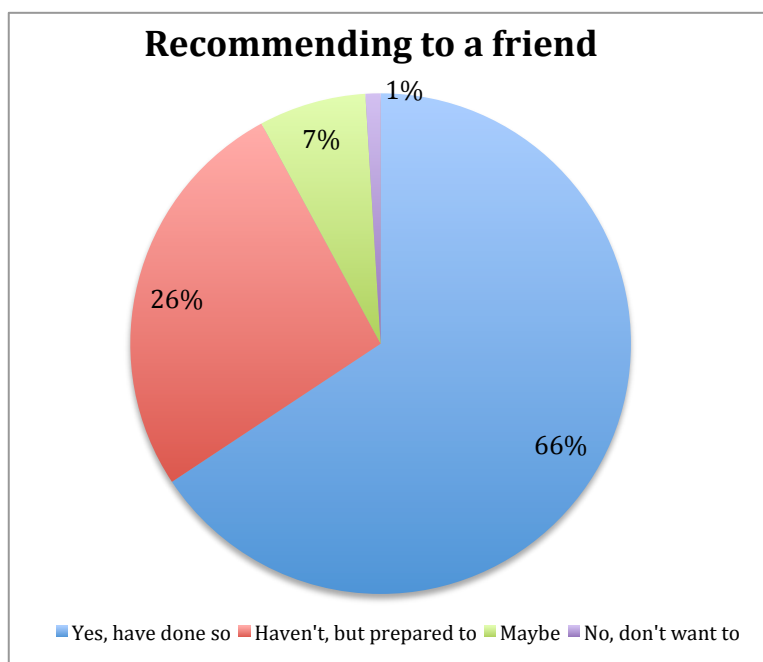
In terms of WhatsApp, 16% of respondents were connected to FunDza for the broadcasts, 9% had no interest in receiving these but 75% said they would like to but didn't know how.

While for the open online courses, only 5% of respondents had registered successfully completing a course, with a further 5% saying that they had registered but hadn't yet completed a course. Worryingly, 19% said they had tried to register but had got stuck, while 61% said they would like to register but didn't know how. We are trying to simplify the registration process so that it is easier for readers to participate.

Self-reported impacts

90% of readers claimed that their language or comprehension skills had improved thanks to access to FunDza content; while 86% said that they had 'learned something about themselves or the world' thanks to reading FunDza stories. Both of these were open-ended questions, and an analysis of the long-form answers is included in this report.

In addition, respondents were asked whether they had ever recommended reading on fundza.mobi to a friend or family member. 66% said that they had already done so, while a further 26% said they hadn't done so yet but would be happy to do so.



Qualitative feedback on favourite reading content

Readers were asked what type of content they enjoyed reading the most on fundza.mobi. We conducted a frequency analysis of the type of words or themes that resulted from the comments to get a sense of what readers loved. Top of the list was the short stories – which FundZa creates weekly for its readers. The following word cloud indicates the top words/themes recounted through the open-ended feedback.



Here follows a selection of the actual comments provided by readers. Please note that these have not been edited.

I love reading informative stories, i get informed about things that influence me and my society, and i get a chance to be exposed to all different types of languages and get more info about the environment, how important for us to look after it and how i should try all my best to abstain from the diseases around me and i what i enjoy also i that my vocab also improves concurrently.

~ Lungiswa

What I enjoy on Fundza is I like reading some stories and almost it is true. Some stories made me think of how to be in life, how to fight battle and believe in yourself. I enjoy reading fundza stories.

~ Sibongile

First All,i Would Love To Give Many Thanks To The Fundza Team For Their Wonderful Work. Ever Since My Young Sister Introduced Me To This World Of Interesting,life Changing Stories Of Those Teens Of Age Write And Heartwarming Lookin Back.Belive Me Or Not My Life Has Changed Amazgly.I Can Just Stuff It All In One Parcel; I ENJOY THE WHOLE PACKAGE!

~ Gertrude Sakala

I really enjoy reading them diaries and books such great episodes as they are enjoyable and understandable gives a reader a sense of what might be happening you can visualize each and every part of stories

~ Nthabiseng

I enjoy visiting the Fiction stories whereby I read them and compare them to my daily life or try to see what the story has taught me and use that information wisely when I make decisions. For example on this recent story called ' Where do I belong ', I have read a very good example of children who grew up on poverty with only their grandmother (pension) not for a moment have they thought of running to the streets because of that and the fact that their parents abandoned them. But they kept their faith of a better life and continued with their studies under the circumstances. This story taught me to never give up and not just to think of what I'm going through right now but the future too.

~ Ntombozuko

I like reading the short stories, they are very interesting and educational. I also read tips on how to manage finances and tips on how to start a business as I would like to have my own business one day. I also read about available jobs on the market and subscribe for notifications to help me after I am done studying and looking for a job.

~ Sinikeziwe

I love reading short stories, sometimes I even lost track of time the way I am so taken aback by the different stories which give different lessons. I also love catching first the story of the week on Friday, I sometimes also read the fiction section

~ Sinegugu

I mostly like our short stories. Whenever I get an update on the Fundza whatsapp contact about recent stories I don't hesitate to forward the message to my friends and dive head first into reading them. They are by far the best short stories I've ever read and they sure know how to quench one's thirst. I often befriend the authors on facebook. Not to forget the competitions!! ;) Which I more often than not I try to familiarize myself with.

~ Mankgane

I like the poem and romance content... what I enjoy the most is that when I'm reading the stories, it's like I am that person that wrote it and it teaches me a lot of things in taking decisions and it helps me to take my mind out of things that I have been experiencing in my childhood and even now... I really love FunDza... it's like my second home... where I get motivated and inspired...

~ Anovuyo

I love reading. I spend all my time reading short stories and books when I'm free especial at night. Thanks to FUNDZA for creating such an amazing programme. You guys are awesome.

~ Lungile

Books I enjoy reading stories, cos these stories teach me a lot about life and what's happening to others. I learn how they cope and what to do when you are in some situation again about fitness and being healthy because I have to keep fit and healthy or else I'll be infected with many chronic diseases. About facebook I get to connect to chat with my family and friends and get to find out bursaries and sponsors. Mostly the new ones really appreciate the money I win

~ Mapitso

Life and love lessons. I love reading the awesome stories written by the brilliant writers. Some times I get carried away with reading that I even forget my house chores and burn pots while cooking

~ Gugu

I love stories written by Fundza fans as they're sometimes realistic.. I also select crime thriller stories the stories I don't like are those love soapies with happy endings. I'm 27 not 13 I no longer believe in happy endings.. Fundza is great but I always try to read finished stories. I don't like waiting a day for the next chapter I did that a lot while I was on mxit.

~ Sfiso

Well I just click on popular stories of the week and from that moment nobody can get my eyes off of my phone. The stories there are absolutely amazing and they just captivate me and make me feel like I'm in the story. Cool right? I know!

~ Bakhona

I love reading short stories. I love the stories here because they explain a lot about our African culture. The stories here are something that one can relate to in real life

~ Merlipha

when I go online to catch up on some reading I always start with the weekly stories. These stories carry so much weight that I sometimes wonder how are the writers feeling while they write? do they relive those moments between pages? I ask myself these questions not because of just wondering but because I find myself part of what I'm reading. An emotion stirs up while looking at the sentences. Real Good stories is what I always have to say about what I read on Fundza . Ndibulele Sotondoshe's series 'Inspiring Tomorrow ' is a must read because those collections from various writers are just beautiful and unique in their own way. Gifted are they all.

~ Bomikazi

I love the tips you give for women and girls ,motivational things ,jobs ,entertainment, it basically caters for everyone and its at no additional cost. I like the fact that there's always something to look forward to reading. Fundza is Fantastic !! :)

~ Mishqa

I Would Like to thanks all writers ,when i log in i fell amazed in your nice stories and very interesting i'm good reader ,i real like your romance stories as well . i like fiction and non fiction i though you have the books and stories number one i have ever read thank you very much fundza,

~ Didier Kaneza

Oh well..From my perspective FunDza is the most amazing app where I get interesting fun stories and I learn new words that I can use at school..The app helps me in my English vocabulary and Slowly but surely I'll be an intellectual person soon.I love the app and Its so amzing.. WOW ! THE STORIES ARE SOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO AMAZING. THANK YOU FUNDZA TEAM !

~ Mbali

When I visit FunDza, I'm always open minded and honestly all the stories from adventure to your reality stories, the luxurious, uplifting and aspiring poems not to mention the blogs and the daily stories that the fellow FunDza members produce are outstanding. This really shows that the world can be a better place through reading and writing. I really wish every person could understand and see the main aim of reading and writing as FunDza has made me realize that the key to great literacy and intellectual skills is through reading and writing... Therefore I say Big Ups to FunDza.

~ Philisiwe

I enjoy stories that are told by South Africans writers about South African People. It inspires me because I realize that there is too much talent and I'm happy that fundza is there for people who are book worms because a person who reads is an interesting person and interested in people. Thank you for this opportunity I myself love writing and I'm encouraged to join this good initiative.

~ Zanele

I very much prefer romance; so anytime i log on to fundza, i click on the catalogue for romance stories because fundza picks out the best, unlike other sites that accept gibberish. The writers are also well-versed in their art. For example jean-paul williamse, his stories always stand out. i've read all the stories he published on fundza. Thank you fundza!

~ Aorabee Lyambee

Fundza has improved my comprehension skills which still need polishing hence i need to join the online course but mostly fundza has inspired me to learn to be a writer because I've got an adventurous imagination and fundza has given me hope that one day I'll will be able to write an award winning story

~ Ngwane

funDza has been improved my language because when i read some story i got new vocabulary and help me to increase my level of language's skills

~ Ndayishimiye

My spelling skills were a bit rusty now they have improved i can now speak English freely without being scared that people might judge me for my poor English Fundza has really helped me now i no longer stutter when I speak

~ Sindile

I love stories and as a person who is an actor I get to understand better when I read a script because I am used to reading, and some stories I read them out loud to improve my speech.

~ Lawrence

Yes!!! my comprehension is better now and at least now i can speak english well because i know the definitions to the words

~ Emmerentia

Most definitely. It help broaden my vocabulary & it help me improve my reading skills dramatically. I find it much easier writing letters or comprehensions & in doing so also making it a whole lot more interesting & a very pleasant read.

~ Arefaat

Through reading stories on funDza, i've learnt a lot of new words and have also improved interms of grammar. FunDza stories have changed me completely, i even feel good when i start speaking English with my friends. And now, I'm doing the funDza courses. The courses are so interesting!

~ Womba

Yes. My English has improved since I started reading the stories and i can write poems and essays easier than before i got introduced to FunDza.

~ Pertunia

Yes FunDza has helped me a lot with my language and comprehension skills. Now I am starting to use the English language correctly as I have seen on the stories that I have read how to use it. Because I read a lot, I have now noticed how to create acceptable comprehensions without losing the content of the message and I am using these skills on my emails so that I can be professional at all times.

~ Ntombozuko

It has, since the stories are almost published in almost every South African languages. I get to learn how to read and understand new languages and also learn some of the words i didn't know that they even existed

~ Lebogang

I've now learnt some words i didn't know before, I learnt different forms of writing a good story, improved my reading and writing skills. Fundza has let me to be interested in becoming an author one day

~ Lisakhanya

Qualitative feedback on personal development

Readers were asked whether reading on FunDza had made a difference to their lives in terms of their personal development or a change in their worldview. For us, this is a very important indicator of success as this ties in with our philosophy that extended reading is not simply about improving one's language skills, but rather that access to stories have wider benefits on one's personal development, for instance, stories can help develop empathy, expand problem solving skills, promote tolerance and respect for others, and they can help people to learn about life from different perspectives.

A frequency analysis of the themes or words from these comments resulted in the following word cloud.



Here follows some of the unedited open responses from the respondents:

fundza has helped me in my personal life because the stories i read on fundza are educative and there are many moral lessons to acquire from the stories which i put them all into use and it has really helped me in my personal life a lot

~ Olatunde

yes,like for instance I once read a story about 2 friends and sugar daddies this story taught me money is not everything i should have pride and not use sex to get further in life because i come from a very poor family i honestly have thought of having a sugar daddy at some point in my life

~ Blessing

yes...Fundza is more than just a website where we read but is a page where we learn, experience and grow...it also helps people to solve their problems....there are stories that some of us relate to and in the end we find solutions...

~ Kabelo

most of the stories have encouraged and inspired me with their morals and I have felt like some stories are written by someone looking at my life

~ Nomfundo

Through reading the stories I've improved some various aspects of my life. From my imagination, comprehension skills, vocabulary to my associative memory just to name a few. Some of the stories are also touching and leave you with a humbling experience. I have learnt to be appreciative and content through the heart melting stories and other pieces of writings.

~ Mankgane

some stories have taught me to accept myself and to be aware that every decision I take will have either good outcomes or bad and sometimes both so as I read stories maturity also kicks in

~ Bongwe

the stories I read are things that happen in real life, sometimes I get an advice before I actually come across a similar situation and I usually know how to handle the problem at hand because of the help of Fundza and the writers

Sinegugu

There are these stories about this female investigator who always try by all means to make sure justice is served on all matters that are reported to her police station. Her stories have taught me that the law enforcers are working more than I have thought, they go into danger and their work affect their personal lives too. This shows us what great heroes we have in them and I have never noticed that before I came across these stories.

~ Ntombozuko

I've read stories that relate to my personal life and at times I would feel like I was the person who wrote the story or the person who wrote the story knows me and what happens in my life.

~ Pertunia Mnisi

Fundza has helped me so much in my personal life, I have learned many things from the stories, such as not allowing my past to define who I am, always work hard towards reaching my goals, to be the change that I want to see in my community

~ Skekete

Fundza most of the stories help me to be a better person in future come, fundza gave me life strategies and tactics, by spending my time reading beautiful stories on fundza.

~ Sanele

I have concluded some lessons learnt and put them in my personal life as to a path that I should follow to make my life have a good progress. Also getting to understand how the paths of life take place individually and to understand people's emotions before getting to get in conclusions

~ Thando

Fundza has been a lot helpful. Reading some stories made me realise that out there, there are people who are actually meeting the same obstacles that I am facing and I get to know and learn how to conquer any mountain that comes my way

~ Masala

Yes! I am practising Journalism and I want to become a writer. I use Fundza's stories to learn how to write books. In my personal life, Fundza has built in me the confidence and enthusiasm to read, and it has helped to transform my language and the way I speak. Now I don't spend time roaming around the community, but I am proudly spending my time reading books from Fundza's library.

~ Bayama

from one of the stories I've read, I've learned that I should report a person who is violating human rights such as mistreating people with disability. Young people give up on their future because of the background they're coming from, but I've learnt not ever let the background I'm coming from to describe who I'm and use the opportunity I'm given to build myself a better future.

~ Thato

i have learnt to be an independent type of a person and learn to appreciate everything that i have, no matter how small it is, and to be myself and not try to fit in, when i was born to stand out, and lastly to respect everyone around me.

~ lungiswa nomasonto

I have learned a lot of things. While reading stories on this website my zeal and zest to start writing stories increased because I did not know any site which could promote or publish my story. Futhermore, Some stories were centering on bullying and I took a lesson that its not a good thing. In many schools its considered okay by most boys and since I came across these stories they made me change my perception. It has also made me change my view of South African youth. For instance, I came across some young writers who making big in this writing industry and that encouraged me to start writing my own story which will be published on your website some months coming.

~ DAVID

I have taken inspiration and advice from the stories it has helped me get through many a difficult phase in my life

~ Shanice

it really helped me after read the essay "power lies within us" really showed me not to give up and accept failure in life and move on and open a new chapter

~ Boy-boy

first and for most i was introduced into fundza website by my friend from Durban , since than fundza stole My heart and my personal,lifestyle has been amazing sharing thoughts and views ,fundza helped me to communicatie with a lot of People plus i'm a gemini. Born in Congo , thank you mamah and Desprate times are best books ever .

~ punctual

yes, i got inspired by most of the stories. some stories i get related to. i also get healed when reading some writing. fundza fanz are talented. i also got inspired by the fundza fanz to write as well, and i'm glad that i get the comments that am doing very well and that i have become a fundza fan as well

~ siyabulela

i have learnt a lot from the stories such as i should stay true to me self and believe in me no matter what i may face and that working hard does pay and that truly education is the key to success

~ Akhona

i have depression and i didnt want to accept it when a helpful person told me. through fundZA i understand the situation

~ Asanda

Yes my friends always peer pressured me but once i started reading i found a solution so i found new friends. These stories really help us.

~ Mmakwena

As a matter of fact, FunDza has really helped my personal life, in a way that I never even thought possible! Moral lessons like the ones from Human Dramas all teach me important things by showing me life experiences! In fact, the one I just read recently, The Price is Right for Revenge has taught me that vengeance, no matter how much we want it, shouldn't cloud our feelings!

~ Ayodeji

It helped me personally by helping me get over problems in my life, not only did it help me resolve these issues but it also made me see life in a much different and better perspective. Most of the stories on Fundza has to do with real life situations and there's always a moral behind each story which helps and prepare me on how to cope in various situations.

~ Isaac

I have learnt that not everything is as it seems from the story "miss perfect" so in a way i have stopped feeling sorry for myself. i also take reading books as entering another world which is paradise.

~ Mudau

Fundza has also been helpful in my personal life, because through the stories and the poems I would be inspired and encouraged to do more in life like being able to persue my goals,so it has really helped me a lot.

~ Nqobile

Writing the story about judging a book by its cover has given me more self esteem then i've ever had. I've been judged and i understand how it feels. So when i wrote the story and read other's inspiring stories i just knew i wasn't alone and there are help and encouraging people out there. That is much i've learnt and i know that every word that a person exchanges with another can either break or make them. Because we are humans and we all have hearts whether it's bad or good. Think about your peers, ALWAYS.

~ Crystal

Very much, i was a shy person and thought that my future is dim, but was inspired and strengthened. If you knew me before reaching fundza u could tell that this is not Edson P you knew. Am now confident and outgoing young man.

~ Edson

Yes it has.as an unemployed youth from a rural settlement i dont have access to libraries or newspapers so fundza helps me polish my english

~ Sfiso

fundza has played a crucial role in my personal life it has impacted my life in a story whereby i was low and down to life ,i was too weak almost gave up in life until i read a story in fundza that says never give up in life no matter the challenges we come across, thats when i did self-introspection and find my self again, today i feel like a born again christian and ready to live the life i was blessed with.

~ Vukani

I have been struggling lately to get my mother to give me money and having a blesser was an option but reading one of your stories based on blessers and then I changed my mind about my decision, it has also taught me not to judge people because I don't know the reasons why people do certain things

~ Nomasabatha

I've learned a lot about my personal life with FunDza, I learned about how to live with people and how to solve personal situations, and how to accommodate people around me and how to react on difficult situations

~ naomie

I learnt to personally enjoy reading , I learnt time management (I'd allocate 30 minutes to read a story on FunDza) and I've learnt that writing is a skill.

~ Kanyisa

I got a problem with my mum but reading the stories of others who also have problems with they moms and I made me realised that all they are trying to do is only for the best of their children and the stories made me sort out my problems with her

~ Desiree

After I read hope...i had once tried to commit suicide because I felt so unworthy to live..but now my better days are coming

~ Joyce

I have learned so many personal things from Fundza,It has opened up my eyes about the world out there ,and I have seen so many of my experiences portrayed in so many stories in the Fundza app. It has showed me that i am not the only one going through difficult times ,and has also given me idea and strength to tackle my difficult experiences.

~ Mpho

Im a personal with low confidence but since ihave been reading stories on fundza I have learned to love myself first before wanting someone to love me

~ Ntombenhle

Through stories that fundza published i have learned alot for example how to be strong in hopeless situations, how to make good decisions and knowing that am not the only one who faces certain challenges, others also do and they survived.

~ Victoria

FunDza has these stories that really influence me. They constantly change my mindset. Uhm, this one time, I read a book, actually it was the first book I read on FunDza, it's been so long, it had something to do with a girl who started dating a taxi driver and she fell pregnant and later found out he was married. That book, it opened my eyes, you know, I'm only fourteen, so I've just began with the whole puberty phase, it's rough, it's like, being treated like a child but expected to act like an adult. Let me go back to the book, I read it, before then, there was so much pressure to do things, like have a boyfriend and have sex and go to parties and drink and try weed, and when I read that book, yoh, the girl just fell pregnant nje, kanjalo nje, I was so afraid for her, I didn't want to be like her. I didn't want to have a baby so early, especially now that things are kind of rough on my side. It scared me, why? Because I knew that things like that do happen actually. You make mmistakes, think you're right, think it's love, then you abandon your education and try to fit in, try to have fun. Mmmm. So from thereof, I decided never to have sex, don't talk to strangers (especially taxi drivers) and not to desert the ones who love me because it's tough out there, apparently. Then there was Teenagers Like Smanga (Please tell the author that I don't like the suspense I've been kept in), there was a day, I took a razor, I cut myself, it hurt so much, I was upset, I felt misunderstood and I wished I was no more, I wished I was perhaps, dead or thrown right into Oblivion. But I recovered, that happened in the beginning of the year, then I read Teenagers Like Smanga a few months ago, I couldn't believe how suicidal he was, I never realized that it affected me.

~ Alexis

The story: Perfectly Imperfect has taught me not to judge easily and appreciate both my parents and the best lesson that I have learnt is to love myself just the way that I am.

~ Mmoledi

Team trinity Stories... I have always been a big girl and I have always thought I was not good enough. I was afraid to speak my mind, the stories gave me so much hope. Trinity survived abuse and peer pressure she did not let her dad's status determine who she is and she was she was not as clever as her brother and friend but that did not stop her for going after her dreams.

~ Ntombizodwa

I've learned about how people are not to be trusted. how love can bring happiness and sadness in ones life. I've also learned that everything in this world that we live in comes with a price and never to accept things from other people without knowing the real reason why they are being given to us. I learned also that women abuse is something that happens everyday and in many different ways. you may never know when you might fall victim and that the only way to protect yourself is to talk to someone if you have been abused or if you feel like someone is trying to hurt you.

~ maserame

most of the stories are about what the youth is going through and most of the time i feel like they are talking about me and what i am personally going through. it gives you lessons about life and what you can do to become a better person

~ Thando

The stories have taught me a lot of things like being disobedient to your folks is not a good thing at all ,it sometimes leads to unnecessary ordeal experience in young people.In another way,fundza has inspired me to start writing, gives me hope and courage.

~ Innocent

I've learnt that as a young Lady you should be able to stand up for yourself from the old hooligans who wanna play with teenagers. I've also learnt that i should never give up on my dreams and shouldn't let the past determine my future.

~ Phumelele

I almost got my self into drugs but i read some stories and i saw the view point of life and i quit and lived a decent lifestyle

~ bongeka

FunDza has been really helpful on a personal level. Some stories have taught me self-respect, some have taught me that a pen is mightier than a sword, some have taught me about life in general, and what to expect in my future endeavors.

~ Utlwang

FunDza stories have helped me with life problems eg the book titled "Forgive". It taught me to forgive, make peace with my past and move on with my life. Some stories taught me to look at life in a different and positive way.

~ Busisiwe

The stories give a lot of moral lessons and this helps to shape my life. Sometimes i see myself in the same shoes as the characters and the challenges they go through and the decisions they take.

~ Amadu

I sometimes connect to the stories, feel the pain that the characters feel. Because i want to be an actress, i sometimes use these stories to practice my acting skills. So i'm learning lot

~ Phumudzo

I've learnt that I might be going through a rough patch for now and might be thinking there's no hope for me but fundza has taught me that I'm not the first person to be in this situation and be been through but they reached that light at the end of the tunnel

~ Dumisani

These stories reflect on what happens in our lives day in and out. Sometimes we hide the truth behind closed doors because we are told it's not supposed to be known but instead this is a lie to making us believe what is wrong is right. I hope that they help many other young people out there in shaping themselves for the better. valuable lessons are learnt with of course a little humour much needed.

~ Bomikazi

I've learnt that one must not try to be like other people but be him/her self and not try to imitate what's bad...we must adapt to change and appreciate what we have...

~ Keitumetse

I have been a lonely person and most times I lack self confidence... I have been living with depression trying to keep other people happy and afraid to say my mind... So it has helped a lot with stories of same situation

~ Eunice

I often feel and think I'm lost in the world but I've come to realize that we are all living in small world's of our own and it's okay to feel that, and also some things don't come out right when you say them or there's nobody listening so it's better to put them on paper and revisit them later and be your own listener

~ Sandile

Reading other people's poems and a few short stories has reminded me that we are all writers and we need to discover them in us. At times I was also intimidated by how good other writers are but the words of encouragement from various writers inspire me to write.

~ Zikhona

it has helped me expecially the stories about domestic violence,i now know that they are people who help thoes facing such problems which makes me want to help aswell because most of these cases happen to us females and we need to support each other

~ MARGARET

Fundza is more than just a website where we read but is a page where we learn, experience and grow...it also helps people to solve their problems...there are stories that some of us relate to and in the end we find solutions...

~ Kabelo

More information

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