

# SA youth exhibiting strain amidst surging Covid-19 cases

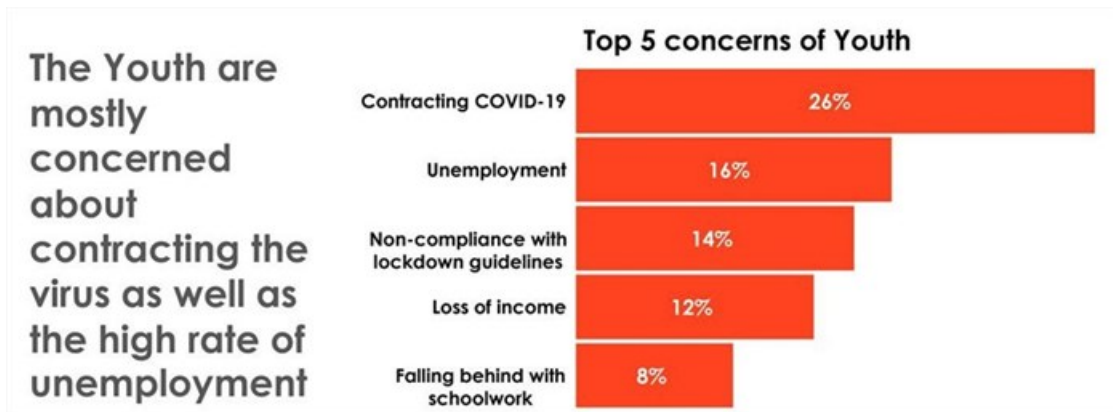
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*Younger South Africans are not having an easy time currently showing the highest levels of fear and depression amongst all age groups, according to recent quantitative research conducted by research firm, Ask Afrika.*



According to the results from week 10 of the Ask Afrika Covid-19 Tracker study, contracting the virus remains the top concern of the youth at 26%, followed by unemployment at 16%, non-compliance with lockdown regulations at 14%, loss of income at 12%, while 8% are concerned about falling behind with their schoolwork. For the purpose of this study Ask Afrika classifies the youth as those aged 15 to 34.



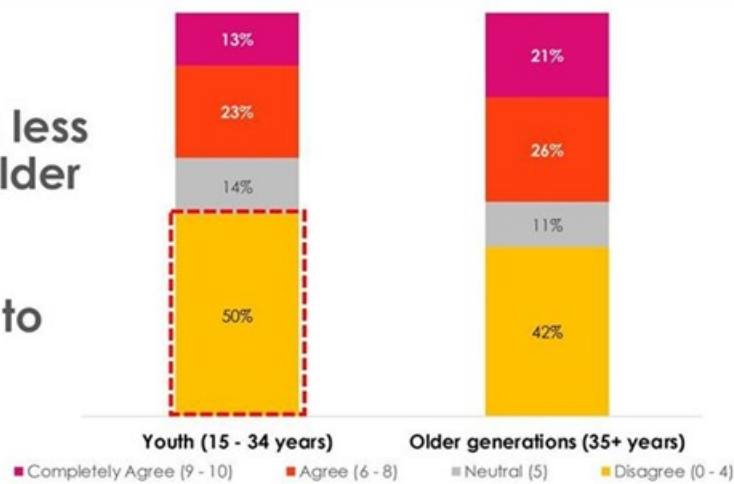
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The main aim of the study is to understand the socio-economic impact that the coronavirus, lockdown and gradual re-opening of the economy has on South Africans. Week 10 of the research has a special focus on the youth and the impact recent events have had on this segment of the market.

Concerns around food security have been persistent over the past four weeks of the study with almost 70% of respondents concerned about the amount of food in their homes. Almost a quarter of children went to bed hungry while half of respondents indicated that adults in the household had reduced their portion sizes due to a lack of food and insufficient money to buy food. These concerns are exacerbated by the youth with 69% indicating that they are very concerned about the amount of food they have available.

Despite several studies indicating that the youth are less at risk from Covid-19 than older people, a surprising 50% say they feel less safe than older generations to return to work, compared to only 42% of older generations aged 35 and over saying they feel unsafe.

**The Youth feels less safe than the older generations to return to work when required to do so.**



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A third of people overall disagree that the gradual re-opening of the economy will contain the spread of the virus, with the youth being significantly more likely (38%) than older generations to disagree that the gradual re-opening will contain the spread to save lives.

According to the study, 52% of youth are likely to comply with more stringent lockdown regulations should certain provinces move back to Level 5, compared to only 38% of older generations.

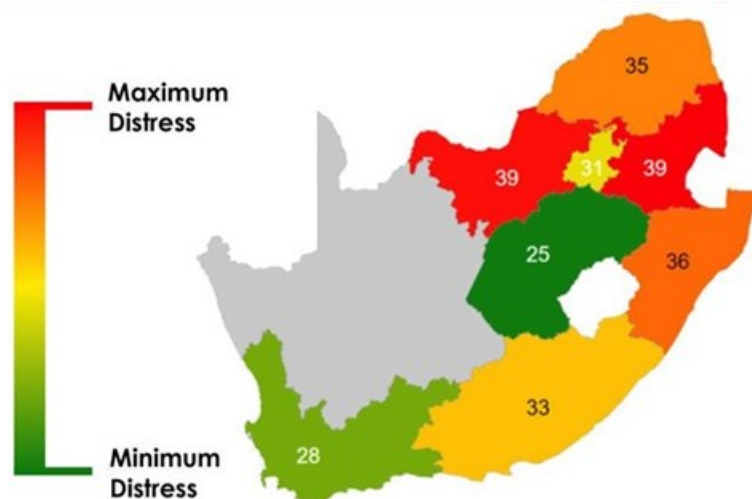
While trust in President Cyril Ramaphosa's leadership has declined overall in recent weeks, the youth are less likely to distrust the president's leadership during this time with 65% of respondents aged 15 to 34 years saying they trust the president to lead the country during this time, compared to only 61% of those aged 35 and older feeling the same way.

According to the Ask Afrika Covid-19 Distress Index, which tracks the wellbeing of South Africans, the country's overall distress is stabilising at 32 points. It has been hovering in the low 30s since week six of the study. Surprisingly, the level of distress is not directly linked to the number of Covid-19 cases per province with the North West and Mpumalanga displaying the highest levels of stress of all provinces at 39 and 38 respectively. The distress is primarily centred around emotional distress (44%) with females more likely to be emotionally distressed than males; hunger (45%); and financial distress (18%).

Following similar lines to the overall population's distress levels, the youth are displaying an overall distress index of 33, with the highest distress levels emanating in the North West and Mpumalanga. However, the distress levels of youth in Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal are higher than those of the overall population. According to the Youth Covid-19 Distress Index, 45% of youth respondents are either afraid or depressed, 37% went to bed hungry or without food for a day, and 16% have no income or are uncertain of their source of income.

## Overall Distress Index 33

The distress is not directly linked to number of COVID cases per province



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The research has revealed that fear of contracting the virus has increased each week and is currently at levels last seen at the end of April 2020. This is likely to be in direct response to the fact the number of positive Covid-19 cases increased by more than 16,000 from the end of May to 8 June.

Ask Afrika's quantitative research is conducted via computer aided telephone and online interviews.

The research explores different themes and topics each week in order to better understand relevant issues and provide an immediate statistic. Companies are able to participate in the research to establish how the current situation is impacting their particular brands.

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