

RESEARCH PEARLS | FEDU PEARL #18

In our series “Research Pearls” we are providing first-hand insights into our dynamic and powerful diaries research. Following the previous Research Pearl on comparing employment activities in Youth Livelihood diaries and FEDU, this Pearl will focus on business activities in a similar way.

Diving into datasets - Business

Our research was carried out on the assumption that young people have a range of businesses that they work on according to the season and circumstances. This assumption was confirmed: working on a business is mostly a part-time, on-and-off rather than a full-time, continuous affair.

Youth Livelihood Diaries

Almost two thirds of respondents (64%) carried out a business activity during at least one of the 13 biweekly interviews. Among these respondents, it was most common to be engaged in this business for only one biweekly interview (17% of respondents). In most cases the type of business carried out is “own business”, as you can see in the graph below.

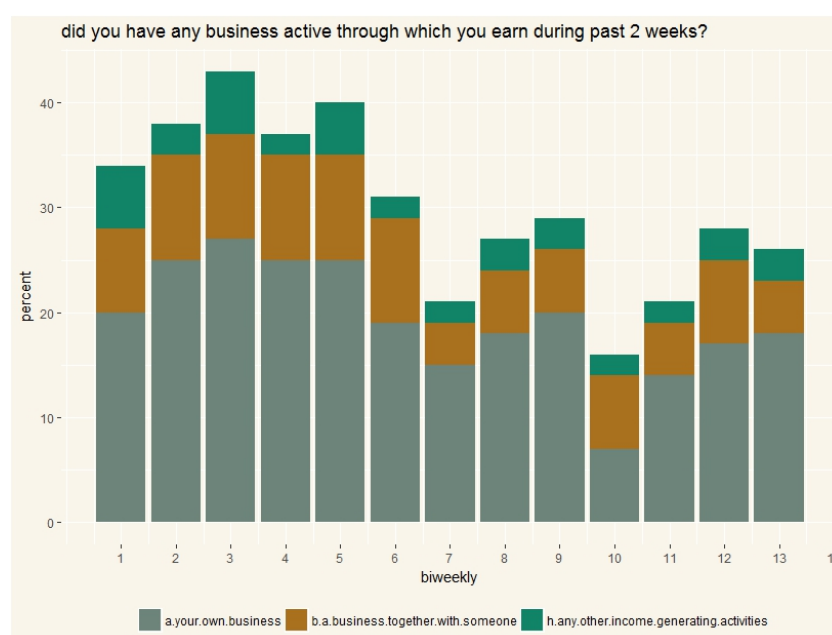


Figure 1: Business activity YLD

To elaborate more on “your own business”, in the graph on the following page, the frequency with which respondents carried out their own business is illustrated. Most of those who had their own business indicated that it was active for only one or two biweekly interviews, as circled in red on the left side of the graph. There is quite a spread of answers among the rest of the cases, with several respondents having their own business for only half of the research period. Only a few had their own business during all 13 biweekly interviews. Hence, having one’s own business as a full-time, continuous activity is rare. The assumption that businesses are on-and-off, part-time affairs is therefore true for most of the cases.

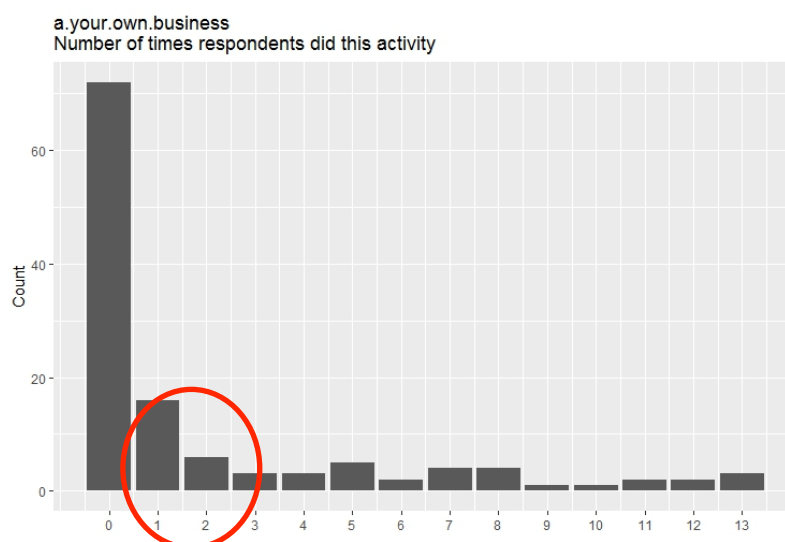


Figure 2: Frequency “own business” YLD

As can be observed in the graph, there is a slight seasonal pattern, such that halfway through the biweeklies, activities start to increase again. Biweekly 7 started in January, so as can be seen in the graph, activity started to increase again toward the beginning of the year. The pattern seems to slightly resemble that of agricultural activity, suggesting that young people’s businesses revolve largely around agricultural activities.

FEDU young adults < 25

The FEDU dataset revealed that more than half of the respondents (54.4%) did not have any business activity during the whole research period, which means considerably fewer young adults reported businesses in FEDU than in YLD, where only 36% had no business. Same as in YLD, the most common business activity is “having your own business”. There is a very similar frequency pattern, where most respondents, who have their own business, have it for just one biweekly (14.4% of respondents). There were no FEDU young respondents that had a continuous business, i.e. that they reported to work on their business during all 13 biweekly interviews. Most cases of business are by far “own business”, as you can see in the graph below.

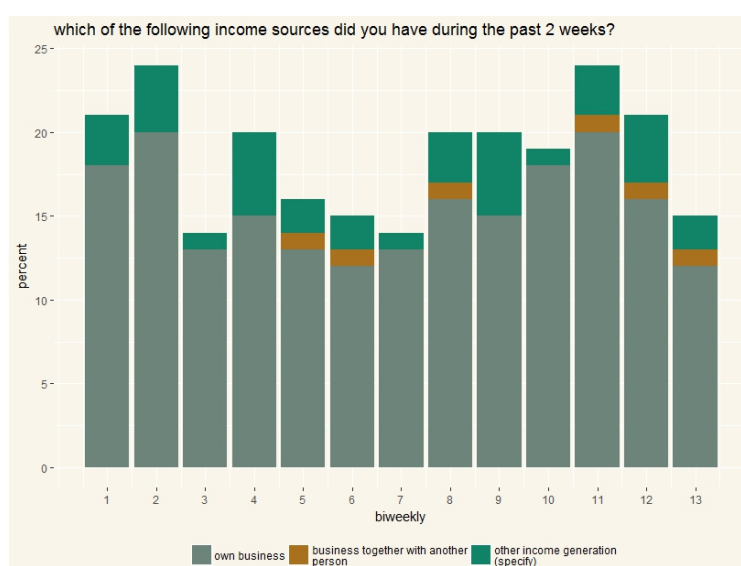


Figure 3: Business activity FEDU <25

Again, there is a slight seasonal pattern in the graph, suggesting that young FEDU respondents' businesses might also largely revolve around agricultural activities.

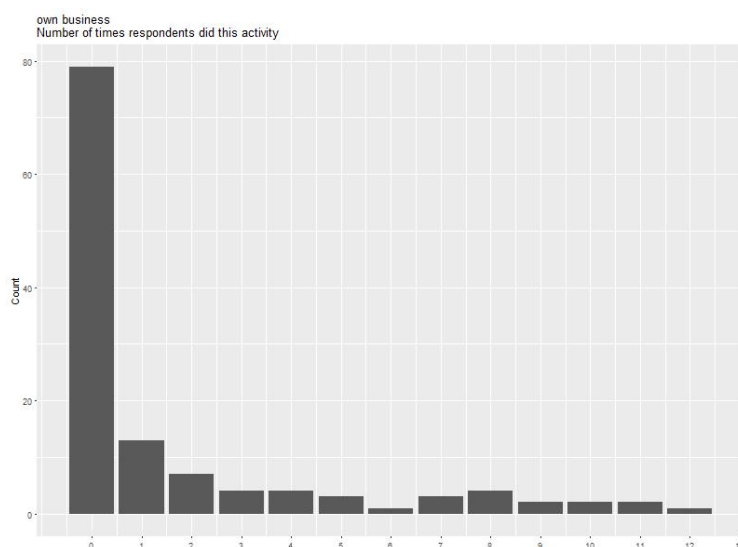


Figure 4: Frequency “own business” FEDU <25

FEDU older adults (25 years and older)

Within the older age group, respondents are more active in business activities than younger adults. While less than half of FEDU youth had an active business (46%), more than half (56%) of older adults did have a business. Youth Livelihoods respondents, however, were most active, with 64% of respondents having a business activity.

Similar to FEDU youth, of those that had a business, 14% reported it at only one biweekly interview. “Own business” is definitely also the most popular activity amongst older FEDU adults. However, the seasonal pattern observed among youth does not seem to follow, implying that older adults may be less active in businesses related to agriculture than youth.

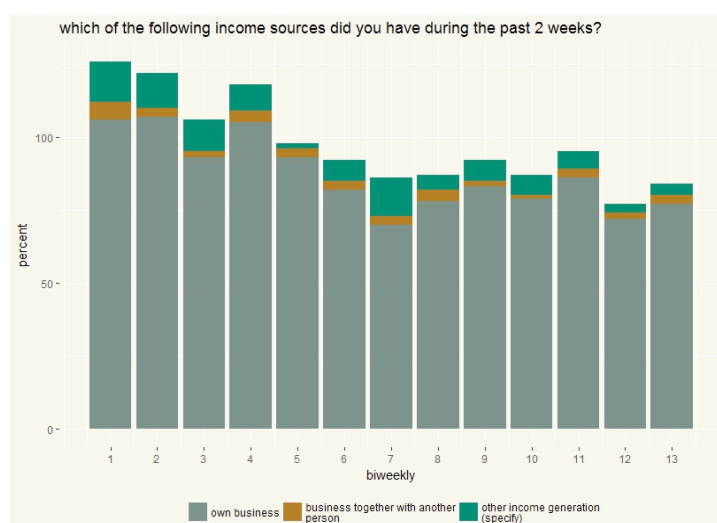


Figure 5: Business activity FEDU ≥ 25

Counting incidences again shows a similar pattern as with youth overall; most of those that have their own business have it active for only one biweekly interview. Fewer respondents have their business active for more than half the number of biweekly interviews. However, it is the group that has the highest percentage of respondents (3.3%) so far, that have a business activity running throughout the whole research period. There were not a lot of “mixed” activities going on; most of those respondents that had a business activity tried their hand at only one type, mostly their own business. Only 10% had two activities at some point during the research and only one respondent had three types of business activities.

Conclusions

There are a few interesting differences between FEDU younger and older adults, which are again different from the Youth Livelihoods young adults. Older FEDU adults are more active in business than younger FEDU adults. However the young adults from the Youth Livelihoods diaries were the most active in business. Age, therefore, is not a defining factor for the amount of work someone does in a business. Generally speaking, younger adults seem to focus their businesses more on agricultural activities. Due to seasonality this suggests that the less agricultural activity can be carried out, the less active businesses become.



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