Beyond methodology: unveiling multisited entrepreneurship

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Abstract

Purpose – Multisited ethnography has primarily been portrayed as a challenge for the following field-worker, with the researcher taking the central role and neglecting research participants also experiencing a multisited nature of their work. The authors argue that literature on multisited ethnography merely discusses multisitedness as a methodological theme. In correspondence, the authors propose to think of multisitedness not just as a methodological theme but also as an empirical theme.

Design/methodology/approach – The authors contend etic and emic perspectives to address multisitedness empirically, which enables researchers to compare and contrast the multisited topic of inquiry in academic "outsider" terms with the etic analysis and considering the perspective of the research participants' multisited experiences using the emic perspective. To show the fruitfulness of discussing multisitedness using the complementary etic and emic analysis, the authors present the example of Mennonite entrepreneurial activities in Belize, a heterogeneous group of migrants that established themselves as successful traders and entrepreneurs.

Findings – Through an etic multisited ethnographic perspective, the authors compare and contrast four communities of Mennonites in terms of their entrepreneurial activities, technology and energy use. Through an emic perspective, the authors demonstrate how Mennonites, while preferring an in-group focus, navigate their multisited entrepreneurial activities, which require interaction with the outside world.

Originality/value – The authors highlight the value of combining etic–emic reflections to acknowledge and include the multisited nature of many social phenomena as experienced by the research participants.

Keywords Emic, Etic, Following, Multisited ethnography, Longitudinal fieldwork

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Multisited ethnography has turned into a well-established methodological framework that offers flexibility, malleability and contingency to ethnographers to follow the topic of inquiry or research participants of interest (Falzon, 2009). In contrast to "classic" ethnography, the multisited ethnographic researcher moves between various places (Marcus, 1995), spaces (Pink, 2009), fields (Alaimo, 2022; Zilber, 2014), areas (Hannerz, 2010), trails (Van Duijn, 2020) or follows more than one mode in the field (Hannerz, 2003; Marcus, 1995). With mode, in this context, we refer to the path one follows doing fieldwork, either through deliberate choices to follow specific agents while navigating various spaces or places of interest or through more opportunistic, unconscious attempts to follow subjects of inquiry (Van Duijn, 2020). In the multisited ethnography project of Hannerz (2003), the "multisited" part of the researcher's project comprised the field-worker following foreign correspondents who were working in different geographical places, such as Jerusalem, Johannesburg and Tokyo. Another more rural-orientated example is the project by Archetti (1997) who used multisited ethnography in Ecuador to compare and contrast various indigenous communities in the Andes in their approach to modernizing guinea pig production and why this failed as the various

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communities shared a traditional way of keeping and breeding guinea pigs in their homes. This example shows that this preplanned project of the researcher has been executed with several other researchers to conduct fieldwork in different communities as the original research design included comparing and contrasting several communities in the Andes. The classic definition of multisited ethnography was put forward by Marcus (1995):

> Multi-sited ethnographies define their objects of study through different modes or techniques. These techniques might be understood as practices of construction through (preplanned or opportunistic) movements and of tracing within different settings of a complex cultural phenomenon given an initial, baseline conceptual identity that turns out to be contingent and malleable as one traces it (p. 106).

The essence of any multisited ethnography is, as depicted by the quote from Marcus (1995), that multisited fieldwork is turning into a matter of "being there . . ., and there . . ., and there!" (Hannerz, 2003, p. 201) to follow the participant(s) of inquiry. The following of a field-worker leads Van Duijn (2020) to the conclusion that an ethnographer deploying a multisited framework can be "everywhere and nowhere at once" (p. 281) as this strategy can lead to an endless number of potential interesting study options, which she refers to as "trails" (p. 281). The intention of this following in the field is to gain a more in-depth and granular understanding of the topic of study, for example, to compare various social groups in various locations and contrast differences.

Through these discussed works, we gain insight into the well-established theoretical domain of multisited ethnography, which presents a flexible and malleable methodological framework. However, the conversations and ruminations within the domain predominantly focus on the researcher's point of view. It is the field-worker who faces challenges in the example of Hannerz (2003) that needs to travel to different geographical locations. In the example from Van Duijn (2020), it is the researcher who faces the endless possibilities of choosing which trail to follow while conducting fieldwork. While cogent issues and corresponding debates addressed in these works are relevant to our understanding of multisited ethnography from a methodological point of view, we also observe that the current literature on multisited ethnography puts an (over) emphasis on the role and experiences of the researcher while doing multisited fieldwork. We argue that this emphasis and dominant rhetoric in the contemporary debate on multisitedness leads to methodological myopia as it turns multisited ethnography into a methodological theme and challenge.

Framing multi-sitedness as a methodological process from the researcher's point of view fails to acknowledge that social processes exist independently. They are not confined, restricted, or dependent on an ethnographer's senses to come into being (Nadia and Maeder, 2005). Put even stronger, it is safe to argue that more social actions happen than any "following" multisited field-worker would be able to study and capture (Van Duijn, 2020). For this reason, we might need to reconsider multisited ethnography. Multisited ethnography then becomes not merely a tool we should reflect on from the following field-workers' point of view studying more than one mode, path, area, etc. (Marcus, 1995). But multisited ethnographies should also aim to include the vistas of research participants on the multisited nature of their workplaces, turning the multisitedness of workplaces from a mere methodological theme to an empirical theme, where we also include the experience of multisitedness from the research participants' point of view.

Inspired by notions such as "engaged scholarships" (Van de Ven, 2007) and "co-creation" (Pearce *et al.*, 2022), which receive traction in the ethnography community as research participants' perspective is better represented through direct engagement and collaboration between the research participants and the researcher, we propose to build on the work on etic and emic ethnography (Morris *et al.*, 1999) to multisited ethnography to reflect on multisitedness as an empirical theme. Thereby, one would not only reflect on the multisited

nature of fieldwork as experienced by the researcher—the classic methodological perspective—but also on the multisited nature as experienced by research participants, whose workplaces are also often flexible, malleable and contingent to the nature of their work.

We seek inspiration from the etic–emic distinction to elaborate on multisitedness as an empirical theme. From the etic point of view, multisitedness is defined by the researcher and is grounded in directly observable behavior. As Marvin Harris (1968) portrays it: "Etic statements depend upon phenomenal distinctions judged appropriate by the community of scientific observers" (p. 575). The etic perspective aims to describe differences across cultures in terms of a general, external standard (Morris *et al.*, 1999). For example, when studying cultural practices from the etic perspective, the researcher adopts their own point of view as a reference point to understand and make sense of research participants' behavior intending to compare and contrast the behavior from, e.g. two communities with each other. The etic perspective may focus on social practices—or explanations of those social practices—that cultural insiders may not deem relevant to their behavior (Bourdieu, 1984). The etic perspective is, therefore, referred to as the outside or external perspective of social studies. In contrast, describing a workplace through an emic perspective on multisitedness, which we define as an account or a belief of multisitedness in terms meaningful to the insiders' point of view. In the emic perspective, the central focus of reflection and discussion is not to compare and contrast between research communities; instead, the field-worker strives to capture and represent the diverse, multisited experiences of research participants and their work from within the community. The emic perspective stems from the work of Malinowski (1922, 1967) who introduced longitudinal field research as his preferred data collection method. He argued that for a researcher to make sense of practices by research participants, one has to longitudinally study, follow and live within the community with the intention of understanding such practices from within. Malinowski argued (1922): "The final goal, of which an ethnographer should never lose sight. This goal is briefly to grasp the native's point of view, his relation to life, to realize his vision of his world" (p. 25). The emic perspective represents the knowledge and interpretations existing within a culture, directed by local custom, meaning and belief (Morris *et al.*, 1999) and best described in terms that fit the reference framework of natives to the culture (Malinowski, 1967).

When addressing the concept of the etic–emic distinction, it is important to recognize the critical scrutiny and criticisms that have surrounded the concept since its inception in the early 1980s (Verver and Koning, 2023). For instance, Harris (1976) argued that since culture is made up of rules communicated via language, and this language is deeply shaped by the culture itself, it is extremely difficult to achieve a true insider's understanding (an emic perspective) of that culture. According to Harris, this perspective is inadequate for comprehending the linguistic nuances of a native speaker's meaning-making. This classic critique of the etic–emic debate can also be found in a significant issue discussed in the field of social scientific inquiry, as explored by Fay (1996) in his book. Fay opens a chapter by posing the question: "Does it take one to know one?" Answering such a profound question is not straightforward, and Fay suggests that the usefulness of these concepts depends on the researcher's goals and their ontological and epistemological stances.

In this research, the goal of introducing the etic–emic distinction is not to discuss the affordances and limitations inherent to the concept (see, e.g. Harris, 1976; Verver and Koning, 2023). Rather, we aim to extend the perspective of multisitedness beyond conceptualizations as a methodological theme. Researchers can describe multisitedness by adopting an etic perspective to compare and contrast various aspects of the subject of inquiry in terms of academic "outsider" concepts, and they can use the emic perspective to make sense of this multisitedness from the viewpoint of the subject of inquiry. We argue not for the etic over the emic or the emic over etic descriptions but rather emphasize the complementary contribution of both perspectives to our understanding of multisitedness (Morris *et al.*, 1999). With this work,

we aim to inspire ethnographers to not just think of multisitedness as a methodological theme but also spotlight multisitedness as an empirical theme covered by the etic and emic distinction.

To illustrate the fruitfulness of such a complementary approach between etic and emic multisited ethnography, we draw on the empirical case of entrepreneurial workplaces of four Mennonite communities in Belize, a divergent religious group. Our intention for this research project was originally to understand how various Mennonite communities, traditionally depicted as closed-off communities, respond similarly or differently to the paradoxical practice of entrepreneurial activities, which is the source of monetary income for the Mennonites but also necessitates contact with the outside world. The study of entrepreneurial activities among the four different Mennonite communities required us to adopt a multisited ethnographic approach as the entrepreneurial activities by the actors are not confined to predetermined, isolatable places but were rather constituted and characterized by an emergent and dynamic social nature. Thereby, we realized, after the data were collected, that besides our experiences as field-workers who followed these entrepreneurs to various places of work and entrepreneurship, our story should also revolve around the experiences and perspectives of the actors working and trading in these different places. As such, after diving into the literature on multisited fieldwork and emic–etic ethnography, we found inspiration in the conceptualization of multisitedness not just as a methodological theme but also as an empirical theme, which allows for the acknowledgment of the dynamic nature of the very workplaces we aim to study as following field-workers.

Our story progresses as follows: We start by introducing the empirical setting of our study comprising four Mennonite communities in Belize, including a brief historical account of the different communities. Second, we reflect on multisited fieldwork from a methodological perspective, specifically emphasizing access negotiations with the diverse communities and workplaces where entrepreneurial activities occur. Third, we elaborate an etic perspective on multisited Mennonite entrepreneurship, zooming in on similarities and differences across the various communities with respect to entrepreneurial activities, technology use and use of energy. We conclude with an emic perspective on multisited Mennonite entrepreneurship in which we enrich the etic observations with a more nuanced and detailed everyday experience of entrepreneurship in one Mennonite community: "the Old Order Mennonite community," in terms such as profit-making, contacting other Mennonite communities and the outside world.

Four Mennonite communities in Belize

Mennonites, a religious group with roots in the Anabaptist movement, rebelled against the Protestant and Catholic churches in Northern Western Europe in the 16th century. The Mennonites believe in adult baptism, lay ministry, nonresistance and the separation of Church and government. Therefore, they rejected the prohibition of taking oaths and that one should not vote during governmental elections and so they rejected the authority of a civil/religious government (Ryman, 2004). Mennonites live preferably in small communities constituted of a single family or multiple families within close-knit settlements. They exhibit a strong in-group orientation and limit interaction with the world outside of the community to a minimum (Loewen, 1993). Mennonites mostly rely on farming for the sourcing of food and entrepreneurial activities for monetary income.

Despite the word "Mennonite" insinuating the existence of an integrated community, Mennonites are actually schismatized in various denominations rooted in different interpretations of the Holy Script (Anderson, 2013; Redekop, 1989), resulting in the existence of multiple Mennonite communities. In this paper, we focus on four different Mennonite communities in Belize with a focus on the similarities and differences in coping with entrepreneurial activities, which despite the strong in-group orientation and preference for separation from the world (Loewen, 1993), paradoxically require Mennonite communities

to open up and trade with the outside world. We look at these various coping strategies in four Mennonite communities: "the EMMC Mennonites," "the Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites," "the Old Colony Mennonites" and the "Old Order Hoover Mennonites." Each of these communities has its own traditions, practices, household sizes and execution of entrepreneurial activities, which are distinctively different from each other (Verver *et al.*, 2020). Before diving into the characterizing differences among these Mennonite communities, we first outline a brief historical overview of the Mennonite communities of Belize to explain how the different communities established and relate to each other.

The initial group of Mennonite migrants arrived in Belize back in 1958. These migrants share Dutch, Prussian and Russian roots and the language of "Plautdietsch" but comprised two distinctive communities—the Old Colony and the Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites (Everitt, 1983; Penner *et al.*, 2008; Sawatzky, 1971). The Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites went on to establish themselves in the Cayo District, located in Spanish Lookout in the western part of Belize. The Old Colony Mennonites settled in Blue Creek and Shipyard, located in the northwestern region of the Orange Walk District. Upon arriving in Blue Creek and Shipyard, the Old Colony Mennonites went through a division between progressive and conservative groups (Kraybill, 2010), which resulted in the formation of two distinct groups—the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference (EMMC) and a denomination that still refers to itself as Old Colony (Kok and Roessingh, 2013). The progressive EMMC group settled in Blue Creek, while families of the conservative Old Colony community left Blue Creek and moved to Shipyard. Over the years other Old Colony settlements, spread across the north-western region of Belize, known as the Orange Walk district. The fourth community comprised later arrivals, between 1966 and 1968, which were the Old Order Mennonites (Roessingh and Bovenberg, 2018). Influenced heavily by the Amish (Hoover, 2018), the Old Order Mennonites share South German and Swiss lineage. We will describe the differences among the four Mennonite communities in more depth. We begin with the most progressive denomination, the EMMC, then discuss the Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites, who can be perceived as moderately modern, and conclude with the conservative communities of the Old Colony Mennonites and the Old Order Hoover Mennonites. Table 1 schematically presents an overview of the similarities and differences between these discussed Mennonite communities below.

The EMMC Mennonites

The road to the EMMC Mennonites settlement is rather bumpy and dusty in the dry season and muddy in the rainy season, but upon entering the settlement, the roads are excellent. If one looks at the kind of houses they live in, one would speculate that it is a wealthy area, somewhere in a rich suburb. Despite the isolated location of the settlement, the entrepreneurs are all over the country with their products. In the EMMC Church, seating arrangements are designed so that families are mixed, sitting among each other rather than in separate groups. The Church members sing modern religious hymns in English guided by modern musical instruments (Smits, 2007; Zandbergen, 2018). The average household size in the EMMC Mennonite community consists of 3.7 members, which is relatively small in comparison to other Mennonite communities in Belize (Roessingh and Bovenberg, 2018). In a stereotyped way, for example, how tourists would look at the Mennonites in Belize, the EMMC Mennonite would not appeal to that image. They do not distinguish themselves with traditional Mennonite clothing such as the Old Colony and Old Order Hoover women and men and the Kleine Gemeinde women are wearing.

The Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites

Visitors to the Kleine Gemeinde community have the choice of three roads to enter the settlement: two very bumpy and dusty unpaved roads in the dry season (December until May),

Table 1.
Overview Mennonite communities in Belize

	EMMC Mennonites		Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites		Old Colony Mennonites		Old Order Hoover Mennonites	
Settlement	Blue Creek, Orange walk District		Spanish lookout, Cayo District		Shipyard, Orange walk District		Springfield, Cayo District	
Tradition	Modern/Progressive		Modernish/Average		Traditional/conservative		Traditional/Conservative	
Family size	Moderate: 3.7 members		Moderate: 4.7 members		Large: 5.9 members		Large: 7.0 members	
Dress	Men: Caps, jeans and not to colorful shirts or lumberjack-shirts and work boots	Women: No headcover or sometimes a cap and ordinary clothing, could be jeans but also dresses, sneakers, or sandals	Men: Caps, jeans and solid colored or lumberjack-shirts and work boots	Women: Black headscarf, plain-colored short-sleeves dresses with tiny motifs which end under the knee, sneakers, or sandals	Men: Panama hat, black or brown trousers with suspender, white or light blue shirts and work boots	Women: Black or white headscarf topped with a white-brimmed straw hat with a colored ribbon, on Sunday a bonnet, dark-colored long-sleeved, knee-length high-neck dresses sneakers, or sandals or barefoot	Men: Brimmed straw hats, black or blue trousers with suspenders, green, blue, or gray, brown shirt and work boots or barefoot	Women: Black apron or sometimes a black headscarf, long-sleeves plain, brown, green, blue, or gray blue dresses which fall until the ankle, sandals or barefoot
Descent	Dutch-North German, Russia, Canada		Dutch-North German, Russia, Canada, Mexico		Dutch-North German, Russia, Canada, Mexico		Combination of Swiss-South German and Dutch-North German, Russia, Canada, USA, Mexico	
Gender norms	husband is responsible for the wellbeing of the household; the position of the women is sifting slowly to more equality		husband is responsible for the wellbeing of the household; the position of the women is still based on her role as housewife		Husband has a very dominant position and is leader in the household, men have no beards		Husband is making the decisions and are the leader in the household	
Social norms	Adult baptism, lay ministry, non-resistance, and the separation of Church and government Norms based on the religious space which the Church permits. EMMC seems rather liberal, although it is expected that the Church rules are guiding. Church leaders Pastors or Ministers		Adult baptism, lay ministry, non-resistance, and the separation of Church and government. Norms are based on the religious space which the Church permits. The Church rules are more or less still based on the traditional engagements: men and women are sitting separated in the Church		Adult baptism, lay ministry, non-resistance, and the separation of Church and government. Norms are based on the religious space which the local leadership of the Church ("Lehrdienst") permits. The local leadership is dominant and in control, the Bishop, Ministers, and Deacon prescribe the rules, excommunication is still common		Adult baptism, lay ministry, non-resistance, and the separation of Church and government Norms are based on the religious space which the Church permits. The Church leaders (the Bishop, Ministers, and Deacons) are responsible for realization of the Church rules, excommunication is still possible	

Source(s): Authors' work

but muddy and rather challenging to drive in the rainy season. One of the two unpaved roads crosses the Belize River by a hand-cranked ferry. These roads are the shortest option when driving out from San Ignacio. The third road, which crossroad is further away from San Ignacio, is paved all the way. The road was constructed and paid for by the settlement road committee, without input from the Belizean government. In their religious faith, the Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites are stricter than the EMMC Mennonites. For example, in church, you will see men sitting on the left side and women on the right side on the wooden benches. Hymns are sung in High German without music (Roessingh and Schoonderwoerd, 2005). The women's attire consists of plain-colored short-sleeved dresses with black headcovers. In many cases, the dresses may have modest motifs like tiny flowers. Men wear either dark trousers or blue jeans accompanied by solid-colored shirts or lumberjack shirts and caps. The household size in a Kleine Gemeinde family exists of 4.7 members, which is more in comparison with the EMMC household size but less if we compare this average size with the households of the conservative/traditional Mennonite communities in Belize (Roessingh and Bovenberg, 2018).

The Old Colony Mennonites

The road to this community is unpaved making it in the dry season dusty and muddy in the rainy season. Much traffic is passing through because the road also connects the nearby town with the settlement of the EMMC. The Old Colony is a conservative denomination of the Mennonite Church. In these communities, a strict dress code applies. Men wear black or brown overalls or black trousers with suspenders/braces and with white or light blue shirts combined with a Panama hat or sometimes a cap. Women wear dark-colored long-sleeved, high-neck dresses which end under the knee. As headcover, the married women wear black or unmarried women white kerchiefs topped with a white wide-brimmed straw hat. On Sundays, the women mostly wear a bonnet. The Church rules are strict. Men and women enter the meetinghouse (church) through different doors and sit on distinct sides of the church. Their seating hierarchy is based on strict rules, with older people in the front seats and younger ones in the back. Children until thirteen are not allowed in the Church as they are still in the Old Colony school in the settlement (Plasil, 2009). The leadership of the Church (Lehrdienst) consists of several Ministers (Prediger), the Bishop (Aeltester) and Deacons (Vorsteher), who are all in control over the community (Hedberg, 2007). The community is grounded in principles of brotherhood and equality before God, which results in a strong hierarchical system in which everybody is aware of their corresponding place (Plasil, 2009). The average household size of the Old Colony Mennonites in Belize consists of 5.9 members (Roessingh and Bovenberg, 2018).

The Old Order Hoover Mennonites

The road leading to the Old Order Hoover colony branches off of the Hummingbird Highway, which runs from Belmopan, the capital of Belize to Dangriga. The road is unpaved and very bumpy, and like the other unpaved roads dusty in the dry season, and muddy in the rainy season, which makes it very difficult to enter the community. The road lurches through the community until it stops at the last farm where the jungle arises (Roessingh and Bovenberg, 2018). The Old Order Hoover Mennonites are very traditional in their script interpretation and are seen by the outside world as a conservative Mennonite community. The Old Order Hoover Mennonite Church also has a strict hierarchy of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons, like the Old Colony Mennonites. However, the system seems more open to contact with outsiders. Men wear blue or dark trousers with suspenders/braces, green, blue or gray-brown shirts and brimmed straw hats. The Hoover Mennonites men have, unlike the EMMC, Kleine Gemeinde and Old Colony Mennonites, beards. The women wear long-sleeved dresses that fall until the ankle. Sometimes, the dress is combined with an apron. The colors can be brown, green, blue

or gray blue. As headcovers, the women wear black bonnets or sometimes black headcovers. In comparison to the other Mennonite communities in Belize, the households, with an average of 7.0 members in one household, are large. Among the Old Order Hoover Mennonites, a large family is conceived as a blessing from the Lord (Lentjes, 2004).

Contemplating the forgoing, it becomes apparent that the communities in Belize, despite being part of the same religious group, are separated along lines of variation and differences.The discrepancies between the Mennonite communities manifest in various aspects, including the organization of church services, household sizes, attendance at divine worship, dress codes, and social norms. These differences generate severe challenges within the Mennonite communities themselves. For example, the difference in household size has far-reaching consequences for the possibility of getting land access for the next generation within Mennonite communities. Communities with larger households with, e.g. 10–14 children need to divide the same land size as households with fewer children.

Multisitedness as a method

How do we explain the differences between these four Mennonite communities? In our research, which started in 2002, we focused on these four different Mennonite communities in various multisited places: the Orange Walk District (Blue Creek and Shipyard) and the Cayo District (Spanish Lookout and Springfield). By using multisited ethnography (Marcus, 1995; Hannerz, 2003), this study aims to understand how Mennonites navigate their in-group orientation and separation from the world preference (Loewen, 1993) while engaging in entrepreneurial activities that require interaction with the outside world. The multisited methodology allows us to analyze and understand how small-scale actions, like entrepreneurial practices, are influenced by the similarities and differences among the four Mennonite communities included in our study (Greenman, 2013). We will delve into the entrepreneurial differences in the upcoming section, where we discuss both outsider (etic) and insider (emic) perspectives on multisited entrepreneurship. In this section, we will explore the impact of multisitedness as a methodological theme, particularly in the process of gaining access for our study. This pertinent issue affects multisited projects since access to one site does not translate the access to others (Van Duijn, 2020), which shows the segmented nature of fields (Hannerz, 2010). Our fieldwork encountered difficulties during these access negotiations, as we had to engage with four heterogeneous Mennonite communities, which are characterized by an in-group orientation and preference for separation from the world (Loewen, 1993) and, correspondingly, situated in physically isolated places of Belize.

The data collection was conducted through ethnographic fieldwork by the second author in combination with a team of thirteen master students. These students conducted fieldwork in one of the four Mennonite communities, participating and gathering in-depth data on communal and entrepreneurship life. Their research consisted of periods of multisited and also of single-sited fieldwork among the four Mennonite communities over a period of several years (Verver *et al.*, 2020). The second author shifted between the different communities to coordinate and supervise the data collection and to establish contact with each member of the data collection team.

Access negotiation commenced by contacting a Minister (a religious leader) within the Kleine Gemeinde Mennonite Church in Spanish Lookout to apply for an opportunity for a student to stay in their community for four months. This approach was adopted as Spanish Lookout is conceivably more open to outsiders than the more conservative Mennonite communities. After the Minister had consulted with his congregation, and fellow Church members, he expressed the willingness to host the student in the community if this student was willing to write a letter to his Church, which he would read aloud to the members at one of the divine services and ask the community if they would raise objections. The Church members did not have any objections, thus enabling us to proceed with our research in the community.

The second community we were interested in conducting our multisided research was the more conservative and traditional Old Order Hoover Mennonite community in Springfield. The second author engaged in a coincidental meeting with the Deacon of the Old Order Hoover community on a public bus from Belmopan to Dangriga. After some small talk about the origins of the second author (The Netherlands), which must have impressed the Deacon as the Anabaptist Reformer Menno Simons, who founded the Mennonites, originated from the same country. In response, the Deacon introduced himself as being the community' Deacon. The first contact had been laid successfully as later, during a second unforeseen encounter on the market of Belmopan, the capital of Belize, the Deacon offered his help in any way possible. This offer resulted in a talk about doing research in his community. The Deacon promised to take the matter up with the Bishop, the Ministers and his fellow Church members in The Old Order Hoover Mennonite community. But first, the student, who wanted to study the corresponding Mennonite community, and the second author had to write the Deacon a letter to apply for a possibility to stay within the community for four months. We include a part of the letter we sent to the Deacon on May 22, 2002, which goes as follows:

> Although it is some time ago, I hope that you still remember me and our two meetings. The first was in the James Bus [one of the public bus companies in Belize]. The second time we saw each other was in Belmopan on the market, just before I was leaving the country to go back to the Netherlands. I remember that you told me that you had been thinking about our discussion on the bus and when we would meet again. Well, I will be back in Belize in November 2002, and I would like to visit you in Springfield. But before I will arrive in Belize there will be a student arriving in Belize in September 2002. My question is whether she can stay in your community and besides her presence and participation, like working, could do her research. As we discussed on the market in Belmopan, she is aware of your request to use no tape-recorded and no cameras and she will be properly dressed. This is no problem at all, and I am sure you will be very satisfied with the behaviour of this student. I have included a letter from this student. If you have any questions or doubts, please write me and I will answer you as soon as possible. Anyway, I would appreciate it if you would write me back to tell me if you and your congregation are willing to let her stay in your community and if I can visit you in November.

After a while, the Deacon sent a letter in return that they would agree if the student wrote an additional introductory letter to the community, in which she would introduce herself, including matters such as which religion she had, whether she was married or not, and other private information. The access to the community of Old Order Hoover was based on two coincidental meetings, luck and "the being there quality" which "is about conveying qualities of intense familiarity with the subjects and their ways" (Bate, 1997, p. 1163) of living their traditional life in separation from the world and finally showing a kind of recognizable attitude. The access negotiation process revealed how relationships among and between the various Mennonite communities are shaped and connected through kinship and friendship ties despite the desire and seeming separation from the world of each corresponding community. We highlight this point as the connections between the various Mennonite communities might appear vast at face value. However, these linkages and connections between the communities are rooted in more complex networks, and a researcher must skillfully navigate these relationships to successfully gain access to all pertinent areas of investigation. Our depiction of access negotiations with the Mennonite communities underscores the substantial time, effort and meticulous planning required to establish multisided research sites within such complex intertwined communities, while effectively addressing uncertainties about whether one will be able to access the community of interest. For example, our engagement with the Old Order Mennonite community through letter exchanges was a tedious process rife with uncertainty about gaining research authorization. However, these correspondences sustained the only opportunity to engage in long-distance connections with key individuals within the community, harmonizing with their traditional worldview and, more practically, lack of internet access.

Upon securing two students in distinct Mennonite communities—one modern and the other conservative—we initiated a "scanning" phase for additional research opportunities in the remaining two communities: the EMMC Mennonites of Blue Creek and the Old Colony Mennonites of Shipyard. Correspondingly, we deployed a snowball sampling approach, which Robson (2011) describes as: "the researcher identifies one or more individuals from the population of interest. After they have been interviewed, they are used as informants to identify other members of the population, who are themselves used as informants, and so on." (p. 275). The snowball sampling strategy provided a crucial advantage to us. For example, within the Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites community, a Minister played a central role in our snowball strategy. He facilitated connections with EMMC Mennonites in another part of Belize, who held connections with an excommunicated Mennonite residing in the Old Colony settlement. This excommunicated individual was associated with the Kleine Gemeinde community in Blue Creek while owning a farm in Shipyard, belonging to the Old Colony. This example underscores snowball sampling's value in access negotiations for multisided research among remote and conservative communities, which opened a vista for us to connect with the Old Colony Mennonites in Shipyard. Therefore, the Kleine Gemeinde community emerged as a crucial hub interlinking these diverse communities.

After successfully negotiating initial access, the students had to integrate into their respective communities and negotiate access to the workplaces where entrepreneurship takes place, getting involved in their own snowball processes within these communities, which we refer to as the secondary snowball sampling processes. These processes involved negotiating access within each community, with a focus on entrepreneurs, allowing the students to expand their network within their assigned community along the lines of the research scope. In Shipyard, among the Old Colony Mennonites, our student was welcomed with suspicion. While entrepreneurs within the community were willing to engage with the student, deep-rooted distrust caused by the prevailing social system of insecurity and cultural norms posed hurdles. This social system is imposed by the strict local leadership of the Church (referred to as "Lehrdienst"). The Old Colony Mennonites, like other Mennonite communities, posit a strong desire for separation from the world. Therefore, they are afraid their stories might gain too much attention or that their stories might be misinterpreted by worldly people, for example, by the student who is an outsider to the community. Similar barriers existed in Spanish Lookout among the Kleine Gemeinde and in Blue Creek among the EMMC Mennonites. Overcoming these barriers involved time and relationship-building, often leveraging familial and friendship connections. The student was able to engage with multiple entrepreneurs within the community and observe their entrepreneurial activities, such as the local farmer, who was simultaneously a, by fellow community members, a well-respected butcher owning his own slaughterhouse. During the observations, the student found out that despite the forbidden use of mobile phones or driving trucks with combustion engines was unthinkable because of the strict and fairly conservative ideals of the Old Colony community, the entrepreneur was still able to serve a substantial number of customers in the country Belize. He achieved this with the help of an outsider (not a member of the Old Colony Mennonite), who used a mobile phone to take customer orders, communicate these to the butcher and help distribute the meat all over the country with a truck (Roessingh and Bovenberg, 2016). This example of the Old Order Mennonite entrepreneur illustrates a coping mechanism by the Mennonite to deal with the paradox of being a successful entrepreneur while also adhering to the dominant in-group orientation and desire for separation from the world (Loewen, 1993). In Springfield, among the Old Order Hoover Mennonites, research hinged on our connection with the Deacon. Despite initial resistance by people of the community that resulted in situational ignorance, interview refusals and delays, or exclusion of the researcher from communal activities, which impeded the research, our student persevered, gaining acceptance by keeping an open attitude for the community, showing

deep interest in their cultural norms and contributing through diligent work. This accomplishment paved the way for the student and second author to delve deeper into the community's entrepreneurial activities.

While our research design was committed to one student doing research in a dedicated Mennonite community, we soon found out that while students engaged in secondary snowball sampling, which broadened their respective networks within one of the Mennonite communities, unexpected opportunities arose to study a different Mennonite community, which was originally assigned to another student. These opportunities occurred through interactions such as entrepreneurs from one community engaging in trade with members of another Mennonite community or through kinship ties. These interactions exposed the students to each other's research sites, revealing a complex and interconnected web of relationships within and between Mennonite communities, defying the anticipated division of research sites.

In summary, our experiences with multisitedness from a methodological theme show how we were able to include four research sites, comprising four different Mennonite communities, which were separate entities that still interacted with each other. Members of our research team integrated into these communities, facilitating an in-depth study of the contrasting entrepreneurial undertakings within each Mennonite group, which we elaborate on in the following sections.

An etic perspective on multisited Mennonite entrepreneurship

Up to this point in the paper, we adopted the classic understanding of multisitedness, portraying it as a methodological theme. In this paper, we wish to describe multisitedness also as an empirical theme that shows how research participants can also experience their work to be scattered and multisited, providing a connotation for entrepreneurs of "being there. . ., and there. . ., and there!" (Hannerz, 2003, p. 201) while performing their everyday work. The starting point of describing multisitedness as an empirical theme begins with our etic analysis of entrepreneurship among the four Mennonite groups, which we introduced earlier. In this etic analysis, we focus on comparing and contrasting three themes related to entrepreneurship: the various entrepreneurial activities, the use of technology and the electricity use. The communities differ on these themes because of different expertise in entrepreneurial activities and different allowances of technology use and energy use driven by their interpretations of the Holy Script. Table 2 provides a comprehensive overview of the similarities and differences in entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurial activities in all four Mennonite communities primarily revolve around agriculture and farming, with a strong emphasis on cultivating crops and raising livestock. However, these communities differ significantly in their approaches to farming and other entrepreneurial endeavors. For instance, the EMMC Mennonites and Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites are known for their corporations. They operate shopping centers, computer stores, gift shops and even a prominent ice cream factory known for producing some of Belize's finest ice cream. These large businesses provide employment opportunities to members of their own communities, Mennonites from other communities and outsiders (non-Mennonites). They also have a vast range of repair and maintenance shops because of their use of transport vehicles and a vibrant construction industry. The EMMC Mennonites have construction contracts to build public infrastructure such as the airport but also road maintenance. The EMMC community has positioned themselves as relatively modern entrepreneurs, engaging in a diverse range of entrepreneurial activities, including the oil and gas industry and an insurance company. On the other hand, the Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites have a more limited set of entrepreneurial activities, primarily focusing on producing and selling dairy products in modern-looking facilities. In contrast, the entrepreneurial activities

	EMMC Mennonites	Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites	Old Colony Mennonites	Old Order Hoover Mennonites
Type of entrepreneurial activities	*Agriculture and Farming* Cattle, poultry, rice, corn, grain, sorghum, beans, citrus, papaya's, slaughterhouses, hatcheries	*Agriculture and Farming* Cattle, poultry, hatcheries, dairies, cheese, ice cream, rice, corn, grain, sorghum, beans	*Agriculture and Farming* Horse trade, cattle, hogs, poultry, slaughterhouses, feed mills, sorghum, beans, corn, rice soya beans, peas	*Agriculture and Farming* Horses trade, cattle, hogs, poultry, guinea-pigs, rabbits, slaughterhouse, corn, melon, watermelons, potatoes, peanuts, peppers, tomatoes, salad, Chinese cabbage, fruit trees, plants and forest trees, cheese, honey, jarred vegetables or fruit in jars
	Agricultural Support Feed mills, crop dusting, farm-machinery and parts, farm supplies	*Agricultural Support* Feed mills, Farm-machinery, and parts	*Agricultural Support* Feed mills, sawmill	*Agricultural Support* Feed mills, sawmill
	Handicrafts and Artisanal Products Quilts, sewing of cloth	*Handicrafts and Artisanal Products* Furniture, sewing of clothing	*Handicrafts and Artisanal Products* Furniture, handcraft of movable slats, wooden furniture	*Handicrafts and Artisanal Products* Handcraft of movable slats, dog leashes
	Retail and Shopping Shopping center, computer store	*Retail and Shopping* Shopping center, computer store, bookstore, gift shop, Ice cream shop	*Retail and Shopping* Hardware store	*Retail and Shopping* Marketplace, fabric store
	Hardware Construction, real estate, home builders, construction	*Hardware* Home builders	*Hardware* Home builders	
	Transportation and maintenance Auto sales and repair, tire shops, mechanic shop	*Transportation and maintenance* Auto sales and repair, Tire shops	*Transportation and maintenance* Mechanics	
	Energy and Resources Oil and gas company, Electricians	*Energy and Resources* Electricians	*Energy and Resources* Electricians	
	Financial Services Insurance			

(*continued*)

Table 2.
Overview Mennonite entrepreneurship, use of technology and use of energy

	EMMC Mennonites	Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites	Old Colony Mennonites	Old Order Hoover Mennonites
Use of technology	Agricultural machinery, tractors, and harvesters with pneumatic tires. Use of trucks, automobiles, pickups, ATVs. Crop dusting with airplanes. Computers	Agricultural machinery, tractors, and harvesters with pneumatic tires. Use of automobiles, trucks, pickups, ATVs. Computers	Agricultural machinery, tractors and harvesters with iron wheels, horse drawn wagons or buggies with pneumatic tires. No automobiles and equipment which is related to the modern world	Machinery drawn or activated by ox or horsepower, sometimes with pneumatic tires. No automobiles and equipment which is related to the modern world
Use of energy	Combustion engines, grid electricity, wind, and solar energy	Combustion engines, grid electricity, wind, and solar energy	Benzine-driven generators (before 7 p.m.), horsepower, wind, and solar energy	Horsepower and wind energy

Table 2.

Source(s): Authors' work

of the Old Colony Mennonites and Old Order Hoover Mennonites are considerably more traditional, relying more heavily on agriculture and farming compared to the other two Mennonite communities. The Old Colony specializes in cattle breeding, primarily focusing on meat production, while the Old Order Hoover Mennonites concentrate on agriculture, particularly the cultivation of vegetables and fruits. Table 2 details the specific expertise of each of the Mennonite communities in terms of produced products and services provided. The entrepreneurial activities undertaken by these two communities pose greater challenges due to their more traditional and conservative approach to technology and use of energy, which are vital factors in achieving entrepreneurial success, making it more challenging for the Old Colony Mennonites and Old Order Hoover Mennonites to thrive in this regard.

The utilization of technology plays a pivotal role in driving entrepreneurial endeavors, and it distinctly highlights the disparities among the four Mennonite communities. Notably, the EMMC Mennonites and Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites demonstrate a proactive approach by seamlessly integrating modern technology into their business operations. They employ tools such as computers, mobile phones and landline telephones to efficiently coordinate, control and manage their affairs. For instance, the EMMC Mennonites efficiently coordinate orders and deliveries for their shopping centers through digital networks, despite being geographically dispersed. Moreover, these communities employ modern agricultural machinery, including tractors and harvesters. In the case of the EMMC community, they even deploy crop-dusting planes for tasks such as insecticide application. Modern-looking trucks, ATVs, pickups and automobiles, all equipped with combustion engines, facilitate the transportation of goods, with community members acting both as owners and operators. This technological infrastructure empowers these communities to conduct entrepreneurial activities on a large scale, even in remote areas. In contrast, the Old Colony Mennonites and Old Order Hoover Mennonites adhere to a more conservative interpretation of their religious beliefs. The members of these communities have a conservative interpretation of the Holy Script. They refrain from using machinery and transportation with combustion engines in combination with pneumatic tires as these are related to the modern world. Old Order Hoover Mennonites, being more conservative than the Old Colony Mennonites, do not use combustion engines at all and only use horses as a power source to work the land. Pneumatic

tires are allowed in such instances, and as such, horse-drawn buggies are frequently spotted with pneumatic tires in the community. Furthermore, merchants within both communities are forbidden to use trucks, vans or automobiles for transporting their goods and produce. However, these prohibitions do not translate into a complete rejection of modern technology among the two more conservative communities. In practice, Mennonite entrepreneurs establish partnerships with outsiders who own telephones and pneumatic-tire vehicles, such as those belonging to the EMMC and Kleine Gemeinde Mennonite communities. Consequently, it is not uncommon for Old Colony Mennonites, who, for instance, operate small furniture factories, to rent vans and hire external drivers to transport their merchandise to various marketplaces. This furniture is subsequently sold during market days in locations such as Belmopan, Orange Walk and even Belize City.

Electricity usage also varies among the four Mennonite communities in Belize. The EMMC and Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites use a combination of grid, wind and solar power to provide electricity. In addition, their vehicles and machinery are driven by combustion engines with pneumatic tires. Members of the Old Colony Mennonites do not use grid energy. Instead, they rely on benzine-driven generators to produce their own electricity, making them independent from the state-owned grid system. However, after 7 PM, local Church rules require shutting down generators, so Old Colony Mennonites use oil lamps for light. Their vehicles and machinery are also driven by combustion engines but have iron wheels instead of pneumatic tires. The Old Order Hoover Mennonites stand out as the most traditional in their use of energy. They abstain from using grid electricity or generators entirely, relying solely on small wind-propelled mills for low-voltage power. They also exclusively use manual or animal-driven power sources, avoiding combustion engines. The Old Order Hoover Mennonites, like the Old Colony Mennonites, illuminate their homes with oil lamps.

This etic analysis of multisited entrepreneurship enabled us to compare and contrast the four Mennonite communities in terms of their entrepreneurial activities, their use of technology and their use of energy. These terms could be referred to as academic "outsider" concepts as the etic analysis uses terms relevant to researchers' perspectives and needs. We showed that the Mennonites in Belize have established themselves as successful farmers, traders and entrepreneurs, despite distinctive approaches. Besides the individual businesses in the various Mennonite settlements themselves, they developed workplaces based on communal entrepreneurship and ownership, or in other words, corporations. The corporations owned by the EMMC Mennonites and Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites, and to a lesser extent the businesses of the Old Colony Mennonites, offer job opportunities to people outside of the community, whereas the Old Order Hoover Mennonites generally do not provide employment opportunities. However, the Old Order Hoover Mennonites offered themselves as workers to the Kleine Gemeinde community to work in their feed mills. In another instance, the EMMC Mennonites, who operated a papaya farm and a packing warehouse, employed Old Colony Mennonites from a neighboring community. These workers were responsible for cultivating the papaya trees and the land, as well as for cleaning and packaging the papayas in the factory in preparation for shipment (Roessingh and Smits, 2010). One reason for hiring Old Colony Mennonites is that they are used to working with their hands and besides that "we rather work with brothers than with others." So even if they are not from the same denomination, Mennonites are more likely to trust other Mennonites than other kind of outsiders. Dana and Dana (2010) describe this kind of trade organization as "a vehicle for collective entrepreneurship where individual skills are integrated into a group and the team's collective capacity to innovate becomes greater than the sum of its parts" (p. 256).

Shaped by their different stances on technology and energy use, as well as their levels of interaction with the outside world, Mennonite communities exhibit a diverse array of workplaces. The more progressive Mennonite communities, such as the EMMC and Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites, have embraced more modern practices. These communities have

established sizable enterprises, including shopping malls, hardware stores and car dealerships. Plate 1 visually depicts an example of an EMMC corporation which sells car tires and other car-related hardware. Plate 2 illustrates the ice cream factory run by Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites. Such large-scale operations often require more labor than the Mennonite community can supply internally, leading these businesses to hire employees originating outside the Mennonite community. In stark contrast, the more conservative groups, such as the Old Colony Mennonites and Old Order Hoover Mennonites, have workplaces that reflect their stringent limits on external interaction and their minimal use of technology and limited use of energy. Their entrepreneurial efforts are typically more modest and localized. They tend to sell their produce directly to consumers through small roadside stands or at local markets, maintaining a close-knit community structure and limiting their engagement with the outside world. The Old Colony Mennonites, known for their handicraft and furniture-making skills, sell their produce mainly on marketplaces as depicted by Plate 3. Plate 4 shows how entrepreneurs within the Old Order Hoover Mennonite community transport their products to the market by horse and buggy. The variance in workplaces among the diverse communities illustrates the impact of religious and cultural beliefs on entrepreneurial activities within and across the Mennonite communities. Each group balances their values with their economic practices in ways ranging from expansive commercial ventures to small-scale local trade centers. However, the question of how Mennonite entrepreneurs within communities experience the fragmented and multisited workplaces within one community and how they developed over time remain unanswered in our etic analysis. Therefore, we turn to an emic analysis of multisited entrepreneurship in the next section.

An emic perspective on multisited Old Order Hoover Mennonite entrepreneurship

Our paper has illustrated many fragments of four different Mennonite communities in Belize. We showed differences among these various Mennonite communities in their interpretations

Plate 1.
Corporation selling care tires owned by the EMMC Mennonites

Source(s): Authors' work

Source(s): Authors' work

Plate 2.
Famous diary factory selling the best ice cream in Belize owned by the Kleine Gemeinde Mennonites

Source(s): Authors' work

Plate 3.
Old Colony Mennonite craftsman making furniture at the Belmopan market

of the Holy Script, household sizes and worldview. We also showed an etic analysis of the multisited entrepreneurship to compare and contrast the various communities in academic "outsider" terms, such as the Mennonites' entrepreneurial activities, technology use and energy use. In this section, we conduct an emic analysis within one particular Mennonite community, the Old Order Hoover Mennonites from Springfield, to elaborate on their experiences of work being scattered and happening in various places around the settlement, causing their entrepreneurship to be truly multisited. The community is known for their

Plate 4.
An Old Order Hoover Mennonite transporting products to the local market

Source(s): Authors' work

conservative beliefs and traditional interpretation of the Holy Script. For instance, they mostly rely on horses and buggies for transportation as they are not allowed to drive vehicles with pneumatic tires or combustion engines. Exploring these entrepreneurial multisited workplaces from an emic perspective shows how these entrepreneurs cope with a paradox between religious practices, with a preferred in-group focus and minimalized contact with the outside world as a result, and their trading habits, an activity that inherently needs engagement with the outside world. Within this emic description of multisited entrepreneurship, we focus on entrepreneurship which is, particularly in the conservative Old Order Mennonite community, a privileged activity for men. Women are for this reason underrepresented in our descriptions. To show different multisited entrepreneurial workplaces of contact with the outside world, we outline four different workplaces common to the Old Order Hoover Mennonite community.

First workplace: individual entrepreneurial activities in the Springfield settlement

In the settlement are some trading places which are owned by individual Mennonite members, for instance, the textile shop annexed drugstore with a small offer of aspirin, Band-Aids or disinfectors, or the stores which are owned by the community, such as the grocery

store, a store with feed supply for animals and the store where one can buy agrochemicals. All these stores sell their products to community members without a profit but sell their products with a profit to outsiders of the community. One store in the community is rather successful in its trade with people from outside the community and makes a fair profit. Buyers from all over the area come to this gardening store to buy fruit trees, fruit plants, ornamental plants and all sorts of seeds. The shop is owned by one family within the community. During the week, buyers drive in their pickup trucks, vans or even mopeds into the settlement to buy plants and trees at the store. The fact that shops demand a fair profit from customers from outside the community is well-accepted in the community as the making of a fair profit implies that the family is "secure" in the sense that the owner's sons can buy a plot of land for themselves in the future. The owner is not always able to be physically present in the store but can rely on his son in such instances, who is sixteen years old. The father (who is also the owner) is worried, as he acknowledged in an interview: "You know … Sometimes I worry when my son is working in the shop when I leave." Upon asking why the father worries, he responds: "Yes, I have to get the boys together to instruct them that they are not allowed to get too much in contact with the buyers from outside Springfield. It is bad for them; the boys sometimes talk too much." The quote is exemplary of the entrepreneurship paradox that the Old Order Hoover Mennonites need to cope with to engage in entrepreneurial practices (Roessingh and Verver, 2022). The traditional Mennonite community has a strong in-group orientation preference and adheres to the ideal of separation from the world, while simultaneously they need to engage with the outside world for their entrepreneurial practices (Loewen, 1993). The father and shop owner solved the issue of his son having potentially too much contact with the outside world by letting the son be accompanied by his younger brother when working in the store, who reports to the father how much contact there has been between the other son and customers.

Second workplace: collective entrepreneurial activities within the Springfield settlement

The Old Hoover Mennonites in Springfield recently decided to open a marketplace, which could be considered a collective entrepreneurial workplace. The marketplace is open weekly on Monday and Thursday mornings and is managed and run by the people of the settlement. Before the opening of the marketplace, entrepreneurs from the Old Order Hoover Mennonite community sold their products only in the markets of Belmopan, San Ignacio and even in Belize City. Nowadays, not every Mennonite entrepreneur needs to make the journey anymore as customers find their way to the community to buy produce locally. The opening of the marketplace was not an easy discussion as not every community member liked the idea of a market, which meant opening up the community to external traders and customers. After several discussions, the community agreed with the plan to open a marketplace within the settlement for outsiders, as illustrated by the following excerpt from an interview with a Mennonite merchant within the community:

> It was not an easy decision, but we opened the market in our community some years ago. There is much demand for our crops from outside our community, and now we do not have to take our crops to the marketplaces of Belmopan or San Ignacio. Also, now that we can stay inside Springfield, our women can also join us with packing and selling our crops [Old Order Hoover Mennonite women are not allowed to have contact with an unknown man from outside the community, except when their husband is with them]. So we share more hands while we sell our vegetables (Springfield merchant, personal communication with the second author, February 2016).

In this situation, the collective entrepreneurial activities had the advantage that all community members were working together, which enabled them to enforce social control among community members and as such resist getting in contact with outsiders for too long. From the entrepreneurial perspective, the marketplace has proven its valuable contribution

to the community. First, the distance between the community members and the outside world was reduced in a controlled manner. Second, the money earned through the marketplace provided the community with financial resources to buy farmland for their offspring. As we indicated before, the Old Order Hoover Mennonite families in Springfield are large, with an average of 7.0 members in one family, but a family with 12 children is not unusual. So the community needs farmland for their children to continue entrepreneurial activities to ensure family continuity.

Third workplace: selling produce on the market in the nearby villages or towns

Some Old Order Hoover Mennonites sell their products and produce on one of the marketplaces outside the Springfield settlement, for instance, at the market in the capital city of Belize, Belmopan. One of the problems for this kind of entrepreneurial activity is the distance from the settlement and the selling point on the markets, which is complicated as the Old Order Hoover Mennonites are not allowed to use vehicles with pneumatic tires in combination with a combustion engine themselves. To tackle this problem, Mennonite entrepreneurs must devise innovative ways to transport their products and merchandise. The merchants travel by horse and buggy from the settlement to the crossroad of the Hummingbird Highway, where they leave the buggies on the side of the road. They stall the horses in a corral with surrounding trees, which provides the animals shelter for the sun. The horses also have access to a water reservoir. The Mennonite merchants wait for local public transportation or for a ride with some passing pickup or van that could bring them to Belmopan, the distance being about 21 km. While waiting for a ride, we find a weathered Mennonite merchant at the side of the road. In the tranquil early morning hours, the sun hung low on the horizon, its fiery rays casting a scorching heat upon the land, a predictor for a hot day to awake. The merchant wears a brimmed straw hat that casts a shadow over his sun-kissed face and stands patiently by the dusty roadside leading to Belmopan. His attire of suspenders and plain, earth-toned clothing contrasts with the colorful hues of the four large bags brimming with jars of honey, fresh salads and okra, a testament to the bountiful harvest he hopes to sell at the market. We asked the merchant about the trip to sell his products in the capital city of Belize. In correspondence, he describes the difficulty of traveling to the market:

> I make the trip weekly. It takes a long time before I can sell my products. Especially because of the trip we [the Mennonites of the community] need to make. I cannot drive a car, so I have to wait until someone comes along willing to take me to the Belmopan market. The quality of my products is degrading very fast because of the scorching heat, especially on days like this. But in the stillness of waiting, we find the strength of patience, and in the uncertainty of arrival, we learn to trust in His timing [the Mennonite merchant points to the sky]. (Springfield merchant, personal communication with the second author, April 2017).

Other community members from Springfield do not want to make the trip to Belmopan and instead travel, for instance, to surrounding villages to sell fruit or vegetables in preserving jars. Other products doing well in those markets are honey jars or small retail products, such as slats (Lentjes, 2004). A second strategy is to plan for the weekly trip more effectively by having Mennonite merchants take turns traveling to Belmopan while bringing along produce from the other merchants. This approach eases the burden on the merchants, as they only need to make the trip once every two weeks instead of every week. A third strategy is that Old Order Hoover merchants sell their produce to grocery store owners in Belmopan, as well as in the nearby town of San Ignacio. The merchants accept a lower profit margin but can sell their products with a lower investment in terms of labor. The grocery store owners pick up the products in the Mennonite settlement and resell the acquired products in their store or to local restaurants.

Fourth workplace: selling melons at the side of the "main" roads and crossroads. When driving on one of the main roads in Belize, we encounter individual Mennonite entrepreneurs who have parked their buggies and horses, loaded with melons, at the side of the road, trying to sell them. We count four merchants in a stretch of about 40 km. They mostly stand near a speed bump as drivers need to slow down, making it more convenient for potential customers to pull over and buy a watermelon. The merchants rely on the relatively high traffic of the Belizean main roads to attract passing customers and sell their products directly to consumers. We pull over and ask one of the merchants, a man in his mid-twenties, why he chose the specific location over the others. The merchant elaborates:

> I know by experience that this is a good spot and I stand here every day from sunrise to sunset to sell my produce, mainly fresh watermelons that are grown by my nephew. He is a farmer. I sell these melons to be able to buy a plot of land after I save enough. Eventually, I want to use the plot of land to become a farmer like my nephew. (Springfield merchant, personal communication with the second author, May 2019).

This type of entrepreneurship is often characterized by its direct customer contact and the wish of the young entrepreneurs to earn a little money, enabling them to buy some land in the near future. A bit further down the road, we engaged in a conversation with another merchant. The man, who looks like a teenager, wears a brimmed straw hat, blue trousers, a blue shirt and no shoes. Upon asking about his entrepreneurial activities, the man tells us:

> My faith teaches me the importance of hard work, self-sufficiency, and providing for my family. A Mennonite will always find a way to work for their existence. Selling these watermelons by the roadside is more than just a business for me. It is a way to ensure that my family can afford the land we need to sustain our close-knit community and keep our traditions alive. Every watermelon I sell represents a step closer to that dream, and it's a labour of love that I'm proud to undertake. (Springfield merchant, personal communication with the second author, May 2019).

Entrepreneurship among the Old Order Hoover Mennonites is not a matter of making a profit or trying to be financially successful. During our longitudinal research, the community expanded with young people growing up. The consequence was and continues to be a land shortage for the starting young farmers. In anticipation of this shortage, and through the "successful" entrepreneurial activities of the community, the land commission of Springfield in collaboration with another Old Order Hoover Mennonite settlement was able to buy rather large plots of land in the eastern part and the southern part of Belize. The new settlements are situated in Cayo District and at the border of Stann Creek and Toledo District (Roessingh and Bovenberg, 2018). The inhabitants of the new settlements consist of young people from the existing Old Order Hoover Mennonite communities in Belize. But some inhabitants are families from sister communities abroad, like the US. One can interpret the entrepreneurial "successes" of these conservative/traditional Old Order Hoover Mennonites in the light of their quest to be independent of the surrounding systems and create a life in which, as much as possible, they separate themselves from the world and live according to their interpretation of the Holy Script.

Discussion and concluding thoughts

In the empirical part of this paper, we presented the case of four Mennonite communities: the EMMC Mennonites, the Kleine Gemeinde, The Old Colony Mennonites and the Old Order Hoover Mennonites and their multisited entrepreneurship in Belize. We started with discussing multisitedness as a methodological theme, the classic interpretation of the concept, where we elaborated on the intricacies of access negotiations with the various Mennonite communities, which are often remote and, for some of the communities, with

little access to digital communication technology. Subsequently, through the etic perspective on multisited entrepreneurship, we studied the similarities and differences between the four Mennonite communities using academic "outsider" terms, such as the Mennonites' entrepreneurial activities, use of technology and use of energy. Through an emic multisited perspective, we distinguished four workplaces within the Old Hoover Mennonite community to illustrate how these communal members experience the "multisitedness" of their daily entrepreneurship within the community and outside, such as traveling across Belize to sell their products and produce. In doing so, we showed how the Mennonites balance the seemingly paradoxical tension between their wish for separation from the world and wish for limited contact with the outside world with their entrepreneurial endeavors, which require the community to open up to the outside world. We argue that the combination of both the etic and emic perspectives brings forward the most interesting insight in any research project that deals with multisitedness as an empirical theme.

Discussions about multisitedness in scholarly works often revolve around its role as a theme in research methodology. Correspondingly, reflections upon the difficulty of the "multisitedness" of any workspace are frequently discussed in terms of the following field-worker, who needs to follow the research participants to be able to study a social phenomenon that is not restricted or confined to a specific place, space, field, area, trail or mode. In correspondence, Van Duijn (2020) stated that an ethnographer deploying a multisited methodological framework can be "everywhere and nowhere at once" (p. 281). This statement makes you wonder what, as a researcher, all the details one misses in all the fieldwork one has conducted. It is virtually impossible for an ethnographer to observe everything, and everywhere, at the same time while imbued into the immersive experience called "fieldwork."

We argued that besides treating multisitedness as a methodological theme, we could also address multisitedness as a fruitful empirical theme, thereby acknowledging the possibility that research participants also sense a particular "multisitedness" and also experience their workplaces to be often flexible, malleable, scattered and contingent to the nature of their work. We propose the theoretical distinction of etic and emic to reflect on the multisited nature of the social activity, practice or research group under study. The etic perspective enables the researchers to compare and contrast various experiences on multisitedness by deploying their own academic "outsiders" perspective as an arguable reference point of sensemaking. The emic perspective serves to elaborate on the research participants' experiences of multisitedness, for example, workplaces and entrepreneurship.

As a final remark, we highlight the importance of teamwork in any multisite research project. The data collection for this paper multisited project would not be possible without the efforts of the team. Such team data collection offered multiple advantages to our project, such as more senses, different areas to be covered, more trails followed in the field and more chasing of research opportunities. Arguably, such team data collection yields more surprising insights through both an emic and etic multisited perspective. But this kind of research also costs precious time, and sometimes one wonders if we still have time to do longitudinal research projects, such as our research among the Mennonite community. The combination of etic and emic multisited ethnography embedded in longitudinal research projects reduces the gap between "being everywhere and nowhere at once."

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