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# **Hybrid forms of business: understanding the development of indigenous social entrepreneurship practices**

## **Abstract**

Few studies have been conducted on indigenous social entrepreneurship practices in Latin America. The purpose of this paper is to examine the development of indigenous social entrepreneurship practices in Colombia drawing on postcolonial theory and in particular Bhabha's mimicry and hybridity theoretical framework. Using participatory video research, this work draws upon evidence from a multiple case study of five indigenous communities (Curripaco, Puinave, Yanacona, Misak and Wayuu) in three geographic regions. The analysis of the multiple case study using NVIVO, discovered that indigenous social enterprises operate as hybrid organisations that are influenced by their cultural practices, as well as the dominant Western forms legitimised by SE norms (mimicry). This paper brings into attention the importance of the hybrid forms of businesses and community's sustainable development.

**Keywords:** hybrid business; indigenous practices; social entrepreneurship; Colombia

## **1. Introduction**

Although there are studies that investigate indigenous communities in Latin America (LA), they focus on the ontology, history or contemporary context of these communities rather than their organisational activities and business operations (e.g., Gros, 1991, 1997, 2000; Rodríguez, 2017). Colombia was chosen as the case study country in which to explore the involvement of indigenous people within social entrepreneurship in LA. This provides a particularly interesting setting in which to investigate the development of social enterprises (SEs) in the region as it is characterised by the exploitation of natural resources with little consideration for environmental

sustainability, recurrent periods of political instability and armed conflict which has also limited development capacities in the country (Meléndez, 2005). Although there are studies that investigate SEs in the country, there is currently no evidence of empirical work carried out in relation to indigenous people (e.g., Álvarez, 2010; Álvarez & Serrano, 2006; Álvaro, 2007; Bedoya & Caruso, 2006; Fajardo, Cabal, & Donneys, 2008).

SEs feature dual economic and social goals and include cooperatives, mutuals, fair trade organisations, associations and non-governmental organizations with trading activities (Calvo, Morales, & Zikidis, 2017; Rodríguez, Martín, & Jiménez, 2018; Rodríguez, Martín, & Salinas, 2019). Despite growing scholarly interest in SEs, few studies have examined the hybridity of such organisations including, surprisingly, whether they adopt an entrepreneurial orientation (EO) (Kraus, Niemand, Halberstadt, Shaw, & Syrjä, 2017; Gali, Niemand, Shaw, Hughes, Kraus, & Brem, 2020). Contemporary research is beginning to grasp the importance of value creation shared, entrepreneurial orientation and hybridity between businesses and this is of crucial importance to understand the phenomenon of indigenous social enterprises (ISEs) (Ferreira, Fernandes, & Kraus, 2019; Kraus, Breier, & Dasí-Rodríguez, 2020; Kullak, Baker, & Woratschek, 2020; Halberstadt, Niemand, Kraus, Rexhepi, Jones, & Kailer, 2020). We have used the term ISEs, since these organisations are the result of a process in which the community acts entrepreneurially to create and operate a new enterprise embedded in its existing social structure. The definition is taken from Peredo and Chrisman (2006, p. 4) who define them as “*a community acting corporately as both entrepreneur and enterprise in pursuit of the common good*”.

Drawing upon insights from postcolonial theory, this paper sets out the conceptual framework used in this study, in particular Bhabha's (1984) mimicry and hybridity theory to examine the development, implications and differences of ISEs in Colombia, considering indigenous people in a “*subaltern position*” (Spivak, 1988) and their organisations as agents. This paper contributes

to the existing literature on the fields of (I) business and management studies by examining how indigenous people construct business structures, (II) indigenous studies by looking at their traditional practices, (III) the SE sector by illustrating the motivations, characteristics, experiences and differences of these initiatives in Colombia, and (IV) postcolonial studies, by looking at the organisations characteristics inherited from colonization.

This paper makes three original contributions. Firstly, to understand the development, implications, characteristics and differences of ISEs as this study contributes to Bhabha's (1984) mimicry and hybridity theory. Secondly, this study contributes empirically by providing primary data to describe and more profoundly comprehend the processes that shape ISEs in LA, particularly in three regions of Colombia: the Amazons, the Caribbean and the Cauca region. Thirdly, this paper provides a methodological contribution by building a research method coherent with the post-colonial literature by using video participation to carry out a multiple case study to analyse indigenous communities and the SE sector, in particular ISEs.

Five different ISEs that belong to five different indigenous community groups (Misak, Yanacona, Curripaco, Wayuu and Puinave) located in three different Colombian regions (the Amazons, Cauca and Guajira) were selected for this paper to represent the diversity of indigenous social enterprises (ISEs). We chose to study different indigenous communities in the country as each location in Colombia has its own historical context and geographical conditions that determine the cultural features of indigenous communities, and therefore the development of ISEs.

## **2. Postcolonialism theory to understand indigenous social entrepreneurship practices**

Post-colonialism is a key concept to understand the nature, role and position of indigenous people and the ISEs' behaviour as agents in the LA region, particularly in Colombia, since issues of power and knowledge are central to their representation and understanding of "self"

and “other” within a “subaltern position” (see in Bhabha, 2012; Lye, 2017; Said, 2012; Spivak, 1988).

In simple terms, post-colonial theory highlights the disadvantaged position in which indigenous people are located within society (Lye, 1998, 2017). The legacy of colonialism is characterised by a binary relation between the colonizer (self) and the colonized (other) and although physical colonization was supposed to end with the independence of the regions, a cultural hegemony was inherited and is still present in most of the liberated societies. Post-colonial studies then, problematise the relationship between the central and the peripheral -or “centre” and “periphery”- by building on the concept of hegemony (or domination by consent). Hegemony is theorised as a particular condition of dominance that momentarily outweighs coercion (Said, 2004, 2012). With this in mind, we suggest that the ISEs’ behaviour has been influenced by an isomorphic process in which SE norms play a role as authoritative guidelines for organisational behaviour (institutionalist). It is not only important to examine this through the cosmovision (values and beliefs) of the ISEs’ members, but also the power relations of the ISEs, as they are constituted by indigenous people as colonised subjects (Jackson, 2011). Therefore, there is a need to understand the ISEs’ nature, role and behaviour by drawing on post-colonial studies, particularly Bhabha's (1984) notions of mimicry and hybridity.

For Bhabha (1984) the process of mimicry rather than simply mimicking the colonizer’s culture, is an analytical tool that reveals the ambivalent effect of domination and hegemony. On the one hand, mimicry can be seen as a metaphor for a process of acculturation and adaptation of imposed cultural concepts and patterns by the colonizer. On the other hand, it can be seen as a strategic adaptation by the colonised subject as a subtle act of resistance (Lye, 1998, 2017). In either of these cases, domination and hegemony are never complete, he argues. In emulating the colonizer (because of the idea that they are superior), a kind of carbon copy is created in which colonization is reproduced as “*almost the same but not quite*”, and mimicry

emerges as the representation of a difference that is itself a process of disavowment (Bhabha, 1984, p. 126).

Thus, mimicry works as a moment of contestation that leads to hybrid forms. As such, hybridity captures Bhabha's conception of the third space, in which the process of mimicry generates the construction of an object that is new, neither one nor the other (Bhabha, 1984, 2012). We consider that Bhabha's (1984, 2012) mimicry and hybridity theory provides elements that can be used to explain the development of ISEs in Colombia. This can be particularly useful to explain how hybrid organisational forms emerge from a formalisation process. Figure 1 depicts the process in which indigenous organisations (IOGs) become ISEs by drawing on Bhabha's ideas and incorporating elements from the institutionalist (DiMaggio & Powell, 2000) and culturalist (Ghiselli & Porter, 1966; Hofstede, 2001) schools of thought. The theoretical underpinnings of these elements are as follows. Firstly, IOGs are understood to be colonised subjects that are located in a disadvantaged position ("subaltern position") as a consequence of colonialism. The IOGs' organisational behaviour is shaped by their own institutions (i.e., *cabildos*) and cosmovision (beliefs, values and pillars) (see indigenous movements in Gros, 1997, 2000).

Secondly, in the process of mimicry, organisational change occurs by the colonized subject's emulation (adoption and adaptation) of external variables that abstractly embodies the colonizer's image, synthesised in culture, knowledge and practice. That is to say that the external variables are characterised by the SE norms and other variables (i.e., managerial, entrepreneurial and organisational strategies) that set out a structure that determines how organisations have to behave based on their values and pillars. Supposedly, the IOGs are formalised (ISEs) to become more 'business-like', entering an economic setting (SE sector), through the myth of economic development based upon collectiveness, fairness, inclusiveness and associative practices (e.g., Coraggio, 2007; Gaiger, 1999; Laville, 2013). However, the SE

reflects a global discourse on economic alternatives underpinned by managerialist modes of thinking that may be inappropriate to their contexts. Thirdly, the result of IOG acculturation, rather than assimilation is the generation of a ‘third space’ (Bhabha, 2012), where indigenous people negotiate and articulate their identity by creating a hybrid form (ISE) from the clashing and/or blending of two or more worlds (translated as local and external variables) (Bhabha, 1984). Thus, the process of mimicry refers to the internalisation of development, and hybridity is the result of the creative resistance by the contestation of the IOGs in the ‘third space’ (i.e., Jackson, 2011).

*Insert Figure 1.*

### **3. Perspectives on indigenous social entrepreneurship in Latin America**

There are limited studies conducted about indigenous firms and practices, and the existing ones are mostly located in Canada, Africa, Asia and Australia (Blankson, Pramodlyer, Owusu-Frimping, Nwangkwo, & Hinson, 2020; Dholakia, Dholakia, & Chattopadhyay, 2018; Henderson, 2018; Spencer, Brueckner, Wise, & Marika, 2016). In addition, few studies have explored indigenous communities and SE in the LA region (i.e., Giovannini, 2012, 2016; Vázquez, Ruelas, & García, 2016; Vázquez, Portales, & Velásquez, 2017; Peredo, McLean, & Tremblay, 2019). A study conducted by Giovannini (2012) with indigenous community enterprises in Chiapas (Mexico) evaluates the factors that support the emergence of these organisations. For Chiapan indigenous community enterprises, the main enabling factor for their emergence is related to the existing relationship of leaders involved in other social movements.

In another study conducted by Vázquez et al. (2017), they looked at examples of ISEs in Mexico and Peru, and in particular the case studies of the *Ixtlan Group* and *Granja Porcón* communities. The findings demonstrate that ISEs are essential in contributing to the rural

community's sustainable development, improving the quality of life (living standards) of its inhabitants. Their work also suggests that ISEs used four main mechanisms to promote rural sustainable development in the community: (1) labour as source of quality of life; (2) gender equality; (3) sustainable exploitation; and (4) the equitable distribution of benefits between the economic, social and environmental decisions. Interestingly, their findings demonstrate that in both cases ISEs deliver prosperity in their contexts, even generating jobs for neighbouring locations (for example, salaries are higher than the national average). There are also clear concerns in relation to the urbanisation of their communities, which may lead to the ethno-extinction of their culture. Although economic growth enables indigenous communities to enhance households (power of buying building materials), and provide better education for their children, there is increasing concern among community leaders, as some of the children do not return to the region after finishing university in urban areas. Finally, they identified a conflict created between the managers and other stakeholders within the case study organisations, where the former prioritized the economic versus the social dimension. More recent studies conducted by Peredo (2019) and Peredo et al. (2019), indicated that there are three aspects on which ISEs in Latin America are grounded: (1) traditional knowledge and practices; (2) distinct cosmology and culture; and (3) struggles for decolonization and indigenous resurgence.

#### **4. Methodology**

Participatory video research (PVR) was selected for this study as the key objective is to empower those researched (Sitter, 2012). Blazek and Hraňová (2012, p.152) describe PVR as “*a production of a video by a group of people, or, by a community*”. One of the more important aspects of PVR is “participation” (Gubrium & Harper, 2013). Participation is blended with the participatory action research approach, that is, to seek the meaning of the interventions (research events) for the groups willing to be studied (in this case the ISEs) from many different

perspectives (Holm, 2008; Jewitt, 2012). Therefore, applying a PVR approach to study ISEs may produce rich multimodal and narrative data, guided by the participants' interests and priorities, putting the methods literally in the hands of the participants themselves, and allowing them greater access to knowledge beyond the merely academic (Gubrium & Harper, 2013).

There are limited studies that apply PVR as a research method to explore SEs. In fact, the only example found is the work conducted by Tremblay and Peredo (2014) of a recycling cooperative in Brazil. In this paper, they reflect on the applicability of PVR and its contributions to building transformative capacity in participating members, as well as the use to create new spaces for inclusive policy. There are some studies that explore indigenous communities using PVR. For example, the study conducted by Sinclair, Keelan, Stokes, Stokes and Jeffries-Stokes (2015) that used PVR as a means of engaging indigenous children as participants in health research. However, there is no evidence of studies that apply PVR to the study of indigenous people and social enterprise.

In the case of this research project, ISEs have the opportunity to enhance and contribute to the construction of their own image, giving voice to an invisible group. Through collaboration and participation, even in the first phase of the study, ISEs were invited to improve the planning of this project. A multiple case study method with five ISEs, namely, Misak, Yanacona, Curripaco, Puinave and Wayuu in three different regions – the Caribbean, the Andes and the Amazon – specifically in the departments of Cauca, Guainia and Guajira, was conducted to explore the characteristics of these ISEs, taking into account the processes of mimicry and hybridity (see Table 1 for details).

Insert Table 1

Prior to conducting the collection of data from these five case studies, a pilot case study was carried out between December 2015 and January 2016 visiting two ISEs: one in the Cauca

region and the other one in the Amazon. Lessons were learned from this pilot experience to reflect on the research design and methods of data collection. From April to September 2017 data was gathered for the five organisations selected for this study. As seen in Table 2, a four-stage methodological process was used to collect data: a review of a secondary data source, a preproduction stage, a production stage and a postproduction stage.

Insert Table 2

Table 3 shows the five phases that summarise the PVR activities which includes meetings with the leaders, opening up events, video-recorded focus groups, training workshops and filming.

Insert Table 3

The analysis of the case study was conducted using NVivo 11 version. As seen in Table 4, firstly, the researcher became familiarised with the data by looking at the material obtained from the video focus groups and semi-structured interviews to get initial ideas. Then, and to facilitate the analysis, we inserted the material from the interviews and focus groups in NVivo 11 version. Watching the videotape at a speed that is slower or faster than normal, only listening to the audio, or watching the video without audio helped us to focus our attention on particular aspects of interest. With this in mind, this phase consisted of transcribing the material selected. Videos are understood to be visual texts, transformed into text by transcription or by recounting the stories contained in them, and then analysed as such.

Insert Table 4

For this project, the data analysis followed an inductive coding process based on the research objectives and questions, in which nodes were identified using the word cloud in NVivo11.

After this, the researchers decided to create spider diagrams for cross-analysis where key themes and subthemes were identified from the data and were refined as the analysis evolved. This analysis was a recursive rather than a linear process, involving a constant moving back and forth between the entire data set, the nodes and extracts from the data that we identified, and the data produced (based on the triangulation between secondary sources, video interviews, focus groups and field notes taken from general observations). This was done with each of the case studies and then comparisons were made within the five ISEs and cross-cases to look for similarities and differences to draw and discuss the conclusions of the study, set out what had been learned and suggest possible ways of taking this knowledge forward in academic, practical and political arenas. The researchers did not analyse the non-verbal behaviour of the interviewees for this research project but focused on the verbal transcriptions from the videos (Ferreira, 2006; Pink, 2008; Turner, 1992).

## **5. Findings**

The findings emerge from the collected data and respond to the questions of development, implications and differences of ISEs, taking into account the indigenous people's culture, organisational life span and geographical context. The characteristics that were identified were the result of the in-depth-triangulated data analysis, using the cross-case study. Although many characteristics were identified from the collected data, they were distributed into four segments to help the reader understand the hybridisation process: (i) *Legal status, ownership and organisational structure*, (ii) *Production of goods and services*, (iii) *Decision-making* and (iv) *organisational strategies*.

## 5.1 Legal status, ownership and organisational structure

Table 5 illustrates some accounts made by the participants about the creation of their organisation's statutes, that demonstrate that by complying with external norms (and/or emulating external practices), at a formal stage, the ISEs are becoming isomorphic to each other, losing their distinctiveness from when they were IOGs.

Insert Table 5

From a post-colonial perspective, it can be argued that the narratives above are a perfect illustration of the spread of the colonising ideology of managerialism founded on Western rationality and scientism being imposed on local systems (i.e., coercive isomorphism). The ISEs reported that they had lost their distinctiveness (through the process of mimicry) and were treated like any other SE by complying with external norms and adopting standard legal status. As a cofounder commented:

*Within the current economic sector, it does not matter whether we are indigenous or not ... there are norms that we must comply with ... you know, for them [referring to non-indigenous people] there is no difference between our organisations and others established by the white men [cofounder, CSI].*

Interestingly, the findings reveal that the SE sector may have excluded other forms of entities that share similar objectives for existence. For instance, the Finca Lechera el Paraíso (CS2) is legally registered as an orthodox venture with the objective of benefiting the whole Yanacona community (31 communities). Although this is a socially and environmentally-oriented venture, it is not recognised by the SE umbrella.

One of the board of directors of case study 2 (CS2) pointed out:

*Our venture is not like any other conventional one ... our objective is collective ... of course, it is profit-oriented but the distribution and the benefits are collective, there are 31 communities and all of them must obtain a profit from it [public administrator, CS2].*

The example above shows how a hybrid form is created by deviating from formal practices to manage the tensions of establishing a formal organisation. This example also illuminates the disadvantaged position of the indigenous people (i.e., subaltern group) as their practices are recognised neither in the SE sector nor in another sector (see Calvo, Morales & Zikidis, 2017). *Collective ownership* is an important factor that emerges from the collected data. As seen in Table 6, all the ISEs are collectively owned and even though the Finca Lechera el Paraíso (CS2) was formalised with a different legal status, the company is considered a collectively owned venture. As suggested in the section above, the development of the ISEs is strongly influenced by pursuits that mutually benefit all its members and the whole community. Most of the participants reported a close relationship between the organisation and the community. This could explain the rationale behind choosing a collective ownership approach. An example is provided by one of the interviewees who points out:

*The cooperative and the association were created to benefit the whole community, hence were owned by the whole community. We all put in our contribution and have worked here since it was founded ... the collective wellbeing is our purpose, that is why that the cooperative is owned by our members and our community ... we are spiritually bound [cofounder, CS1].*

The findings indicate that at the formal stage, all the studied ISEs comply with the norm of collective ownership. However, it is apparent from the interview responses and focus group

discussions that ownership in indigenous people's terms has other connotations and reveals conceptual tensions between the ownership of an entity and the ownership of the place in which the entity's activities take place. A couple of aspects may illustrate this. Although, the SE normatively establishes that SE organisations must be structured according to their legal form, two types of organisational structure were identified amongst the ISEs in which a copy of external norms is adapted to their contexts (i.e., blending). Firstly, (i) *the autonomous*, which operates as a "*flatarchy*" organisation, in which responsibilities and tasks are allocated evenly and internally amongst the members, and even though the board of members have managerial and senior roles, they tend to be actively involved in the operations of the company; that is to say that every now and then, the board of directors must be renewed and elected. Secondly, (ii) the quasi-autonomous, that functions as a type of "flatarchy", as an internal, external and hierarchical level organisation, in which the ISEs are interdependent on an external entity(ies) (i.e., usually the cabildo or the community). The responsibility of planning and organising is at times either performed or directed by the indigenous authorities, assuring the collective benefit of the organisation, independent of the organisational autonomy. Non-registered members are also involved in the operations of the ISEs, following the cultural values of solidarity and collaboration. In Table 6 identified organisational structures are exemplified by some of the participants.

Insert Table 6

As seen, the ISE process of internalising hegemonic dominant views of organisational structures (dictated by the SE norms) is compounded by an emancipation practice that creates a hybrid version (creative resistance in postcolonial terms). Here, it allows us to explore hybridity through the ongoing process of both the imposition of external norms upon SE organisations, influenced by Western dominant organisational discourses (i.e., coercive

isomorphism), as well as the resistance of the ISEs to this domination through the implementation of cultural practices at an organisational, but informal level (i.e., deviating from formal practices) (Claeyé & Jackson, 2012)

## **5.2 Production of goods and services**

Evidence suggests that the ISEs' production process is determined by the emulation of IOGs for external practices (process of mimicry) that lead to hybrid forms of production. The findings suggest that hybrid forms are determined by an element of innovation of the ISEs in which the traditional practices are 'enhanced' and implemented to meet organisational objectives, and to improve organisational practices. By disentangling the ISEs' informal production, activities can be summarised as having two types – *land-based and culture-based*.

The findings indicate that similarities between the ISEs can be categorised in two groups: land-based production of goods, mainly in agricultural practices, and the culture-based production of goods and services. The ISEs parallels seemed to be rooted in their indigeneity, as well as in the development of their cultural practices towards formality. Which is to say that similar features can be encountered by exploring the association between the ISEs' practices at a formal level and the informal practices influenced by their indigenous culture (i.e., creative resistance to strengthen identity, thus a hybrid form). A member of an ISE commented:

*We currently offer services that entail the ancestral practices of our culture, the role of our Shamans as healers in our community has been present for centuries; we have clients that are interested in trying alternatives to cure various illnesses, particularly cancer [member, CS4].*

From this perspective, similarities can be traced amongst the ISEs by exploring the mimicry process in which local variables are fundamental to the understanding of where hybrid forms start from. As a community member explained:

*There is no way to understand indigenous organisations, but to understand where our organisational practices come from, in all our organisational practices there is a cultural feature [member, CS1]*

However, although similar features can be identified in the ISEs' production process and activities, differences can be found between the ISEs. The findings reveal that the ISE participants are fully aware of the external influences when production processes take place. They report that there are advantages and disadvantages of combining both local and external knowledge. By quoting some accounts from the participants, it can be argued that there is an intrinsic dilemma between mimicking and disregarding external practices (influenced strongly by Western managerial and entrepreneurial dominant discourses) (see Table 7). Interestingly, while the production of videos was taking place (following the PV approach), some of the participants were reluctant, in the filming, to highlight the advantages of appropriating Western practices that may benefit their organisational activities, but rather they wanted to report the importance of bringing cultural aspects into the process of production, and how by reimplementing ancestral knowledge, production processes could be improved (i.e., agroforestry, crop rotation, polyculture and water harvesting).

Insert Table 7

Tensions in emulating external variables were observed in those ISEs that conducted land-based activities (the CS1, CS2 and one of the business activities of the CS3). The findings reveal that an organisational conundrum appears when production processes are conducted by

either following local knowledge or the combination of both, Western and local. With the objective of enhancing farming processes, achieving sustainable agricultural methods and improving income generation, some of the ISEs reported an implementation of external farming methods which incorporate all or most of the following: use of high-yield varieties of seeds, chemically derived fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides, irrigation and mechanisation. The fact that some members are reluctant to appropriate external farming methods because of their negative effects upon the community has created some tensions amongst the ISE members. As an example of this, a large number of participants in the focus group conversations report issues in bringing about Western methods, as there is a community concern of how the land is used, and how the use of pesticides and genetically modified seeds (GMS) are negatively impacting the wellbeing of the environment and their families. A community leader pointed out:

*There are a lot of issues with implementing white men's methods of farming production.... with them [referring to the methods], cancer and other types of illness appeared... the excessive use of pesticides and other chemicals upon our land, results in some health issues that are affecting the wellbeing of the community [accountant, CS2].*

Other evidence suggests that not all the members are unenthusiastic about appropriating external farming methods and knowledge and are willing not only to conduct external farming techniques but also partner with other institutions to improve agricultural production (an innovative approach in indigenous practices). This is illustrated by the example of CID, which partnered with a local university to conduct research about the sustainable use of the land, free from pesticides and with improved organic seed production. A partner researcher from a local university pointed out the importance of working in partnership with the indigenous

communities to enrich scientific knowledge with the indigenous people (i.e., normative isomorphism as a sense of improving professional networks). She stressed:

*We came here to conduct research on an onion plague that was affecting local production.... we are now working hand in hand with them and the results have been amazing.... their knowledge is unique and I have learnt so much from them ... we work in a really horizontal way...I think many universities should stop patronising them and appreciate what they have to offer [researcher, CSI].*

Here, the evidence shows that hybrid models of production emerge by seeking sustainable and productive agricultural methods (resistance). Interestingly, although many participants often blamed the external approaches as the main reason for agricultural pitfalls and environmental catastrophe, many others acknowledged the advantages of combining knowledge.

Another important aspect emerging from the data, key to identifying the hybridisation process when transforming from informality to formality, is the indigenous collective work. In almost all the ISEs, collectiveness is a key innovative strategy to address operational difficulties and improve the production process. The evidence shows that while capital resources are scarce in the ISEs' assets (i.e., tools, equipment, buildings, and machinery), their wealth lies in a human resources capability. During the interviews and focus groups discussions, it was often reported that indigenous collectiveness is a crucial practice that drives the organisational praxis towards to a more participative, proactive and engaged working behaviour. Interestingly, the *minga* which is a tradition of community work is frequently mentioned by the participants as a cultural habit that nurtures working behaviour. In this respect, the findings indicate that indigenous people in this context perceive work as a cultural tradition rather than an organisational duty. Thus, the community involvement in volunteer labour appears to be a

natural element that benefits the organisational praxis (organisational advantage by integrating local practices). Table 8 shows how collective practices contribute to the production processes, and how the collective work is the motor that provides motivational power to organisations. Particularly, when the organisations face an economic pitfall or are in great need and more labour is required.

Insert Table 8

In this regard, the findings indicate that collective work is highly subject to the interplay between free will, wider participation and a communal duty. In fact, in some ISEs, interviewees reported that by not participating and getting involved in collective activities, individuals are disrespected and sometimes punished. A key informant corroborated this, as he pointed out:

*Collective work is something that is embedded in our community it is part of our DNA, it is a collective responsibility.... the cooperative belongs to everybody... thus everybody has the duty to contribute to it.... People who do not collaborate disrespect their family and their community.... we have to honour our people on an everyday basis [member/cofounder, CS1].*

In the indigenous entrepreneurship literature, it is suggested that volunteerism and collectivism are common characteristics among indigenous groups (see the work of Anderson, Honig, & Peredo, 2006; Giovannini, 2012; Peredo, 2001; Vázquez et al., 2016, 2017). This aspect seems to confirm that there is an embedded cultural element in the hybrid forms when exercising collectivism. Although, volunteerism appears in the literature of the SE as an organisational strategy to enhance internal practices (i.e., Coraggio, 2007), indigenous collectiveness appears to be a local variable in the mimicry process. The fact that despite the geographical location (referred to as *mingao* in the Guainia region by the participants), minga

practice is commonly used by the majority of the ISEs, indicating the indigenous influence on the ISEs' hybrid forms. More empirically, fieldwork observations reveal that indigenous collectiveness is spontaneously manifested at all times. For instance, during the participatory video process, although many participants were not members of the ISEs, they joined the video activity to collaborate with the other members of their community. They seemed to join in order to strengthen social bonds and reinforce social cohesion.

### **5.3 Governance: decision-making process**

The findings indicate that governance is a neology introduced by external entities, such as the *Supersolidaria* to the indigenous communities. A decision-making phase is widely used by the participants when referring to the collective process of selecting a course of action amongst different options to attain a goal or goals. A hybrid governance form was explained by a top manager:

*The objectives of our associations are ruled by the statutes that the members created.... however, the statutes are ruled by our indigenous authorities...the interests of our organisation simply cannot be above the interests of our people [vice-president, CS4].*

The evidence suggests that at a formal level, the new organisational practice (hybrid form) can be understood through the organisational contestation between the interplay of the local and external variables internalised in the process of mimicry. The findings indicate that contestation in this context, is the act of resisting external governance forms, strengthening indigenous culture by complementing formal practices with the informal ones. The paradox of the ISEs in complying with the SE governance norms and following the rules of local institutions, pertains to Bhabha's (2012) third space, in which subaltern groups resist and negotiate their local and external variables creating a hybrid form.

Other findings reveal that the indigenous community that each of the ISEs is affiliated to, either participates in or is directly informed of the general state of the organisation. Despite the fact that different governance forms are adopted by each of the ISEs selected for the study, there is evidence of high community engagement, particularly when general assemblies take place (as it creates social cohesion). Collectiveness is a common feature that appears again as an important aspect when decision-making is needed. 24% of the participants were community members (all the ISEs' associates are community members, but 24% are non-associates of the ISEs). The community indicates a level of engagement with the ISEs. A community member that is actively involved in the activities of the organisation reported:

*Although we are not registered as members [referring to his family], we feel that we are part of the organisation...we participate in the minga that they call and we come to the assemblies, our friends and relatives are part of the organisation... thus so are we [teacher/community member, CS5].*

This corroborates the work carried out by Peredo (2001) and Peredo and McLean (2013) that suggests that trust and community ties are both key elements for decision-making processes in indigenous entrepreneurship. Here, it is suggested that the role of the community in any entrepreneurial activity is crucial, as wider participation generates an ecosystem of trust that eases the decision-making processes when a large number of participants are involved. In this respect, the findings reveal that hybrid forms are displayed when the decision-making process is compounded by local and external variables; while decisions are made collectively following cultural traditions, they are also made democratically (one person one vote) complying with external norms. For instance, in one of the ISEs, children are encouraged to participate in general assemblies from the age of thirteen, and to be part of the decision-making process. In other cases, organisational unanimity is widely practiced and decisions are made collectively

and usually with great participation. Thus, decisions are not made on a majority basis but rather when there is not a convincing argument to stop the execution of a decision. Generally, some ISEs reported making decisions while doing a *minga* of thinking, which is when a group of participants discuss and talk about the same topic (see Table 9).

Insert Table 9

The findings indicate that several factors enable good governance practices amongst the ISEs. The main aspect identified in almost all of the ISEs relates to members sharing the same conditions, as they are affiliated to the same indigenous community. Participants shared elements in personal relationships, culture, political affiliation, traditions, rules, history, social and economic conditions, and other common interests. This is particularly interesting as an apparent sense of homogeneity amongst the members enables a better practice of governance. Therefore, both identified governance forms, autonomous and quasi-autonomous collective practices demonstrate that they are linked to community shared conditions, and wider participation is effective at times. Respondents also stressed the importance of increasing participation outside their ISEs, thereby setting an example to be followed by similar initiatives. The prosecutor of an ISE pointed out:

*We always seek to widen participation, as it legitimises the process of decision-making and makes the process much easier when implementation takes place, we all have common goals as we share the same socio-economic and historical conditions.... we need to have our ducks in a row to ensure that there is a general consensus at implementation level [prosecutor, CS2].*

Nevertheless, organisational issues emerged when widening participation, as well as inclusive governance took place. A number of ISEs reported having experienced a “difficult”

time during general assemblies and saw the disadvantage of grouping associates and community members, as the general audience lacked information about their organisations and experienced a ‘slowness’ in the process. While implementing inclusiveness and democratic governance the ISEs demonstrate improvements in some implementation processes in the organisation, weaknesses were also highlighted by some of the participants. Table 10 illustrates this.

Insert Table 10

The evidence suggests that the ISEs’ good practice of decision-making is subject to the capacity of integrating and managing the tensions of local and external governance forms. The fact that informal governance practices are implemented to improve the formal ones, suggests that complementarity offers an extended idea of the SE governance forms. Particularly, as the informal ones are shaped by their cosmovision. This corroborates with what Peredo and McLean (2013) suggest that the conceptuality of entrepreneurship must be revised and extended to indigenous entrepreneurship because not only is the decision-making process important, but also the ideological platform on which these decisions are made. An important point here is that all ISE organisations reported being linked to their cultural values in the decision-making process, which is why the majority of them included the general audience into their decision-making; even the ones reported to be autonomous.

#### **5.4 Organisational strategies: grant seeking, diversification, capacity building, networking and partnerships**

The evidence suggests that many of the organisational strategies are designed by the ISEs to achieve the short, middle and long-term goals of the organisation. Interestingly, informal practices are planned as a strategy to enhance the organisational practices; even though all the

ISEs showed adoption and adaptation of external methods. The findings indicate that by emulating external methods, the ISEs generate a ‘bricolage’ of strategies with a cultural ingredient that helps them to meet organisational objectives (i.e., capital, institutional and organisational). Which is to say that the ISEs’ organisational strategies depict a hybrid form in which the result of the organisations’ internalisation of external strategies, accompanied by informal practices as a strategy (i.e., process of mimicry), generates an enhanced repertoire of actions to achieve organisational goals.

Organisational strategies are unscrambled in different categories: *grant seeking, capacity building, diversification, networking and partnerships*, in order to illustrate that the ISEs are necessarily influenced by external dominant discourses to overcome organisational challenges. This can be regarded as reflection of an organisation whose management succumbs to emulating external practices in the urgency of outreaching organisational difficulties; evidence suggests that the main obstacle amongst the five ISEs is financial, which is one of the main drivers of mimicry.

Grant seeking and business diversification strategies are the most reported by the board of directors of each ISE. 32% of the participants are either part of the board of directors or directly involved in the management process. Moreover, the evidence reveals that grant funding sources are a more common feature of the start-up period rather than the later period across the ISEs; even though in some of the selected ISEs, initial contributions are complemented with members’ inputs, either in kind or in money, for the opening period. The findings also demonstrate that only one of the selected ISEs used financial credit or a loan to start-up and develop their business. Access to finance during the development period (excluding the start-ups) is perceived as the main problem faced by the organisations; thus, grant seeking is one of the main strategies to meet such needs. Table 11 provides examples of how a grant seeking strategy is used to solve financial pressure.

Insert Table 11

The evidence reveals that some tensions occur from the strategy of attaining financial and other resources (i.e., equipment, infrastructure and IT) from external entities, and from relying on grant seeking. A head manager pointed out:

*The problem with relying on grant seeking and aid so much is that the members of the organisation may become a little lazy, if one only thinks of seeking aid, one tends to forget how to improve the business with other strategies [president and cofounder, CS3].*

On the other hand, dominant discourses are imposed upon the ISEs, as usually grants, funding and donations are subject to certain conditions and agendas that legitimate the colonized vs colonizers subject amongst indigenous people (i.e., the ISEs are obliged to change because of the isomorphic pressure, and therefore coercive isomorphism occurs). A community member explained:

*Aid and external support are the disguises of neo-colonial forms of power, by falling into these strategies our communities are doomed to extinction.... everything has an agenda behind it, I remember before, they [referring to national entities] gave us financial help for local development and later they privatised the natural resources in our territory [GM and cofounder, VIMK6, CS1].*

Additionally, business diversification emerges as a key aspect for tackling economic issues. The findings show that in the majority of the ISEs, economic issues are resolved by diversifying their business activities. By doing this, economic performance is enhanced, and surplus produce is reinvested in the organisation and the community. In all the well-established ISEs, business activities are improved by extending to other areas. In the case of Cooperativa Las Delicias (CS1), their main activity is agriculture; nonetheless, they identified a lack of transport in their

location, and saw the opportunity to improve their income generation by buying a bus, with which they now operate a bus service from Guambia to Silvia.

Similarly, the Akayú Association (CS3) demonstrated how economic performance could be enhanced by entering into other types of business. The CS3 started as an association that offered a recycling service; however, in order to include the rest of the members and improve economic performance, three more business activities were developed: retail, education and floriculture.

The president and co-founder of the CS3 pointed out:

*We started with the recycling business and it went really well, but other things were needed for the association, that's why we developed the other three services that today are really important for the economic performance of the organisation.... we have to admit also, that when we started, we had something different in mind for the other three services, but we improved them according to the necessities of our organisation and public demand [president and cofounder, CS3].*

Evidence shows that the ISEs that diversify their businesses reduce the risk of relying on sales from only one type of product, which ensures the survival of the company when one market collapses (the agriculture sector has suffered the most, and has had many difficulties in Colombia) resulting in cost saving and an increase in their level of production. An interesting example, that may illustrate a hybrid form of business diversification, is reported by Cooperativa Las Delicias (CS1), in which the cooperative diversified their businesses by exercising ancestral practices (the used of informal practices as a strategy). The cooperative engaged in bartering activities to reduce waste and manage food production. The CS1 mastered the control of the entire supply chain, as they not only produced goods with their own seeds but also commercialised them in their local store in Silvia (where they also sell other products).

One member of the board of directors highlights the importance of complementing their business process by exercising their ancestral practices:

*Bartering helps us to connect with our culture and helps us to reduce waste and manage the surplus production of some products .... also, it is a really good strategy because we have access to products that we do not produce here, our Misak community in the hot areas of Guambia also operates similarly... thus we complement each other [fiscal, CSI].*

This aspect can be linked to the BV pillar of plural economy, in which both economic practices (ancestral and orthodox) can complement each other and deliver a more efficient outcome (Hidalgo-Capitán & Cubillo-Guevara, 2017). It also shows hybrid models of production, as indigenous practices complement the Western ones (i.e., informal practices were implemented as strategies to enhance the organisational practices and facilitate blending).

## **6. Conclusions**

This paper shows that while hybridisation forms might be the outcome of power dynamics and dominant Western forms legitimated by the SE authorities, it also echoes indigenous cultural practices that shape the current ISE forms. Overall, the findings demonstrate that the ISEs can be considered to be hybrid forms as a result of a *mimetic* process in which the IOGs at an informal level, emulate external variables; the external variables are constituted by the culture, knowledge and practices imported from outside (SE norms, and managerial, entrepreneurial and organisational Western discourses). Which is to say that hybrid forms, in the Colombian context, can be explored in the so-called third space (at meso-level), in which the ISEs (indigenous groups that adopt a business-like persona) either negotiate or resist the two worlds: the local (shaped by indigenous institutions and cosmovision) and the external

(shaped by SE norms, and managerial, entrepreneurial and organisational forms) (Bhabha, 1984, 2012; Spivak, 1988).

The process of mimicry is explored through the ISEs' constitution at an operational level. The evidence shows how the IOGs adopt or adapt to external variables to formalise themselves and become ISEs. Interestingly, all the IOGs responded to the institutional isomorphic pressures by complying with the SE norms in order to be formalised and be part of the sector. These findings confirm what the indigenous entrepreneurial studies suggest, which is that indigenous organisations must adopt business practices in order to survive and defend their rights in their contexts (e.g., Anderson, Dana, & Dana, 2006; Spencer et al., 2016; Vázquez et al., 2017). The findings provide many examples in which the process of mimicry occurred. For instance, the SE norm establishes that SE organisations are jointly owned and democratically controlled entities, and their registered members must elect the board of directors democratically to manage and represent their organisations. Which is to say that almost all the ISEs (except the CS2) reported having a board of directors elected democratically in order to comply with the SE norms and be successful at the time of registration. In the process of mimicry, the IOGs must comply if they are willing to be formalised. It can be seen, as the study of Claeys and Jackson (2012) suggests, that ISEs must adopt a business-like persona as a consequence of institutional isomorphic pressures.

However, isomorphic processes in the ISEs seem to be constrained at the third space, in which hybrid forms resist and/or negotiate the institutional pressure and enable the ISEs to have a unique organisational identity. Hybrid forms were identified through four types of organisational behaviour, in which the management of tensions (resistance) and adaptations (negotiation) were clustered, which include: (i) deviant informal practices, (ii) the integration of innovation in informal practices, (iii) the complementarity of the informal practices and (iv) the implementation of informal practices as an organisational strategy. Interestingly, the

findings indicate the importance for the ISEs of either readapting their traditional praxes to contemporary forms (while preserving their culture) or simply resisting change by deviating from the formal practices. These factors make the ISEs a unique case, as the existing literature either focuses on the institutional/structural context in which indigenous organisations operate (e.g., Anderson et al., 2006; Henderson, 2018) or on the agency of the indigenous organisations (Giovannini, 2012, 2016; Vázquez et al. 2016, 2017). The ISE example illustrates that both institutional/structural and agency must be linked through a post-colonial approach; especially, because their organisational disadvantages are not only produced from socio-economic equalities, but also their disadvantages are rooted in their colonial inheritance (Spivak, 1988).

Moreover, the process of mimicry and hybridity also highlights the tensions and contradiction of the indigenous people through the exploration of the hybrid forms (Vanhulst, 2015). The findings indicate that the ISEs' also manifest internal problems and conflicts in their organisational behaviour. It is apparent that the ISEs' discrepancies at an internal level are rooted in the generational gap (in this study 38% were under 30 and 62% over 30). The findings indicate that although there is a cultural respect towards the elders and their authority, the indigenous younger generations are more exposed to Western culture and are willing to emulate these practices. For instance, many of the participants reported that wellbeing not only lies in the indigenous cultural aspect, but also in the accessibility to technology, education and health. That is why many of the ISEs created cultural-oriented programmes to strength the loss of indigenous culture in the younger generation. This phenomenon can be confirmed by last the national census, where in many of the indigenous communities, the native language is barely spoken. This paper and in particular the emergence of such findings bring into attention the importance of the hybrid forms of businesses and community's sustainable development.

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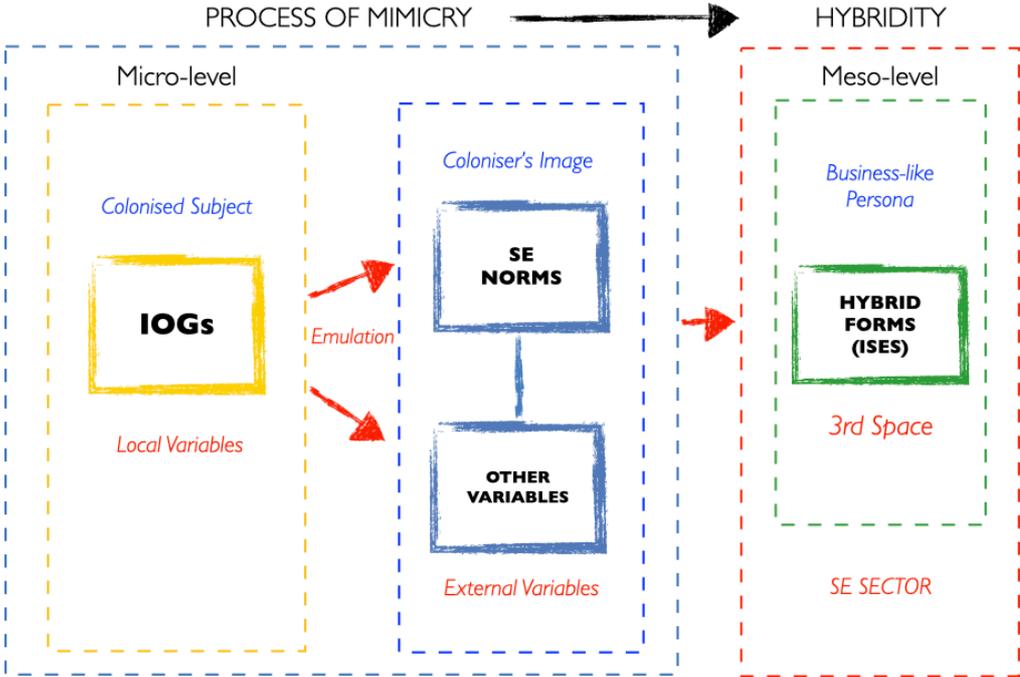
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**Tables and figures.**

**Figure 1.** The process of mimicry and hybridity with ISEs.



**Table 1.** Description of indigenous social entrepreneurship.

Description	Video Link
Indigenous Cooperation Las Delicias	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxVVIW00bTY&amp;feature=youtu.be">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxVVIW00bTY&amp;feature=youtu.be</a>
Milk Cooperative El Paraiso	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VW8SptIcxXc&amp;feature=youtu.be">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VW8SptIcxXc&amp;feature=youtu.be</a>
Akayú	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UcQS_5UntQ&amp;feature=youtu.be">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UcQS_5UntQ&amp;feature=youtu.be</a>
Dugjin Association	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_La31ZvTaE&amp;feature=youtu.be">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_La31ZvTaE&amp;feature=youtu.be</a>
Shiruria Association	<a href="https://youtu.be/xy7IU9sGhu8">https://youtu.be/xy7IU9sGhu8</a>

**Source:** Compiled by the authors

**Table 2.** Summary of the four-stage methodological process.

Stage	Methodological process	Explanation
1	Literature review	A review of secondary data sources
2	Preproduction	Preparation before the fieldwork (workshop material and equipment)
3	Production stage	Data collection
4	Postproduction stage	Video production and closing event

**Source:** Compiled by the authors

**Table 3.** Summary of the PVR activities undertaken (five phases).

Phase	Research method	Explanation
1	Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meetings with the leaders and other stakeholders of each of the ISEs selected for the study.</li> </ul>
2	Opening event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An introductory event.</li> </ul>
3	Video-recorded focus group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A focus group was conducted with each ISE selected.</li> <li>An invitation to participate in the production of videos.</li> </ul>
4	Training workshop about PVR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Role of co-researchers and introduction to PVR.</li> <li>Preproduction, production and postproduction training sessions.</li> <li>Interviews and storyboard plan.</li> </ul>
5	Filming session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Video interviews were conducted with 12 key stakeholders.</li> <li>Filming was carried out in the ISEs location and related activities.</li> </ul>

**Source:** Compiled by the authors

**Table 4.** Stages of Analysis for case study initiatives selected for the study.

Stages	Description of the process
1. Familiarisation of the data	Watching videos from the focus group and semi-structured interviews and other relevant materials (documentary sources, observations and field notes) for each case study.
2. Transcriptions	Creating transcriptions and noting down initial ideas.
3. Identifying and refining nodes in NVivo11.	Identifying and refining nodes by looking at words that were repeated by participants in the word cloud.
4. Spider diagram	The development of themes and subthemes (within case and cross case analysis) to connect this to research objectives and questions.

**Source:** Compiled by the authors

**Table 5.** ISEs' similar statutes.

*The objective of our association is the wellbeing of our members and our community, this is something we have clearly stated and is part of our rules .... that is why we created this association [fiscal, CS3].*

*Our association's rules are made to benefit all of us ... we would not make any rule that could be detrimental to our people nor for the benefit of us as individuals ... as an indigenous community, we are collectively oriented ... all our rules are always made thinking of the wellbeing of others [vice-president, CS4].*

*The legal framework that we have is an association ... registered within the Chamber of Commerce of Rioacha, the department of La Guajira ... We comply with all the requirements that an association needs ... our statutes are made to meet these requirements, but also to meet the needs of our members and our community [president and cofounder, CS5].*

**Table 6.** Organisational structure of the ISEs.

*Our enterprise is owned by the 31 Yanacona communities and is administered by the cabildo that is elected by our people. ... the cabildo appoints a board of directors to manage and operate the enterprise, the board of directors is a team of professionals that is prepared and trained to direct the enterprise... every year a team is renewed if it is needed... but generally the new team of authorities revises the performance of the venture every year and allocates new tasks to either maintain or enhance the performance of the venture [general manager and economic coordinator, CS2].*

*We have been registered as not-for-profit association at the Chamber of Commerce since 2003 .... we had to appoint a board of directors to legally formalise the association.... but this is only a public figure because we all work in all departments if needed, the same hours and help each other... we are all part of a team [president and cofounder, CS3].*

*Despite the fact that tasks are allocated evenly amongst the members of our association .... our community is sometimes also involved.... it is required, because we need to outsource some of the services...that was the commitment with the people here in the resguardo. everybody wins.... also, sometimes we need to report to the cabildo and inform the community of any activity Here, everybody is prepared to do anything ..... we all collaborate in all the areas of the organisation... tasks can be allocating to any of our members.... this is a principle not only of the associates but also our community [member, CS1].*

**Table 7.** Differences in similar business activities amongst the ISEs.

*Our association was created to provide an alternative to the way we were practicing agriculture we realised that we were replicating the mistakes of the White people ...by over working the land, using pesticides and foreign seeds to produce our products, detrimental outcome has been happening, particularly, in health for both, us and the mother earth .... We had to create an alternative project to encourage our members and the Misak community to protect the environment and preserve our natural resources... that is why when there is lack of water, we contacted one of our elders to lead a ritual and 'cultivate water' ... you know, to make the paramo, that is one of our deities, to provide us with the water that is needed [member, CS1].*

*We acknowledge that by making our dairy production more efficient we have to embrace both worlds, the western and our knowledge to improve our productivity... we brought professionals that support us for the operation of the finca and so far, results are quite good.*

**Table 8.** Collective work as a motor to power ISEs.

*For us, the Curripaco .... we work as a community, that is, in solidarity with the whole world ... For example, in terms of food.... there is no worry, when someone hunts something, it is for everyone. So how do we plan? collectively ... for instance, community work, if there is a lot of community work. How do we plan? In the morning, people gather, make the plan and distribute the tasks... The old men meet at six in the morning before going to work. What happens there? Well, everything is known, the activity that men and women will do separately. The women gather also take hot yukuta, migao and there they plan. You already know exactly what they are going to do that day.... we do exactly the same with our organisation, we emulate what our community does [president, VICU2, CS3].*

*Not only do we need to save cash, the money to share or to have things for all people.... For example, we do mingas, and there are times that things can be done without money... for example, in November the minga is done, for the offerings that it is believed that the offerings are made...that is how our organisations operate, by embracing our collective spirit [member, MKFG1.11, CS1].*

*Well, for us collective work is fundamental ... working in a group, in a team to be able to reach the objective that one expects, in terms of organisation.... Talk to the community, we have the same idea practically to be able to reach a future.... collective work not only drives the efficient path of our organisation but the destiny of our community [treasurer, PUEG 1.3, CS4].*

*The collective work that the 31 communities did to start the Finca el Paraiso was crucial to be at the stage that we are today.... this land belongs to all of us, thus we have to protect it and preserve it.... When a big job is needed, we call for mingas of work .... And people have to come... it is a cultural duty... we cannot simply outsource the labour that we need knowing that we've got such communitarian commitment [accountant, YAFG1.5, CS2].*

**Table 9.** Minga of thinking and decision-making process.

*Because our objective is collective, right? To this end we created the organisation ... because we are at the resguardo, we need to respect the resguardo's rules and align our objectives with it, especially because we work within the resguardo .... and always consult the community. Before any decision, we have to propose to them...usually we do, in the morning, every morning we wake up and before the day starts we have a community meeting ... we eat and everything... it is a sort of mingao when we discuss and talk about topics [member, VIPU5, CS4].*

*General assemblies are really important for us .... there we have the opportunity to meet and discuss topics.... Sometimes we take hours to make decisions because it is really important for us that everybody agrees or there are not enough reasons to stop doing things, We make decisions unanimously.... That's why it is so important to make mingas of thinking [member, MKFG1.1, CS1].*

*We call for big mingas when a big job needs to be carried out on our land, we take this opportunity to talk about the community and about the projects that we have in mind....and then we decide collectively... To be honest... we also take opportunities to catch up and meet with others, it is a social event [community member, YAFG1.11, CS2].*

**Table10.** Disadvantages of collective decision-making.

*Gathering and making decisions together is great because it creates community cohesion, as our assemblies take place in community celebrations...but sometimes.... we [referring to the board of directors] struggle to please everybody there is a very fine line in between the social and the economic outcome [general nanager, VIMK1, CS1].*

*We make decisions unanimously, practically .... together we make all the decisions. If there any strong ideas that oppose the idea we proceed ... although we have to say that for now it is fairly simple to handle, as we still are a very small organisation. but we find more difficulties when non-members get involved in the process...you know...we must to include other community members, it is our cultural duty...but sometimes they don't see the whole picture and we take more time than we should explaining things [vice-president, PUFG1.2, CS4].*

*How do we plan and make decisions? in the morning, people gather. The old men meet at six in the morning before going to work. What happens there? Well, everything is known, the activity that men and women will do separately.... the women gather also take hot yukuta, mingao and there they plan. They already know exactly what they are going to do that day, and that they killed last night, the men. And they go to work at*

*communal level it is easier but when you do it at an organisational level.... it is different because there are specific tasks to be performed [general manager, CUFG1.2, CS3].*

**Table 11.** Grant seeking as a strategy for overcoming financial stress.

*If there are available funding opportunities... we are going to take the chance.... we are also dedicated to searching for grant opportunities, locally and internationally.... The cost of development is too high and our business is not making enough money yet to reach a level of economic investment [vice-president, CS4].*

*Grants have helped and may help us to meet our economic needs.... sometimes it is really hard to cope with our financial responsibilities.... and money is something that we always need ... it is not crucial but sometimes infrastructure is needed and we don't have enough financial resources .... In fact, I applied for a national award called mujer Cafam and I won, with the money that we got we invested everything into the organisation.... Also, we have received some help from national and international institutions .... we applied for different grants and we got some of them... we planned to seek those opportunities as we demonstrated that we could manage it perfectly [president and cofounder, CS3].*

*We got a grant in the beginning which help us to kick off our business... in our agenda there is always a point that we must seek for funding opportunities...we don't have a strong 'financial muscle' to invest in other things thus, is really important to seek for these opportunities [president and cofounder, CS5].*