

## **Reviewer -1**

This manuscript makes a meaningful contribution, particularly in the areas of rural mental health, first responder wellbeing, and identity development research. It addresses an under examined but increasingly important topic.

The title communicates the general idea of service-oriented identity and intergenerational influence, but it could be improved: -“Family, Culture, and Community: The Making of Service-Oriented Identities in Rural First Responders” - “Intergenerational Transmission of Service Values in Rural First Responder Families: A Qualitative Ethnographic Study” - “Raised to Serve: Stories of Identity, Family Legacy, and Community in Rural First Responders” - “The Making of a First Responder: Intergenerational Transmission of Service-Oriented Identity in Rural First Responder Families.”

Overall, the English quality of the article is suitable for scholarly communication. Here are some areas that could improve it: -Core themes (family legacy, rural context, service identity) appear multiple times—there could be slight condensation. -A few sentences are extremely long, which may reduce readability. -IRB approval is stated and repeated in both the introduction and the methods sections. There are minor variations in citation style (e.g., sometimes with initials, sometimes without). A few terms could be consistently defined (e.g., service-oriented identity vs. helping identity).

The manuscript is well-structured, coherent, theoretically sound, and methodologically good. Areas of improvement include - Reducing the introduction, which is very long and reads mostly like a “literature review”. -Consolidating citations for efficiency, some are repeated (e.g., Sattler et al., Chapman & Arbon). - Improve the statement of the research gap near the end of the introduction. A more explicit statement would strengthen the justification. -The theoretical frameworks are presented clearly, in depth, and logically. This section is strong but could be better distinguished from the introduction. → A clear header like “Theoretical Framework” early on will help readers recognize the structure. - Consider reducing some repetition in the Theoretical subsections. --The methodology is transparent and ethical. -The phrase “the first dozen interviews” sounds preliminary or unfinished. → It can be reframed as: “This manuscript analyzes an initial subset of interviews from an ongoing project.” -The Procedures section could be better explained. - In the Data Analysis, there is a clear description of thematic coding. However, it would be appropriate to briefly describe how themes were generated (inductive vs. deductive; iterative steps). -Also, were any software used (NVivo, MAXQDA, Dedoose)? -The Results section is very strong. Only recommendations include clearly separating Results vs. Discussion. Also, Subsection formatting could be more consistent for clarity. -Very strong Discussion. Only comments are that some paragraphs repeat earlier concepts (e.g., intergenerational socialization). -Could use a more explicit statement about -The

Implications and Future Directions section could be more concise; some points could be combined. -It could add explicit implications for training academies or leadership development. -The Conclusion could better specify its unique contributions to the literature.

The References are Ok. However, they could benefit by using more recent empirical sources (2020–2025). More literature specific to rural first responders, more scholarly sources on first responder mental health, identity formation, and resilience, and more diversity (beyond a few repeatedly cited authors)