March 31, 2023

Dear Dr. Peter Gittins,

Associate Editor,

*The International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation*

Re: Submission of Revised Manuscript, ID IEI-23-0210

We would like to thank the reviewers for their second thorough and constructive critique of our manuscript, “The pronounced embeddedness of commercial and social entrepreneurship in rural communities.” Their insightful feedback has been instrumental in enhancing the quality of our research.

Following the reviewers’ comments, we have highlighted the research contributions throughout the article. We have also made a clear distinction between entrepreneurship in the village and entrepreneurship in the city. This differentiation is essential for contextualizing our findings within the broader framework of rural entrepreneurship. In addition, due to the word limit, we have attached our answer to Reviewer 1 regarding the coding of findings, which we used to identify themes, to this letter, rather than including this information in full in the manuscript. We briefly mention these codes in the main article body.

According to the reviewers’ recommendations, we have meticulously revised the manuscript and incorporated their suggestions. A comprehensive summary of these revisions accompanies this submission, and the changes within the manuscript are distinctly marked and highlighted for ease of review.

To address the major comments, we summarized the novelty and contributions of this study at the beginning of the “Implications and contributions” section, and we have further elaborated on the study methodology. Following your request, we have edited the article and significantly reduced the number of words in it. However, it remains above the 8,000-word limit as this length is necessary to incorporate all changes in response to the reviewers’ comments. Nevertheless, we believe that the increased depth and rigor of the study justify this.

To improve the manuscript further, we have engaged a professional linguistic editing service, including the reference (Sage Home), thereby ensuring the clarity and coherence of the article.

Following your submission guidelines, we have removed the original files from our submission and have ensured that this revised manuscript was submitted within the 12-week deadline following receipt of the second round of feedback (Feb 13, 2024).

We are confident that these revisions meet the high standards of *The International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation,* and eagerly anticipate the potential inclusion of our work in your esteemed journal.

Thank you for your consideration of our revised manuscript.

Sincerely,

The Authors

Foe easy reading, we have included our updated answers to the reviewers’ comments in tables below.

Reviewer: 1

Thank you for your detailed comments. We have reviewed the article and made corrections accordingly, including adjustments in phrasing and terminology, along with other amendments. Detailed changes are presented below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Comments to the Author - Overall Impression |  |
| This is a much-improved submission. The article flows better but at times the writing could be tighter and phrasing more succinct – this would help reduce the wordcount. You make some interesting observations, but these are mostly points which have already been discussed in extant literature. You state you have ‘novel’ arguments. I would like to these having more prominence throughout your article. Also, check you are using consistent font sizes and referencing formatting throughout. | Thank you for your comment. We have tightened the phrasing throughout our article, which has helped to reduce the word count. We have highlighted the novel findings from the article in the abstract and throughout the text. Following your comment, we have also checked the style and formatting aspects throughout the article. |
| –       Your proposition “We argue that the phenomenon of an entrepreneur’s embeddedness in place is more pronounced in rural localities than in large cities.” Is not a new argument - what is your novel finding/contribution? I would like to see this included in your abstract. | Thank you for your comment. The novel findings and contributions of the article are emphasized throughout, including in the abstract and especially in the subchapter, “Implications and contributions.” In particular, the novelty of this article lies in its exploration of the difference between urban and rural entrepreneurs’ embeddedness, as well as their various services and social activities. |
| –       This section is more focused, better explains the context of your study and your conceptualisations of the key terms. | Thank you for your comment on the introduction. |
| –       These is a conflict in your writing regarding “Warehouses and freight-forwarding centers in villages can take advantage of the proximity and quick access to highways to move goods quickly” (Pg 6 line 7) with “old and decrepit traffic infrastructure that make transport difficult, high transportation costs for supplies and products” (Pg 6 line 30), I would like this to be resolved | Due to our decreased emphasis on the comparison between villages close to and far from the city (changed following the reviewers’ previous comments), we have deleted the sentences that created the conflict noted. |
| –       Hance, should be hence Pg 8 line 31. | Thank you for your comment. We have corrected this error. |
| –       You have included a better explanation of why you chose a phenomenological approach. | Thank you. |
| –       From the expanded table 1 it would be interesting if you could provide your insight into what the demographic trends in the participant cohort tell you, E.g. Older ag profile? | As requested, we have added information concerning the demographics of participants: “Most of the business owners in the sample have families and are between 30 and 50 years of age, and most of the businesses are in the low-tech field, including services, tourism, agriculture, and trade.” In addition, we have calculated the averages of the parameters reviewed, as shown in Table 1. |
| –       When discussing your data analysis, you do not provide information about how many codes and themes emerged, how you arrived at you four themes and how often they occurred during your interviews. You simply state the number of quotes used in the discussion -this is interesting but does not add significant value to your methodology. | In response to your comment, we have added and detailed the coding process by subject and frequency. This is included as Appendix A in this document because of the article’s word limit. In the body of the article, we have detailed the process of analyzing the codes, categories, and themes: “The code frequency analyzed various aspects of business operations, reasons for business establishment, advantages and disadvantages of operating in peripheral areas, nature of community connections, and the entrepreneurs’ perspectives.” |
| –       “The research elucidated the embedded relationship between rural entrepreneurship and community dynamics, showcasing its significant influence on social and economic aspects, as outlined in the studies.” (Pg 21 line 17) - which studies? | Thank you for your comment. The wording has been corrected to clarify that this is a finding from our study. |
| –       Why is your novel finding (Pg 21 line 55) important?  ~~“~~As for the village management, a novel finding emerged from our results that highlighted the mutual relations between the entrepreneur and the village management: the village management encourages the establishment of the business in the village, understanding that the enterprise’s success in addressing the needs of the community residents raises the appeal and allure of that particular village.” | The relationship between the entrepreneur and the village management plays an essential role in the village recovering from economic crisis, and part of the article’s novelty lies in its suggestion that the village administration should encourage entrepreneurship in the village to help it recover from economic crisis. |
| –       “Thus, an entrepreneur in the village can have a vastly different This illustrates the difference in the interaction that an entrepreneur has with people in his village vs. that of an entrepreneur who provides a service in the city” (Pg 23 line 34) this is incomplete - what is vastly different? | The difference is significant between an entrepreneur in the village and an entrepreneur in the city due to all the differences noted throughout the article. This paragraph is mainly intended to explain the economic contribution the rural entrepreneur makes to the village, as will be detailed later. |
| –       “The economic crisis necessitated organizational changes, primarily in privatization, which had profound implications for the rural business landscape. These changes are now collectively shaping the future of rural entrepreneurship” (Pg 24 line 51) the final sentence is an interesting observation, how and why are these changes shaping the future of rural entrepreneurship? | Thank you for your comment. We have included the following text: “Building on the research findings, rural entrepreneurs have a significant impact on recovering from economic crisis in villages, with businesses becoming an income source for both the entrepreneurs and the residents working within them. Opening the village to customer traffic and business owners from outside the inner circle that existed before privatization has initiated organizational and cultural change processes that connect the village to the space outside it, metaphorically shortening the distance between the village and the city. Unlike their urban counterparts, village entrepreneurs play an additional role in developing their community.” |

Reviewer: 2

Thank you for your comments. We have reviewed the article and made corrections accordingly. Detailed changes are presented below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Page & line** | **Comment** | **Correction** |
| 4 | Rural areas | Thank you for your comment. This has been corrected. |
| 5 | Unlike commercial enterprise, social entrepreneurs | Thank you for your comment. This has been corrected. |
| 7 | HANCE | Thank you for your comment. We have deleted this. |
| 8 | Does this paragraph belong here? It is not about SE | You are correct. The paragraph that starts with, “The notion that all rural enterprises add value to the rural economy is challenged by Wilson et al. (2022)…” summarizes the theory and is unrelated to social enterprises. |

Once again, we appreciate the help of the editors and the two anonymous reviewers in enhancing the manuscript.

Sincerely,

The Authors

**Appendix A: Frequency code analysis results**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Code types | Characterization | | | |
| Conceptual codes/subcodes | **Key conceptual domains** | **Frequency** | | |
| Business characteristics | Hospitality and tourism | 7 | | |
| Food production | 3 | | |
| Services | 7 | | |
| Agriculture | 1 | | |
| Consultation | 4 | | |
| Education | 1 | | |
| Reasons for establishing the business | Worked there before | 6 | | |
| A dream they wanted to fulfill | 10 | | |
| Offered to them by the village management | 4 | | |
| Ideology | 3 | | |
| Advantages (+) and disadvantages (–) of living in the periphery (more than one possible answer for each business owner) | Distance from the center (quiet, less pressure, etc.) | +3 | | |
| Lower rental costs | 4+ | | |
| Work within the settlement (less travel) | 7+ | | |
| Close to family | 5+ | | |
| Professional employee | –3 | | |
| Transport costs | –4 | | |
| Support of the region (council) | +3 | | |
| Relationship codes | **Links among conceptual codes/subcodes** | **Frequency** | | |
| Formal connection to the community (contracts, etc.) | 6 | | |
| Informal connection to the community (volunteering, outside of working hours, etc.) | 9 | | |
| Connection to the community not described | 8 | | |
| Participant perspective | **Directional views (positive [+], negative [–], or indifferent) of participants** | **Frequency** | | |
| Related to the local community | 12  (indifferent) | –2 | +8 |
| Related to the surrounding community | 21 (indifferent) | 0 | +2 |
| Compared with the community in the city | 13 (indifferent) | –8 | 0 |

A total of 23 businesses

We believe we have addressed all of your comments, and we thank you again for helping us improve our manuscript.

Sincerely,

The Authors