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Obstacles Confronting Rural Entrepreneurs in Eastern Cape Province of South Africa

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ABSTRACT The study seeks to investigate the challenges facing the rural entrepreneurs in Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The study used both quantitative and qualitative research approaches for the collection of data. Self-administered questionnaires were used to collect information from 42 rural entrepreneurs (owners of small business), 31 entrepreneur employees while face-to-face interviews were conducted with 20 customers. A purposive random sampling technique was used to select the participants. Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were used to analyze quantitative data and qualitative data respectively. The findings of the study revealed that rural entrepreneurs faced numerous challenges, such as lack of finance, poor market access, inadequate infrastructure, inflation, lack of skill labour and insecurity. To address all these identified barriers in the economy of South Africa, there is a need for the government to provide supportive machinery and innovative strategies for all rural entrepreneurs in order to create more employment opportunities and reduce the poverty rate in the country. The study recommends that government and other relevant stakeholders should create conducive environment for rural entrepreneurship growth so that rural entrepreneurship can increase in its efforts for creating more jobs opportunities for societies.