



Challenges and Opportunities in Post-Conflict African Business Environments

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Abstract

Post-conflict African states in South Africa face unique challenges and opportunities for businesses due to historical trauma, political instability, and socioeconomic disparities. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative interviews with quantitative surveys. Data is collected from small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operating in the Eastern Cape and Northern Cape provinces. A notable finding is that SMEs in the Eastern Cape region have demonstrated higher resilience strategies due to more robust community support networks compared to those in the Northern Cape, which has seen less communal investment. The study underscores the critical role of local community engagement and government support in fostering a conducive business environment for post-conflict recovery. Businesses should prioritise building strong partnerships with local communities and engaging with regional governments to enhance their resilience strategies.

Keywords: *Post-Apartheid, Conflict Zones, Economic Development, Entrepreneurship, Community Engagement, Stakeholder Theory, Peacebuilding*

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