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Energy Patterns and Socioeconomic Conditions of Non-electrified Rural Households in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

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ABSTRACT This research paper examines the relationship between energy patterns and socioeconomic conditions in the Upper Blinkwater community. Data from 53 respondents was analysed using Pearson's correlation test. Results showed low education levels among the respondents, with most having completed only primary school. High unemployment rates, low income levels and dependence on social grants were observed. Firewood, LPG gas, paraffin, and candles emerged as the primary energy sources used by the participants. The analysis indicated significant, albeit weak, correlations between education and the use of firewood, as well as household income and the use of a diesel generator. This suggests that the community's existing energy patterns alone may not be solely responsible for their poor socioeconomic conditions. Therefore, a comprehensive approach that acknowledges the complex relationship between energy access, living conditions, and the multifaceted factors influencing energy choices, ultimately aiming to enhance community well-being is crucial.