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PHILANTHROPY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN SOUTH AFRICA: ADDRESSING UNDERLYING CAUSES OR MITIGATING IMPACT?

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ABSTRACT

In this Masters Research Report, I argue that different conceptual frameworks play a central role in influencing whether and why independent funders in South Africa choose to engage in either social justice philanthropy or traditional philanthropy. Based on documentary analysis and in-depth interviews with a sample population of independent funders and experts in the philanthropic field in South Africa, this research first puts forward a different understanding of social justice philanthropy, from a South African perspective. Based on this understanding, the research then reflects that the way in which independent funders conceptualise and operationalize the reasons why they do the work they do and their roles in relation to other development role players are the central elements that influence the nature and scope of the funding approaches, priorities and strategies that they adopt.

Keywords: social justice philanthropy; traditional philanthropy; structural change; contextual factors; grant making; charity; funders; South Africa; conceptual frameworks.