



# Ramosoeu Sekati



**University of the Witwatersrand**



**Funding: Parents**

## More about Ramosoeu

**Favourite subjects:** Corporate Finance and Investments.

**Interests:** Technology, finance, entrepreneurship and fitness.

**Community activity:** Helping academically excluded students draft appeals to Wits Readmissions Committee; helping organise clothing drive to provide underprivileged students with formal attire.

**Inspired by:** Steve Jobs, American businessman best known for co-founding Apple.

**Main achievements:** Elected deputy chair of Wits School of Business Sciences Student Council; led team to victory in Institute of Risk Management South Africa's University Risk Management Challenge.

**What I love/hate about South Africa:** I dislike the slow economic growth which leads to high unemployment and few opportunities for young people; I love the entrepreneurial spirit of many South Africans.

**In 10 years' time I see myself...** running a successful tech or finance company, creating solutions that solve real problems.

## ESSAY SYNOPSIS

Although tariffs are often promoted as tools to protect domestic industries, preserve jobs and generate employment, Ramoseou argues that they provide short-term relief at the cost of long-term inefficiency, higher input prices and diminished competitiveness.

Developing countries may need temporary protection to allow young industries to reach scale and competitiveness, but such protection frequently becomes permanent and counterproductive. Studies from Latin America, Turkey and Brazil show that protected sectors often stagnate, fall behind technologically and fail to improve productivity.

Short-term employment gains from tariffs arise when imports become more expensive and consumers shift to locally produced goods, creating temporary demand for domestic labour. Yet research shows that these gains are offset by losses elsewhere, for example, protective steel tariffs, which aim to support upstream producers and preserve jobs, raise input costs for downstream sectors such as construction, automotive manufacturing and renewable energy.

Experiences in India and Brazil show how retaliatory tariffs (placed on imported goods by one country to punish another for imposing tariffs on its own exports) can harm labour-intensive sectors, disrupt supply chains and contract export earnings.

The broad lesson is that tariffs carry significant economic and political risks, and are a limited and often counterproductive tool for employment creation. Sustainable job growth for South Africa depends not on shielding industries from global competition but on strengthening competitiveness within.