

## NEWS FROM:

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### **UCT research makes case for protecting contract workers**

There is a growing trend among South African firms to contract work out to miners, truck drivers, construction workers and clothing machinists, and to treat these contract workers as self-employed rather than staff workers under labour law. Many of these “self-employed” workers in turn employ others to help them complete a job. Research by Pamhidzai Bamu, a PhD graduand in Commercial Law at the University of Cape Town, broadly considers the development of this informal and precarious work in a global context

Bamu’s thesis, *Contracting work out to self-employed workers: Does South African law adequately recognise and regulate this practice?*, makes a case for robust legislation to provide adequate protection to vulnerable workers in these arrangements. She finds that South African law does not adequately regulate firms’ attempts to exclude the application of labour law from work that is contracted out.

Bamu’s thesis questions claims that such a practice empowers ordinary workers and advances South Africa’s black economic empowerment and small enterprise development policies. Demonstrating that the practice is driven by firms’ quest for flexibility and the desire to evade obligations as employers and cut their labour costs, it argues that South African law does not adequately regulate such firms’ labour practices.

Bamu completed her LLB and LLM (Labour Law) at UCT in 2004 and 2006, respectively. She registered for her PhD in 2008 and since then has worked as a researcher in the Law Faculty’s Institute of Development and Labour Law. Her supervisor is Professor Evance Kalula at UCT.

***ENDS***

**Please note:** Information in this release is based on the supervisor’s citation for the PhD thesis. UCT advises journalists to obtain a copy of the thesis and/or interview the PhD graduate to verify and expand on this information.

**Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department**

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