

Youth study vindicates SA's labour brokers

A study about young job seekers has found that temporary employment services - usually referred to as labour brokers - play a big role in helping unskilled and inexperienced workers find employment.

The study by the Centre for Development Enterprise found labour brokers were most useful to those whose link to the labour market was particularly tenuous.

"Temporary employment services may help bring excluded households and workers into the economy. In doing so, they help make our economy more inclusive," it said. Banning labour brokers - as advocated by the Congress of South African Trade Unions - would reduce access to the labour market for the most excluded, it said.

Researchers said they found no evidence that people employed by labour brokers earned wages significantly lower than was typical or were employed in sectors of the economy considered less desirable.

The research assessed more than 10 000 people registered with SA's largest temporary employment services firm, Adcorp. It also examined several government-run and statutory agencies, such as the sector education and training authorities (Setas) and the National Youth Development Agency.

The study showed most young people got their first jobs from information from family or friends, sending out CVs and responding to advertisements. Young people in households where no one worked had a slim chance of finding jobs unless they got help.

An examination of the Setas, which had put 10 000 people through learnerships, found that although most of their candidates found jobs, they would have found work anyway. The success of Setas in the financial sector was mostly responsible for the trend.

Source: *Business Day* via I-Net Bridge