

**School Drop-out and Success in the Trades:
A Paradox or a Reality of South African Youths?**

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ABSTRACT This article reports on the success of the drop-out youths in the trades who, during their school days were classified as being incapable of engaging successfully with academic school work. This paper interrogates how these youths, who have been labelled as "slow learners", offer services to the labour market when they grow older. Therefore, this paper, which is a qualitative case study of ten youths who dropped out of school system in the rural areas of the North West province, examines the theory of multiple intelligences (MI) and unique characteristics of these learners. It also examines the route and/or process that these formal school education failures take to finally end up as drop-outs, and what they do thereafter. Through participants' stories in this paper, drop-outs' lives have narratives with themes of their formal school experiences and their out-of-school experiences. The findings bring out the success stories of these drop-outs.