YOUNG & RESILIENT RESEARCH CENTRE

Y&R 2025 SEMINAR SERIES

11 June: Dr Joshua Kalemba

Lecture in Youth Work, School of Social Sciences, Western Sydney University

Coloniality non/belonging and aspirations of racialised migrant youth



This presentation is based on a recently published paper and draws on a broader research project that explores the experiences of migrant Black African youth in the deindustrialising city of Newcastle, Australia. Drawing on the experiences of 20 young people who migrated to Newcastle under various circumstances as international students, dependants of skilled migrants or refugees, I explore how these young people navigate racialised exclusion and construct a sense of belonging. I show how young people with temporary residency reported a heightened sense of non-belonging due to restricted citizenship rights, limited access to resources and precarious work conditions. However, exclusion was not confined to visa status. Those with citizenship rights also faced racialised barriers, particularly in the labour market, which constrained their opportunities and undermined their aspirations for the future. Despite these challenges, young people demonstrated resilience and agency in resisting the effects of coloniality. They pursued education, contributed to their communities and fostered connections through family and kinship. While some hoped to return to their countries of origin, others sought to build a meaningful sense of belonging in Australia or elsewhere. This presentation highlights the enduring impact of coloniality on exclusion and aspirations while showcasing the resilience of racialised migrant youth.

Biography

Dr Joshua Kalemba's research explores the labour market trajectories of young racialised and migrant youth, focusing on how changing labour markets, driven by processes like deindustrialisation and their engagement with new forms of work like digitally mediated labour, shape their labour market experiences, sense of non/belonging and aspirations for the future. Joshua is currently writing his first monograph, Anti-Black Racism and Labour Market Experiences of Migrant Black African Youth: Race, Racialisation, Belonging and Aspirations in Newcastle's De-Industrialising Economy, to be published in the Perspectives on Children and Young People series by Springer.

11 June, 12:00 to 1:00 PM

Parramatta South EZ.1.57 & online

Lunch will be provided