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The 'Culturally and Linguistically Diverse' (CALD) label: A critique using African migrants as exemplar

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Abstract

This article critiques the widely accepted official label 'Culturally and Linguistically Diverse' (CALD), used in Australia to refer mainly to Australia's non-Indigenous ethnic groups other than the English-speaking Anglo-Saxon majority. Our main contention is that it is a racialised and racialising label that perpetuates institutional racism, providing a conceptual excuse for legitimising privilege and altruistic governmentality over minority groups, while inferiorising and projecting these groups as an analogous population who need 'fixing'. The article draws on the sociological construct of labelling, through which we analyse the framing of CALD people in the literature as 'deviants' using Black African Migrants in Australia as exemplars. We propose that CALD labelling is counterproductive because it hinders social integration, divides people into 'us and them', homogenises, blurs particular lived experiences and needs, and ignores intersectional issues.

Introduction

In Australia, the term 'Culturally and Linguistically Diverse' (CALD) is a widely accepted and institutionalised label that is used in political, government, research and popular discourse to refer to non-English-speaking and non-Anglo-Saxon minority groups (other than indigenous Australians). Adopted in the 1990s to replace an even more problematic label 'non-English Speaking Background (NESB)', the CALD label is rarely critiqued but rather, is used un-problematically. In our view, the CALD label, however subtly and inadvertently, frames minority groups in Australia as "deviants".

In this article, we analyse how as a label, CALD others, racially profiles, stereotypes, homogenises and inferiorises minority groups to whom the label is applied. We argue that CALD labelling not only reinforces institutional racism in Australia, but also informs lived experiences of racism. People from CALD communities have been found to be more likely to be victims of racist attacks than Anglo-Australians (see for example: Dunn, Pelleri and Maeder-Han, 2011; Shepherd, 2016). Shepherd's (2016) research found that two of every three persons from a CALD background reported that they had experienced racist behaviour in the twelve months preceding the survey, evidence which confirms the treatment of CALD groups as 'different'.

Using Black African migrants in Australia as exemplars, the article highlights that the CALD label (1) is a racist label that overtly divides people into 'us and them', (2) provides conceptual pretext for legitimising institutional racism against non-English-speaking and non-Anglo-Saxon minority groups, and (3) inferiorises migrant communities, projecting the image of an analogous population—despite being glaringly heterogeneous—who need 'fixing'. Being a racist tag, we argue further that the continued use of the CALD label in Australia has the potential to hinder social integration.

To highlight the shortcomings and racializing nature of the label CALD, the article is informed by the sociological theory of labelling. Labelling theory is traceable to Emil Durkheim, who linked labelling to "deviance" (difference), explaining how social order and stability is maintained in society (Durkheim, 1938). Labelling theory reached its zenith in the 1960s and early 1970s, when its intellectual roots were rejuvenated from 'symbolic interactionism', which focuses on how people construct, interpret and give meaning to their behaviour through their interaction with others. Edwin Lemert examined the concept of 'deviance' in his book *Social Pathology* (1951), and argued that deviance is the product of society's reaction to an act and the attachment of a label to the individual (Lemert, 1951). Lemert stated that deviations are not significant until they are subjectively organised and transformed into active roles and become the social criteria for assigning status.

In his ground-breaking book, *Outsiders*, Becker regarded deviance as a social construct, created through social interaction when certain behaviours or groups of people who violated mainstream laws were labelled as deviant by social institutions such as the police, courts and mental health authorities (Myers, 2002). Labelling theory has been used in several academic fields, for example, in psychiatry as an instrument of social control to constrain the actions of 'difficult' individuals and social groups (Germov, 2014). Becker argued that labelling is perpetrated through rules, which often begin as

abstract values devised as a response to perceived trouble or threat. Once a label is created, it is enforced through ‘moral enterprise’ and institutionalised through usage and publicity. It is also used to promote hegemonic values and dominance to inferiorise minority groups (Foucault, 1978; Marshall, Douglas, and McDonnell, 2007; Zelinka, 1996).

In this context, applying principles from labelling theory to our analyses in this paper allows us to demonstrate how CALD as a label is also rooted in the concept of ‘deviance’, i.e. that people can be labelled as being deviant, or culturally different, or unfairly stereotyped as dangerous, because of their skin colour, language or religion. Since deviance is a social construction, it is not the act itself, but the hostile societal reactions that creates serious deviance. Consequently, it can be argued that the institutionalisation of labels, such as CALD, is an endorsement of racist societal reactions towards migrants in Australian society.

A brief history of institutional racist policies and labelling in Australia

In order to contextualise the discussions in this article, a brief overview of Australia’s history of institutional racism and labelling is necessary (see Bolt, 2001; Henry, Houston and Mooney, 2004). Australia passed the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*, which ushered in the ‘White Australia Policy’ (WAP) (see for example, Tavan 2004, p. 111). As an immigration and nationalist policy, the WAP reflected Australia’s aspiration to maintain a ‘White’ British character and create “a homogenised Australian identity” (Babacan, Gopalkrishnan and Babacan, 2009, p.63; see also Tavan, 2004)¹. While the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* did not cite race specifically, in principle, it sought to outlaw the permanent settlement of Asians, [Black] Africans and other coloured races, in Section 3(a), which stated that:

The immigration into the Commonwealth of the persons described in any of the following paragraphs of this section (hereinafter called “prohibited immigrants”) is prohibited, namely (a) Any person who when asked to do so by an officer fails to write out at dictation and sign in the presence of the officer a passage of fifty words in length in an European language directed by the officer.

The WAP was progressively relaxed after the Second World War, although the emphasis on European immigration continued until 1966

¹A recent biennial study, the Barometer,¹ revealed that 57% of Indigenous people and 39% of the general community agree that Australia is an institutionally racist country (Reconciliation Australia. 2016).

(Centre for Dialogue, 2011). While the WAP was abolished officially in 1973, many scholars have argued that it did not eradicate institutional racism against non-English-speaking and non-Anglo-Saxon minority groups (see Bolt, 2001). While the WAP was condemned internationally as racist, two ex-Prime Ministers of Australia respectively hailed the WAP as the “greatest thing we have achieved” (William Morris Hughes 1915–1923), and another claimed that, “This country [Australia] shall remain forever the home of the descendants of those people who came here in peace in order to establish in the South Seas an outpost of the British race” (John Curtin, 1941–1945) (Department of Immigration and Border Protection, n.d.)

The abolition of the WAP was partly influenced by the increasing migration of non-European settlers into Australia between 1966 and 1971, and the eventual migration of several Black Africans into the country (Jupp, 2002; Jakubowicz, 2010; Southphommasane, 2012)². To our knowledge, there is no publically available statistical data on Black African migrants in Australia (BAMIA). This is because Australia does not collect data on ‘race’ or racial background/identification. However, Australia’s 2016 population census revealed that 317,182 people were born in sub-Saharan Africa, representing 5.1% of the population born overseas (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017). BAMIA form part of the three broad categories of Africans living in Australia, comprising Caucasian Africans—”White Africans” mainly from South Africa and Zimbabwe—and North Africans (see Adusei-Asante, 2018). Within the BAMIA population five subcategories exist: (1) middle class professionals, (2) humanitarian entrants, (3) family reunion entrants, (4) international students, and (5) Australian-born Africans (see Adusei-Asante, 2018; Hugo 2009; Jakubowicz, 2010).

The ‘opening’ up of immigration to non-white non-European immigrants heralded the era of multiculturalism in Australia in the 1970s. Multiculturalism replaced ‘assimilation’ and ‘integration’ policies of the 1940/1950s and 1960s respectively. Assimilation policies required newly arrived migrants-labelled ‘New Australians’ to remove traces of their former identities and quickly become like other Australians, including learning the English language. The integration schemes of the 1960’s encouraged migrants to maintain links to their nationalities and past cultures on condition that they were found to be non-threatening (Henry and Kurzak, 2013; Jupp, 2002; Southphommasane, 2012; Markus, Jupp and McDonald, 2009; Koleth,

²The abolition of the WAP was also motivated mainly by Australia’s interest in recruiting ‘distinguished non-Europeans’ or ‘highly skilled immigrants’, especially for the burgeoning mining industry and in light of the repercussions of the Second World War (see Jakubowicz, 2010).

2010). The promotion of multiculturalism brought about the need for tolerance and respect for other cultures and the importance of recognising difference, inclusive diversity and the necessity of meeting the needs of migrants (Henry and Kurzak, 2013). Multiculturalism in Australia has been given impetus by various landmark events and reports³, although it also led to the emergence of racist labels such as the tag “Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)”.

The CALD Label: Background and Conceptual Flaws

The Office of Multicultural Interests describes CALD people as “groups and individuals who differ according to religion, race, language and ethnicity, except those whose ancestry is Anglo Saxon, Anglo Celtic, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (2009, p.1).” The CALD label replaced the label “Non-English Speaking Background” (NESB). The NESB label was introduced in the 1970s, and remained in common use in research, practice and policy discourses until the Ministerial Council of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (MCMIA) initiated dropping it from official communications in favour of CALD (Markus et al., 2009). Although Marcus et al. (2009) regarded NESB as more sensible than CALD, the MCMIA identified four problems with the NESB label, considering that it had (i) conflicting meanings, (ii) grouped those who were relatively disadvantaged with those who were not disadvantaged, (iii) was unable to separately identify the many cultural and linguistic groups in Australia, and (iv) developed negative connotations. According to Sawrikar and Katz (2009) there was also concerns that NESB became a proxy for the ‘non-Anglo Saxon other’.

The MCMIA’s preference for CALD was influenced by arguments that the label (i) does not demarcate based on what people are not, as opposed to NESB, which developed negative connotations because it distinguishes based on non-English-speaking heritage; (ii) draws attention to both the linguistic and cultural characteristics of minority ethnic groups, and unconsciously highlights that any barriers or disadvantages they experience relate to these two factors; and (iii) does not have any explicit criterion to define membership, and is therefore, flexible and adaptive to be inclusive of

³These include but are not limited to the (1) Galbally Report of 1978 which reviewed post-arrival programs and services for migrants; (2) Hawke Government’s National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia, which established principles and values underpinning multicultural policy; (3) Launch of the ‘The People of Australia’ under Prime Minister Julia Gillard, which reaffirmed support for multiculturalism (see Henry and Kurzak, 2013).

any and all ethnic groups. The Queensland Government declared that the label CALD was more inclusive, and reflects the diversity of the entire population (Queensland Government, 2010).

However, some scholars have pointed out weaknesses inherent in the CALD label. Marcus et al. (2009) for example, argued that the label is used exclusively to refer to non-English people, and gives a false impression that people from English-speaking backgrounds are not culturally diverse and monolingual. Arguing within the framework of relational exclusion, Sawrikar and Katz (2009) also pointed out that CALD has conflicting definitions that can lead to a sense of social exclusion (Sawrikar and Katz, 2009). The authors asserted further that the CALD tag highlights the fact that groups may differ from the majority because of linguistic and cultural differences, legitimising the implementation of so-called CALD-specific crime prevention programs, for example, as though they were an analogous collective (Bartels, 2011; Gwukuba, 2018).

In this light, whereas the CALD label “can conveniently include the White majority when describing and celebrating Australia’s multicultural milieu, for the most part, it [refers categorically] only to minorities” (Sawrikar and Katz, 2009 p. 5). The consequence of this malleability is an erroneous view that the “Anglo Saxon majority are either considered to not be a cultural or linguistic group, or that their cultural or linguistic diversity is not ‘sufficient’ to warrant being part of CALD” (Sawrikar and Katz, 2009). The word ‘diverse’ in the label CALD, has also criticised for the reason that it “carries an emotive valence for people which the factual ‘language in country of origin’ does not” (Sawrikar and Katz, 2009 p. 5). The authors argued further that:

CALD’s acknowledgment of the uniqueness of different (minority) groups detracts from the fact that in its common use, the label still refers to the same groups as NESB – those who are different from the majority; it is simply less transparent about the fact that there is a majority from which others are seen to differ. (Sawrikar and Katz, 2009, p. 6).

It has also been argued that, while the CALD label provides opportunities for understanding common challenges, the label has the potential to mask the disparity in access to opportunities between ethnic and minority groups (Babacan, 2005; Sawrikar and Katz, 2009). This may stem from the deliberate policy of some organisations to not routinely collect data on instances of racialised disadvantage in access to services and opportunities (Sawrikar and Katz, 2009). The authors argued further that the inclusion of

‘culture’ in the label CALD is conceptually risky, because it ignores cultural differences in minority groups and may increase the effect of stereotyping. Given the limitations of the CALD and NESB labels, Sawrikar and Katz proposed the alternative label ‘Australians Ethnically Diverse and Different from the Majority’ (AEDDM), but quickly conceded that the proposed acronym was too long, and had racist tendencies, particularly with the inclusion of the label ‘ethnic’ (Sawrikar and Katz, 2009).

Notwithstanding the associated conceptual challenges identified above, the CALD label has been institutionalised in Australia. Although rarely used in everyday conversational discourses, CALD is a label of choice used by government departments. It dominates in policy circles, appears in reports and other publications and is used uncritically by professionals working in academia, health and education sectors, law enforcement and criminal justice agencies and community as an ‘inclusive’ label to categorise Australia’s non-Indigenous ethnic groups other than the English-speaking Anglo-Saxon majority (Queensland Government, 2010; Hugo, McDougall, Tan, and Feist, 2014). The label has also enhanced professionalisation of the community sector in Australia, offering employment and the emergence of CALD-experts (AIFS, 2015; Hugo et al., 2014; Queensland Government, 2010).

Furthermore, we acknowledge neoliberalist views that support categorisation of people to meet their needs collectively, as opposed to meeting their individual needs in the face of tight budget constraints (Bartels, 2011). We are also aware of the ‘convenience argument’ that no label would perfectly suit or encapsulate all groups. Government program for ‘CALD people’ that have yielded positive outcomes in some cases are also recognised (Hancock, Cooper and Bahn, 2009). However, we provide several instances of the pejorative use of CALD, and argue that the CALD label is doing damage to non-English-speaking Anglo-Saxon minority groups.

Representation of CALD Communities

In Australian literature and public discourse, CALD people are in the main, presented in a deficit-focussed framework, i.e. mainly as ‘a problem or residents in need’. This characterisation is sometimes conceptually electroplated as altruism and requests for the government to address the identified needs. The issues faced by CALD groups are portrayed as “diverse and complex, including lack of employment, discrimination, prejudice, social isolation and disenfranchisement, lack of understanding of Australian laws and justice system” (Bartels, 2011, p. 2; see also Crawford, 2013; Queensland Government, 2010). While we do not deny the existence of the so-called ‘needs’ of CALD groups, our contention is against the tendency to frame

them as emanating from having diverse (read as ‘problematic’) cultures and limited proficiency in speaking, reading and writing the English language (Ben-Porat, 2008; Crawford, 2013). We argue that the emphasis on culture and language provides a conceptual excuse for the depreciatory depiction of CALD groups as (1) ‘deviants’ — i.e. less intelligent, other, difficult to work with, not proactive, needing support and uncooperative — ostensibly because they “have limited English language abilities” and “non-western cultural practices” (Lorig, Ritter, and Jacquez, 2005; Williams, Manias, Liew, Gock, and Gorelik; 2012); and (2) being unable to assimilate into broader Australian culture (see Bartels, 2011; FECCA, 2010; Hugo et al., 2014).

Other scholars have characterised CALD people as (1) being noticeably different physically in appearance and apparel; having religious and cultural norms that are unique from those of mainstream Australia (Bartels, 2011; FECCA, 2010; Gwukaba, 2018); (2) suffering from undiagnosed trauma, grief for loved ones who died during wars and the anxiety for loved ones displaced by war (see Bartels, 2011; Gwukaba, 2018); and (3) carrying tensions which began from their home countries (Crawford, 2013). Aside from the above mentioned generic scornful and derogatory characterisation of CALD groups, specific exemplars of the othering, deviant-speak, outsider framing, and racial profiling, the homogenisation and vilification of CALD abound in the medical literature, education sector and public discourse on crimes and violence. We discuss these using BAMIA as cases in point.

Medical literature

Racial vilification and generalisation of CALD groups in Australia is prevalent in the medical literature. For instance, Williams et al. (2012) cited Lorig et al. (2005) to argue that CALD groups have an increased risk of medication mismanagement and are often excluded from intervention studies. However, analysis of the evidence in Lorig et al. (2005) suggested that the studies were conducted with a cross section of people from Chinese, Italian, Vietnamese, Greek and Spanish backgrounds. Thus, while the CALD label is presented as an inclusive label in official circles, several CALD groups (including African Australians) were not part of this research cohort, but have been vilified by the unfounded generalised statement. Furthermore, although Williams et al. (2012) conceded that the “intervention was translated and interpreters were used, [and that] cultural sensitivity may not have been adequate in this study”, the researchers consistently quoted sources that represented CALD people negatively in their publication, referring to them as having “limited health literacy”, having “a high risk of medication mismanagement and nonadherence”, being [“difficult to work with”] and

implying that CALD people were ignorant and unwilling to give back. Such pathological and deficient representations of CALD patients and nurses is common in the medical literature (see for example, Caperchione, Kolt and Mummery, 2009; Choi et al., 2012; Cioffi, 2003; O'Driscoll, et al. 2014; Rao, Warburton, and Bartlett, 2006).

The above discussion exposes the inherent contradiction of the CALD label. On the one hand it homogenises CALD groups while its practical application excludes certain groups. In our view the CALD label creates association of 'CALDness' with 'sameness' without recourse to 'skin colour' and intersectional issues. For example, while humanitarian settlers from Bosnia (ex-Yugoslavs) and Sudan are effectively 'CALD refugees', as portrayed in Gorman, Brough and Ramirez (2003), it cannot be argued that they have similar experiences in Australia. Several scholars have argued that skin colour matters in Australia and plays a significant role in opportunities or the lack thereof, for Black Africans in particular. Drawing on the experiences of BAMIA in the States of New South Wales and Victoria, Mapedzahama and Kwansah-Aidoo (2017) argued that blackness in Australia is othered not only as 'inferior' but also as 'burdensome'. The authors argued that "Blackness is not merely about skin color, but a social construct persistently conceived of as an opposition to whiteness" (p.1). Thus while El-Gack and Yak's (2016; see also Abur and Spaaij, 2016; Wickramaarachchi and Burns, 2016) study found that Sudanese refugees with Australian higher education qualifications are under and unemployed, Colic-Peisker (2005) argued that, as the preferred humanitarian immigrants because of their "whiteness" and "Europeanness", Bosnian [ex-Yugoslavs] refugees were effectively excluded from the 'burden' associated with blackness in Australia. Colic-Peisker asserted that, deemed to have the "right colour", ex-Yugoslav refugees were regarded by the general Australian public to be a good blend into the "White Australian" population and had greater resettlement-potential (2005). Our contention is that while the label homogenises CALD people, some CALD groups have different experiences based on skin colour. Therefore, some CALD groups are attributed "insider status" (white groups or those who can "racially pass" as white), others and their suburbs are often criminalized (Nolan, Farquharson, Politoff, and Marjoribanks, 2011).

Criminalisation of CALD people and their suburbs

Research has shown that the majority of people who identify as Africans in Australia live in low socio-economic status suburbs (see for example: Briddle, 2013). Windle (2008) argued that the suburbs where BAMIA live

are depicted as being besieged by ‘outsiders’ and are ‘cut off from the city’. Further, these suburbs are variously labelled as “no-go zones”, (Mitchell, 2007, p. 25); “African, Asian and Polynesian strongholds”; “hotspots” and “hotbeds” for “youth violence and ethnic tensions” (Lloyd-McDonald, 2007, p.3). Such sentiments are highlighted for example, in Carly Crawford’s Herald Sun article (2007), where she reports a 75-year-old widow, ‘a local’, as lamenting that before the invasion (by African migrants), “the area used to be ‘lovely’” (Crawford, 2007, p.4). Suburbs where BAMIA live, such as Balga, Koondoola, Mirrabooka and Girrawheen in Perth, Blacktown in Sydney, and Melbourne’s Dandenong, have gained notoriety via the calumny of the media.

Perceptions of these suburbs have created stereotypical tendencies that associate low socio-economic status with inferiority, affecting the value of real estate and resulting in a constant police presence (Pawson, Hulse and Cheshire, 2015). In their *Submission to the Victorian Police Inquiry*, the Australian Communities and Foundation Australia and Youth Support Advocacy Service reiterated the racial profiling and criminalisation of Africans in the State of Victoria (Australian Communities and Foundation Australia and Youth Support Advocacy Service, 2013). The African advocacy organisation argued that Blackness is associated with criminal behaviour, resulting in police officers unfairly targeting BAMIA (Wickramaarachchi and Burns, 2016).

In our assessment, the need to give the ‘no-go zones’ ‘a new image’ in Perth’s (Western Australia) northern suburbs influenced the implementation of ‘The New North’ project in the 1990s, which included renaming some ethnic-stigmatised suburbs, to more Anglo-Saxon sounding ones. An example was the creation of ‘Westminster’ out of ‘Balga’. Regarded by the Government of Western Australia as “one of the largest and most successful urban renewal projects ever undertaken in Australia”, this project has seen the application of so-called urban renewal approaches, which have “transformed the suburbs of Balga, Koondoola, Girrawheen and Westminster into strong and vibrant communities offering residents a highly desirable lifestyle in some of Perth’s best located suburbs (Government of WA, 2016).

The deviance discourse associated with the CALD label also feeds the distrusts that can often lead to targeting and surveillance and patrol of BAMIA and their suburbs by authorities such as Australian police. African youth have, in particular been the victims of these tendencies, for example when traveling together in groups, either in cars, or on the streets (FECCA, 2010). Seidel and Hopkins (2013) reported that while African young men were underrepresented in the crime statistics, they were about 2.5 times more

likely to be stopped and searched by the police in the Flemington and North Melbourne suburbs. Haile-Michael and Issa (2015) studied the Victoria police and CALD relations and frequent targeting of Black Africans. The authors cited the Victorian Police's 'Operation Molto' which mandated the Police to stop and search African youth in the Flemington suburbs under the pretext of addressing crime violence in the area. Black Africans and Sudanese in Melbourne reported being harassed and assaulted by Victoria Police. The African youth lodged a legal case against Victoria Police citing "140 incidents of police mistreatment, and systemic pattern of racial profiling, which breached the Racial Discrimination Act 1975" (Haile-Michael and Issa, 2015, p. 9). The Victoria Police negotiated an out of court settlement with the Sudanese youth in February 2013, bringing an end to targeted stop and search operations policing in the Flemington area (Haile-Michael and Issa, 2015).

Another example of the negative consequences of institutionalised labelling can be seen in incidents of police brutalities meted out to members of South Sudanese communities in Western Australia (WA) (see: Edwards, 2005). The WA Police reportedly continue to target South Sudanese youth in several instances, leading to clashes between the youths in the Mirrabooka area (Gwukuba, 2018). African youth criticised the police for unfairly targeting them with hefty fines for offences they did not commit, and failing to attend to their matters. Gwukuba (2018) further notes that the relationship between the two parties frosted to the point of being reported in the media as reaching "a time bomb ticking mode". Windle argued that media reports of African youth "reveal the adaptation of pre-existing institutional racism and racialising narrative frames to a new target in Australia", and further that such "xenophobic discourses function as tools of social power [via] the construction of narratives through the selection, ordering and manipulation of perspectives and experiences to produce a particular ideological meaning" (2008, p. 554). Likewise, Pickering (2001) argued that the views promulgated by the Australian government about African refugees relate to "deviancy", 'inclusion' and "exclusion", embedded in the language of common sense reproduced and sustained by the media (see Marshall et al., 2007). Gatt (2011, pp. 210, 213) argued further that the Australian government and the media deliberately construct the narrative about the:

... increased involvement [of Africans] in crime to justify the government's policy responses...to create public acceptance of such policies, and additionally for political gain...[such as] justify[ing] a 'tough' stance on immigration issues.

Based on unfounded and sometimes isolated cases, Sudanese have been associated with violence in Australia (Nolan et al. 2011; Hanson-Easey, Augoustinos and Moloney, 2014). The Australian government's response to and the media reporting of the tragic death of the 19-year-old Sudanese Liep Gony on 28 September 2007 in Victoria is a case in point. According to Gatt, before this incident, the media across Victoria had been regularly reporting on a Sudanese ethnic crime wave, involving youth gangs (Gatt, 2011). Following the news of Liep's death, the Minister for Immigration at the time, Kevin Andrews, announced that Australia would suspend the intake of refugees from Sudan because they did not seem to have "settled" and "adjusted into the Australian culture" (Gatt, 2011). It was later found that Liep's killers were Caucasian. The minister offered no apology.

The CALD label does not only homogenise various groups of migrants, it does so even more strongly for African migrants and this is a problem because there are law-abiding Sudanese-Australians and non-Sudanese Black Australian residents. In our opinion, ignorance of the differences among BAMIA have tended to lead to the 'Sudanisation' of Black Africans in Australia. Personal experiences of the authors and communication with Australian residents show that Black African people are constantly asked in public spaces, "Are you from Sudan" or "are you a refugee?" The apparent 'Sudanisation' of Black Africans in Australia suggests that (common) knowledge of the African continent (comprising 54 separate [distinctively independent] countries) is either low in Australia or there is a deliberate attempt to inferiorise and deepen the burden of blackness of BAMIA.

Education sector

CALD students in educational institutions in Australia have been reported as performing poorly academically. Walker, Batchelor and Shore's (2009) systematic review of the literature on the effects of education and cultural background on a number of intelligence and memory tests found lower performance among CALD groups in Australia, and concluded that the lower performance was attributable to culture (Walker, Batchelor and Shores, 2009). In other words, the measurement of the intelligence of CALD students is based on their (in)ability to relate to Anglo-Saxon culture and language. Walker et al. argued further that "cultural effects" on CALD educational outcomes were greater if cultural background was divergent from English language and Western culture, had fled war and experienced physical and psychological trauma or had limited or no formal education.

Chamberlain (2005) described a variety of ways that culture influences interactions between teachers and students from CALD backgrounds. The

author argued that culture clashes are found in assessment processes, particularly if teachers and educational diagnosticians collect and misinterpret the explanations for their students' learning problems. It has been established that a validated predictor of second language students' achievement in English language is building on the students' native language (see Thomas and Collier, 1997). However, such bilingual programs seem to be non-existent in Australian schools. Chamberlain (2005) argued therefore, that, the misrepresentation of CALD students is partly to blame for their overrepresentation in student support systems; and in our view, their labelling in the education literature as "unintelligent", being "more likely to plagiarise", experiencing "communication and relational challenges", having "difficulty with academic writing and a tendency to achieve lower grades", "needing tailored programs", "falling under the category of English not at all" and having "no hope of learning a new language" (see Abdelkerim and Marty, 2012; Alam, 2004; Boughton, Halliday, and Brown 2010; Crawford and Candlin, 2010).

The depiction of CALD students as low academic achievers presents two points for discussion. First, it underestimates academic achievements of high-achieving CALD students. The "victim blaming" narratives of the low academic achievement of CALD students tends to associate "CALDness" with "stupidity", "dumbness" and "failure" (McKay and Devlin, 2016; Adusei-Asante, 2018), although there is evidence to the contrary (Adusei-Asante, 2018). For example, a recent report released by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development which reviewed educational attainment of migrants shows that students from the Philippines, China and India (part of the CALD cluster) were more likely to demonstrate key knowledge and skills in science, reading and mathematics expected for fifteen year olds than their white Australian counterparts (see OECD, 2018). Similarly, the results of the 2016 National Assessment Program–Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) – which tests life essential academic skills such as reading, writing, spelling, grammar and numeracy-revealed analogous trends (ACARA, 2016).

Second, negative view of CALD students fails to consider the historical existence in Australia of huge educational gaps between advantaged and disadvantaged groups. In other words, low academic achievement among people from low socio-economic status background is not a CALD problem, but a systemic one, a fact several scholars have acknowledged (see Kenway, 2013; Thomson, De Bortoli and Underwood, 2015; Thomson, Wernert, O'Grady and Rodrigues, 2017).

The collateral impact of the negative portrayal of educational attainment of CALD people on BAMIA is evident in the literature. Burgoyne and Hull (2007) argued that refugees from Sudan who became students had multifaceted, but interrelated, issues that affect their resettlement in Australia. The authors argued further that the students' 'educational challenges and aspirations were inextricably bound up with [an] array of other resettlement issues' (p. 21). Turner and Fozdar (2010) drew comparable conclusions when they studied forty adult Sudanese learners at three different educational centres in Australia. However, the authors did not only blame the students for the poor outcomes, but on the need for teachers to build trusted relationships with BAMIA. Harris and Marlowe (2011) researched the experiences of a group of young Africans from refugee backgrounds who were studying at a South Australian university, and reported that the students had little understanding of the expectations of Australian educational institutions and accessing study materials and studying in another language (see also Adusei-Asante and Doh, 2016; Harry, 2008; Harris and Marlowe, 2011; Wickramaarachchi and Burns, 2016). Gately, Ellis, Britton and Fleming (2017) used a multi-method approach to investigate the experiences of twenty-two Sudanese students at Western Australia's Edith Cowan University. Based on data obtained from the university, Gately et al., 2017, p.121) reported that:

Of all units undertaken in that period by Sudanese students the failure rate was 47.53% despite completion of assessments for 73% of the units of study involved ... Further, Sudanese students discontinued their course[s] primarily for academic issues of which the precise nature is unknown.

Aside from such negative representation, there is evidence that attaining higher education qualifications do not always enhance the employment prospects of some Black African groups in Australia (El-Gack and Yak, 2016; see also Abdelkerim and Grace, 2012).

Conclusion

This article drew on the representation of CALD people in the medical literature, public discourse on crimes and the educational sector demonstrating how the "deviant depiction" impacts on BAMIA. It has shown that the CALD label can imply an oversimplification of ill-informed generalisations of diverse people with diverse cultures. For example, the label has been used to appraise the needs of diverse migrant populations in a one-size-fits-all approach, in spite of the existence of a wide range of

situations and solutions in diverse populations and migrant communities. This is done by exaggerating legitimate needs as ‘a problem’, through the media and by moral entrepreneurs—politicians, teachers, parents and religious leaders—thus generating moral panic. In this context, moral panic is the process of arousing social concerns over differences—rather than diversity—of languages and cultures and, in particular, focusing on ‘Australian values’. As such, this label excludes a large number of people as full participants in Australian society.

Despite the Australian government’s good intentions, the CALD label divides Australian society into ‘us’ (Anglo-Saxon majority) and ‘them’ (non-Anglo minority) (Black Africans, Asians, and others). It is suggested that rather than creating and using labels and rules, emphasis should be on an inclusive policy of integration of migrants. One way of doing so is to educate the media and public, to enhance their understanding of the high values attached to diversity in Australian society, and the need to value and celebrate cultural diversity.

Where to from here? We suggest that if authorities of multicultural affairs are in the firm opinion that an appropriate label can further enhance the social cohesion of multicultural Australia, then we believe that instead of introducing another ‘label’ by us or by other individual scholars, we should engage in a proper collective research project to discuss and debate different ideas and terminologies in order to come up with a term that unites people, reducing racial tensions, and celebrating diversity within Australian society in real sense. In our view, the CALD label has outlived its usefulness in contemporary Australia.

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