

INTERNATIONAL DEFICIT THINKING

Educational Thought
and Practice

RICHARD R. VALENCIA



ROUTLEDGE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS:

1. The Construct of Deficit Thinking
- Part I: The Americas
2. The United States of America
3. Canada
4. Latin America (Brazil; Costa Rica; Mexico; Peru)
- Part II: South Pacific
5. Australia
6. New Zealand (Fiji)
- Part III: Europe
7. England
8. Other European Countries (Ireland; Belgium)
- Part IV: Asia
9. Asia (India; China)
- Part V: Africa
10. Africa (South Africa; Nigeria)
- Final Thoughts*

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International Deficit Thinking

Educational Thought and Practice

Richard R. Valencia

International Deficit Thinking: Educational Thought and Practice explores the incontrovertible reality of the persistent and pervasive academic achievement gap in many countries between marginalized students (primarily of color) and their economically advantaged White counterparts. For example, *International Deficit Thinking* discusses the cases of low-socioeconomic Black and Mexican American students in the United States, Indigenous Māori students in New Zealand, and immigrant Moroccan and Turkish pupils in Belgium. The predominant theoretical perspective that has been advanced to explain the school failure of marginalized students is the deficit thinking paradigm—a parsimonious, endogenous, and pseudoscientific model that blames such students as the makers of their own school failure. Deficit thinking asserts that the low academic achievement of many marginalized students is due to their limited intellectual ability, poor academic achievement motivation, and being raised in dysfunctional families and cultures.

Drawing from, in part, critical race theory, systemic inequality analysis, and colonialism/postcolonialism, award-winning author and scholar Richard Valencia examines deficit thinking in education in 16 countries (e.g., Canada; Peru, Australia; England; India; South Africa). He seeks to document and debunk deficit thinking as an interpretation for school failure of marginalized students, offer scientifically defensible counternarratives for race-, class-, language-, and gender-based differences in academic achievement, and provide suggestions for workable and sustainable school reform for marginalized students.

"In this impressive volume, Richard R. Valencia, the world's expert on the scholarly study of deficit thinking, highlights examples of deficit thinking around the globe. He gives attention to its origins in the conquest and colonization of many countries, and explains the impact this pseudoscience has had on not only race, but gender, language, and class as well. The many examples and thorough analyses shared in this book make it essential reading for anyone seeking to better understand educational inequality."

— **Sherry Marx**, Professor of ESL, Multicultural Education, and Qualitative Methods, Utah State University, Author, *Revealing the Invisible: Confronting Passive Racism in Teacher Education*, USA

"*International Deficit Thinking* is the latest scholarship on deficit thinking, the newest form of contemporary colonialism, by the most outstanding scholar on the subject—Richard R. Valencia. A must read for all professors, graduate students, educators, and policymakers."

— **John P. Portelli**, Professor of Social Justice Education, Centre for Leadership and Diversity, OISE, University of Toronto, Canada

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