

# **AN OVERVIEW OF FEEDING AND EATING DISORDERS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

UNA MIRADA DE LOS TRASTORNOS DE LA INGESTA Y DE LA  
CONDUCTA ALIMENTARIA EN LATINOAMÉRICA Y EL CARIBE

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Presenting the status of feeding and eating disorders (FED) in Latin America and the Caribbean in a field that traditionally has been focused on white European populations is a justice call. While we have certainly seen significant progress in the representation of our communities in research and intervention at various levels, the reality is that more outreaching programs are lacking. We are still facing a stigma due to the lack of comprehensive programs targeting ample populations that can educate about FEDs for early detection and intervention. Access to evidence-based and affordable treatments for communities with fewer resources continues to be a challenge for most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean often alienated by a lack of resources, awareness, and language barrier. This special issue “**Feeding and Eating Disorders in Latin America and the Caribbean**” is aiming to continue raising awareness towards greater inclusiveness for a better understanding of risk factors in our populations, and therefore allowing the development of treatments more sensitive to our cultural background.

This special issue presents *an overview of FEDs in Latin America and the Caribbean* with nine regular articles that address a variety of topics ranging from the identification of risk factors and behaviors, instrument adaptation, novel treatments, and the importance of expanding genetic research in our Hispanic Latin American communities. My gratitude to the International Invited Board composed of Juanita Gempeler, PhD., FAED (Colombia), psychologist Fabian Melamed, MA., FAED (Argentina) and Claudia Unikel Santoncini, PhD. (Mexico) for the collaborations in this special issue. Also, we have two special contribution notes “*History of Hispanic Latin American Chapter of the AED*” by Dr. Eva Trujillo-ChiVacuán and “*A Map to Navigate a Disturbed Territory*” presented by the directors (Lcda. Rosina Crispo, Lcda. Diana Guelar) and coordinators (Lcda. Paula Hernández, Sonia

Acosta, Ph.D., and Lcda. Julieta Ramos) from La Casita, Adolescent and Youth Care and Prevention Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

As editor-in-chief of the *Puerto Rican Journal of Psychology*, clinical psychologist, and FEDs researcher, I feel honored to be able to contribute with this special issue, to continue raising the awareness in our communities, among medical, nutritionist, and mental health professionals, and associated professions who are essential in the early identification of these conditions. In the early 1990s when I began my graduate studies in psychology in Puerto Rico, there was not a single prevalence study documenting the existence of FEDs on the Island. Unfortunately, up to now this situation is not very different in some regions of Latin America and the Caribbean. I hope that we continue expanding collaborations in order to have interventions that are more responsive to our cultural context and with services more affordable regardless of the resources or background of the people suffering from them.

I thank the authors who have trusted the *Puerto Rican Journal of Psychology* to publish their papers, all reviewers who contributed with the review process of published or unpublished papers to ensure a higher quality publication. Also, grateful of the invited international board and our editorial team, especially our editorial assistant Mariely Vélez Pérez for her support in editorial coordination and Dr. Marco Peña Jimenez, our associate editor, to coordinate the production of this issue. Without their support it would be impossible to see this final product. May our overview of FEDs in our Latin American and Caribbean communities promote a state of justice for a greater detection and better treatments until the need does not exist.

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