Spanish-speaking Latin American and Caribbean individuals showed lower total scores and internal consistency on a well-known depression scale than individuals from culturally Western, English-speaking countries.

Discussion

Based on our results, we believe differences in scoring and reliability on the PHQ-9 may be related to cultural differences in LAC countries. It could be that the PHQ-9 does account for cultural differences such intense stigma and collectivism. Additionally, respondents who speak English as a second language may interpret item meanings differently and thus scoring may be impacted.

While there were no differences in total scores and reliability on the HCL-32, differences in scores on the sunny subscale may indicate a difference in hypomanic presentation in LAC countries. This could be attributed to the idea of collective harmony that pushes individuals to suppress emotion in an effort to maintain peace. However, this contradicts ideas of machismo in LAC culture so this will likely require further investigation.

Finally, differences in total score between males and females on the PHQ-9 may indicate lower reliability overall due to gender differences in both the LAC and Western group. Where age is concerned, the significant negative correlation between total HCL-32 score and age may indicate the need for greater investigation of age differences in hypomania.

References


