



Interlibrary Loan between the United States and Latin America: The Current Landscape

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Definitions/Purpose of Study

- Latin America
- Interlibrary loan/Resource sharing
- Decolonial theory (Walter Mignolo, Enrique Dussel)
- Limited snapshot, not at all a complete picture



Previous Studies

- Guerrero, 1995: 14% of 39 libraries offer international lending
 - Lack of codes, copyright law, insufficient time and/or personnel, inefficient postal resources

Previous Studies

- Cornish, 2011: three categories
 - “Systems, demand, and collections” – Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico
 - “Systems... limited collections and therefore limited demand” – Cuba
 - None of these elements – Honduras, Paraguay, and Peru

Previous Studies

- Schmidt, 2014: lots of good data
 - **61%** of libraries charge patrons for ILL
 - **60%** do not lend internationally
 - Issues affecting ILL in general: copyright law, postal difficulties, e-books
 - Issues affecting international ILL: costs, time, danger of loss

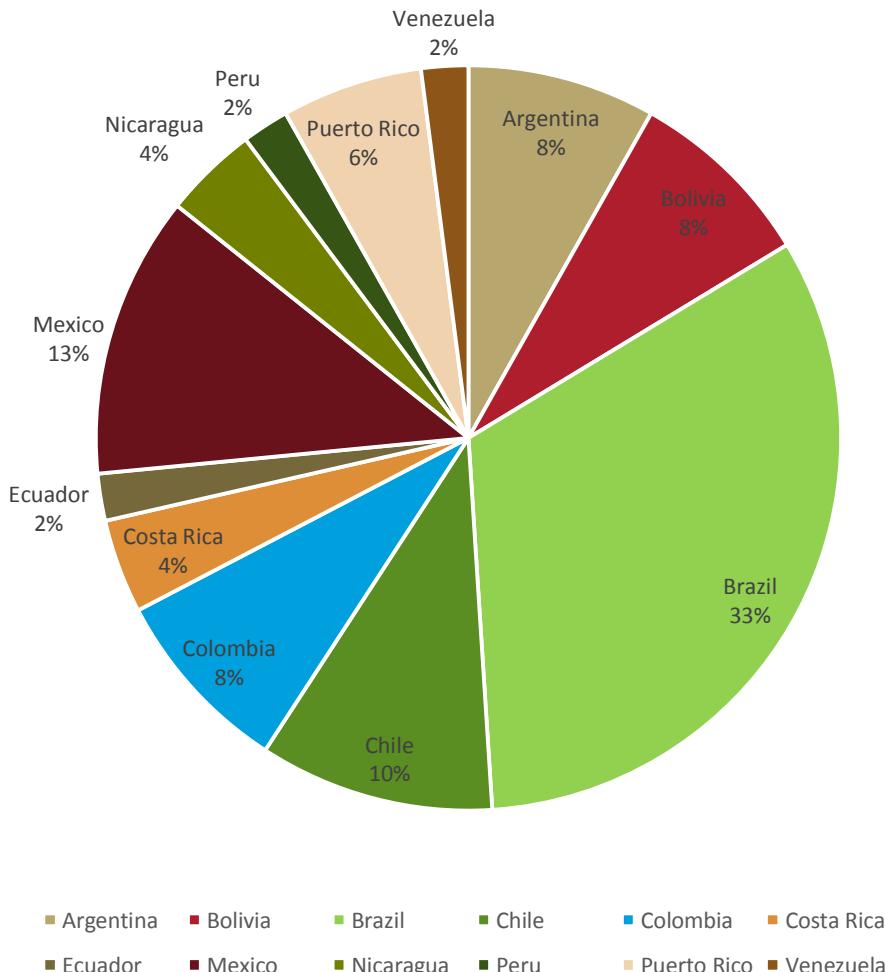
Survey Instrument

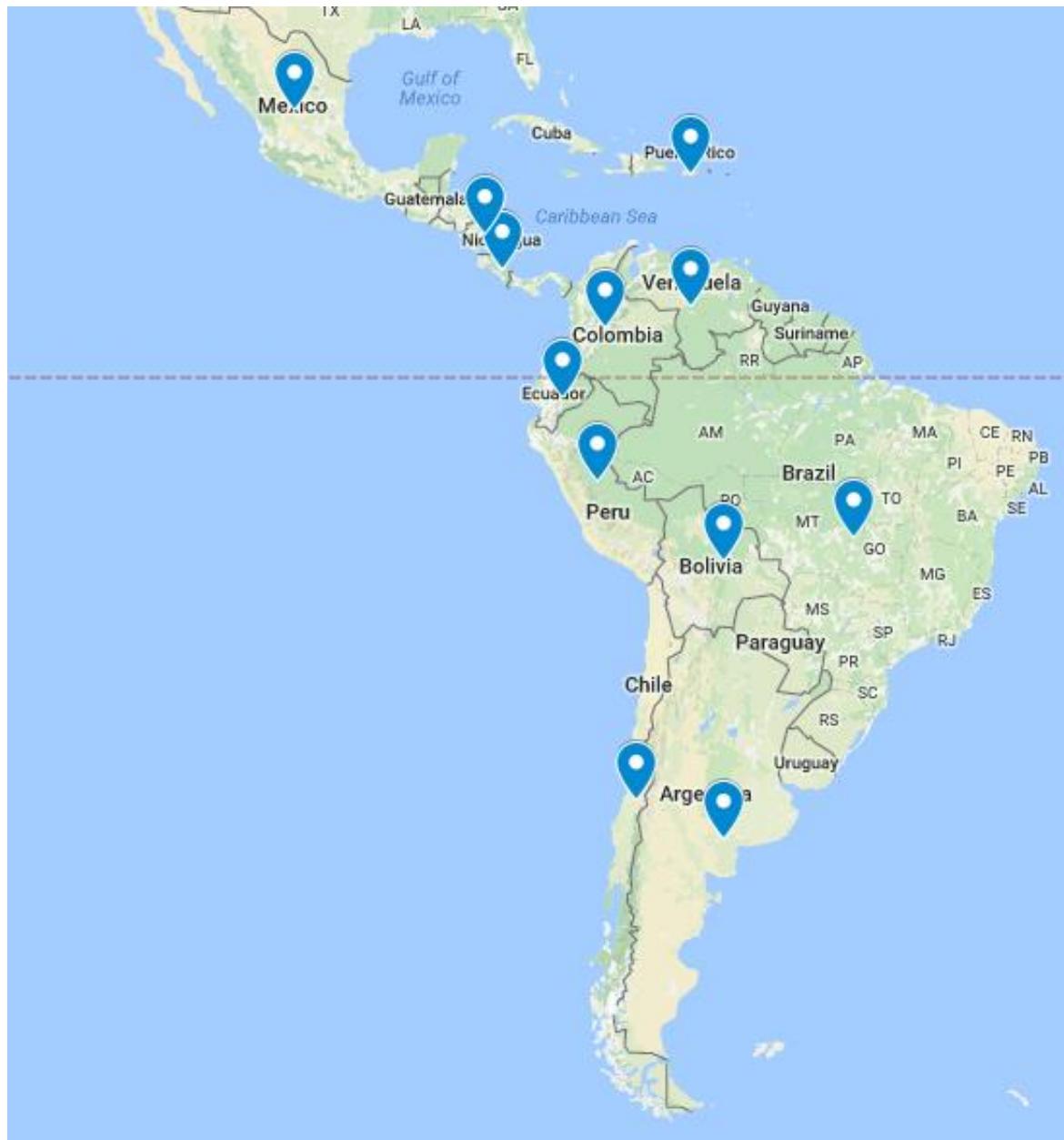
- Current practices and policies
- No statistics requested
- Focus on sharing between the U.S. and Latin American countries and territories
- Free text opportunities
- Anonymous; country/territory and library type collected

Response Rate

- 43 to Spanish-language version, 7* to English-language version
- Majority university libraries
- Not all countries/territories are represented

Respondents' Country/Territory





Biggest barriers to interlibrary loan

- Shipping/transportation
- Cost
 - Often mentioned in conjunction with shipping

Additional barriers

- Lack of permission/clarity in copyright/intellectual property laws
- Prohibitive copyright/intellectual property laws
 - Brazil's Authors' Rights Law most frequently cited

Current practices: lending

- **Supplying non-returnables**
 - 67% in country
 - 16% to the U.S.
 - 37% to any country
- **Supplying returnables**
 - 84% in country
 - 18% to the U.S.
 - 10% to any country

Why aren't some libraries lending?

- Predictable reasons: cost, time, materials security
- Lack of an arrangement or agreement
- They might lend, but they aren't receiving requests
- No culture of interlibrary lending

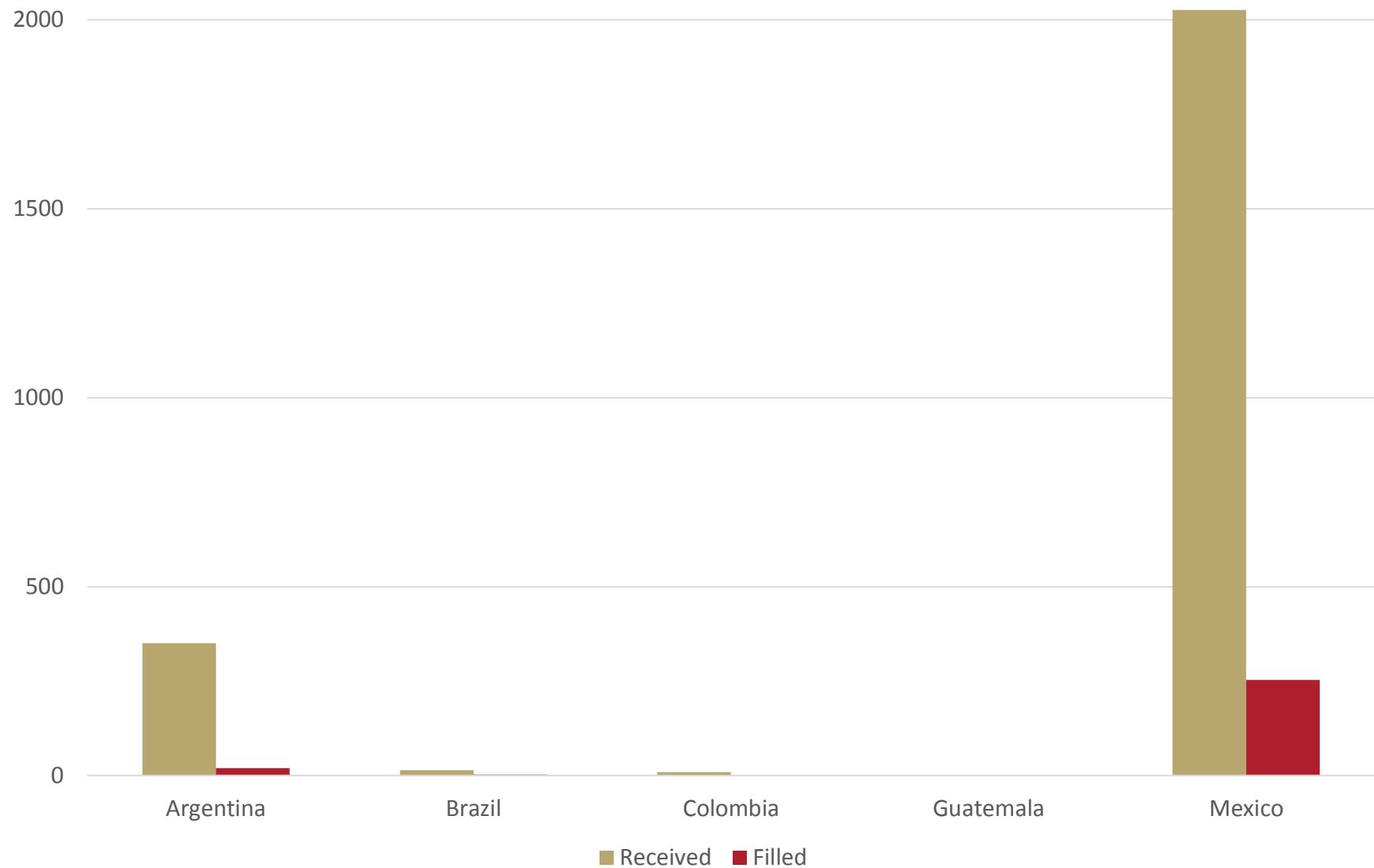
Current practices: borrowing

- **Requesting non-returnables**
 - 80% in country
 - 35% from the U.S.
 - 31% from any country
- **Requesting returnables**
 - 84% in country
 - 20% from the U.S.
 - 18% from any country

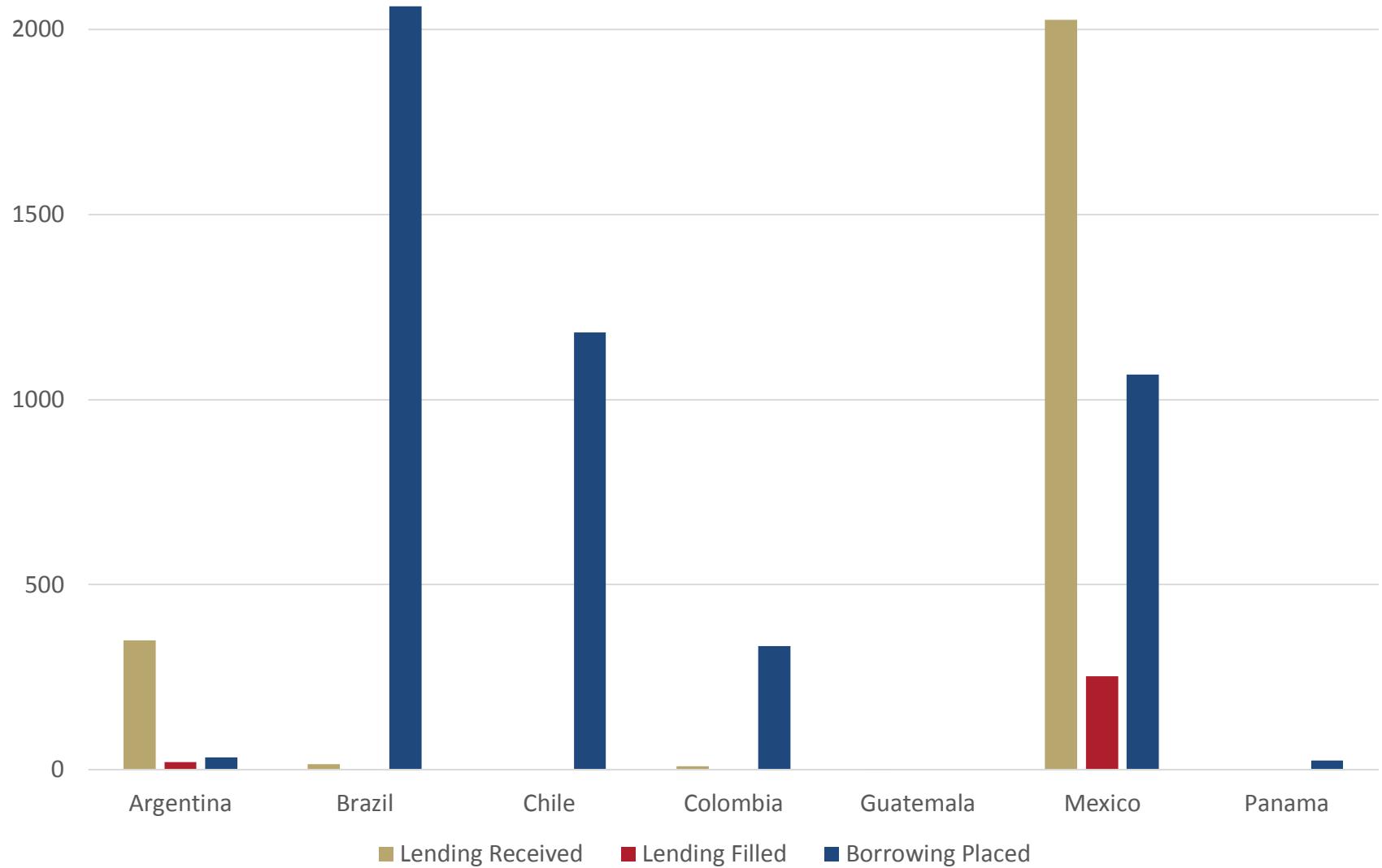
Why aren't some libraries borrowing?

- Cost, time, materials security again
- Users aren't requesting materials that require going outside the region
- Lack of awareness of resource sharing operations in other countries
- No culture of interlibrary borrowing
- Not practical

WorldShare ILL Lending Fill Rate (2015)



WorldShare ILL Lending Plus Borrowing Submitted (2015)



Philosophical Barriers

- Books as equity
- Bureaucracy and/or administrative support
- Democratizing knowledge in more efficient, open ways
- Marvin and Rodríguez Salas: observations about consortia and the family

Recent Article

- Librarians in North America have a long and laudable history of freely offering their holdings—printed and digital—to the public... but, generally speaking, the momentum has not reached the rest of the world, and certainly not Latin America. On the contrary, there exists here a strong tradition of withholding books from those who might be ill-intentioned or careless—the historic echo of a time when books were considered objects of veneration that should go unsullied by use.”

Helen Hazen, “The Cloistered Books of Peru,”
<https://theamericanscholar.org/the-cloistered-books-of-peru/#>

Decolonial Theory (for a moment!)

- “Third World” libraries and the view of “First World” libraries
- Recognition of differing models and approaches to an experience or interaction

Lessons for practitioners outside of Latin America

- Framework of resource sharing in another country may not match that of the requestor's country ["no hay modelo"]
- Perceptions of other regions may be counter-productive ["falta de confiabilidad de las Bibliotecas de USA en Bibliotecas Latinoamericanas"]
- Ripe opportunities for partnership do exist
- Puerto Rico is a U.S. territory!

Even more practical advice

- Go beyond WorldCat and OCLC
- Be prepared for flexibility
- Phrasing is important

Next steps

- Focus on more specific areas: Mexico is probably first
- Investigation into discovery tools
- Advocacy for resource sharing in libraries that might be interested but lack the administrative support
- Follow up with colleagues

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