



Latinos and Public Library Perceptions

Tomás Rivera Policy Institute



By Edward Flores and Harry Pachon

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Acknowledgments

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For a copy of the survey instrument used in the report, please visit WebJunction at WebJunction.org/latino-perceptions or contact info@webjunction.org.

We encourage libraries to use the survey instrument to measure the library perceptions of their own Latino communities.



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Latinos now comprise the largest minority group in the United States but a gap persists in their access to information and technology especially for Latinos who speak primarily Spanish. In 2004, with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, WebJunction launched the Spanish Language Outreach Program to help equip library staff with knowledge and resources to reach out to Spanish speakers in their communities and increase their access to information and technology.

In partnership with forty state libraries across the U.S., WebJunction has increased the knowledge and skills of over 6,000 library staff members to reach out more effectively to Spanish speakers in their local communities. In addition, the program has created a vibrant online community of practice (WebJunction.org/slo) designed to help library staff improve their outreach efforts and share their lessons learned.

The inspiration for this research project was based in frustration with the lack of available national baseline research about Latinos' library use. In order to evaluate the impact of the Spanish Language Outreach Program, WebJunction needed to determine the current level of library use by Latinos in the United States to see if the outreach efforts being implemented by libraries participating in the SLO program were having an impact. We found that a comprehensive study of Latino library use did not exist so we decided to commission such a study.

The goal of the study was to establish a baseline for libraries to use in their strategic planning and outreach efforts. We also wanted to provide library staff with information to help make the case to their leadership and communities for the need for outreach to their Latino patrons. The survey instrument from the study is available to libraries on WebJunction.org. We encourage libraries to use the instrument in their own communities to measure the perceptions and library usage patterns of local Latino communities in comparison with the national average illustrated by this study. Libraries can draw upon their local results to plan their services and advocate with local funding agents.

The results of the report indicate that fifty-four percent of the Latino population visited libraries in the past year and that Latinos hold positive perceptions of libraries. While these results indicate a higher usage rate by Latinos than previously documented, additional outreach efforts are still needed to eliminate the usage gap that remains between Latinos and whites. The report also found that friendly staff service was a strong predictor of library visits, even stronger than access to Spanish Language materials! The report draws upon these and other findings to provide libraries with clear recommendations to increase Latino library usage.

The success of the Latinos and Public Library Perceptions project is due to the hard work of many people including our preliminary survey advisory board members: Camila Alire, Loida Garcia-Febo, Ivonne Jimenez, Roxana Benavides, John Ayala and Toni Bissessar. I would also like to thank WebJunction staff members Janet Salm, Emily Inlow-Hood, and Zola Maddison for their outstanding work on the project.

It has been a privilege to be part of this exceptional collaboration with the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute. We hope that the library field will benefit greatly from TRPI's dedication to key issues affecting the Latino community and their high quality research. We look forward to discussing the study and its implications with the library community via our online Spanish Language Outreach community of practice at WebJunction.org/latino-perceptions!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Laura A. Staley'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping 'L' and 'S'.

Laura Staley
Senior Community Manager
WebJunction.org

Executive Summary

Public libraries are positioned to be an effective tool and useful resource for U.S. Latinos at all levels of English proficiency, including those who are Spanish monolinguals. In the largest and most representative study to date on Latinos and library use, the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute (TRPI) reports a largely positive perception by Latinos regarding public libraries, library resources, and staff. The study also found that English learning can draw Latinos to the library.

In the United States, the Latino population¹ is growing, and in the past decade, Latinos have become the largest ethnic minority, surpassing the size of African American and Asian communities. Continuing immigration and higher birthrates among Latinos ensure future growth, and the expansion of Latino communities is altering the demographics of even parts of the United States that have not known large-scale immigration of Latinos to date. Libraries hold considerable potential to play an important role in enriching the lives of immigrants and assisting their integration into communities. Libraries also can benefit from more visitors and usage, boosting their prospects for funding and in turn increasing their ability to provide quality programming and resources that fit a community's needs.

This report holds what is likely the most accurate data to date on Latino library usage. Prior research on Latinos and libraries has not been able to provide a reliable baseline and was not conducted at a scale to provide actionable data. In addition, much of the research is no longer

54% of the Latino population in our sample visited libraries in the past year.

current given changing demographics in the United States. TRPI studied a larger and more representative sample in order to provide a more accurate and current estimate of library use by the growing Latino population, and to better understand why Latinos use libraries and what would draw them more frequently. Previous research, for example, placed the rate of library visits within the past year at 49% for Latinos and 63% for whites. This quantitative analysis,

based on a survey of 2,860 Latino adults, pegs a higher frequency of library visits at 54%. Also revealed here is the first examination of the impact of demographic variables on Latino library visits and Latino perceptions of libraries.

When we began this study, we sought to understand patterns in Latino library usage, perceptions of the library among Latinos, and the factors that drive Latino library usage, by seeking to find answers to the following questions:

- How often do Latinos go to libraries?
- Why do they use libraries? What motivates using the library? What services do Latinos access?
- Are there differences in library use based on demographic factors such as immigration status (i.e. citizen, legal permanent resident, temporary resident) or years of residence?
- Do Latinos go to libraries in new destination states—in areas of the country that have historically had few immigrants—for reasons different than Latinos in traditional immigration states?
- What policies or paradigm shifts would encourage Latino library use?

¹ Latino and Hispanic are terms used interchangeably here to denote individuals who can trace their heritage back to Spanish-speaking countries in the Western Hemisphere

This study found that Latinos hold positive perceptions of libraries and also determined that:

- Latino library visits are affected by demographic factors (see Tables 3.1 to 3.7 and 7.4), as is the case for the population at large.
- Library-use differences exist between foreign-born, second-generation, and third-generation Latinos (see Table 3.5). However, these differences are due to demographic differences in age, education, and income between these groups (see Table 7.1).
- Although Spanish language materials are of importance to Latinos (Table 2.4), their perceptions of staff service are a stronger factor in terms of increasing visits than Spanish language materials (see Tables 8.1 and 8.3).
- The more fluent a person is in English, the more likely they are to have visited the library and accessed its services (see Tables 3.7 and 7.4).
- Availability of resources including computer access, information on jobs, and general information influence library visits (see Tables 8.2 and 8.3).

How to Draw More Latinos into America's Public Libraries: Policy Recommendations

This study shows many Latinos use local libraries to learn English and that, in general, Latinos rate public libraries and their experiences highly positively. Still, they would prefer to encounter more bilingual staff and advertising in Spanish. To that end, TRPI recommends the following steps for public libraries to increase Latino involvement in their institutions:

1. Get to know your local Latino community

Library personnel should be aware of the overall diversity of Latinos and the particular composition of the Hispanic community in their own area, including how long most have been in this country and what socioeconomic levels are represented. Among other tendencies based on demographic data, our research found:

- Age, sex, and income influence library use in the Latino community.
- Foreign-born Latinos are less likely to frequent the library than those born in the states.

2. Advertise the library as a place to learn English

Satisfaction with English language materials is more pivotal in increasing library visits than satisfaction with Spanish language materials. In addition, use of the library to learn English is the third biggest factor associated with higher library visits (see table 8.2). When asked, they may suggest that libraries serve the Latino community with Spanish language materials or Spanish-speaking staff, as demonstrated in table 2.4. However, all background characteristics equal, those who make such suggestions do not visit the library at higher rates than their counterparts who do not agree with such questions (see table 8.3). Libraries can use this finding best by:

- Acquiring English-learning programs such as books, CDs, and DVDs.
- Creating or improving children's programs geared toward fluency in English, including summer reading programs.
- Advertising the array of resources and programs in Spanish or via Spanish media.

3. Advertise public access to computers and availability of general information

Our research found that Latino library-goers who use available computers frequent the library more often (see tables 2.2 and 8.2). In addition, although Latinos who go to the library for general information go less frequently than others, they may be influenced to go more by seeing what is available, such as books for children (table 8.2). Library staff should know that:

- Only 47% of Latinos who use the library for internet access already have such access at home or work.
- Of those who visited the library within the past year, 70% had family who had also visited the library.

4. Inform the community that the library does not share library user information

Many foreign-born Latinos in this country are not U.S. citizens, and the total foreign-born population comprises about half the adult Latino community. Our research found that foreign-born Latinos are much less likely to use the library (see table 3.5), and one reason for this may be that some Latinos fear signing up for a library card and may not be aware that libraries must keep personal information confidential (see tables 2.1 and 8.1). Libraries should:

- Hang signs or posters in Spanish that state that the library does not share confidential information.
- In other library advertisements or public relations materials, mention confidentiality.



Introduction

This report corroborates previous research showing that Latinos visit libraries at a lower rate than the population as a whole. However, our sample—the largest yet in research on Latinos and libraries—also indicates a higher usage rate by Latinos than previously documented. In addition, this study builds on previous studies by examining a wide variety of factors potentially pivotal in influencing Latino library use. In the following analysis, we frame our study in a broad literature review followed by a description of this study’s data and findings. We conclude with policy recommendations for libraries to consider in light of this research and the growing Latino community, which can benefit greatly from the use of public libraries as a resource in their communities.

Our sample indicates a higher usage rate by Latinos than previously documented.

Literature Review

H.C. Campbell (1980) reported that libraries can serve to help immigrants learn a second language and navigate culture shock. Historically, immigrant and native-born Latinos have experienced marginalization in U.S. society, so their perceptions and use of libraries should be tracked. Unfortunately, there is no current, nationally generalizable baseline research on Latinos and library usage. Much of the research conducted is either out of date or has been locally focused, lacking statistically strong sample sizes or lacking statistical regression analysis (i.e. CESTF, 1979; Payne et al. 1988; Love et al. 2001; SEFLIN 2003; Kwon 2006; ALA 2007).

Most factors in this study can be framed within two general schools of thought in library research: The first focuses on access to Spanish language materials and services as vehicles for library outreach to the Latino community; the second portrays the library as a pillar of democracy, where diverse people can be integrated into mainstream society through civic participation. With this in mind, TRPI posed the following questions:

- How does access to Spanish language materials affect Latino library usage?
- How do perceptions of library and staff influence Latino library usage?

Present-day library services for native and foreign-born minorities are distinct from the approach taken at the turn of the 20th century (Wertheimer and Roy, 1980). During World War I, the primary goal was Americanization of immigrants and other minorities. Then, library funding dwindled with the Great Depression and onset of World War II. However, a 1950 Supreme Court decision on equal rights for African Americans provided a conceptual foundation for programs directed towards the functionally illiterate and disadvantaged (Wertheimer and Roy, 1980). Since then, library efforts to serve the underserved followed in the spirit of the 1960’s War on Poverty. Today, library services are focused on providing materials that help library visitors appreciate and know their heritage (Wertheimer and Roy, 1980). For example, despite Putnam’s (2000) observation that America is suffering a recent decline in civic participation, Love et al. (2001) claim that library storytelling programs remain a rich venue for integrating marginalized persons into American society.

A review of earlier as well as more recent scholarship on Hispanic library use suggests that Spanish language access has been vital to Latinos' use of libraries (i.e. Haro, 1981; Guarena, 1990; Guarena, 2000). For example, SEFLIN (2003) conducted a survey on the Hispanic population of southeast Florida on a sample composed of predominantly Spanish speakers and found that attendance rates lagged below the national average. In addition, Kwon et al. (2006) found in a county in Florida that Hispanic non-users perceived a stronger need for Spanish language materials, resources, and Spanish-speaking staff than Hispanic users. Scholars have argued that Spanish language cataloguing and Spanish language subject headings may make the library more user-friendly for Latinos (i.e. Marielena Fina, 1993; Crowley, 2000). This line of research also suggests that a major obstacle libraries face in attracting Hispanic users is a lack of Spanish language materials, resulting from limited budgets for Spanish language materials (i.e. Davis, 1996; Kiser, 2001; Marquis, 2003).

However, even with library services to help Latino library visitors learn English as well as appreciate their Spanish language heritage, the sheer density of diversity among Latinos makes library outreach a potentially unwieldy effort. Current Population Survey (CPS) figures suggest that about half of all Latinos above the age of 18 were born outside of the United States, and Pride (2004) found that reallocation of library funds is complicated when dealing with the heterogeneity within immigrant groups. Among Latinos, Mexican immigrants have different norms than Central Americans and South Americans; there are about 20 political units that make up Latin American nations (Trejo and Kaye, 1988). Yolanda J. Cuesta (1990), in her article on Latino needs and library needs, identifies Latinos according to four major subgroups: Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans and Other. The socio-economic status of these Latino sub-groups varies dramatically. At one end are Puerto Ricans, with the lowest indexes of socio-economic standing among all Latino groups, while at the other end are highly educated "other" Latinos that arrive in the U.S. with specialized training in areas such as law, engineering, or architecture. Cuban-Americans are the most geographically concentrated group; 85% live in Florida. Florida, however, is changing. More than 60% of Latinos in that state have non-Cuban backgrounds.

Mexican-Americans are the largest group of Latinos. According to recent 2007 CPS figures, they account for roughly 70% of the Latino population in the U.S. Cuesta (1990) divides Mexican-Americans into three major sub-groups: new immigrants, established residents who have followed the rural-urban flow to major metropolitan areas, and internal migrants. In the decade following Cuesta's (1990) writing, internal migration soared in a new way: Immigrants in traditionally-immigrant large cities moved to new destination areas in the Midwest and South (Zuniga and Hernandez-Leon, 2005; Light, 2006).

The interests of each group in Cuesta's (1990) typology vary, but it is emphasized that new immigrants focus on learning English as quickly as possible, as well as becoming familiar with survival-related material, such as information on food and housing, medical services, jobs, transportation, or legal matters. Settled immigrants, on the other hand, are interested in self-help books on an array of topics, from child development to parenting, auto mechanics to landscaping, and carpentry; Cuesta (1990) argues that these should be at the top of any librarians' list.

Data on Latinos and Library Use

WebJunction and TRPI conducted a six-state survey of adult Latinos from March to May of 2008. Data were gathered by random sample of 2,860 Latinos from six states through telephone surveys. Criteria were that respondents be Latino and over the age of 18. From each state, 467 Latinos were sampled. States included California, Florida, New York, Texas, North Carolina, and Nevada. One goal was to determine if there were differences between library use and

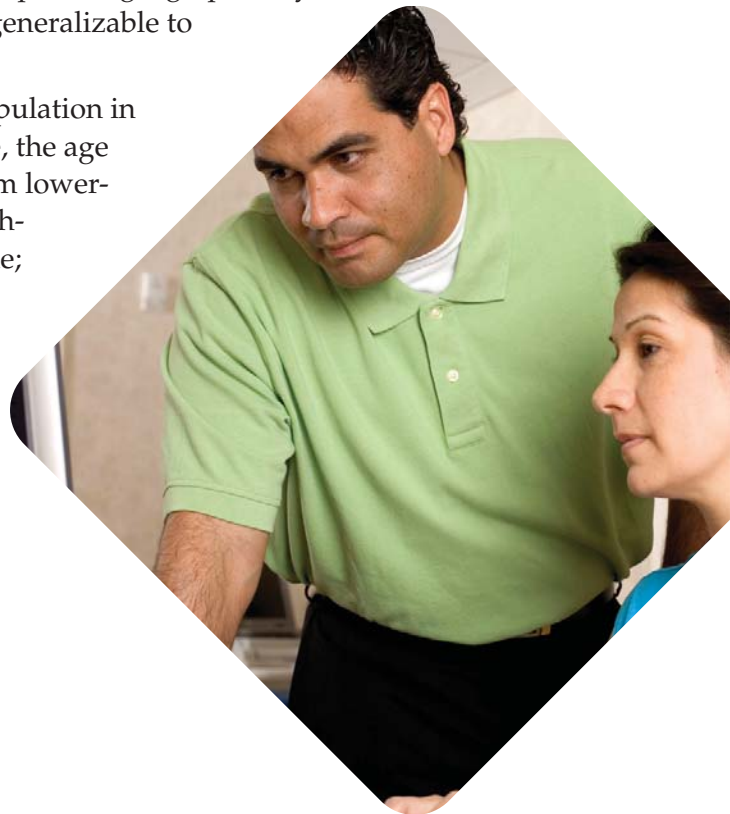
One goal was to determine if there were differences between library use and perception among Latinos in traditional immigration states and the so-called new destinations states.

perception among Latinos in traditional immigration states (California, Florida, Texas, New York) and the so-called new destination states (North Carolina, Nevada). The random sample design makes the findings scientifically generalizable to the six states in our sample but also to Latinos across the United States. Latinos living in the six states in our sample account for 70% of the nation's Latino population. These six states are comprised of four traditional immigration and two new destination states.

Weights were employed to provide the sample with a composition similar to the U.S. Census Bureau's estimation of Latinos in the six states of our sample. According to Current Population Survey (CPS) figures, 97% of Latinos in

our six states of analysis reside in the traditional immigration states (California, Florida, New York, and Texas), while 3% reside in the new destination states (North Carolina, Nevada). However, 33% of our sample is from new destination states. In order to arrive at an analysis that is generalizable to the Latino population in these six states, the cases were weighted so that the two new destination states would comprise only 3% of the sample for this study. The weighting process followed four more stages, adjusting the weight of cases along the lines of age, sex, education, and birthplace (U.S. or non-U.S.). Since Latinos in these six states comprise 70% of the total US-Latino population, and these six states represent geographically diverse regions, analyses of Latinos in these six states are generalizable to Latinos in the rest of the US.

After weighting, our sample resembled the U.S.-Latino population in our six states selected. Women comprise half of the sample, the age distribution is tilted towards the younger, and persons from lower-earning households are a larger group than those from high-earning households. Foreign-born comprise half the sample; second and third-plus generation immigrants each comprise about one-fourth of the sample. Although Spanish-speaking dominant Latinos comprise two-thirds of the sample, the total sample is evenly split between citizens, permanent residents, and those of another immigration status.

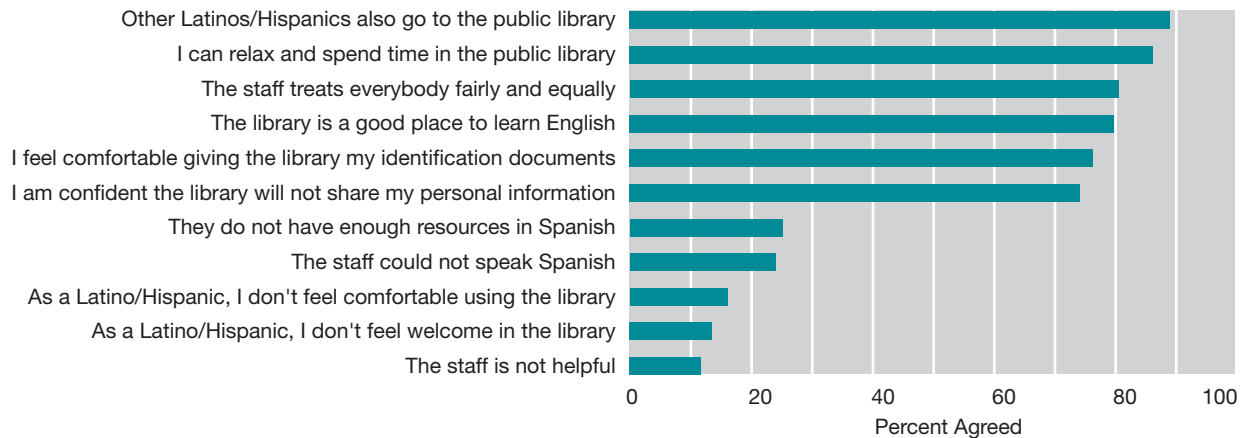


Findings and Discussion

Our research shows that frequency of Latino library visits is affected by sex, age, income, and education level, just as the broader population is affected by these factors.² However, for Latinos—a demographically diverse group—there are other processes at play, including birthplace, generation in this country, and language preference.

An important result of this research is that Latinos have a generally favorable perception of the public library, on par or slightly above that of the general population (see Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Perception of Libraries



Furthermore, the strongest predictor of library visits among Latinos is English fluency, not other immutable factors, such as sex, age or generation (see table 7.4). Although it may appear that a strong correlation exists because library visits influence English fluency, our regression findings suggest that satisfaction with English materials is more pivotal in increasing visits than satisfaction with Spanish materials (see table 8.3).

Frequencies

Frequency of visits

Unweighted, 49% of our sample visited a library in the past year. This matches the percentage of Latinos estimated by the American Library Association's (ALA) *State of America's Libraries* report (2007). However, after weighting, 54% of the Latino population in our sample visited libraries in the past year (see Table 1.1). More specifically, about 14% visited the library once or twice in the past year, 10% frequented the library about every two months, 18% went monthly, 11% went weekly, and only 1% visited the library daily. Thus, the gap reported by the State of America's libraries, between the general population's library-going behavior and Latinos', is not as large when we use a bigger sample and weights.

Though demographically diverse, the U.S. Latino population is generally literate and knowledgeable in regards to libraries (see Tables 1.2 to 1.6). Two-fifths of the sample preferred to read in Spanish, one-third in English, and about one-fourth in both. 99.6% of the sample is literate, and only 5% of those who had not attended libraries in the past year were illiterate.³

² For an explanation of our measure of Library visits, see Appendix A.

³ A cautionary note: illiteracy, "analfabetismo" in Spanish, has high negative connotations. Thus, the socially accepted response may push respondents to answer "yes" in reference to their literacy.

Two-thirds of the sample who had ever been to the library had library cards. Two-thirds belonged to families that attend the library. 61% percent of those who had not attended a library in the past year knew of a library in the area, and 61% percent also had Internet access. Slightly less than half (47%) who used the library for internet access have online access at home or work.

Latinos' perceptions of the library

The ALA study (2006) *At Your Library: Attitudes Towards Public Libraries* found that 70% of respondents surveyed from all backgrounds were either extremely satisfied or very satisfied with their library. By comparison, between 70-80% of our Latino phone survey sample agreed with statements concerning a wide array of characteristics of public libraries (see Figure 2.1). These perceptions included seeing other Latinos at the library (88.6%), being able to relax at the library (85.9%), experiencing fair and equal treatment from the staff (80.5%), and recognizing the library as a good place to learn English (79.6%). Furthermore, most agreed they felt comfortable giving the library identifying documents (75.8%), and they felt confident the library would not share personal information with others (74.2%). Lastly, relatively few agreed that the staff could not speak Spanish (23.5%), there were not enough resources in Spanish (25.1%), they felt uncomfortable (15.9%) or unwelcome in the library (13.4%), or that the staff was not helpful (11.3%). Although much could be assumed concerning the minority of responses that suggested negative sentiments about the library, the overall picture is generally as positive for the Latino community as the larger community.

Reasons for visiting

Among those who visited the library weekly or more, Latinos' top six reported reasons were (see Table 2.2):

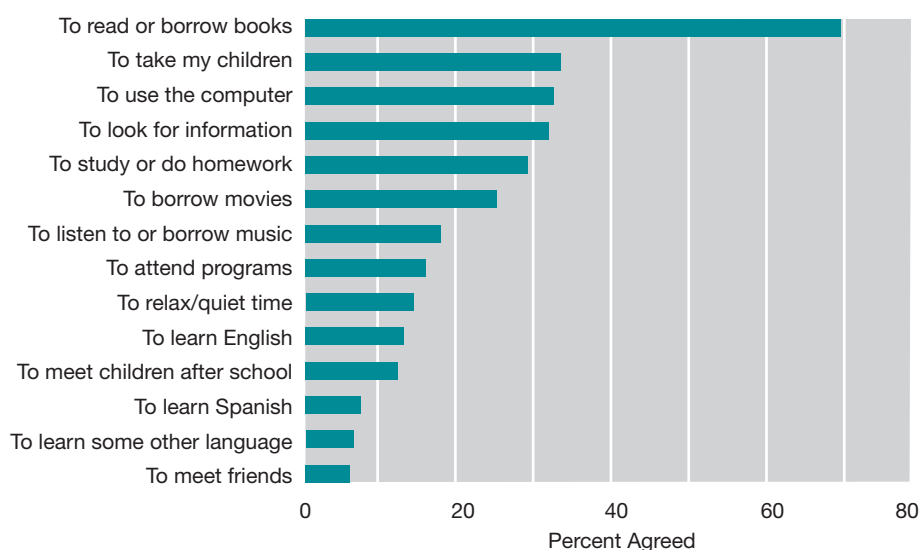
- To read or borrow books (69.1%)
- To take children (33.6%)
- To use computers (32.6%)
- To look for information (31.7%)
- To study or do homework (28.8%)
- To borrow movies (24.5%) (see Figure 2.2)

Among those who used the computer at the library, looking for information was the top reason to use the computer at the library (see Appendix E).

Satisfaction with libraries

Latinos reported somewhat more satisfaction with English materials than Spanish materials (see Table 2.3). More respondents replied being "satisfied" or "very satisfied" (4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5) with English books (93.3%), CDs (87.2%), movies (85.8%), newspapers/brochures/magazines (89.8%), children's books (91.9%) and children's movies (86.9%) than for Spanish books (74.0%), CDs (65.5%), movies (63.5%), newspapers/brochures/magazines (78.2%), children's books (76.5%) and children's movies (66.9%). Satisfaction was high with programs for adults (76.9%), for children (85.5%), availability of space (84.6%), and opportunities to learn English in the library (75.2%). More research is necessary to understand why there are different perceptions of English and Spanish language materials available in libraries. One reason maybe that Spanish language materials in the library may reflect a higher literacy level than that of our respondents.

Figure 2.3 Reasons for Attending Public Library, “weekly or more” users



Suggestions for libraries

Only one suggestion as to how the library can best serve the Latino community received a “yes” from more than 50% of the sample (see Table 2.4). Of the sample, 76% agreed that having

76% (of respondents) agreed that having bilingual staff would better serve the Latino community.

bilingual staff would better serve the Latino community. However, no methods for inviting Latinos to the public library received a “yes” from at least 50% of the sample, though Spanish-related advertising ranked in two of the three most popular responses (see Table 2.5). The most popular suggestions included announcements on Spanish radio (49.9%), at schools (48%), or via advertisements in Spanish (37.5%). Notwithstanding Latinos’ positive perceptions of and satisfaction with public libraries, this

research suggests a bilingual staff and Spanish advertising for the public library are considered by Latinos to be the best ways to improve Latinos’ relationships with public libraries.

Demographic Frequencies

Differences in this study emerged along three core demographic lines in a manner very similar to that of the ALA’s (2006) *At Your Library: Attitudes Toward Public Libraries* survey of the whole population and use of libraries. Tables 3.1 to 3.10 and figures 3.1 to 3.4 present our findings. First, similar to the ALA study (2006) that found slightly more than half of public library visitors to be women, we also found Latinas (60%) were more likely than Latinos (48%) to have visited libraries in the past year. Second, the ALA (2006) reported that library visitors are more likely aged 35-44, and less likely those aged 45 and above. We also found that at age 45 and above, Latinos are more likely to report not having been to the library in the past year. In addition, the ALA study (2006) found that library visitors were more likely those with yearly household incomes between \$25,000 and \$49,999, and less likely those with yearly incomes \$50,000 and over. We also found that more than one third of those with incomes between \$65,000 and \$99,999 had not visited the public library in the past year, and almost one-half of those with incomes above \$100,000 had not visited the public library in the past year. It appears that demographic trends in these respects influence library visits among Latinos much as they do

Figure 3.1 Frequency of Library Visits, by Sex

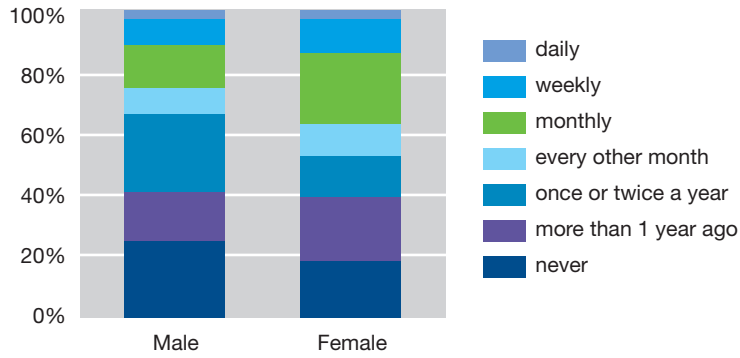


Figure 3.2 Frequency of Library Visits, by Age

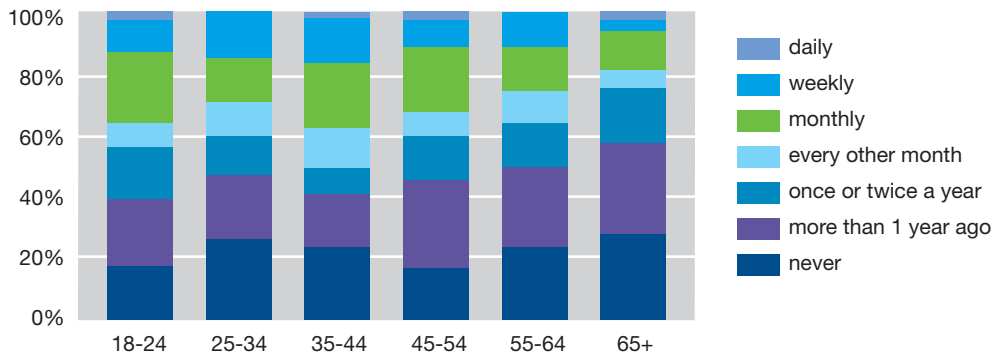


Figure 3.3 Frequency of Library Visits, by Income

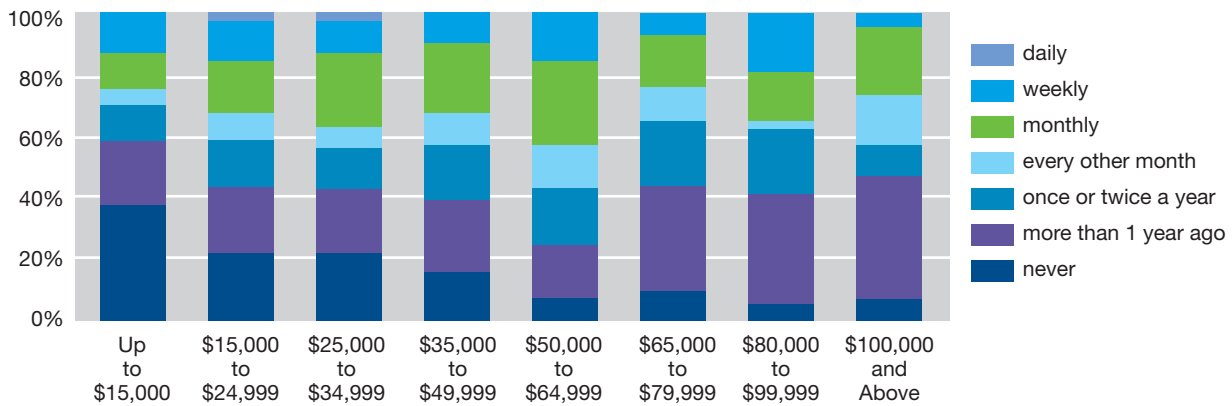
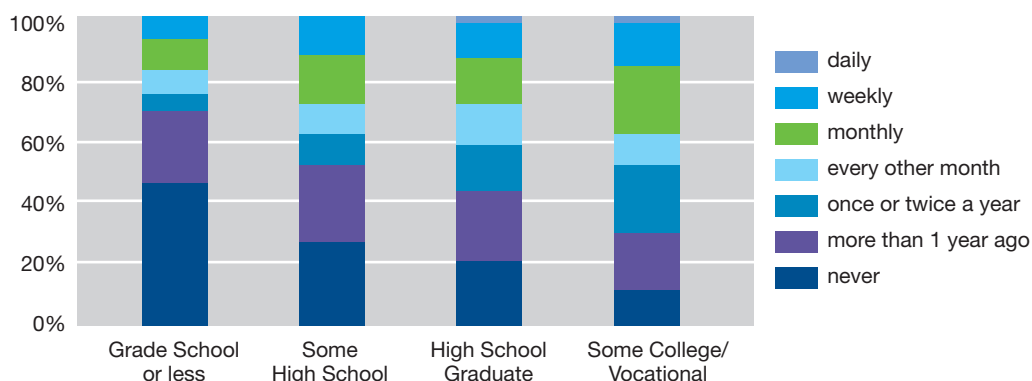


Figure 3.4 Frequency of Library Visits, by Education



In addition, higher education is associated with higher rates of library use for Latinos. The most striking finding was that many Latinos with less than a high school education had never been to a library (46.8%). Those with less than high school or some high school were disproportionately clustered in the “never visited the library” category. Latinos who read in English reported visiting the public library at almost every category of frequency (>1 yr, once or twice a year, every other month, monthly, daily) at larger percentages than their Spanish-reading counterparts. Bilingual Latinos visited the library at a distribution that was even across most categories.

Generations

With respect to immigrants in the United States, it appears that frequency of library visits increases with each successive generation. First-generation immigrants disproportionately reported never attending the public library and were under-represented in every category of attendance (see Table 3.5). Second-generation immigrants, born in the United States to foreign-born parents, disproportionately reported going to the library less than once a year. They were unlike their parents in that few second-generation immigrants reported never having been to the library. In addition, they also were unlike third-plus-generation-plus immigrants, who reported higher rates of visiting the library once or twice a year, every other month, and monthly.

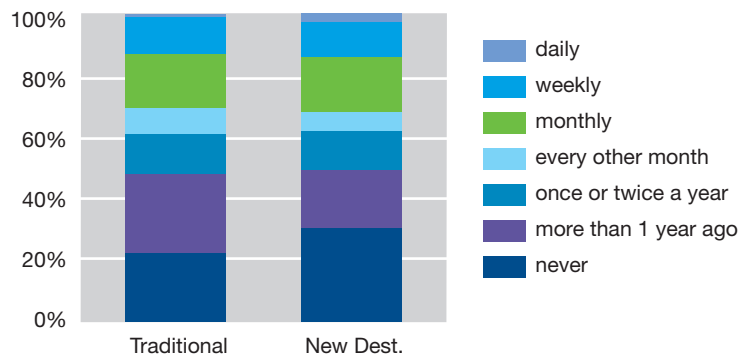
Frequency of library visits increases with each successive generation.

Foreign and native-born Latinos are similar in that less than one percent of either group reported being illiterate, and about two-thirds of both groups have library cards (see Tables 4.2 and 4.3). However, foreign-born Latinos generally were less familiar with the English language, libraries, and technology than native-born Latinos (see Tables 4.1 and 4.4 to 4.7). Such differences are relatively small and not surprising. First, about two-thirds of foreign-born Latinos prefer to read in Spanish, whereas two-thirds of native-born Latinos prefer to read in English. A little more than one-fourth of both groups read equally in both languages. Second, fewer foreign-born Latinos (58.7%) know of a library in the area than those who were native-born (69.9%). In addition, more foreign-born Latinos (22.1%) than native-born (17.0%) belong to families that have never attended the library. Third, related to Internet access, fewer foreign-born Latinos (51.7%) than native-born (72.3%) have online access. Of those who do have Internet access, more foreign-born Latinos (54.3%) say they still have a need for it at the library than native-born Latinos (40.9%).

Geographic setting

Latinos in traditional immigration states resemble Latinos in new destination states in regards to rates of literacy (traditional immigration states=99.5%, new destination states=99.9%), library cards (67.3%, 70.0%), Internet access at home or work (63.1%, 59.2%), needing Internet access at the library (46.0%, 44.3%), and belonging to families that frequent the library (69.6%, 65.6%) (see Tables 5.4 to 5.9).⁴ In addition, Latinos were almost identically distributed (see Table 5.1) between once or twice a year, every other month, monthly, weekly, or daily when comparing frequency counts in both traditional immigration states (13.5%, 9.9%, 16.7%, 11.6%, 1.0%) and new destination states (12.1%, 9.4%, 17.4%, 10.2%, 1.9%). This is not surprising, considering immigration literature has suggested immigrants in new destination areas are not new international migrants, rather internal migrants driven from traditional immigration states with slack labor markets (Zuniga and Hernandez-Leon, 2005; Light, 2006); Tables 6.1 and 6.2 suggest this as well. The difference between Latinos in long-standing and new immigration states does appear when we compare those who most recently visited libraries less than one year ago (see Figure 5.1). Those in new destination states were more likely to have never gone (30.0%) as opposed to have gone in the past year (19.1%); thus, library-related policies in new destination states that inform recently settled Latinos of local libraries may increase library attendance above that of traditional immigration states.

Figure 5.1 Frequency of Library Visits, by State



Regression

We tested for a best-fitting statistical model—a model which most succinctly could predict the effects of demographic factors upon library visits.⁵ We did this by estimating the effects of different combinations of variables, and the results of this procedure are presented in the four paragraphs that follow. In the next section, we use the final, best-fitting model to estimate the effects of perceptions on library usage.

Demographic differences account for differences in Latinos' library visits along generational and geographic lines. Model 1 reveals that sex, age, income and education all have statistically significant relationships with library visits (see Table 7.1). In Model 2, after controlling for type of state and generation to our model, the differences disappear in type of state and generation, which we had observed in our frequencies section. The differences along sex, age, income, and education lines remain statistically significant.

⁴ We removed weights that shrunk the sample size from new destination states in this one particular comparison in order to receive a higher and more accurate measure of Latinos in new destination states.

⁵ Models with large numbers of predictors but low explanatory power are poorly-fitting models, models with a small number of predictors and high explanatory power are best-fitting models.

No acculturation variables bear statistically significant relationships with library visits- except for fluency. Citizenship, years in the United States, Spanish-speaking dominant, and Spanish-reading dominant do not influence library visits. However, for every level of English language fluency, the likelihood of library visits rose by one-fifth of a category (see Table 7.2). For example, the predicted difference in library usage between someone with the highest level of English fluency and the lowest level of English fluency, all other demographic factors being equal, is roughly the difference between bi-monthly library usage and monthly library usage, or monthly usage and weekly usage.

A model that controls for family members attending the library rather than just children better captures the influence of families on library visits. Although children between the ages of 13 and 18 do not influence greater library visits, there is a highly statistically significant relationship between children under 12 and library visits (see Table 7.3, Model 5). However, this difference is part of a larger influence of family members. The “family members attend library” variable alone has a greater effect than the children under 12 and children 13 to 18 variables (see Model 6).

Using three age and three income variables yielded stronger results. There is a curvilinear relationship between age and library visits, as well as between income and library visits (see Table 7.4). Those age 55 and older as well as households with income above \$65,000 are correlated with lower library use. Households with income between \$15,000 and \$64,999 are correlated with higher library use.

Significance of Perceptions

Perceptions of the library

Perceptions of library service affect Latinos’ library visits (see Table 8.1). Perceptions can be grouped into two general categories: comfort and usefulness of libraries. While higher “comfort” was related to more library visits, lesser “usefulness” was related to fewer library visits. Statements read to respondents in our study are listed below.

Comfort

- Other Latinos also go to the library
- As a Latino/Hispanic, I don’t feel comfortable in the library
- The library is too far

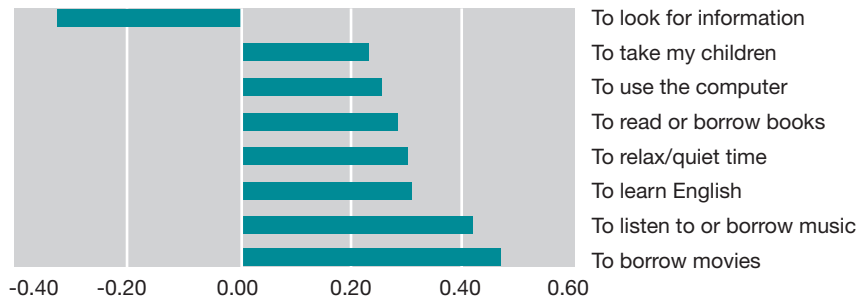
Usefulness

- I have access to the library at school or work
- I don’t feel any need to use the library
- Public libraries are only for children

In addition, Latinos are more concerned with friendly staff service than Spanish language access. Although “staff is not helpful” and “staff treats everybody fairly and equally” were significant predictors of library visits, “staff could not speak Spanish” and “they do not have enough resources in Spanish” bore weak relationships with library visits. This suggests that although the library is a place where Latinos expect to feel comfortable around the staff, access to the Spanish language is not pivotal in influencing library visits.

Latinos are more concerned with friendly staff service than Spanish language access.

Figure 8.2 Effect of Reasons for Attending on Usage



Reasons for Attending

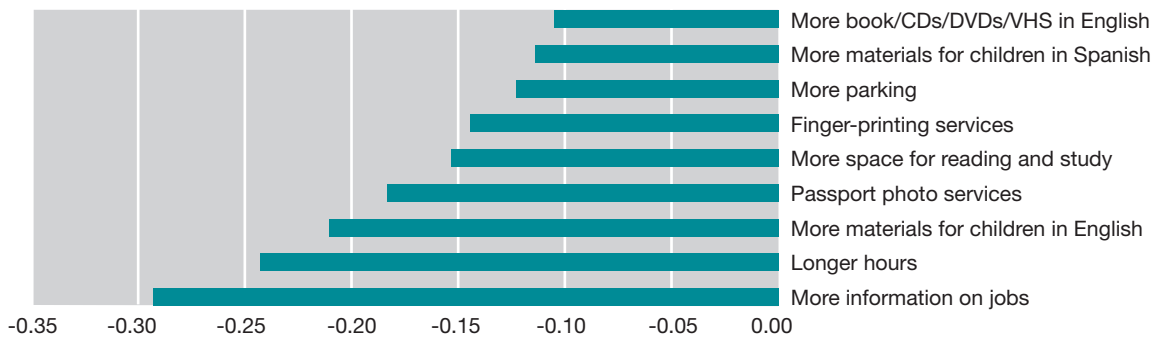
After inserting controls, learning English became one of the most influential reasons Latinos visit the public library (see Figure 8.2). Borrowing movies or music were Latinos’ top reasons for visiting libraries, and learning English was still more influential than reading or borrowing books. Two more notable reasons for attending include using the computer and taking children to the library. However, “looking for information” is associated with lower library attendance.

Suggestions

Suggestions for information on jobs, materials for children in English, and longer hours had the strongest relationships with low library visits implying that dissatisfaction with these items deters library visits (see Figure 8.3). In addition, across all categories of materials, suggestions for English materials were more strongly related with low library visits than Spanish materials. Most striking, perhaps, is the finding suggesting a bilingual staff is not at all correlated with library visits. In other words, libraries that lack the aforementioned materials, particularly English materials, may be losing the most Latino visitors; however, libraries lacking a bilingual staff do not seem to deter Latinos from visiting the library.

Across all categories of materials, suggestions for English materials were more strongly related with low library visits than Spanish materials.

Figure 8.3 Effect of Suggestions for Libraries on Usage*



* A higher negative number indicates a lesser importance of the factor mentioned

Recommendations

The findings of this TRPI study are intended to inform library funding policies and the development of library programs in areas with growing numbers of Latinos. The fundamental goal is to draw more Latinos to the library and increase Latino library usage. The following policy developments are recommended for libraries to consider implementing based on this research:

1. Get to know your local Latino community

Library personnel should be aware of the diversity in their Latino community service area. Is the clientele foreign-born or native-born? How long have they resided in the area? What socio-economic levels do they represent? In regards to age, sex and income, demographic trends in the Latino community influence usage as they do in the broader U.S. population (see Tables 3.1 to 3.3 and 7.4). However, Latinos are a diverse group. Foreign-born Latinos are very likely to be Spanish-dominant and less likely to frequent the library than native-born Latinos (see Table 3.5). Latinos in new destination areas are more likely to have never visited a public library (see Table 5.1).

2. Advertise the library as a place to learn English

Although Latinos' highest reported suggestion was for bilingual staff (see Table 2.4), our regression analyses showed that satisfaction with Spanish language materials and Spanish-speaking staff did not influence frequency of library visits (see Table 8.1). Rather, attending the library to learn English and being English fluent were strong predictors of high library use (see Table 8.2). As a result, libraries should invest in creating adult English-learning programs. Libraries also should invest in creating children's programs that improve fluency, such as summer reading programs. Libraries without English-learning programs should advertise the array of resources they may have for learning English, such as books, CDs or DVDs. Latinos report that advertising would be most effective through Spanish media (see Table 2.5). Spanish-speakers (see Table 3.7) and those with little education (see Table 3.4) are least likely to be aware of the library's resources.

3. Advertise public access to computers and availability of general information

Libraries should advertise the existence of accessible computers and general information in their facilities. Such information can be useful for improving a resume or applying for a job, and awareness of the library as such a resource is likely to draw new people to the library (see Table 8.3). Our research found that, all background characteristics being equal, users who go to the library for purposes of obtaining general information go less frequently than others who go for other reasons (see Table 8.2). However, our research also found that library users who use computers attend the library at higher rates than others (see Table 8.2 and Appendix E). As a result, the availability of computers may generate frequent library visitors who might have normally visited the library only occasionally. In addition, our research found that family members influence on library-attending behavior (see Tables 1.6 and 7.4). For example, parents who use the library to search for information may discover that the library is a safe place to take their children and return more frequently.

4. Inform the community that the library does not share library user information

Many foreign-born Latinos are not citizens, and foreign-born Latinos comprise about half of the adult Latino community (Appendix B). However, our research found that foreign-born Latinos are much less likely to use the library (see Table 3.5), and that a small proportion of Latinos are afraid their personal information will not be kept confidential by libraries (see Table 2.1). As a result, libraries should inform visitors that all personal information is kept confidential. This can be done with a Spanish language sign or a poster that is widely visible. In addition, advertisements for the library also can mention that such confidentiality exists at the library.

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Tables

Table 1.1 Latino Library Use (in percentage)	
Library visits	Percent
never	22.5
more than 1 year ago	23.6
once or twice a year	14.1
every other month	9.7
monthly	17.8
weekly	11.2
daily	1.0
Total	100.0

N= 3,058

Note: ALA (2006) places Latino use at 49%

Table 1.2 Library Cards Among Users (in percentage)	
R has library card	Percent
No	32.8
Yes	67.2
Total	100.0

N= 2,370 (library users only)

Table 1.3 Knowledge of Library in Area (in percentage)	
R knows of library in area	Percent
No	38.5
Yes	61.5
Total	100.0

N= 688 (library non-users only)

Table 1.4 Internet Access (in percentage)	
R already has Internet access	Percent
No	38.8
Yes	61.2
Total	100.0

N= 3,058

Table 1.5 Need Library for Internet (in percentage)	
Need Library for Internet	Percent
Yes	47.1
No	52.9
Total	100.0

N= 1,871 (those with Internet access only)

Table 1.6 Family Attends Library (in percentage)	
R's family attends library	Percent
Never	20.0
More than 1 year ago	9.5
In the past year	70.6
Total	100.0

N= 2,562

Sources: All tables in this section are from the TRPI Latino Library Study

Table 2.1 Perceptions of Libraries by Library Usage (in percentage)

	USAGE						
	Never	Less than yearly	1-2 times per year	Bi-monthly	Monthly	Weekly or More	Total
Other Latinos/Hispanics also go to this public library	74.3	89.5	91.9	91.6	95.0	97.9	88.6
I can relax and spend time in the public library	76.3	82.5	89.1	94.6	90.6	92.5	85.9
The staff treats everybody fairly and equally	56.4	86.6	86.3	90.3	86.4	90.1	80.5
The library is a good place to learn English	79.5	76.9	77.4	84.6	77.2	86.7	79.6
I feel comfortable giving the library my identification documents	58.5	80.7	77.2	77.5	82.7	85.3	75.8
I am confident the library will not share my personal information with others	57.7	76.5	75.8	76.5	82.6	84.0	74.2
I am worried about losing the books or CDs of the library	59.7	52.3	47.6	55.0	57.5	62.0	55.7
It is difficult to find parking in the library area	17.6	20.3	19.1	26.2	19.1	28.3	20.8
They do not have enough resources in Spanish	19.2	23.4	28.4	27.4	29.2	27.4	25.1
Library is too small - limited space and collection	12.2	17.7	19.5	24.8	20.6	26.1	19.0
Library hours are too short	20.6	17.9	19.1	28.5	20.6	25.1	21.1
The staff could not speak Spanish	19.9	24.7	21.4	24.7	26.8	24.5	23.5
I have access to the library at school or work, so there is no need to	27.2	29.8	26.0	13.8	18.3	18.7	23.7
It is better to buy books rather than to borrow them	33.4	28.8	20.0	17.8	17.2	18.1	24.2
Fines for forgetting to return borrowed books or tapes are too expensive	19.3	17.6	14.4	20.8	18.6	17.4	18.0
Library is closed during my free time	22.5	24.4	25.1	28.5	19.6	16.5	22.7
I don't know how to use the library, and I'm embarrassed to walk in and ask	34.5	19.5	14.4	12.8	13.2	16.0	19.9
Library is not accessible by public transportation	17.7	19.1	18.8	20.5	12.8	14.4	17.2
I don't feel any need to use the library	36.2	26.9	17.0	13.1	8.1	13.6	21.3
I don't have time to go to the library	50.6	38.6	37.4	28.5	13.8	13.6	32.7
As a Latino/Hispanic, I don't feel comfortable using the library	22.1	15.5	18.6	10.1	11.9	12.6	15.9
The staff is not helpful	12.1	11.2	11.6	7.4	13.0	10.4	11.3
As a Latino/Hispanic, I don't feel welcome in the library	16.7	12.6	17.2	9.4	12.7	9.3	13.5
Library is too far	23.5	16.9	11.6	11.7	13.0	7.5	15.3
Public libraries are only for children and students	14.5	9.7	4.7	2.3	4.8	4.3	7.8

N= 3,058

Table 2.2 Reasons for Attending Public Library, by Usage

	USAGE					Total
	Less than yearly	1-2 times per year	Bi-monthly	Monthly	Weekly or More	
To read or borrow books	55.0	65.1	76.8	66.1	69.1	49.9
To look for information	44.3	47.0	36.9	35.4	31.7	30.9
To take my children	21.9	21.4	27.9	30.1	33.6	20.4
To use the computer	17.2	21.6	19.5	33.8	32.6	19.0
To study or do homework	24.1	14.2	15.4	24.0	28.8	17.0
To borrow movies	13.4	7.0	12.8	19.6	24.5	11.9
To relax/ quiet time	10.1	6.7	14.1	15.1	12.8	9.0
To listen to or borrow music	8.2	4.2	7.0	14.3	17.1	7.8
To meet children after school	6.5	9.8	6.7	10.3	11.5	6.8
To attend programs	8.0	6.5	6.0	8.1	14.1	6.6
To learn English	8.3	7.0	5.0	6.6	12.5	6.1
To meet friends	2.4	5.6	4.7	5.1	5.3	3.4
To learn Spanish	4.8	1.4	2.0	3.3	5.9	2.8
To learn some other language	4.4	2.6	0.7	2.4	5.9	2.6

N= 2,370

Table 2.3 Satisfaction with the Public Library

Item	Percent
English books	93.3
English children's books	91.9
English Newspapers, brochures, magazines	89.8
English CDs	87.2
English children's movies	86.9
English movies	85.8
Learning programs for children	85.5
Availability of space	84.6
Learning programs for adults	76.9
Spanish children's books	76.1
Opportunities to learn English in the library	75.2
Spanish books	74.0
Spanish newspapers, brochures, magazines	68.2
Spanish children's movies	66.9
Spanish CDs	65.5
Spanish movies	63.5

(Note: N size varied between 1,627 and 2,218 for above estimates)

Table 2.4 Suggestions for “How Can the Library Best Serve the Latino Community?”

Suggestion	Percent
Have bilingual staff	76.0
More books-CDs-DVDs-VHS in Spanish	45.5
More materials for children in Spanish	39.2
More computers with Internet connection	38.4
More information on jobs	36.3
More books-CDs-DVDs-VHS in English	32.7
More materials for children in English	32.5
More space for children to read and learn	28.4
More space for reading and study	28.2
Passport photo services	27.5
Longer hours	27.2
More parking	24.2
Finger-printing services	21.7

N= 3,058

Table 2.5 Suggestions for “How Can the Library Best Invite Latinos?”

Item	Percent
Announcements on Spanish radio	49.9
Through child’s school	48.0
Spanish advertisements	37.5
Through local newspapers	36.9
Through the mail	36.9
Through church	28.2
By word of mouth	26.9

N= 3,058

Table 3.1 Library Visits, by Sex (in percentages)

Visits	SEX		Total
	Male	Female	
never	25.7	19.4	22.5
more than 1 year ago	26.4	20.9	23.6
once or twice a year	14.8	13.3	14.1
every other month	8.7	10.7	9.7
monthly	14.0	21.5	17.8
weekly	9.1	13.3	11.2
daily	1.3	0.8	1.0

N= 3,058

Table 3.2 Library Visits, by Age (in percentages)

Visits	AGE						Total
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	
never	17.1	27.5	23.7	16.4	22.5	29.2	22.5
more than 1 year ago	23.4	20.6	17.4	30.3	27.7	28.6	23.6
once or twice a year	16.4	12.7	9.8	15.1	14.6	18.7	14.1
every other month	8.4	11.0	12.4	7.7	11.9	5.7	9.8
monthly	22.6	14.6	21.0	20.5	10.9	12.4	17.8
weekly	10.6	13.3	15.3	7.9	12.2	3.8	11.2
daily	1.6	0.3	0.5	2.1	0.3	1.6	1.0

N= 3,058

Table 3.3 Library Visits, by Income (in percentages)

Visits	INCOME								Total
	<\$15k	\$15k- \$24k	\$25k- \$34k	\$35k- \$49k	\$50k- \$64k	\$65k- \$79k	\$80k- \$99k	\$100k+	
never	38.1	22.1	21.7	14.7	8.5	9.9	6.7	7.4	20.6
more than 1 year ago	21.3	23.5	20.1	23.8	18.4	33.1	33.3	40.7	23.9
once or twice a year	11.4	13.8	15.2	17.4	15.8	22.3	25.3	10.4	15.0
every other month	5.2	9.7	7.2	13.5	14.5	12.4	2.7	16.3	9.8
monthly	12.3	16.3	23.5	20.9	29.5	14.9	14.7	20.7	19.0
weekly	11.2	12.9	11.5	9.4	13.2	7.4	17.3	4.4	11.1
daily	0.4	1.8	0.8	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6

N= 2,168

Table 3.4 Library Visits, by Education (in percentages)

Visits	EDUCATION					Total
	Less than H.S.	Some H.S.	H.S. Grad	Some College	College Grad	
never	46.8	28.7	20.6	11.9	12.3	22.5
more than 1 year ago	22.4	22.8	24.3	25.8	20.3	23.6
once or twice a year	6.6	10.1	15.2	15.5	20.8	14.0
every other month	6.6	9.9	10.2	12.1	8.1	9.8
monthly	10.3	15.3	16.1	24.4	21.6	17.8
weekly	6.8	12.9	11.8	9.9	15.2	11.2
daily	0.4	0.2	1.8	0.4	1.7	1.0

N= 3,058

Table 3.5 Library Visits, by Generation (in percentages)

Visits	GENERATION			Total
	First	Second	Third	
never	30.2	14.1	12.8	22.0
more than 1 year ago	22.1	29.0	21.3	23.6
once or twice a year	10.0	14.3	20.1	13.6
every other month	8.7	10.6	11.8	9.9
monthly	17.4	17.1	21.7	18.3
weekly	11.0	13.0	11.0	11.5
daily	0.6	1.9	1.2	1.1

N= 2,895

Table 3.6 Library Visits, by Citizenship (in percentages)

Visits	Other	IMMIGRATION STATUS			Total
		Perm. Res.	Citizen	Refused	
never	43.9	30.7	18.6	31.9	29.7
more than 1 year ago	16.1	21.9	27.7	23.9	22.8
once or twice a year	7.8	8.8	13.4	22.1	11.5
every other month	6.0	7.6	10.8	6.7	8.2
monthly	14.9	16.3	21.0	8.0	16.7
weekly	10.1	14.1	8.2	7.4	10.5
daily	1.2	0.6	0.4	0.0	0.6

N= 1,501 (Foreign-born only)

Table 3.7 Library Visits, by Language (in percentages)

Visits	English	LANGUAGE R READS IN		Total
		Both	Spanish	
never	12.2	17.1	34.7	22.3
more than 1 year ago	27.0	22.2	21.8	23.7
once or twice a year	16.6	15.3	11.0	14.1
every other month	11.9	10.3	7.6	9.8
monthly	19.2	19.5	15.5	17.9
weekly	11.1	15.2	8.7	11.3
daily	1.9	0.4	0.7	1.0

N= 3,042

Table 3.8 Library Visits, by Literacy (in percentages)

Visits	Literate	LITERACY	Total
		Illiterate	
never	22.3	83.3	22.5
more than 1 year ago	23.6	16.7	23.6
once or twice a year	14.1	0.0	14.1
every other month	9.8	0.0	9.7
monthly	17.9	0.0	17.8
weekly	11.3	0.0	11.2
daily	1.0	0.0	1.0

N= 3,058

Table 3.9 Library Visits, by Children Under 12 (in percentages)

Visits	CHILDREN UNDER 12		
	No	Yes	Total
never	23.7	20.9	22.5
more than 1 year ago	28.2	17.2	23.6
once or twice a year	12.4	16.4	14.1
every other month	9.8	9.8	9.8
monthly	15.9	20.5	17.9
weekly	9.1	14.0	11.2
daily	0.9	1.2	1.0

N= 3,051

Table 3.10 Library Visits, by Children 13-18 (in percentages)

Visits	CHILDREN 13-18		
	No	Yes	Total
never	25.4	14.1	22.5
more than 1 year ago	23.8	22.9	23.6
once or twice a year	14.6	12.5	14.1
every other month	7.7	15.9	9.8
monthly	15.9	23.7	17.9
weekly	11.5	10.5	11.2
daily	1.2	0.5	1.0

N= 3,052

Table 4.1 Reading Preference, by Birthplace (in percentages)

Language R Reads	BIRTHPLACE		
	Native	Foreign	Total
English	64.9	7.6	35.4
Equal	27.9	26.2	27.0
Spanish	7.2	66.1	37.6

N= 2,795

Table 4.2 Literacy, by Birthplace (in percentages)

Literacy	BIRTHPLACE		
	Native	Foreign	Total
Literate	99.8	99.4	99.6
Illiterate	0.2	0.6	0.4

N= 2,807

Table 4.3 Library Card Ownership, by Birthplace (in percentages)

Library card	BIRTHPLACE		
	Native	Foreign	Total
No	30.5	34.8	32.5
Yes	69.5	65.2	67.5

N= 2,185 (library users only)

Table 4.4 Knows of Library, by Birthplace (in percentages)

Knows of library in area	BIRTHPLACE		
	Native	Foreign	Total
No	29.6	41.3	37.8
Yes	70.4	58.7	62.2

N= 623 (library non-users only)

Table 4.5 Internet Access, by Birthplace (in percentages)

Internet access	BIRTHPLACE		
	Native	Foreign	Total
No	28.0	48.3	38.5
Yes	72.0	51.7	61.5

N= 2,807

Table 4.6 Need Library for Internet, by Birthplace (in percentages)

Need Library for Internet	BIRTHPLACE		
	Native	Foreign	Total
Yes	40.1	54.3	46.2
No	59.9	45.7	53.8

N= 1,727 (those with Internet access only)

Table 4.7 Family Attends Library, by Birthplace (in percentages)

Family attends library	BIRTHPLACE		
	Native	Foreign	Total
Never	17.0	22.1	19.6
More than 1 year ago	8.9	10.4	9.6
In the past year	74.1	67.5	70.8

N= 2,379

Table 5.1 Library Visits, by Type of State (in percentages)

Visits	TYPE OF STATE		
	Traditional	New Dest.	Total
never	22.1	30.0	24.6
more than 1 year ago	25.3	19.1	23.3
once or twice a year	13.5	12.1	13.0
every other month	9.9	9.4	9.7
monthly	16.7	17.4	16.9
weekly	11.6	10.2	11.1
daily	1.0	1.9	1.3

N= 2,940

Table 5.2 Citizenship, by Type of State (in percentages)

Status (Foreign-born only)	TYPE OF STATE		
	Traditional	New Dest.	Total
Perm Resident	19.2	33.3	24.4
Citizen	31.5	34.0	32.4
Other	38.4	23.3	32.9
Refused	11.0	9.3	10.4

N= 1,552

Table 5.3 Reading Preference, by Type of State (in percentages)

Language R Reads in	TYPE OF STATE		
	Traditional	New Dest.	Total
English	32.9	23.5	29.8
Equal	27.7	33.4	29.6
Spanish	39.4	43.1	40.6

N= 2,929

Note for Tables 5.1 to 6.2: Weighted without state weight

Table 5.4 Literacy, by Type of State (in percentages)

Literacy	TYPE OF STATE		
	Traditional	New Dest.	Total
Literate	99.5	99.9	99.6
Illiterate	0.5	0.1	0.4

N= 2,940

Table 5.5 Library Card Ownership, by Type of State (in percentages)

Library Card	TYPE OF STATE		
	Traditional	New Dest.	Total
No	32.7	30.0	31.9
Yes	67.3	70.0	68.1

N= 2,215 (Library Users Only)

Table 5.6 Knows of Library, by Type of State (in percentages)

Knows of library in area	TYPE OF STATE		
	Traditional	New Dest.	Total
No	38.0	49.7	42.6
Yes	62.0	50.3	57.4

N= 725 (Library Non-Users Only)

Table 5.7 Internet Access, by Type of State (in percentages)

Internet access	TYPE OF STATE		
	Traditional	New Dest.	Total
No	36.9	40.8	38.2
Yes	63.1	59.2	61.8

N= 2,940

Table 5.8 Need Library for Internet, by Type of State (in percentages)

Need Library for Internet	TYPE OF STATE		
	Traditional	New Dest.	Total
Yes	46.0	44.3	45.5
No	54.0	55.7	54.5

N= 1,816 (Those with Internet Access only)

Table 5.9 Family Attends Library, by Type of State (in percentages)

Family Attends Library	TYPE OF STATE		
	Traditional	New Dest.	Total
Never	20.1	26.7	22.3
More than 1 year ago	10.4	7.7	9.5
In the past year	69.6	65.6	68.3

N= 2,449

Note: Weighted without state weight

Table 6.1 Length of Residence in Area, by Type of State

Years in Area	TYPE OF STATE		
	Traditional	New Dest.	Total
<1	6.6	10.2	8.0
1-5 years	36.9	50.4	42.1
6 and over	56.4	39.4	49.9
1539	100.0	100.0	100.0

N= 2,940

Table 6.2 Length of Residence in US, by Type of State

Years in U.S.	TYPE OF STATE		
	Traditional	New Dest.	Total
1	1.9	4.9	3.0
2-5 years	13.9	17.8	15.3
6 and over	84.2	77.3	81.7
1609	100.0	100.0	100.0

N= 2,940

Note for Tables 5.1 to 6.2: Weighted without state weight

Table 7.1 Effects of Demographic, Geographic, and Generational Variables on Library Usage

Variables	MODEL 1		MODEL 2	
	b	Std. Error	b	Std. Error
(Constant)	1.15***	0.15	1.25***	0.18
Demographic				
Female	0.59***	0.07	0.58***	0.07
Age	-0.05*	0.02	-0.04*	0.02
Income	0.06**	0.02	0.06**	0.02
Education	0.23***	0.03	0.22***	0.03
Geographic and generation				
New destination state			0.02	0.19
First generation			-0.1	0.09
Second generation			-0.13	0.10
Acculturation				
Foreign-born and citizen				
Years in U.S.				
Fluency				
Spoken language				
Reading language				
Familiarity				
Years at residence				
Library card				
Family				
Children under 12				
Children 13 to 18				
Family members attend library				
R2	0.06		0.06	

N= 3,058

*p<.10

**p<.01

***p<.001

Source: TRPI Latino Library Study

Note for tables 7.1 to 7.4: This study used Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression for regression analyses. The purpose of regression is to predict changes in the outcome variable (in this case library visits) while keeping constant the differences between independent variables (i.e. age, sex, education, income, etc.).

Table 7.2 Effects of Demographic, Acculturation, and Library Familiarity on Library Usage

Variables	MODEL 3		MODEL 4	
	b	Std. Error	b	Std. Error
(Constant)	0.52	0.39	2.20***	0.19
Demographic				
Female	0.55***	0.11	0.15*	0.07
Age	-0.01	0.06	-0.05*	0.02
Income	0.10**	0.04	-0.07***	0.02
Education	0.19***	0.05	0.00	0.03
Geographic and Generation				
New destination state				
First generation				
Second generation				
Acculturation				
Foreign-born and citizen	-0.02	0.09		
Years in U.S.	0.00	0.01		
Fluency	0.18*	0.07	0.09**	0.03
Spoken language	0.00	0.19		
Reading language	0.00	0.12		
Familiarity				
Years at residence			-0.10*	0.06
Library card			1.27***	0.07
Family				
Children under 12				
Children 13 to 18				
Family members attend library				
R2	0.08		0.19	

N= 3,058

*p<.10

**p<.01

***p<.001

Table 7.3 Effects of Demographic, Acculturation, Familiarity, and Family Variables on Library Usage

Variables	MODEL 5		MODEL 6	
	b	Std. Error	b	Std. Error
(Constant)	1.77***	0.20	1.06***	0.24
Demographic				
Female	0.10	0.07	0.15*	0.07
Age	0.00	0.02	-0.07**	0.02
Income	-0.08***	0.02	-0.06**	0.02
Education	0.01	0.03	-0.02	0.03
Geographic and Generation				
New destination state				
First-generation				
Second-generation				
Acculturation				
Foreign-born and citizen				
Years in U.S.				
Fluency	0.10***	0.03	0.12***	0.03
Spoken language				
Reading language				
Familiarity				
Years at residence	-0.10*	0.05	-0.08	0.06
Library card	1.25***	0.07	1.17***	0.08
Family				
Children under 12	0.45***	0.07		
Children 13 to 18	-0.01	0.07		
Family members attend library			0.45***	0.05
R2	0.21		0.23	

N= 3,058

*p<.10

**p<.01

***p<.001

Table 7.4 Comparison of Best-fitting Models for Analysis of Library Data

Variables (Constant)	MODEL 7		MODEL 8	
	b	Std. Error	b	Std. Error
(Constant)	-0.75***	0.18	-1.19***	0.14
Demographic				
Female	0.48***	0.07	0.48***	0.06
Age (0-7)	-0.05*	0.02		
18-34			-- --	--
35-54			0.08	0.07
55 and over			-0.22**	0.08
Income (0-8)	-0.02	0.02		
\$0- \$14,999			-- --	--
\$15,000- \$64,999			0.12*	0.07
\$65,000 and over			-0.27*	0.1
Education	0.09*	0.04	0.14***	0.03
Geographic and generation				
New destination state				
First generation				
Second generation				
Acculturation				
Foreign-born and citizen				
Years in U.S.				
Fluency	0.25***	0.03	0.23***	0.03
Spoken language				
Reading language				
Familiarity				
Years at residence				
Library card				
Family				
Children under 12				
Children 13 to 18				
Family members attend library	0.78***	0.04	0.80***	0.04
R2	0.23		0.24	

N= 3,058

*p<.10

**p<.01

***p<.001

Table 8.1 Effect of Latinos' Perceptions of Library Service on Usage

Perceptions	beta	Std. Error	R2
I don't have time to go to the library	-0.48***	0.03	0.30
Other Latinos/Hispanics also go to this public library	0.35***	0.07	0.25
Library is too far	-0.31***	0.04	0.26
I don't feel any need to use the library	-0.30***	0.04	0.26
As a Latino/Hispanic, I don't feel comfortable using the library	-0.27***	0.04	0.25
Public libraries are only for children and students	-0.26***	0.06	0.25
I have access to the library at school or work, so there is no need to go to the public library	-0.26***	0.04	0.26
The staff is not helpful	-0.25***	0.05	0.25
I don't know how to use the library, and I'm embarrassed to walk in and ask	-0.22***	0.04	0.25
It is better to buy books rather than to borrow them	-0.21***	0.04	0.25
The staff treats everybody fairly and equally	0.21***	0.05	0.25
Library is closed during my free time	-0.20***	0.04	0.25
I am confident the library will not share my personal information with others	0.19***	0.04	0.25
Library is not accessible by public transportation	-0.18***	0.04	0.25
Fines for forgetting to return borrowed books or tapes are too expensive	-0.17***	0.04	0.25
I can relax and spend time in the public library	0.16**	0.05	0.25
As a Latino/Hispanic, I don't feel welcome in the library	-0.13**	0.05	0.25
The staff could not speak Spanish	-0.09*	0.04	0.24
It is difficult to find parking in the library area	-0.05	0.04	0.24
Library hours are too short	-0.05	0.04	0.24
I feel comfortable giving the library my identification documents	0.05	0.04	0.24
The library is a good place to learn English	0.05	0.05	0.24
They do not have enough resources in Spanish	-0.02	0.04	0.24
Library is too small - limited space and collection	-0.01	0.04	0.24
I am worried about losing the books or CDs of the library	0.00	0.03	0.24

Note: Estimations for each item were calculated while controlling for demographic variables in Table 2.4, Model 8. R-squares for each estimation are reported in column on right.

N= 3,058

*p<.10

**p<.01

***p<.001

Table 8.2 Effect of Latinos' Reasons for Attending Public Libraries on Usage

Why does R go to the library	beta	Std. Error	R2
To borrow movies	0.46***	0.08	0.14
To listen to or borrow music	0.41***	0.10	0.13
To look for information	-0.32***	0.06	0.13
To learn English	0.30**	0.11	0.13
To relax/ quiet time	0.30**	0.09	0.13
To read or borrow books	0.28***	0.06	0.13
To use the computer	0.26***	0.07	0.13
To take my children	0.22**	0.07	0.13
To attend programs	0.21	0.11	0.12
To learn Spanish	0.20	0.16	0.12
To meet friends	0.17	0.15	0.12
To study or do homework	0.14	0.07	0.12
To meet children after school	0.14	0.10	0.12
To learn some other language	0.11	0.17	0.12

Note: Estimations for each item were calculated while controlling for demographic variables in Table 2.4, Model 8. R-squares for each estimation are reported in column on right.

N= 2,370

*p<.10

**p<.01

***p<.001

Table 8.3 Effect of Latinos' Suggestions for Libraries on Usage

How can the library better serve the Latino community?	beta	Std. Error	R2
More information on jobs	-0.29***	0.06	0.25
Longer hours	-0.24***	0.07	0.25
More materials for children in English	-0.21**	0.06	0.25
Passport photo services	-0.18**	0.07	0.25
More space for reading and study	-0.15*	0.07	0.24
Fingerprinting services	-0.14*	0.07	0.24
More parking	-0.12*	0.07	0.24
More materials for children in Spanish	-0.11*	0.06	0.24
More books/CDs/DVDs/VHS in English	-0.11*	0.06	0.24
More space for children to read and learn	-0.09	0.07	0.24
More books/CDs/DVDs/VHS in Spanish	-0.04	0.06	0.24
More computers with Internet connection	-0.03	0.06	0.24
Have bilingual staff	0.00	0.07	0.24

Note: Estimations for each item were calculated while controlling for demographic variables in Table 2.4, Model 8. R-squares for each estimation are reported in column on right.

N= 3,058

*p<.10

**p<.01

***p<.001

APPENDIX A

The Analytic Strategy

“Library Visits” was our main dependent variable. Library Visits was a linear variable, with values ranging from 0-5 (0=Never Been, 1=Over 1 Year ago, 2=1-2 Times per year, 3=Bi-monthly, 4=Monthly, 5=Weekly or more). This variable was constructed from two different questions. Interviewers asked respondents, “Have you ever been to your public library?” The possible responses were “Never Been,” “Over 1 year ago,” and “within the past year.” Those who responded that they had ever been to a public library were asked, “How often do you visit the public library?” Possible responses were “1-2 times per year”, “Bi-monthly”, “Monthly”, “Weekly”, or “Daily.” “Library Visits” was constructed in order to capture the range of responses in these two questions (although “weekly” and “daily” were collapsed into one category in order to allow for more cases). Near the end of the findings, we employ the dependent variable “Library Use” to refer to only those who had ever visited a library; “library use” is a construct with values from 1-5. Some questions were only asked to respondents who had ever been to a library; for example, questions related to satisfaction with materials or computer use at the library.

First, we presented our findings with frequencies on our dependent variable (library visits) and mediating variables (perceptions, reasons for attending, satisfaction). Second, we presented cross-tabulations between demographic variables (sex, age, income, highest education, reading language), generation, and geography, on library visits.

Because distinct patterns emerged from our observation of generation and library visits, we also cross-tabulated data on birthplace (foreign vs. native-born) by library-related variables (literacy, library cards, reading language preference, Internet access, use of Internet at library, knowledge of library in the area). Third, to answer questions that we drew from surface-level analyses of frequencies, we entered variables into a set of “best-fitting” regression models; the purpose of this was to test for the strongest predictors of library visits. Fourth, we controlled for significant factors (i.e. we kept background characteristics constant) to predict which library-related issues (i.e. awareness of resources, satisfaction, suggestions, perceptions, reasons for attending) were most relevant to the Latino population in general.

Appendix B. Demographic Characteristics (in percentages)

Type of state	Percent
Traditional	96.3
New destination	3.7
Total	100.0

N= 3,058

State	Percent
California	41.3
Florida	12.3
Nevada	1.8
New York	9.9
North Carolina	1.9
Texas	32.9
Total	100.0

N= 3,058

Sex	Percent
Female	49.4
Male	50.6
Total	100.0

N= 3,058

Age	Percent
18-24	21.1
25-34	22.4
35-44	20.1
45-54	15.4
55-64	10.7
65+	10.3
Total	100.0

N= 3,058

Generational status	Percent
First generation	50.3
Second generation	23.8
Third-plus generation	25.9
Total	100.0

N= 2,895

Status (Foreign-born only)	Percent
Perm Res.	33.4
Citizen	33.3
Other	22.4
Refused	10.9
Total	100.0

N= 1,502

Income	Percent
Up to \$15,000	20.6
\$15,000 to \$24,999	20.5
\$25,000 to \$34,999	17.2
\$35,000 to \$49,999	15.6
\$50,000 to \$64,999	10.8
\$65,000 to \$79,999	5.6
\$80,000 to \$99,999	3.5
\$100,000 and above	6.2
Total	100.0

N= 2,169

Education	Percent
Grade school or less	15.3
Some high school	13.2
High school graduate	34.7
Some college/Vocational	23.5
College Graduate	13.4
Total	100.0

N= 3,058

Language Speaking Preference	Percent
English	32.7
Spanish	67.3
Total	100.0

N= 3,058

Language R Reads in	Percent
English	33.8
Equal	27.5
Spanish	38.7
Total	100.0

N= 3,045

R is literate	Percent
Literate	99.6
Illiterate	0.4
Total	100.0

N= 3,058

R has children under 12	Percent
No	57.7
Yes	42.3
Total	100.0

Missing N= 7

R has children 13-18	Percent
No	74.4
Yes	25.6
Total	100.0

Missing N= 6

Source: TRPI Latino Library Study

Appendix C. Library Visits, by Library Variables (in percentages)

Visits	LIBRARY CARD		
	No	Yes	Total
more than 1 year ago	53.8	19.1	30.5
once or twice a year	21.8	16.3	18.
every other month	7.3	15.1	12.6
monthly	9.4	29.6	22.9
weekly	7.1	18.2	14.5
daily	0.6	1.7	1.3

N= 2,370 (Library Users Only)

Visits	INTERNET ACCESS		
	No	Yes	Total
never	35.5	14.3	22.5
more than 1 year ago	20.2	25.8	23.6
once or twice a year	13.4	14.5	14.1
every other month	7.0	11.5	9.7
monthly	13.0	20.9	17.8
weekly	10.3	11.8	11.2
daily	0.7	1.3	1.0

N= 3,058

Visits	INTERNET NOT NEEDED		
	No	Yes	Total
never	13.5	15.0	14.3
more than 1 year ago	18.1	32.6	25.8
once or twice a year	11.8	16.9	14.5
every other month	13.3	9.9	11.5
monthly	25.9	16.5	20.9
weekly	16.8	7.4	11.8
daily	0.7	1.8	1.3

N= 1,871 (those with Internet access only)

Visits	Never	FAMILY ATTENDS LIBRARY		Total
		More than 1 year ago	In the past year	
never	51.7	15.6	11.7	20.0
more than 1 year ago	21.4	57.2	17.2	21.9
once or twice a year	12.7	7.4	15.9	14.4
every other month	4.9	6.2	12.9	10.7
monthly	6.0	9.9	25.3	20.0
weekly	3.3	2.9	16.0	12.2
daily	0.0	0.8	1.1	0.8

N= 2,565

Source: TRPI Latino Library Study

Appendix D. Variable Effects on Possessing Library Card

	UNSTANDARDIZED COEF.		
	B	Std. Error	Sig.
(Constant)	0.10	0.12	0.42
Sex	0.13	0.03	0.00
18-34			
35-54	0.06	0.04	0.12
55 and over	-0.02	0.06	0.74
Highest Education	0.03	0.01	0.03
\$0- \$14,999			
\$15,000- \$64,999	0.05	0.03	0.13
\$65,000 and over	0.07	0.06	0.24
Geographic and Generation			
New destination state	0.04	0.03	0.22
First generation	-0.03	0.05	0.59
Second generation	0.01	0.30	0.96
Acculturation			
Years in U.S.	0.00	0.00	0.54
English fluency	0.03	0.02	0.04
Familiarity			
Years in area of residence	0.03	0.03	0.23
Family			
Children under 12	0.11	0.03	0.00
Children 13 to 18	0.04	0.03	0.18
Family members attend library	0.08	0.02	0.00
R-Square	0.09		

N= 2,370

Note: Controlling for demographic variables in Table 2.4, Model 8

*p<.10

**p<.01

***p<.001

Source: TRPI Latino Library Study

Appendix E. Latino Computer Use by Library Usage (in percentage)

	LIBRARY VISITS					Total
	Less than yearly	1-2 times per year	Bi-monthly	Monthly	Weekly or More	
Use computer	17.2	21.6	19.5	33.8	32.6	24.5
Do not use computer	82.8	78.4	80.5	66.2	67.4	75.5

N= 2,370 (Library Users Only)

	LIBRARY VISITS					Total
	Less than yearly	1-2 times per year	Bi-monthly	Monthly	Weekly or More	
Read/write emails	5.7	7.4	6.0	12.1	10.7	6.4
Look for jobs	3.9	4.0	4.7	9.0	8.0	4.5
Look for information	12.2	13.5	18.5	26.8	29.3	14.9
Word or number processing	2.4	5.6	6.7	13.6	7.7	5.4

Note: For example, 5.7 percent of those who attend the library less than yearly claim to use the computer for reading or writing emails.

N= 2,370 (Library users only) Source: TRPI Latino Library Study

Appendix F. Variable Effects on Using Computers

	UNSTANDARDIZED COEF.		
	B	Std. Error	Sig.
(Constant)	-0.17	0.08	0.04
Sex	0.03	0.02	0.21
18-34			
35-54	-0.03	0.03	0.23
55 and over	-0.13	0.04	0.00
Highest education	0.01	0.01	0.23
\$0- \$14,999			
\$15,000- \$64,999	-0.04	0.02	0.07
\$65,000 and over	-0.01	0.05	0.87
Geographic and generation			
New destination state	-0.01	0.05	0.91
First generation	0.04	0.05	0.34
Second generation	0.00	0.12	0.97
Acculturation			
Years in U.S.	0.00	0.00	0.95
English fluency	0.02	0.01	0.10
Familiarity			
Years in area of residence	0.03	0.02	0.17
Family			
Children under 12	0.02	0.02	0.48
Children 13 to 18	0.00	0.03	0.91
Family members attend library	0.07	0.01	0.00
R-Square	0.09		

N= 2,370

Note: Controlling for demographic variables in Table 2.4, Model 8

*p<.10

**p<.01

***p<.001

Source: TRPI Latino Library Study

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Founded in 1985, the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute (TRPI) advances informed policy on key issues affecting Latino communities through objective and timely research contributing to the betterment of the nation. TRPI is an independent, nonprofit organization that is an affiliated research institute of the School of Policy, Planning, and Development at the University of Southern California.

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