



Faculty of Legal Sciences

School of International Studies

**INTEGRATION BLOCS: ADVANTAGES AND
DISADVANTAGES IN DEVELOPING ECONOMIES
IN LATIN AMERICA. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Project prior to obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in
International Studies

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**Cuenca – Ecuador
2025**

To my parents, Karina and Christian,
for making my goals their own. For seeing my potential
even when I cannot.

Thank you for being my anchor and, at the same time,
the wind that drives me forward.

Thank you for teaching me that dreams have no limits.

This achievement is yours as well.

To my grandfather, Papayo. I know how proudly he
would have shown this off.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To God, for being my guide and strength at every step
of my life.

To my parents, Karina and Christian for walking by my
side with
unconditional love and for supporting even my wildest
dreams.

To my brothers, Christian Raul and Christian Andres,
for being my daily joy and motivation.

To my grandmother Susana, for her prayers before
every exam.

To my uncle Raul and my aunt Mercedes, for always
being there
when I needed them the most, and for being my
emergency
contacts when my parents were far away.

To the University of Azuay, for giving me the
opportunity to live experiences that will forever remain
in my heart.

To Prof. Luis Tonon, my thesis advisor, for his fair and
timely guidance,
for trusting my judgement, and for agreeing to be part
of this journey.

I couldn't have chosen a better mentor.

Thank you to each and every person I met along the
way.

Without you, this journey would not have been the
same.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>TABLE OF CONTENTS</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>LIST OF FIGURES</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>ABSTRACT</i>	<i>iv</i>
<i>RESUMEN</i>	<i>iv</i>
<i>1. Introduction</i>	<i>1</i>
1.1 Objectives	<i>2</i>
1.2 Theoretical Framework	<i>2</i>
1.3 State of the Art	<i>3</i>
<i>2. Methodology</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>3. Results</i>	<i>5</i>
Advantages	<i>6</i>
Disadvantages	<i>7</i>
Impact and Projections	<i>8</i>
<i>5. Conclusions</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>6. References</i>	<i>13</i>

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 <i>PRISMA Results</i>	<i>5</i>
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INTEGRATION BLOCS: ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES IN DEVELOPING ECONOMIES IN LATIN AMERICA. LITERATURE REVIEW

ABSTRACT

This research critically analyzes the effects of regional economic integration on the developing economies of Latin America, considering both its benefits and limitations. Through a systematic literature review using the PRISMA approach, over one hundred peer-reviewed sources were collected from databases such as Scopus and Web of Science, covering studies from the last ten years. The findings show that, while regional integration has contributed to increased intra-regional trade, foreign investment attraction, and technical cooperation, these benefits have not been homogeneous or sustained. Significant structural challenges remain, such as institutional weakness, normative fragmentation, and the lack of a shared strategic vision among member countries. The study concludes that integration can be a powerful tool for regional development, provided it is accompanied by deep institutional reforms, redistributive policies, and cooperative governance that transcends political cycles. Recommendations are made to strengthen the institutional framework of regional blocs, harmonize regulations, and consolidate productive chains with higher value-added, aiming for a more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable integration.

Keywords

Economic Integration, Regional cooperation, Globalization, South-South relations, Free trade

BLOQUES DE INTEGRACIÓN: VENTAJAS Y DEVENTAJAS EN LAS ECONOMÍAS EN DESARROLLO DE LATINOAMÉRICA. REVISIÓN DE LITERATURA

RESUMEN

Esta investigación analiza de manera crítica los efectos de la integración económica regional en las economías en desarrollo de América Latina, y considera tanto sus ventajas como sus desventajas. Por medio de una revisión sistemática de la literatura utilizando la metodología PRISMA, se recopilieron 50 fuentes revisadas por pares, las cuales fueron extraídas de bases de datos como Scopus y Web of Science, y abarcan estudios de los últimos diez años. Los resultados evidencian que, aunque la integración regional ha favorecido el incremento del comercio intrarregional, la atracción de inversión extranjera y la cooperación técnica, estos beneficios no han sido homogéneos ni perdurables. Es por ello que, persisten retos estructurales significativos, como la fragilidad institucional, la fragmentación normativa y la carencia de una visión estratégica común entre los países miembros. La investigación concluye que la integración puede constituir una herramienta muy útil para el desarrollo regional, siempre que se acompañe de reformas institucionales profundas, políticas redistributivas y una gobernanza cooperativa que supere las coyunturas políticas. El estudio ofrece recomendaciones para fortalecer la institucionalidad de los bloques regionales, armonizar las normativas y consolidar cadenas productivas con mayor valor agregado, buscando una integración más inclusiva, resiliente y sostenible.

Palabras clave

Integración económica, Cooperación regional, Globalización, Relaciones Sur-Sur, Libre comercio