



**Faculty of Legal Sciences**

**School of International Studies**

**Use of Artificial Intelligence as a Factor in the  
International Trade of Exporting Companies in Azuay**

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

Author:

**Solange Giselle Borja Palacios**

Advisor:

**Juan Fernando Lima Sigua**

**Cuenca – Ecuador**

**2026**

I dedicate this work to my mother, Magaly, who believed in me even when I was unable to do so. I am grateful that you hold my hand at every stage of my life, showing me your support in everything from the smallest details to the biggest challenges, serving as the constant anchor that keeps me from losing my balance. You are the light at the end of the tunnel that drives me to keep moving forward in each of my projects. Thank you so much, and I'm sorry for so little.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

First and foremost, I thank God for being the cornerstone of my life; my family, Magaly, Alexis, Adalberto, Nancy, Fabián, and Yolanda, even though there are few of us, you are the ones who are here and who should be here; I would not be the person I am today without you; to my thesis advisor, Fernando Lima, who has consistently supported me and shown confidence in me throughout every step of the process; to my friends for showing me the true meaning of this word that seems so small. Finally, I hope that the horizon continues to be the meeting point of our dreams and the witness to our growth. Thank you all very much.

## Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	ii
Table of Contents .....	iii
List of Tables, Figures and Appendices .....	iv
List of Tables .....	iv
List of Figures .....	iv
List of Appendices .....	iv
Abstract .....	v
Resumen .....	v
1. Introduction .....	1
1.1 General Objective .....	1
1.2 Specific Objectives .....	2
2. Literature Review .....	3
2.1 Theoretical Framework .....	3
2.2 State of the Art .....	8
3. Methodology .....	13
3.1 Selection of Literature Case Studies .....	14
3.2 Interviews .....	14
3.2.1 Design .....	15
3.3 Statistical Analysis .....	16
3.3.1 Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean .....	16
3.3.2 World Intellectual Property Organization .....	17
3.3.3 World Bank .....	17
3.3.4 Synthesis Methods .....	18
4. Results and Discussion .....	18
4.1 Analysis of Interviews .....	18
4.1.1 Company A: Tire Manufacturing and Sales .....	19
4.1.2 Company B: Production and Marketing of Orchids and Tropical Plants .....	20
4.1.3 Company C: Production and Marketing of Construction Finishes .....	22
4.1.4 Company D: Production and Marketing of Toquilla Straw Hats .....	23
4.2 Analysis of Case Studies Collected from Literature .....	25
4.2.1 Case Study: Manufacturing Company .....	25
4.2.2 Case Study: Company Servicios Amma S.A.S .....	26
4.2.3 Case Study: Food Supply and Distribution Company .....	28
4.3 Statistics on AI Use in the Region .....	30
4.4 Triangulation .....	38
5. Conclusions and Future Work .....	40
6. References .....	41
7. Appendices .....	50

## **List of Tables, Figures and Appendices**

### **List of Tables**

Table 1 Dimensions of the Interview Guide .....	15
Table 2 Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean Data Dictionary.....	17
Table 3 World Intellectual Property Organization Data Dictionary .....	17
Table 4 World Bank Data Dictionary .....	18
Table 5 Results for Company A.....	19
Table 6 Results for Company B.....	21
Table 7 Results for Company C.....	23
Table 8 Results for Company D .....	24

### **List of Figures**

Figure 1 Total Score of the Latin American Artificial Intelligence Index by Country (Base Index 100).....	16
Figure 2 Number of Artificial Intelligence Companies by Country in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2023.....	31
Figure 3 High-tech Exports and ICT Services by Country, 2023 .....	32
Figure 4 ICT Access and Use by Country, 2023 .....	33
Figure 5 Percentage of Exporting Companies that Introduced a New Product or Service in the Past 3 years, by Country and Company Size.....	35
Figure 6 Percentage of Firms that Introduced a Process Innovation in the Past 3 Years, by Country – Comparison of Exporting and Non-Exporting Firms.....	36
Figure 7 Percentage of Medium-Sized and Large Firms that Invested in R&D in Recent Fiscal Years by Country.....	37
Figure 8 Triangulation of Sources .....	39

### **List of Appendices**

Appendix 1 Summary of Interviews with Export Companies.....	50
-------------------------------------------------------------	----

## **Use of Artificial Intelligence as a Factor in the International Trade of Exporting Companies in Azuay**

### **Abstract**

Artificial intelligence has come to play a significant role in transforming business processes worldwide; however, developing countries such as Ecuador face notable digital divides stemming from a lack of technological innovation. In this context, the challenge lies in limitations related to the availability of information, organizational structures, and the low level of integration of advanced technologies. Therefore, the objective of this research is to shed light on the current state of artificial intelligence adoption in the international trade operations of exporting companies in Ecuador's Azuay province. The methodology employs a triangulation of sources, integrating case studies from literature, interviews with production companies, and analysis of regional statistics. This revealed that, although there is no direct relationship between the use of AI and international trade, since they are interconnected processes, this tool can enhance competitiveness in exports and imports by optimizing time and reducing errors in companies, despite country-level limitations such as resistance to change.

**Keywords:** artificial intelligence, international trade, enterprises, technological innovations, Ecuador

## **Uso de la Inteligencia Artificial como Factor en el Comercio Internacional de Empresas Exportadoras del Azuay**

### **Resumen**

La inteligencia artificial ha adquirido un papel relevante en la transformación de procesos empresariales en todo el mundo; sin embargo, países en vías de desarrollo como Ecuador, presentan notables brechas digitales relacionadas a la carencia de innovación tecnológica. En este contexto, la problemática radica en las limitaciones relacionadas a la disponibilidad de información, las estructuras organizacionales, y al bajo nivel de integración de tecnologías avanzadas. Por ello, el objetivo de la investigación es visibilizar el estado de la adopción de inteligencia artificial en las operaciones de comercio internacional de las empresas exportadoras de la provincia del Azuay ecuatoriano. La metodología plantea una triangulación de fuentes, integrando estudios de caso en la literatura, entrevistas a las empresas de producción y análisis de estadísticas de la región. Esto permitió evidenciar que, si bien no existe una relación directa del uso de IA con el comercio internacional, ya que son procesos interconectados, esta herramienta puede favorecer la competitividad en exportaciones e importaciones a través de la optimización de tiempo y reducción de errores de las empresas, a pesar de las limitaciones a nivel país como la resistencia al cambio.

**Keywords:** inteligencia artificial, comercio internacional, empresas, innovación tecnológica, Ecuador