

Determinants to Export through Cross-border E-commerce to China for Latin-American Small and Medium Businesses: An Exploration of Ecuadorian Coffee Firms

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Abstract

This paper is an in-depth case study examining foreign small and medium enterprises setting up Cross Border E-commerce as an entry mode to expand their markets beyond national borders. An important internationalization strategy resolution is choosing which foreign entry mode will give the firm a favorable performance. CBEC has become a well-grounded option since it has grown significantly around the globe. Moreover, SMEs face many challenges due to unfamiliar consumer behavior, cultural and institutional barriers. This article deploys transaction cost theory as the groundwork structure to describe the determinants to select CBEC as an entry mode. The findings propose that CBEC can increase trust, and at the same time reduce uncertainties and opportunistic behaviors. Specialty coffee firms are capable to lower their asset investment on physical stores, logistics, employee training and several requirements, since marketplaces platforms or foreign partners can provide its services. Plus, this entry mode reduces risks, transaction costs and help to build trust, considering the high transaction frequency of E-commerce.

Keywords

Cross Border E-commerce (CBEC); Transaction Cost Theory (TCT); Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs); Specialty Coffee Beans.

1. Introduction

The rapid expansion of cross border E-commerce around the world provides more channels and innovative options for small and medium size businesses in every region. Cross-border E-commerce (CBEC) can be seen as one of the new entry models, which is gaining popularity nowadays due the predominant online shopping behavior and the rapid rise of E-commerce activities in most of the countries. Any firm, which intends to expand its business outside their home country, must make a strategic choice about entry model. (Qia, Chan, Hu, & Li, 2020)

Advances in information technologies (IT) make possible for exporters to improve their efficiency, effectiveness and overall performance in foreign markets. (Teixeira, Ferreira, & Rammal, 2021) Cross border E-commerce refers to a new type of international business activity, which is a transaction entity that belongs to different countries. It can deal through E-commerce platform, and use cross border logistics to distribute commodities. From the meaning of cross-border E-commerce, it is concluded that cross-border E-commerce is like the traditional international trade, but also has its own unique place. It has the characteristics of global, anonymity, immediacy, paperless and rapid evolution. (Hu & Luo, 2018)

We stand for the fact that it is necessary to investigate the determinants for SMEs in Latin America to enter international markets through CBEC, particularly to China. This case study will help to increase the knowledge of what makes selecting a foreign entry mode successful or a failure and how to address the challenges all the supply chain carries out during operations. This research was mainly motivated by several Ecuadorian specialty coffee firms which have

limited success setting up a CBEC and entering international markets, specially to Asia, in this case to China.

It is important to emphasize that Transaction Cost Theory (TCT) is one of the most common theoretical foundations for analyzing the option to implement a foreign entry mode. (Shen, Puig, & Paul, 2017) TCT has expanded its breath to strategic management and international business in seeking to explain how firms internationalize and the structural arrangements required to improve the odds of success. (Martins, Serra, da Silva Leite, Ferreira, & Li, 2010) In an environment where transactions costs are high, TCT predicts that firms tend to internalize the transactions and hence form a vertical integrated governance structure. (Williamson, 1981) However, cross border E-commerce gives a revolutionary option for entering in a new foreign market. This article seeks to link knowledge bridges about this new market entry mode examining the following questions. What does cross-border E-commerce mean to Latin-American small and medium sizes businesses? Which are the obstacles for Ecuadorian SMEs for selecting CBEC? Which are the motivations for SMEs to export through cross border E-commerce?

As a highlight, this paper will investigate the role of trust in the decision of selecting CBEC as market entry mode. The second part of this study consist on critical evaluation and the analysis of the framework structure according to CBEC characteristics. We explain the research methodology and the context of the study selection. The author has conducted a case study within Ecuadorian specialty coffee firms where the team heads were interviewed; Ecuador has an incipient E-commerce environment, SMEs have been looking out ways to create a successful e-business channel, unfortunately it is not easy without the necessary tools to set up one. Consequently, we provide the analysis in the findings and discussions. Finally, conclusions and limitations are presented.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Cross Border E-commerce Definition

Cross-border E-commerce means all the transactions made abroad carried out electronically, enabled by virtual platforms or with digital delivery of the products or services. The main characteristics of CBEC are multilateral, direct, small amount and high frequency. Multilateral mainly refers to the aspect that CBEC can integrate different countries or enterprise's services, such as logistics and payment services combined to perform a transaction. Direct alludes to CBEC context permits consumers to buy products directly from overseas, while offline cross-border transaction may purchase a big quantity of products. In addition, CBEC are usually in a small amount with a high frequency purchase. CBEC logistics has to do with more process linkages, numerous channels and wide scope of geography. (Mou, Ren, Qin, & Kurcz, 2018)

Cross-border E-commerce has been growing significantly in the last decade around the globe, where countries such as the United States and China are in the leading positions. In the United States, cross-border E-commerce experienced in April of 2020 a growth of 7% year over year in cross-border web sales, while such sales surged 42% in May, bringing total U.S. cross-border E-commerce growth to 10.2% from January to mid-June mid-year (Evans, 2020). According to the General Administration of Customs (GAC) imports and exports of China's cross-border E-commerce reached 1.69 trillion yuan (\$261.5 billion) in 2020, up 31.1 percent year-on-year, while the annual growth rate of foreign trade was far behind at 1.9 percent.

CBEC has become an important channel to help any kind of business to get into international market, which integrates both international trade and E-commerce. The worldwide success of this type of trade is due to the great benefits it brings to both companies and consumers, such as the reduction of transport costs and delivery times, logistics, data transfer, access to markets and excellent offers. A researcher has stated that cross-border E-commerce developed a long-

term equilibrium relationship between import and export trade, the development of cross-border E-commerce can increase the volatility of the import and export trade at the same direction. (Jian, 2014)

However, cross-border E-commerce differs from domestic E-commerce, the reason why is because the nature of CBEC bases in complex transactions and processes, such as shipping products across countries. In addition, it must deal with the uncertainty among international market environments. Now CBEC has a key role in transforming the traditional international trade and giving economies the opportunity to boost their dynamics. It could transform the practices, and renew our conceptual understanding, of entry model selection.

2.2. Antecedents of Adopting a CBEC in Latin America

Cross-border E-commerce involves a concept that seems familiar, although it has not yet reached its full potential in Latin America countries. While the term “cross border E-commerce” sounds encouraging, global merchants seeking to do business in this region face a wide variety of challenges. Several obstacles and limitations which includes complex national and regional regulations, misinformation of how to use E-commerce as a method to export goods, high currency conversion rates, and low efficient logistics affecting deliveries.

According to the recent CEPAL annual report "Latin America and the Caribbean International Trade Outlook 2019", cross-border E-commerce in Latin America and the Caribbean has been growing in latest years due to the demand for imported services and products. However, this increase is not reflected in the area of product exports. This is the main reason why methods to implement CBEC for exports are needed with urgency. Then a better digital atmosphere can be created to export products and services from Latin America to the rest of the world. The continued growth of cross-border trade will depend on overcoming many obstacles, which require changes on both regional and national policies

Couple years ago, access to foreign markets was only possible for big companies. However, with the growth of E-commerce, the costs to sell abroad have dropped considerably. Payment methods and technological tools are increasingly accessible, online security is on the rise and logistics are increasingly efficient. (Suominen, 2017) However, selling online and acquiring strong digital capabilities enables Latin American companies and the Caribbean export, it is necessary to ask why many companies still do not sell online. A very important reason is the low financial inclusion; almost 60 percent of the costumers who are between 15 and 24 years old (the segment that tends to buy online more often) do not have credit cards, since this is the principal online payment method in Latin America. This limits the ability of regional companies to sell to consumers in other regional markets, and can affect small businesses and entrepreneurs seeking to sell online services to foreign customers. (CEPAL, 2017) For many traditional trade firms, cross-border E-commerce remains a significant option for digital transformation and an effective shield considering external risks.

CBEC is a new mode of import and export trade via E-commerce platform. It allows firms to avoid high competition in their local markets and to seek more markets abroad. The term CBEC derives from the combination of cross-border shopping and electronic commerce. Cross-border shopping refers to the activity wherein a consumer purchases goods abroad, which may need a consumer cross an international boundary into another country. (Global Center of Excellence, 2017) Online trade platforms can help reduce firms' costs to reach and match with more customers and to penetrate new markets. Evidence based on the IDB's online social network for businesses, indicates that this is indeed the case: smaller firms without previous digital presence experience a significant increase in their foreign sales using the platform. (Carballo, Santa, & Volpe, 2020)

CBEC refers to “an online transaction of buying and selling products and services using. Cross-border shopping may also motivate value perceptions, such as relaxation, pleasure, or

dissatisfied with their local shopping environment e.g., currency rates, and government policies. (Basco, 2020) Although CBEC brings potential benefits, consumers still concern the legal enforcement, culture barriers and high shipping costs. Further, import duty has also been recognized as a barrier for CBEC, this is because consumers may face an additional cost when purchasing a product from a foreign country.

2.3. Transaction Cost Theory as Basic Analytical Framework

TCT suggests that conducting transactions is a costly venture such as negotiating contracts, controlling performance and resolving conflicts and different modes of organizing transactions within a market or a firm which entail different expenses. (Rindfleisch, 2019) Consequently, according to TCT, a comparative examination of the relative transaction costs or their indicants of these alternative modes reveals how a particular transaction should be conducted. (Williamson, 1981)

It is important to emphasize that transaction cost theory is built on assumptions of bounded rationality and opportunism. (Aragote & Henrich R, 2015) Existing entry mode studies commonly investigate transaction costs from four dimensions, such as asset specificity, uncertainty both internal and behavior and external environment and frequency of transaction, (Williamson, 1981) These four dimensions in addition to trust factor are going to be used in this study case, since TCT has become a dominant theoretical framework for explaining market entries (Schellenberg, Harker, & Jafari, 2018) Asset specificity is defined as the transaction which the investments in asset would only be valuable from their use of the specific transaction. Meaning how specific the investment is for the activity and the costs required reallocating it for another use. (Aragote & Henrich R, 2015)

Uncertainty dimension is a fundamental attribute of TCT which influences entry mode selection. (Brouthers & Brouthers, 2003) Researchers also identify interaction between two attributes, namely, economic uncertainty and asset specificity, where transaction costs jump as asset specificity increases due to growing economic uncertainty. (Brouthers & Brouthers, 2003) The term frequency is often identified as the rate of occurrence of repetitive exchange. (Duan, 2007) Considering this attribute jointly with asset specificity will provide a broader understanding on this subject, that is, more transactions can be translated into a higher possibility of investing in more unrecoverable assets abroad.

Hence, (Holtgrave & Onay, 2017) suggests that trust is beneficial when uncertainties come out in the market that businesses operate in. Within an uncertain environment, firms need to react quickly and adapt to external changes, and trust built between partners results in achieving closer collaboration.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Approach

Researchers have explored in the past years what encourages firms to select a certain entry mode in an international market. Numerous studies in the E-commerce field have used quantitative approaches and model building. Nevertheless, in the last decade the academy has been questioned for utilizing statistical approaches to explain motivations for selecting different entry modes. J Mayles Shaves (2013) present in his article called "Do we need more entry mode study?" a review on regression model usage became an unceasing duty since it always will be looking for something missing from our explanation or looks for something new as an explanation, promoting more of the same. Encouraged by the author's critical analysis before mentioned, this paper aims to attain an in-depth understanding of a present-day phenomenon by carrying out a case study through qualitative analysis.

To comprehend the significance of cross border E-commerce platform as a way to enter the Chinese market, a particularized case study was launched, instead of a model building approach. It is suggested by Yin (1994) that case studies can address questions such as how and why in order to examine an event happening in a real-life circumstance, contributing rich qualitative information. It is appropriate to mention that a case study is effective when investigating to some extent a new phenomenon. Consequently, it is suitable to utilize this approach when analyzing the reasons why cross border E-commerce became a prized entry form by foreign firms to do business in China.

3.2. Case Study Selection

A significant consideration in this article is case selection. The main reasons to justify this case study are within a large extent, since most of Chinese CBEC marketplaces platform mainly focus on how their own platforms are operate rather than providing operation services for individual flagships e-stores. In addition, the potential language and cultural barriers, the difficulties to contact foreign brands directly, especially when they do not have subsidiaries or branches in China. Cross Border E-commerce Chinese platforms are mainly unfamiliar with foreign brands, their motivations, their challenges of their e-stores and their entry mode process. (Xiaoguang , Jin Hooi , Junyan , & Yifan , 2020)

Therefore, this research investigates the perspective of Ecuadorian specialty coffee brand owners mainly located in the south of the country, which are interested to enter in the Asian market using the CBEC mode, focusing on the rising Chinese coffee market. This investigation aims to bridge the gap between previous findings and the particular context of small and medium businesses in Latin America and arise with practical solutions.

This study deploys and underpinning framework to merge field data and theory. A multiple case study method was adopted in this research. We choose Ecuadorian specialty coffee firms as a case study because of several reasons, such as the present incipient E-commerce environment within the country, emerging Chinese coffee market, the desire to find new markets outside the border and the limited studies carry out within this fields CBEC and Ecuadorian small and medium enterprises. With the considerations mentioned, we approached ten specialty coffee firms.

Table 1. Information about the interviewees

Respondent	Position	Interview Method	Time Spent
Respondent A	Project Manager	Face to face	2 h, 35 mins
Respondent B	Founder & CEO	Face to face	1h, 40 mins
Respondent C	CEO	Videocall	1 h
Respondent D	Cofounder	Face to face	1 h, 25 min
Respondent E	CEO & Cofounder	Face to Face	1h. 10 mins
Respondent F	CEO	Face to face	2h, 30 mins
Respondent G	Founder & Business Director	Face to face	1h.40 mins
Respondent H	Administration manager	Telephone	43 min
Respondent I	CEO	Videocall	1 h, 7 min
Respondent J	CEO	Videocall	58 min

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

Table 2. Key case information

Specialty Coffee Firm	Coffee Farm Location	Area	Establish Year	Main Business Type	No. of Employees		E-store available
					Permanent position	During Harvest Season	
A	Loja	Rural	2012	Specialty Coffee Beans Exporter	3	6	No
B	Loja	Rural	2016	Specialty Coffee Beans Producer & Exporter	2	10-20	No
C	Pichincha	Rural	1996	Specialty Coffee Beans Producer & Exporter	15	-	Yes
D	Loja	Rural	2011	Specialty Coffee Beans Producer & Exporter	1	4	Yes
E	Loja	Rural	2014	Specialty Coffee Beans Producer & Exporter	6	10	No
F	Loja	Rural	2018	Specialty Coffee Beans Producer & Exporter	5	17-25	Yes
G	Loja	Rural	2015	Specialty Coffee Beans Exporter & Machinery Importer	2	-	Yes
H	Loja	Rural	2012	Specialty Coffee Beans Producer & Exporter	2	10-12	Yes
I	Azuay	Rural	2016	Specialty Coffee Beans Exporter	5	-	Yes
J	Loja	Rural	2014	Specialty Coffee Beans Producer & Exporter	3	18-20	NO

This research collected primary and secondary data related to Ecuadorian specialty coffee firms. Secondary information was mainly gained by investigating coffee industry reports, several firms' internal documents, some the firm's official websites, and various news articles from media outlets. Primary data was mainly obtained from through interviews, conducted in Spanish, since the coffee firms' owners are native Spanish speakers and the Ecuador's official language.

Interviewees possess more or less knowledge about what cross border E-commerce is and its benefits but were familiar with the import and export different processes. They included its Project Manager, Chief Executive Officer, Administration manager, Founder & Business Director, as all of them possess sufficient experience in the specialty coffee field. Table 1, presents basic information about these interviewees. A series of semi-structured interviews, each one with different timing, some of them lasted about one hour, others until two hours 30 minutes, six were conducted face to face, one through telephone and three through videocall. Audio records were taken with the consent of the interviewees and transcribed for data interpretation and future comments. The results of the analysis were translated to English.

Since this is a case study, analyzing data consists on examining, categorizing, tabulating and testing in order to draw conclusions. The author drew from several sources of data including interviews of various respondents, firm's internal documents and their websites; in this way providing reliability on this research information. The data analysis was guided by the transaction cost theory, based on its four dimensions assets specificity, environmental uncertainty, behavioral uncertainty and transaction frequency, additionally the trust factor. The previous mentioned forms the basis framework for the case study analysis and arguments in next section.

4. Research Findings

4.1. Antecedents of Adopting an E-commerce Platform in Latin America

There are various digital platforms options, such as an independent website or to use an existing third-party platform. According to evaluated SMEs, they want to set up their own independent web site. For instance, in the case of the Asian market they would prefer to put resources for that, make an investment. However, according to literature, it is recommended to use third party platforms since they have more positive effects on operations processes. Respondent H, highlighted their perspective of adopting an e-store to expand their market to China:

"Quality is everything, we have the capacity to invest in an E-commerce focused only in China... honestly, I would prefer to have a local partner who can handle every operation in that country; the language barrier stops me to take the risk as well as our lack of knowledge of their favorite e-platforms... Alibaba, is the one I deal with; besides that, I have no idea. Surely, I am interested on entering to China's e-market..."

Third party platforms optimize trade processes, make payment methods easier to handle, better coordination between international logistics providers and warehouses, in order to assist small and medium enterprises take advantage of CBEC existing industrial chains. It is important to emphasize that these platforms will keep the services updated to meet with the market situation.

4.2. Uncertainties and Opportunistic Behaviors

Chinese consumers are highly segmented, plus the fact this market deals with three aspects regarding to uncertainties, such as unpredictable consumer demand, intense brand competitors and constant changes in regulations. (Qia, Chan, Hu, & Li, 2020) Respondent J during the interview noted the uncertainties present in the Asian specialty coffee market, particularly in China:

"It was not until two years ago I started dealing with Asian Market, I initiated with South Korea and then with Chinese Coffee Market... one of the biggest risks I have ever take. Entering to China seemed impossible since they are well-known for being tea drinkers. Everything related to communication, marketing and logistics were uncertain. As a new firm we had to consider which strategy and the most effective channel to use for having a successful first operation, we did not

know which challenges were going to be present, since we were total unfamiliar with Chinese consumers behaviors. Chinese market owns a big demand of high-quality coffee beans, for us having a partner in China was determinant... we found one."

The above highlights generate several opportunities but poses challenges for foreign brands as well. Understanding Chinese market is a key factor for foreign SMEs to grow and thrive in this environment. For example, coffee is a symbol of good taste. Coffee in China always been considered as a symbol of taste and quality instead of a kind of beverage. Several coffee houses tend to make itself as a luxury goods and an instrument to show off because of the conspicuous consumption is very popular among Chinese consumers. (Zhang, 2014)

Secondly, the aspect of the brand's intense competition, the creation of constant new channels to engage consumers, is a factor to keep an eye on. Respondent D pointed out the complexity to reach or to engage with Asian consumers:

"Even we have the tools to somehow deal with the traditional export process, we still lack of knowledge about marketing strategies and multimedia usage, we cannot underestimate Chinese consumers and its specialty coffee market"

The lack of knowledge of marketing strategies of existing brands in Chinese markets are a challenge for foreign brands, as well as the decision to choose which one to use in the first instance. Being unfamiliar with Chinese consumers may result in failing to know what kind of consumers they will serve and how difficult it to satisfy them.

Thirdly, the uncertainty of dealing with changes in regulations and policies is an obstacle for Latin American SMEs since public information may not be enough for foreign brands to interpret those regulations in a timely manner., even with a favorable Chinese government attitude towards CBEC. (Qia, Chan, Hu, & Li, 2020) Respondent C also warned about recent changes in the policies and regulations to obtain permission for exporting products to China: *"We just knew about new regulations for exporting products to China, communication is not smooth as wished, even considering the time difference it is too slow and confusing"*

The uncertainties mentioned above can make a contribution to increased transaction costs for many foreign firms entering Asian market, in this case to China. Moreover, cultural and language barriers will make processes time-consuming and costly. Searching costs, as part as transaction costs is important to understand Chinese consumer's behavior and its market. It includes analyzing data on both online and offline coffee market, looking for multichannel marketing practices, plus a considerable investment to build brand recognition. (Qia, Chan, Hu, & Li, 2020)

4.3. Lower Asset Specificity in High Transaction Frequency

SMEs will be capable to lower their asset investment in employee training resources, warehousing, logistics as these operations are supported by the third-party platforms. Another key dimension to consider is Transaction Frequency being the rate of occurrences of repetitive transactions is expected to be higher in E-commerce, compared with the traditional commodity exports. (Qia, Chan, Hu, & Li, 2020) Respondent I shared his experience exporting Ecuadorian specialty coffee beans to the United States through a third-party platform, Amazon.

"Couple years ago, I started selling my coffee beans to the United States, first I had this gut feeling that it was going to be a good idea... at the same time I was completely lost in the E-commerce field and how it works. Surprisingly, it was successful decision...paperwork was tedious, but now I just restock my coffee beans in their warehouses and I have access to a high level of customer traffic, they sell them...great business opportunity"

Ecuadorian specialty coffee firms would substantially reduce searching, negotiating and enforcement costs through cross border E-commerce, cooperating with a CBEC platforms or providers. (Xiaoguang, Jin Hooi, Junyan, & Yifan, 2020) there will be some costs for setting up

an E-commerce, but the investment is expected to be much lower than having a physical store. Moreover, a mature ecosystem has already been established for cross border E-commerce in China.

4.4. Trust on Marketplace Platforms

Issues of trust can be more apparent since international trade and the lack of trust is a source of increasing transaction costs. Cross-border E-commerce, which is characterized by a separation in time and space between buyers and sellers, the risks associated with information asymmetry are more accentuated, which increases the value of trust. (Waali & Bennani, 2021) Respondent F, mentioned about his worries about overcoming the trust barrier through an E-commerce business:

"I already invest in an E-commerce store to reach national and international clients; I hired a marketing agency to do the work because I am unfamiliar with this new market entry mode but still trying to digitalized my firm's operations. The issue here is... my team have no clue how to address the trust issues, I am sure of our coffee beans quality, we offer our best harvest but our effort to set up an e-store seem worthless since our payment method do not convince our clients or maybe is just our environment were E-commerce still in the initial stage"

The above quotation points out the value-added benefits of adopting CBEC. Substantial investment might be a requirement in order to build trust among marketing channels. Relying on a third-party platform, instead on its own website, brings key advantages, reduces the number of marketing channels, and improves consumers levels of trust since the transaction data is more transparent. (Xiaoguang , Jin Hooi , Junyan, & Yifan , 2020) Attracting more consumers due they already built trust on the third-party platform, reducing transaction costs.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This article evaluates the complexity of the determinants for SMEs in Latin America to choose CBEC as their international market entry mode. A case study approach based on TCT was conducted to evaluate the reasons why SMEs may choose CBEC as an entry mode, by using as example Ecuadorian specialty coffee firms. After the analysis and discussion, specialty coffee firms may choose CBEC as their China entry mode may be determine by a lower transaction cost, since they are reduced by having favorable government polices and E-commerce ecosystem. This research come to the conclusion that TCT groundwork is complimentary technique to explain the determinants to adopt CBEC as an entry mode. The author included TCT four dimensions of (Williamson , 1981) asset specificity, transaction frequency, uncertainty behaviors in order to offer a logical framework for SMEs to select CBEC.

It is important to highlight the role of trust in CBEC, the reason why it was acknowledged in this article. The author drew a conclusion which points out adopting CBEC makes easier trust building specially when focusing in Chinese market. Through analyzing multiple sources of data, literature reviews and the interviews we determine the following, for adopting a digital platform, rather than building an independent website, SMEs should use an existing third-party platform. Enabling firms to skip changing and complex legal regulations and processes in foreign countries and to take advantage of the platform's services such as payment methods, warehouses, logistics connections, language barriers.

At the same time affirms that CBEC has a great strategic significance to promote the reform and upgrade of the traditional foreign trade industry in SMEs from Latin America and maintain the stable economic growth of a firm. It is fundamental to highlight that Latin America is a promising E-commerce market and Ecuador still has incipient E-commerce environment where necessary tools to set up a complete e-store still scarce and its investment is substantial. In order to adopt a third- party digital platforms or foreign business partner, rather than setting

up their own website, SMEs should invest on an existing platform in China who can handle all the necessary operations with efficiency and expertise.

5.1. Research Limitations

This study case has limitations. First, this research study was conducted in the unique economic context of Ecuador. Also, data has been collected mostly from the province of Loja, which may not represent the whole specialty coffee firm's community. Thus, our findings might be unique to the particular social and economic development stage of the south of Ecuador. Future studies are suggested to select or to reach more specialty coffee firms, such as the ones from other provinces, as well as other products. Secondly, we relied on interviews with a relatively small number of participants, moreover, most of the interviewees were unfamiliar with CBEC. Additionally, few or none studies which combines the area of cross border E-commerce and Ecuadorian specialty coffee beans are available as references.

Acknowledgments

To the Ecuadorian specialty coffee producers who kindly collaborate to enrich this case study with their time, knowledge, doubts and experiences.

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