

## Impact of the increase in international freight costs for Colombian importers between 2019 and 2021



### Impacto del incremento de los costos de fletes internacionales para importadores colombianos entre los años 2019 a 2021

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#### ABSTRACT

The main objective of this article is to determine the impact of the increase in international freight costs for Colombian importers between 2019 and 2021. In order to answer this question, the research carried out was based on a qualitative descriptive study, based on a documentary review analysis; This process began through the conceptualization of the most relevant terms used in international maritime transport, then it was inquired about the factors that influenced the increase in international freight costs, there it was shown that the shortage of TEUs and the lack of operators to meet the demand in ports, are the main factors that triggered the increase in this item, it should be noted that the second factor was exacerbated as a result of the pandemic. From the results obtained, it is concluded that the impact generated by this cost overrun is negative for importers, the result was a decrease in the volume of imports arriving by sea, this being the means of

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transport responsible for mobilizing about 90% of the cargo traded worldwide, this negative variation directly influences the economy of each country and is reflected in its balance of trade. It is possible to identify the monopolistic role played by shipping companies, being the owners of containers and vessels, who use the contingency to take an advantageous position and oversell the reserves or exponentially increase the price of these.

**Keywords:** Costs, international freights, imports

## RESUMEN

Este artículo tiene como principal objetivo determinar el impacto del incremento de los costos de fletes internacionales para importadores colombianos entre los años 2019 a 2021, para responder a este interrogante la investigación realizada se ejecutó a partir de un descriptivo de tipo cualitativo, basado en un análisis de revisión documental; este proceso comenzó a través de la conceptualización de los términos más relevantes utilizados en el transporte internacional marítimo, posteriormente se indagó acerca de cuáles eran los factores que incidían en el aumento de los costos de los fletes internacionales, allí se evidenció que la escasez de TEUS y la falta de operarios que cubran la demanda en los puertos, son los principales factores que desataron el incremento en este rubro, cabe resaltar que el segundo factor se agudizó como consecuencia de la pandemia. Desde los resultados obtenidos se concluye

principalmente que el impacto generado por este sobrecosto es negativo para los importadores, el resultado fue una disminución en el volumen de importaciones que llegan vía marítima, siendo este el medio de transporte responsable de movilizar alrededor del 90% de la carga que se comercializa mundialmente, esta variación negativa influye directamente en la economía de cada país y se ve reflejado en su balanza comercial. Se logra identificar el papel monopolístico que juegan las navieras siendo las propietarias de contenedores y motonaves, quienes utilizan la contingencia para tomar una posición de ventaja y sobrevender las reservas o aumentar exponencialmente el precio de estas.

**Palabras clave:** Costos, fletes internacionales, importaciones

## Introduction

Maritime transport has created in international trade safety, efficiency and economy, compared to other means of transport used for the exchange of goods between different countries effectively, as noted by the former secretary general of the IMO (International Maritime Organization) the vast network of ports, container ships and trucking companies moving goods around the world is in crisis and the cost of shipping is increasing (Sanchez Polanco et al., 2023). Shipping companies expect the global transportation crisis to continue, this greatly increases the cost of moving cargo and could increase upward pressure on the prices of imported goods meaning that buyers are likely to face higher prices (Améstica, 2019).

Maritime transport is the main modality of foreign trade, 90% of the merchandise is transported by sea, and in Colombia there are approximately 184 companies that provide this service distributed in different areas of the country, have been decreasing foreign trade operations since 2019 (Analdex, 2021). According to information from ANDI (2020) Colombian imports in figures recorded in electronic declarations, increased by 18.0% in CIF terms, going from US\$ 1,818 million to US\$ 2,145 million

and in FOB value 17.9% going from US\$ 1,740 million to US\$ 2,051 million. The net imported weight presented an increase of 19.9%, going from 1,208 million kilos in 2018 to 1,448 million kilos in 2019 (ANDI, 2020). On the other hand, figures recorded in electronic declarations, Colombian imports increased in CIF terms 33.5%, going from US\$ 2,837 million to US\$ 3,788 million and in FOB value 31.1% going from US\$ 2,683 million to US\$ 3,517 million, and the net imported weight presented an increase of 9.8%, going from 2,108 million kilos in 2020 to 2,314 million kilos in 2021 (ANDI, 2020). According to Figure 2, 91.6% of the imported CIF value entered through five sectional directorates, as follows: Bogota Customs (25.9%), Cartagena Customs (25.2%), Buenaventura Tax and Customs (23.3%), Santa Marta Tax and Customs (8.8%) and Barranquilla Customs (8.4%) (ANDI, 2020).

The world's largest container shipping line AP Moller- Maersk A/ S, will earn about \$4.5 billion in operating profit in 2021, according to estimates earlier this year from financial analysts who follow the companies. Their estimates have been wrong (ANDI, 2020). China's foreign trade could face a more complicated situation next year given the base effects and the reversal of positive factors associated with the global COVID-19 pandemic (Quevedo-Barros et al., 2020).

The container shipping sector has gone through a difficult stage in recent years, due to the persistent market imbalance between trade and fleet supply capacity, intensified by the incorporation of mega-vessels, increased trade tensions, greater protectionism and changes in environmental regulations (Vargas et al., 2022). These factors have increased the volatility of freight rates and transportation costs in 2018-2019, a circumstance that was maintained in 2020 and so far in 2021 (Analdex, 2021). It is no secret that currently maritime freight costs have increased exponentially, which has had a significant impact on importers, since the number of operations is being reduced and some are currently analyzing new transportation alternatives such as air transport, however it is not unknown that the capacity of the maritime fleet compared to the air fleet has no point of comparison; additionally, air transport is a service with much higher costs than maritime transport.

Taking into consideration the information gathered and the importance of the exchange of goods for the country's development, the following question arises: What is the impact of the increase in international freight costs for Colombian importers between 2019 and 2021? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to conceptually describe the international transportation of goods and its importance in imports, identify the factors that affect the increase in international freight rates and

determine whether the impact of the increase in these items has been positive or negative for Colombian importers.

Supply chain management is defined as the systematic and strategic coordination of the traditional functions within companies (Celis & García, 2012), which Argueta et al, (2014) affirm that international transportation is one of the most fundamental links within the supply chain since they contribute in a significant way in the logistics costs of goods, being so that in 1966 the company United States Lines, put into service the first container ship between the USA and Northern Europe, arriving at the port Rotterdam being the first transatlantic container ship (Olmedo & Gil, 2021). Therefore, the main objective of managing the supply chain is to synchronize with the customer the logistics of the goods from origin to reduce costs and increase service (Celis & García 2012).

Torres & Rendón (2013) consider economic integration as the opening and commercial revolution that leads to growth in foreign trade processes between countries, which generates competitiveness and growth. The foreign trade policy of each nation within its strategies oversees the behavior of the administration in the customs system to enforce customs regulations (Torres & Chávez 2015). Argueta et al., (2015) consider that within the value chain, determining the packaging of a primary, secondary and tertiary product allows improving the competitive advantages of a good in a market.

Other links in the supply chain are essential, such as timely production, the amount of inventory and the use of technologies that allow tracking their international cargo (Rodríguez et al., 2021). However, Acuña (2016) adds that permanent innovation activities and human capital are the main factors that determine the competitive advantages of advanced industrial economies, in international transportation it is not only limited to one transport, it can be found combination of several modes of transport (Multimodal) offering reliability advantages in shipping of different characteristics (López-Rodríguez et al., 2021). Becerril-Torres et al., (2021) indicate that containers or TEUs are units that are used in the value chain for the transfer of LCL / FCL goods from one place to another and according to the type of goods it is determined whether they are general cargo, three-dimensional or IMO.

Argueta et al, (2014) state that for companies that use the transportation of goods it is essential to have efficient, economic and safe logistics for the transfer of their production to final consumers, hence the implementation of management and security systems since the attacks of September 11, 2011 with the concepts of security and safety in international logistics (Torres & Chávez, 2015) it is worth noting that the

participation in the balance of payments of international transport services of each country is an item that has a high participation (Torres, & Rendón 2013).

According to Herrera (2014), the increasing global economic openness implies a reconfiguration of the supply chain, which must guarantee safe trade from production to transportation of goods and is influenced by the costs that may affect its performance. Rodríguez et al., (2022) indicate that the cost system should serve as a support and primary source of information when making decisions at different organizational levels and in the transportation-logistics sector it is fundamental in the development of the domestic economy and in international trade, it requires to be more competitive and productive at the level of procedures and infrastructure (Amaya, 2014).

For Gómez et al., (2013) productivity indicators are evaluated in relation to the production factor determined, they can be many in different areas, but the most relevant are labor, use of materials and capital, therefore, quality management systems such as ISO-9001 are used in the transportation sector involving all companies that can be imagined in the international logistics chain from origin to destination (Amaya, 2014). According to Herrera (2014) the objective of management systems is to provide companies with tools to safeguard their processes and products from agents or situations that generate nonconformities or detract from their integrity.

From the point of view of Acuña (2016) the competitiveness of a nation and therefore its industrial and economic fabric, depends on the ability to innovate and improve a clear example of innovation and development are the trade blocs that allowed the implementation of technology, incursion and contribution of private capital for the commercial opening, improving the terminals of the different ports (Torres & Rendón, 2013). In the case of multimodal transport, importers can move their goods to the interior of the countries reducing port costs and generating efficiency in customs processes (López Rodríguez et al., 2018). Jones et al. (2016) state that companies that adopt ICTs and e-commerce reduce transaction costs, increase the speed of their requirements and therefore have more organized and efficient processes and operations.

The cost system documents, analyzes and reports the financial health of the company, determines how the integration of resources has an impact on the management of the value chain (Argueta & Salazar, 2015). For Jones et al., (2016) a better interaction with customers, partners and suppliers the internet and e-commerce are key tools, there you get better information of products and services of the company. Gómez et al. (2013) propose that productivity establishes the result of a production system, which

is determined by the relationship between its outputs and inputs and by the value added.

Torres, & Chávez (2015) state that an efficient administration contemplates variables such as costs, number of employees, revenues collected, volume of declarations, number of offers and measures the level of competitiveness. An example of production philosophy is lean manufacturing which had its origins in Japan with the Toyota system, whose objectives are to reduce inventories and create value (Celis & García, 2012). According to the theory of dynamic capabilities, e-commerce generates value in companies, if there is a capacity for technological absorption, there is a capacity for integration of companies (Jones et al., 2016).

## **Materials and methods**

The scope of the research was descriptive in nature, which, according to Hernández et al., (2014) seeks to specify properties, characteristics and important features of any phenomenon being analyzed, giving the possibility of making predictions, even if they are incipient. Therefore, this type of research is related according to the current juncture of international maritime transport that affects the processes of Foreign Trade at the international level for importers and exporters. These types of study are characterized by having qualitative approach, which as mentioned by Fernandez (2016) does not quantify, measure, or count something, neither does it follow a clearly defined process, its objective is the collection of data that leads to obtain the perspectives and points of view of the participants. According to Poveda et al. (2019), it guarantees the fulfillment of science technology that marks the assigned approach.

Documentary review, which allows having an idea of the development and characteristics of the processes, as well as the availability of information such as reports, images, videos, academic books, scientific articles, among others. The documentary review is a bridge to achieve the objective of the article, which is to determine the reasons for the impact of the increase in international freight costs for Colombian importers between 2019 and 2021 proposed in the research process. The documentary review consolidates information from different theoretical sources and various authors, which allows the development of a research based on philosophical and analytical foundations (Ramos, 2015).

The information analysis process will begin with the collection of information through academic databases by means of computer tools, with these inputs we will proceed to prepare comparative tables and infographics that allow the understanding of the

information obtained in an easy and dynamic way, with this we also intend to respond to the hypotheses raised throughout the research.

## Results

Having different means of transportation available, leads to identify the most suitable option to not increase costs, which is why ocean freight is considered the most economical, being the means of transport responsible for moving about 90% of the cargo traded in import and export operations in the world. As shown in Table 1, the ranking of the 10 countries in the region is compiled and according to the latest report on the behavior of container movement published on June 10, 2020 by ECLAC, in Latin America and the Caribbean, during 2019, 54.2 million TEUs were mobilized, representing 6.5% of the total world container movement, showing a slight decrease in the variation in relation to the previous year (ANDI, 2020). The country in the region with the highest total container movement is Brazil with 10,396,182 TEU, Colombia on the other hand ranks number 5 with 4,402,574 TEU mobilized. Finally, in 2019 the Caribbean (including the Caribbean coast of Colombia, recorded a growth of 2.3% in total container movement, while Central America had a drop of -7%.

**Table 1.** *Top 10 countries of the region in 2019 (TEU)*

Rank	Country	Throghput 2019(TEU)
1	Brazil	10.396.182
2	Panama	7.347.000
3	Mexico	7.100.644
4	Chile	4.496.578
5	Colombia	4.402.574
6	Peru	2.678.258
7	Ecuador	2.127.042
8	Dominican Republic	1.894.225
9	Argentina	1.771.628
10	Jamaica	1.647.609

Source: Own elaboration based on ANDI (2020).



Due to the amount of TEUs that circulate, it is important to determine the factors that affect the increase in international freight costs. Table 2 shows comparatively the reason for the delays at the ports, which causes a shortage of units for export and import processes and therefore causes costs to rise irrationally, where logistics plays a major role, starting with the port infrastructure and internal transportation in each country.

**Table 2.** *Container crisis comparison table*

Normal situation	Current status
1. Ships bring containers to the port	1. Ships bring containers to the port
2. Containers are checked and unloaded.	2. There are not enough port personnel to move containers, nor drivers for trucks.
3. Trucks wait at the port to load the merchandise	3. Empty and full containers are stacked at the ports.
4. Empty containers return to the ships to free up space at the port.	4. Vessels are diverted to other ports
5. Trucks deliver goods to the distribution centers	5. Ports are congested because more ships are arriving

Source: Own elaboration.

The scarcity of units is a logistic phenomenon that has not been seen so aggressively, Table 3 identifies the most relevant shipping lines in foreign trade operations in the world for the year 2021. Most of the major shipping lines are the result of a merger or alliance between other lines that monopolize the market and establish almost exactly the freight costs between them. In the Colombian market, CMA CGM is one of the shipping lines with the highest representation mainly for imports from China, due to its low costs, however, for CIF negotiations it is one of the shipping lines with higher documentary requirements and whose response times are higher.

**Table 3.** *World's largest shipping lines in 2021*

Shipping	Country	Remarks
APM Maersk	Copenhagen, Denmark	It controls 19% of maritime trade and is the second largest carrier in the Far East-North America trade corridor, with 15% of the market.
Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC)	Geneva (Switzerland)	It operates more than 459 vessels and has a transport capacity of 2,308,000 TEU. It is present in 155 countries and was founded in 1970.
China Ocean Shipping (Group) Company (COSCO)	People's Republic of China.	It had to merge with China Shipping Group in February 2016 and acquired Orient Overseas Container Line (OOCL) in July 2018.
CMA CGM Group	France	Created by the merger between Compagnie Maritime d'Affrètement (CMA) and Compagnie Générale Maritime (CGM). It has a capacity to transport 2.6 million TEUs, which represents about 11.4% of the market.
Ocean Network Express (ONE)	Japanese	It is the merger of three major Japanese shipping lines (Nippon Yusen Kaisha, Mitsui O.S.K. Lines and K Line).
Hapag-Lloyd	German	With 248 modern ships and 12 million TEU transported annually, Hapag ranks among the top in this ranking. The shipping company is also the result of a merger between Amerikanische Packetfahrt-Actien-Gesellschaft (HAPAG) and Norddeutscher Lloyd (NDL).
Evegreen Marine	Taiwan	It covers the main trade routes are the Far East to North America, Central America and the Caribbean.

Source: Own elaboration based on Marino (2021).

Table 4 provides the tons mobilized by type of port traffic where it can be determined that of the three zones there are, the one that generates greater movement is the Caribbean Region with a percentage of participation above 85% of the cargo mobilized in the years 2018, 2019 and 2020; within this the 2 port zones with the highest participation are Ciénaga for the years 2018 with 22.9% and 2019 with 24.2%, and Cartagena for 2020 with 26.6% (ANDI, 2020)... This indicates that in Colombia most imports and exports are mobilized through these ports. On the other hand, the Magdalena River area is the one that generates the least movement, since in the period from 2018 to 2020 its percentage of participation ranges between 1.1% and 1.2% (ANDI, 2020).

**Table 4.** Tons mobilized by type of port traffic January-December (2018-2020).

Port Zone	Jan - Mar 2018		Jan - Mar 2019		Jan - Mar 2020		Variation (2018-2019)	Variation (2018-2019)
	TEUS	*Part (%)	TEUS	*Part (%)	TEUS	*Part (%)		
Barranquilla	37.694	3.8	40.842	3.8	38.572	4.6	8,4	-5,6
Buenaventura	324.464	33.0	328.378	30.8	259.149	31.2	1,2	-21,1
Cartagena	569.238	57.8	640.015	60.0	513.099	61.8	12,4	-19,8
Guajira	509	0.1	877	0.1	322	0.0	72,3	-63,3
San Andres	4.232	0.4	4720	0.4	4799	0.6	11,5	1,7
Santa Martha	27.667	2.8	31.278	2.9	-	-	13,1	-
Turbo	20.358	2.1	20.529	1.9	14981	1.8	0,8	-27,0
Total TEUS Units	984.162	100	1.066.639	100	830.922	100	8,4	-22,1

Source: Own elaboration based on ANDI (2020).

As shown in Table 5, the main countries of origin of Colombian imports are China, the United States, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina and finally the rest of the world, in terms of CIF and FOB value, China is the country with the highest representation within this group individually, taking into account that the association of the rest of the countries of the world is the one with the highest participation in both aspects globally (DIAN, 2022). Additionally, it can be observed that importers are opting to buy their goods at the port of destination CIF term since suppliers at origin can have more optimal rates, however, they are unaware of the terms at destination that sometimes become more expensive when settling an import.

**Table 5.** *Main countries of origin of Colombian imports figures in millions of dollars and millions of kilograms July 1 to 24 of 2021*

<b>Country of origin</b>	<b>CIF value</b>	<b>Part CIF value</b>	<b>FOB Value</b>	<b>Part FOB Value</b>	<b>Gross Weight</b>	<b>Part Net weight</b>
China	954	25.5%	852	24.2%	330	14.3%
United States	753	19.9%	721	20.5%	557	24.1%
Mexico	233	6.2%	225	6.4%	66	2.9%
Brazil	191	5.0%	178	5.1%	117	5.1%
Argentina	166	4.4%	148	4.2%	355	15.4%
Rest of the world	1491	39.3	1.394	39.6%	889	38.4%
<b>Total imported</b>	<b>3.788</b>	<b>100.0 %</b>	<b>3.517</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>2.314</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Own elaboration based on DIAN (2022).

### 1.1. Impact of the increase in the cost of international freight rates on Colombian importers

Table 6 shows that there is a variation in imports ranging from -0.47% to -44.97% where the sector that was most affected was fuels and production of extractive industries, which for the year 2019 had imports of 5,356,478 (thousands of dollars) and for the year 2020 imports were only 2,947,471 (thousands of dollars) i.e. 44.97% less than the previous year (Analdex, 2021). In general terms, the difference in the value of imports between 2019 and 2020 was -17.48% which represented in thousands of dollars is equivalent to 9,213,962. This decrease in imports is due to the increase in international freight that occurred as a result of the pandemic, where it has been shown that these items have increased by 300% (Analdex, 2021).

**Table 6.** Imports from January to December 2019 to 2020 (in thousands of dollars)

Sector	Year 2019	Year 2020	Variation (%)
Manufacturing	40.270.45 2	33.503.96 3	-16,80
Agriculture, food and beverages	7.006.330	6.972.846	-0,47
Fuels and products from extractive industries	5.356.478	2.947.471	-44,97
Other sectors	69.365	64.382	-7,18
<b>Total</b>	<b>52.702.6 24</b>	<b>43.488.6 62</b>	<b>-17,48</b>

Source: Own elaboration based on Analdex (2021).

Table 7 shows that there are 6 main countries from which Colombia imports, heading the list with the highest representation is the United States followed by China, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina and finally ending the list is Germany. In general terms there was a negative variation between imports in 2020 with respect to 2019 where it is evident that the country with the greatest negative impact was Argentina with -28.1% and the country with the least negative impact was China with -5.2%, however in thousands of

dollars the greatest difference was presented by the USA with -2,737,083 (Analdex, 2021).

**Table 7.** Imports by country of origin years 2019 to 2020 (expressed in thousands of dollars)

Country	Year 2019	Year 2020	Variation (%)
USA	13.276.840	10.539.757	-20,6%
China	10.966.762	10.398.882	-5,2%
Mexico	3.879.622	2.925.827	-24,6%
Brazil	3.173.994	2.435.489	-23,3%
Argentina	1.007.091	724.462	-28,1%
Germany	2.172.661	1.643.891	-24,3%

Source: Own elaboration based on Analdex (2021).

Table 8 shows the values in millions of dollars of imports for the first half of the years 2021 and 2021 respectively, there is evidence that for the months of January and February of 2021 imports had a negative variation compared to 2020, this is explained by the fact that the ravages generated by the pandemic began to be seen from March 2020, it is for this reason that in the months of March, April, May and June of 2021 there is a positive variation compared to the previous year; taking into account that for these months in 2020 this phenomenon was in all its splendor and the consequences at an economic level around the world were reflected in a recession in all sectors, strongly affecting international trade and therefore imports and exports.

**Table 8.** Imports in millions of dollars from January to June 2020 and 2021

Period	Year 2020	Year 2021	Variation (%)
January	3.498	2.918	-16.6%
February	3.214	2.748	-14,5%
March	2.740	3.364	22.8%
April	3.080	3.199	3.9%

May	2.706	2.768	2.3%
June	2.266	3.011	32.9%
<b>Consolidated</b>	<b>17.504</b>	<b>18.009</b>	<b>2.9%</b>

Source: Own elaboration based on DIAN (2022).

## Conclusions

The development of this research allowed knowing the effect of the increase in maritime freight costs is the so-called "container crisis", i.e., an unusual shortage of available space to transport products, affecting importers in the costs of transporting goods FCL and LCL which is reflected in the liquidation of their imports; within the literature reviewed, different authors were found who emphasize the importance of the logistics chain (López Rodríguez et al., 2018; Argueta & Salazar, 2015), where one of the most relevant links is maritime transportation. In addition to the lack of containers, there are the traffic jams that exist in the largest international ports and the temporary closures of some maritime terminals that have negatively impacted the competitiveness of nations.

As if a gear were lacking oil, when one of the parts gets stuck, the whole system suffers disruptions. Acuña (2016) indicate that permanent innovation in international transport is not only limited to one transport, however, maritime transport is considered the most economical, being the means of transport responsible for mobilizing about 90% of the cargo traded internationally. The importance of the State in trade exchange processes is fundamental to implement internal improvements that favor the value chain, such as customs, road and port infrastructure, which should promote the massification of trade exchanges (Torres & Chávez, 2015).

The methodology used in this research was successful and the objectives set were fully met, first of all the factors affecting the increase in international freight rates were compiled, from a documentary analysis the main concepts of the logistics chain are related, taking as relevant the maritime transport in it was possible to determine the amount in tons of goods that circulated during the period 2019 -2020 seeing a decrease of almost 40% compared to the amount imported in 2019. It has also been identified that the shipping sector is led by five business groups, the Italian MSC, the Danish Maersk, the French CMA CGM, the Taiwanese Evergreen and the Chinese Cosco, which own more than a quarter of the ships and 43.2% of the tonnage, are responsible

for moving goods around the world and the lag presented by some countries in port infrastructure.

Secondly, the impact of the increase in the cost of international freight for Colombian importers was analyzed, where the main importing sectors of FCL maritime goods were identified, from which it is evident that the manufacturing sector is the most relevant being also one of the sectors that has a stricter customs control, this due to the type of mixed tariff that most of its cargoes handle. The increase in international freight rates makes it one of the hardest hit sectors, also the few benefits of the conditions of the containers at destination affect it. Colombian companies are daily seeking to maximize value, avoid bankruptcy, and these are objectives that require strategies with management tools and risk mitigation, there the administrative capacity of managers plays a fundamental role (Giraldo-Prieto et al., 2017). Similarly, the main destinations of imported goods are identified, with China being Colombia's main supplier of different products, and a variation in imports is observed in 2019-2020, giving relevance to the logistics chain.

Finally, it was intended to determine whether the impact of the increase in these items has been positive or negative for Colombian importers, to reach this conclusion a survey of information was conducted from a descriptive research, in which through sources such as DIAN and ANALDEX different figures were obtained regarding imports between 2019 and 2020, which were analyzed and allowed reaching the conclusion that the increase in international freight costs has negatively affected Colombian importers, given that a negative variation has been evidenced in the volume of operations carried out in all sectors of the economy in the period stipulated above. This indicates that the methodology used was in line with the objective set and the result gave a satisfactory answer to the question posed.

From the findings obtained in the development of the present investigation, it is suggested to continue with the course of the same under the line of solution to the negative impact generated to the Colombian importers by the increase of the freights, this taking into account the factors that affect these costs and evidencing that this situation has a high and negative impact on international trade; the most successful option is to focus a new investigation expanding the information found and later proposing hypothesis of solutions to this problem or processes that allow improving the logistics to make it more efficient. It is no secret that the world is becoming more globalized every day, and in terms of international trade, alternatives must be sought to be more competitive and generate greater connections between different countries



worldwide, which will allow a better economic development, strategies and trade alliances that benefit more people and a better standard of living.

One of the limitations of the article is the methodology used, since it was based on a descriptive research based on documentary analysis, which, although it managed to answer the objectives set, did not take into account the opinion of importers, the companies and sectors that have been most affected, as well as the possible solutions they could provide to the problems that have arisen. The inclusion of a combined methodology between the documentary analysis and the collection of information from the surveys would have allowed for more concrete results and a broader perspective of the situation analyzed. In research of this type, it is relevant to have both qualitative and quantitative methods, since they complement each other and serve as joint tools when it comes to providing deeper and more accurate conclusions.

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