

ABSTRACT

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS:

The development of a model and its application
to a small developing country as
Trinidad and Tobago.

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This dissertation examines the competitive advantage of Trinidad and Tobago in manufacturing, based on a Small Developing Countries Model. The model seeks to expand the developed economy orientation of Michael E. Porter's thesis of a Competitive Advantage of Nations, to that of small developing countries such as Trinidad and Tobago. This is done by presupposing in the Small Developing Countries Model that small developing countries have a sustainable, culturally oriented competitive advantage, based on what is referred to as a "socio-psychological" factor or predisposition.

The methodology used in this thesis utilised data collected from various local and international institutions, trade studies and local state agencies. A questionnaire was submitted to respondent firms in five surveyed sectors. The research revealed that Trinidad and Tobago has some competitive advantage in manufacturing based on the unique cultural criteria outlined for the Small Developing Countries Model.

The Small Developing Countries Model was also found to be largely relevant to the competitiveness of the manufacturing sector in Trinidad and Tobago, based on some of the cultural add-ons that were specific to this model. The Porter Model was found to be of greater relevance as a result of the fact that its constituent elements tested in this study are characteristic of countries integrated into the global economy.

Keywords: Barry Anthony Ishmael; Trinidad and Tobago; Michael E. Porter; Small Developing Countries; Culture and Competitiveness.