

An Exploratory Study to Determine Archetypes in the Trinidad and Tobago Fashion Industry Environment

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Abstract: *This paper presents the findings of an empirical study among industry stakeholders on the development of the Trinidad and Tobago (T&T) Fashion Industry in the Caribbean region. This industry is one of several creative industries receiving special attention by the T&T government toward the diversification of the local economy and away from dependence on rents earned from the oil and gas industry. Q-Methodology, which forced participants to rank numbered statements relative to one another, according to their level of agreement or disagreement with each, was used. Views expressed varied from Fashion Industry Participants (FIPs) who were traditionalists, arguing for a return of the protectionist policies from the 1980s, to free market advocates. Five (5) archetypes were eventually isolated. These archetypes were termed State Led Industrial Diversification FIPs, Optimistic Traditionalists, Globalisation Attack FIPs, Westernised Red Oceaners and Powerful Global Value Chain FIPs. The limitations of the study lie in the possibility that other views may exist within the environment since the factors defining the archetypes are as valid as the list of statements, called the Q-Sample, which the participants ranked. The archetypes herein defined represent stakeholder viewpoints which should inform policy governing the development of the T&T Fashion Industry. The methods used in defining the archetypes may also be useful in the preliminary stages of exploring other industries for development.*

Keywords: *Diversification, Operant Subjectivity, Fashion Industry, Q-Study*