

The Use of Soft Power as A Tool for Projecting State's International Image: A Study of Qatar 2022 Federation of International Football Association (FIFA) World Cup

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ABSTRACT

In the international system, state actors often employ soft power tools to achieve their state-oriented goals and further their national interest, branded in what is called foreign policy. Soft power is a theory which advocates for the use of non-coercive or military force to achieve state-oriented goals, rather than the use of ideology, innovations, institutions or culture toW attract other states. Qatar is no exception when it comes to the effective utilization of soft power for projecting the state's international image. Qatar is a small Middle Eastern country situated in the Arabian Peninsula that seeks to gain international prominence and recognition in world politics by positively enhancing its international image, using the medium of soft power, particularly sports diplomacy, by hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup. This study, therefore, analyses Qatar's engagement in sports diplomacy as an oriented and effective tool in achieving its foreign policy objectives. The study adopted the globalization and soft power theory as the theoretical framework of analysis. This study, as part of a wider project, examines the magnitude and the quantifiable benefit derived by Qatar from hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup in terms of an increment in Foreign Direct Investments by 30%. There is also an upsurge in the Qatar Tourism Sector, making Qatar the centre of tourism in the Middle East, improving diplomatic and foreign relations, exploration of Qatar's rich sporting legacy, a chance to improve Qatar's external reputation, dissuasion of global stereotypes and perception of Islamic culture, making Qatar the centrepiece of Middle Eastern Geopolitics, and regional hegemonic power in the Middle East, a growing sense of pride in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Arab Countries are becoming the destination of global tourism, and other socioeconomic and political benefits are procured by Qatar in hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup. This study examines how the soft power apparatus is reflected in Qatar's foreign policy by hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup in line with the doctrine of sports diplomacy. The study found that the 2022 FIFA World Cup, as an instrument of soft power and sports diplomacy, had a positive impact on Qatar's external image. Other major findings of this study are that the 2022 FIFA World Cup improved Qatar's Foreign Direct Investments. It also earned Qatar global recognition and prominence in world politics. The study recommends among the following: that small states like Qatar who relatively lack large population size and military might, could rely on soft power mechanisms in achieving their foreign policy goals, the study also recommends that soft power is not enough for a country like Qatar to secure itself in such a complex and competitive environment like the Middle East.

Keywords: Qatar, Soft Power, External Image, Sports Diplomacy and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

INTRODUCTION

The state of Qatar is a country located in the Middle East, South West of Asia. The sovereign state of Qatar occupies the Gulf Peninsula, which is part of the broader Arabian Peninsula. The Persian Gulf and Saudi Arabia around it. According to Al-Hammadi (2021), Qatar is a member of both the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the Arab League. After gaining independence from Britain, Qatar emerged as a leading global gas

and oil producer. The country's high-income economy benefits from having the third-largest natural gas and oil reserves globally. Qatar is one of the largest exporters of liquefied natural gas in the world (Crystal, 1995:117).

Nevertheless, Qatar is not automatically powerful and well-known in the halls of international politics, even with its vast natural resource wealth. Even within the Middle East, other states like Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, and Iraq tend to pose a threat to Qatar's dominance in the region. This is even though Qatar has hosted over 150 international sports events over the past three decades as part of its sports diplomacy, which has solidified Qatar's global prominence. Nonetheless, the state of Qatar still faces the potential problem of lacking recognition and prominence as either a regional or global norm shaper. For example, Qatar's prominence before the 2022 FIFA World Cup, even within the Middle East, remained trivial, about the nation of Qatar (Brannagan, 2023). Qatar has comparatively acted as a big mediator in the Middle East conflict, granting foreign aid, including the establishment of the Aljazeera Television Channel that was launched in 1996 to position Qatar at the forefront of world affairs. Unfortunately, these mechanisms have failed to gain Qatar the international prominence it deserves. Despite Qatar's military capability, the country's international profile is still low, leaving the country with the only option of utilizing and wielding soft power mechanisms such as sports diplomacy to project its image, particularly the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

The country's soft power strategy of sports diplomacy, therefore, is just beginning to work after hosting the Federation of International Football Association (FIFA) World Cup 2022 by placing Qatar in the limelight worldwide and gaining clout in the halls of international politics. Qatar became the first-ever smallest state to host a major event of this kind when it was chosen to host the 2022 World Cup Championship by FIFA, the world governing body of football, on December 2, 2010 (Brannagan and Giullanotti, 2014).

Although the United States, Australia, Japan and South Korea were favored by many observers, they were, however, defeated by the state of Qatar. It is widely agreed upon by researchers like Amara (2022), Brannagan and Giulianotti (2023), Dorsey (2021), Grix and Lee (2019), and Reiche (2022), that sports diplomacy is at play here like many other nations that host sporting events, Qatar had an evident desire to use the attention the tournament brought to inform and educate viewers about the small state's 21st-century identity and what it has to offer, including its trade and foreign direct investment opportunities, its historical legacy, and its hospitality (Brannagan and Giulianotti, 2018).

At the end of the Cold War Era, specifically in the early 1990s, a new form of power was popularized by Nye (1990) to explain how power is viewed and why coercion is no longer appropriate in foreign policy. The concept of soft power emerged to mean co-opting or attractiveness as opposed to force or coercion (Nye, 1990). The context of this study also demonstrates how a small Middle Eastern state, such as Qatar, has effectively used sports diplomacy as a tool for projecting its international image under the guise of soft power, serving as a model state for the effective application of soft power in important areas of international concern. By interacting with international sports, we hope to close a big gap in the social science discourse surrounding Qatar's soft power. The study examines the use of sports diplomacy, specifically when countries host major international athletic events such as the FIFA World Cup (Roberts, 2017). Mega-events in sports allow countries to showcase their unique cultural, social, and political values to a global audience through the medium of sport. For example, the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia drew over 3.5 billion viewers (Ehteshami and Wright, 2019). This is a unique opportunity for countries to showcase their appeal to a global audience, particularly those with less prominence and influence in the world political arena, such as Qatar (Karen, 2022).

Review Of Related Works

For the continuing research, prior literature and essays were studied for a thematic comprehension of this study to assess the use of soft power for presenting an international image, with a focus on Qatar's 2022 FIFA World Cup.

Perspectives Of Qatar 2022 Qatar Fifa World Cup

Mattern (2005) conducted research related to this study, arguing that realists base their arguments on Nye's definition of soft power, which is: using attraction and persuasion rather than coercion to get what I want from

people. However, what does Doha consider attractive? How will Doha use its sports diplomacy to communicate to the globe notions about its national, cultural, and political identities, among other things? Mattern argues that force is the expression of attraction in international politics in his 2005 paper "Why 'Soft Power' Isn't So Soft: Representational Force and the Sociolinguistic Construction of Attraction in World Politics," which is a relevant source. In the context of international politics, it makes far more sense to conceptualise attraction as a relationship that is developed through communication, a nonphysical but coercive form of power that is exercised through language" (Mattern, 2005). The use of soft power by Qatar and other growing powers in international politics is not about influencing state actors; rather, it is about their sociolinguistically constructed subjectivity and ontological stability that motivates their involvement in and use of sport as a form of soft power at major sporting events. Each of these states has its own definition, application, and acquisition of soft power. States are at odds vocally on this issue. Thus, Qatar will convey its case to the international community through representational power rather than an argument supported by facts to enter the arena of world politics through sports diplomacy.

Since verbal fighting is a competitive form of communication and is characterised by representational force, attractiveness tends to be suffused with coercion. Soft power is not so soft. Accordingly, attraction is a "socially produced reality," "reality" is produced through communicative exchange, and the Muslim Arab world is a reality. Being the host of the FIFA 2022 World Cup means taking the argument of the Muslim Arab world's political security, political values, and rights to the global stage through mega events in sports. (Mattern, 2007). Likewise, Anholt's (2011) viewpoints of the study provided insights from a liberal standpoint, pointing out that Qatar's identity has been closely linked to the misunderstood conservative Islamic ideas over time. To improve its standing as a progressive country around the world, the state of Qatar is employing soft power strategies. "Three main assets constitute a nation's soft power: its culture (where it draws attention from others), its political principles (when it upholds them both domestically and internationally), and its foreign policies (when they are regarded as morally sound and legitimate) (Nye, 2004:11).

Qatar has made significant investments in public diplomacy to increase its international influence. These investments include working with NGOs and MNCs, promoting cultural exchange and awareness, hosting events to increase openness and promote tourism, and providing financial aid to underprivileged nations using FIFA World Cup strategies. Anholt (2011) explains that the Gulf countries' use of modern sport can be understood as a means of constructing a new identity as an emerging model of a modern monarchy-state that has managed to strike the right balance between modern efficiency symbolized by the skilful administration of mega-sport projects and the authenticity of Arab culture (Anholt, 2011).

Osman's (2021) contribution to the study claims that Qatar has made significant progress towards achieving international recognition and acquiring influence over its neighbours by serving as the 2022 FIFA World Cup host. Qatar will have a high chance to improve both its internal and external public diplomacy by hosting the World Cup. Events as big as the World Cup will attract a lot of media coverage and increase Qatar's profile internationally. With the use of soft power tools, particularly the shared cultural value of sport, the small Gulf state will finally have the chance to interact with the outside world and increase its allure. For Osman, this is hardly a novel advancement in international relations, since as early as 1936, the Nazis intended to use a grandiose Olympics to sway public opinion abroad against their regime the first real "sports mega-event." Hosting states can increase their appeal to others by showcasing that they not only share these values but also that they want to support and celebrate them as a group within the framework of their own unique cultural, social, and political values, given the importance of universally admired values in international sporting events (Osman, 2021). There are two well-established, conventional methods for framing major sporting events hosted by non-Western nations like Qatar, as Grix and Kramareva (2015) explain. Mega-sports events are either "assessed as the final rehabilitation benchmark of nations that have done their penance for breaking away from the norms shared by core states" or "characterised as a coming-out party of an emerging state and appraised in terms of a 'graduation into the community of civilised nations" when they are hosted. "Often fail to receive universal acclaim for their alternative modernities" is how developing nations are described.

Since these modernities aim to provide an alternative to the globalized Western ones, they are limited to non-Western, peripheral, and emerging nations. According to Eistenstadt, other modernity-focused cultural programmes are successfully mobilized (both in the East and within the West), and these eventually coexist in

what he has coined as "multiple modernities," challenging the hegemonic assumption that the European-crafted "Western modernity" would end up imposing itself as an uncontested path for all developing nations. Similarly, non-Western host countries have the option to either replicate an already-established route or create one on their own (Grix & Karamareva, 2014).

Griffin (2019) claims that when it comes to hosting sporting mega-events, Qatar's political identity acts as a counter-hegemony against the Western interpretation of sport as a soft power. Non-Western states can also benefit from using sport as a soft power tool and resource. Sport as a soft power does not have to be produced and disseminated by first-world countries, as evidenced by the counter-hegemony of Qatar's political identity and philosophy. Given that football originated in Europe and that adhering to Western norms of play in international relations entail playing metaphorically in Western fields? Yet this is no longer the case, particularly in light of the various political positions Qatar is assuming both before and after its candidature for the FIFA 2022 World Cup. According to Griffin (2019), Qatar's soft power in sports serves as a counterweight to neoliberal and orientalist political narratives that are prevalent in the Arab and Muslim world at large, as well as about Qatar particularly (Griffin, 2019).

Gaps In the Existing Literature

In the structure of existing literature, there is a growing stream of literature constructed in the use of soft power by Qatar in projecting its international image using 2022 FIFA World Cup as an instrument of sports diplomacy, scholarly works such as that of Amara, 2020 & 2022; Habibur, 2016; Reiche, 2022; Brannagan & Reiche, 2023; Griffin, 2019 & 2022; Cooper & Momani, 2011; Brannagan & Guilanotti, 2014; 2018; 2022; Bashir & Abdelsalam, 2021; Al- Hababi, 2022; Al- Tamimi & Amin, 2023; Andersson & Svensson, 2021; Grix & Lee, 2013; 2019; Grix, Brannagan & Lee, 2018; Grix & Kamarava, 2015; Henderson, 2014; Koch, 2018; Luerdi, 2022; Ganji, 2022; Yaushi & McConnell, 2014; Kamarava, 2011; 2014; Haghiran & Robles- Gil, 2021; Ginesta & Eugenia, 2013; Dorsey, 2022; Kaplanidou, Al- Emadi & Triantafyllidis, 2016; Anholt, 2011; Osman, 2021; Mattern, 2005; 2007).

Most of these scholarly works explain the use of the 2022 FIFA World Cup by the state of Qatar from the perspective of an instrument of soft power vis-à-vis sports diplomacy for enhancing a vibrant image of Qatar in the external community. Most of the previous studies, emphasized Qatar's engagement with Mega Sports Events like the 2022 FIFA World Cup as a tool for extrapolating Qatar's international image, by educating the public on what the small state of Qatar has become in the 21st century, what it has to offer perhaps it's graduation into the global arena. Most importantly, the study emphasizes the quantifiable benefits, such as Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and other benefits procured by Qatar, which previous works lack. Much as more of these previous studies accentuate Qatar's sports diplomacy as a method of public diplomacy and nation branding. Based on this, however, the following potential gaps in the literature have been identified, which supports and validates this ongoing research: Insufficient discussions regarding the social scientific analysis of Qatar's involvement in international sport; Previous work in this case study of Qatar has been particularly limited, with only a small number of scholars concentrating on Qatar's goals of international sport.

Additionally, there needs to be a greater understanding of the measurable advantages that Qatar has garnered through sports diplomacy. Furthermore, there may be an unexplored relationship between leadership and the application of soft power strategies in Qatar, which has not been adequately addressed in earlier research. Most notably, previous literature fails to acknowledge and highlight the significance of international sports as a tool of a state's foreign policy and a means for countries to reshape their international image. Similarly, in many instances, nations utilize their ideological initiatives, economic focus, cultural principles, and liberal institutions to achieve their goals and project a positive image of themselves. In that sense, international sports can act as an independent asset for state foreign policy, rather than merely being classified as a soft power resource, as suggested by previous scholars. This study, as part of a wider project, aims to fill that gap.

Theoretical Framework for Analysis

Globalization theory and soft power theory are the two interrelated theoretical frameworks that form the basis of our examination of Qatar's use of global sport as a tool of soft power to project its international image.

Globalization Theory

Frank (2014), Harvey (2001), and Levitt (2001) advanced the globalisation theory. First, to define globalisation, we see it as consisting of two primary tenets, characteristics, and mechanisms: first, a growing degree of interconnectedness between countries and regions, as demonstrated by modern social media, the global financial system, the expansion of international governmental organisations, and international cultural events like international sports; and second, a growing degree of social consciousness regarding the world as a single entity, as demonstrated by international political diplomacy or the transnational environmental movement (Robertson, 1992:8). Mega-events in sports could be considered particularly potent examples of modern globalisation. Economically speaking, these festivals are multibillion-dollar affairs that involve a wide range of multinational corporate sponsors and allow host towns and countries to "sell themselves" in front of prospective clients, travellers, and investors. Socially speaking, during its whole run, sporting mega-events draw billions of viewers to television across the globe. Politically speaking, these events tend to provoke various forms of political conflict, protest, and opposition in addition to drawing politicians from all over the world, especially during the opening ceremonies. These occasions also bring together members of the nation's varied societies for shared cultural pursuits, such as certain sports (Huntington, 1993: 22–23). One of the most active, contentious, and discussed topics in contemporary international relations is globalisation. Furthermore, more complex and stronger interrelationships between the local and the global have been a hallmark of global processes. Robertson's (1992) notion of globalisation well captures this interpenetration (Anholt, 2017). Qatar's hosting of the 2022 FIFA World Cup Mega Sports Event and the 2006 Asian Games served as additional evidence of their commitment to global consciousness (Amirkhanyan, 2019:15-16).

Soft Power Theory

The study further employs the theory of soft power as its second theoretical foundation. Nye introduced the soft power theory in 1990.

The American political scientist Nye (2004) defines soft power as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments" (Nye, 2004:256), setting it apart from hard power, which includes things like financial incentives or military action. The theory's central tenet is the capacity to set the political agenda in a way that makes others want to emulate your "soft power resources," which include an alluring culture, appealing ideologies, and reputable, inventive and progressive institutions and policies (Nye, 2002, 208).

In the context of the global economy, soft power is perceived as becoming more and more significant. One crucial arena for the development and application of soft power is culture, which includes sports, the arts, education, and the media. Mega-events in sports tend to present national governments with major potential to boost soft power, mainly through cultural showcasing on international television, 'luring' tourists, and enhancing patriotism (Manzenreiter, 2010; Grix & Houlihan, 2013). For instance, China was seen as strengthening its soft power during the 2008 Beijing Olympics since it was a successful host, it promoted ideas about old Chinese culture and civilization, and it gained notoriety by winning the most medals. Similar to this, Qatar uses the 2022 FIFA World Cup as a means of utilizing the channels of the state to accomplish its goals, using soft power apparatus (Zhongying, 2008). More especially, we observe here how international sports serve as platforms for nation-states to create or modify their brand identities and accomplish certain foreign policy goals. In this way, national authorities utilize sporting mega-events to accomplish certain state-led soft power objectives, primarily by effectively communicating specific messages to external audiences, pulling off such events, and showcasing one's athletic prowess on a global scale.

The Effect of Hosting The 2022 Fifa World Cup on Qatar's External Image

Qatar Tourism

Andersson et al (2021) claim that Qatar's long-term tourism objectives were significantly boosted by the World Cup. Qatar had an ambitious plan to increase the number of foreign tourists visiting the country from six million annually before 2022 to over twelve million by 2023, making Qatar the destination with the fastest

growth in the Middle East and, to some extent, the world" (Andersson et al, 2021). Svensson (2021) elaborates that the World Cup gave Qatar a boost to develop its unexplored and emerging international tourism sector, raise much-needed awareness of the nation, and put the state on the map for visitors from abroad, something Qatar had struggled to do before the World Cup (Svensson, 2021). The final objective will be achieved by attracting internal investments, increasing the demand from both local and international visitors, enhancing the overall tourism value chain, and creating a ripple effect throughout the domestic economy. According to estimates from Bloomberg Intelligence (2022), the government of Qatar has invested over \$300 billion in infrastructure initiatives, encompassing highway and airport expansions. It was argued that this development was already planned, though the World Cup speed up the timelines (Bloomberg Times, 2022). From a tourism perspective, Qatar invested in world-class infrastructure to create a dynamic and more diversified economy beyond its natural resources, driving the development of the private sector and fields like tourism, to become an integral component of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP). El-Khatib (2013) pointed out that Hamad International Airport, the Qatar Rail Project, Msheireb Downtown Doha, and cultural sites like museums are among the infrastructural investments that promote tourism. Additionally, a new Grand Cruise Terminal being built in Qatar will impact the nation with advances as a maritime retreat (El-khatib, 2013).

Perceptions Of Islamic Culture

Though there is no denying that tourism has increased in Muslim-majority Middle Eastern countries, there are still certain unfavorable stereotypes about Islam and Muslims in other regions of the world. Al-Ansi (2022) defines "fear of Islam" as a negative view of Islamic beliefs, practices, teachings, and rules. It is frequently linked to pressing problems and crises and is frequently shown in the media, including caricatures of Muslims, particularly those from the Middle East. Labels like "terrorism," "dark ages," or "women's oppression" are a few examples of such unfavourable connotations. Al-Ansi (2022) states that the stereotype of Muslims as violent or terrorists intensified after the September 11, 2001, terrorist assault. Former President Donald Trump used hate speech, referring to Islam as a "global threat" and "Islamic Radicalism", using expressions like these, according to a narrative analysis by Waikar (2018).

As a result of these actions, people of certain countries with majorities of Muslims are now temporarily prohibited from entering or leaving the United States (Waikar, 2018). President Trump issued an executive order titled "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorists Entry into the United States," which Donald Trump and his followers have dubbed "The Muslim Ban." Executive Order 13780, a second order with the same title, "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States," took effect on March 6, 2017, except to the degree to which it was blocked by different courts.

Over 50,000 individuals were suspended from the U.S. Refugee Admission Program (USRAP) for 120 days, Syrian refugees were prohibited from entering the country indefinitely, certain cabinet secretaries were instructed to suspend the entry of individuals whose countries do not meet U.S. immigration law adjudication standards for 90 days, and there were exceptions made on an individual basis (Warfield, 2023). These nations are, according to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen. Additionally, Iraq was listed until it was removed when the Iraqi government was strongly criticized and pledged to work with them to enhance the screening of Iraqi residents. There were up to 60,000 visas "provisionally revoked" and over 700 passengers detained (Ryan, 2016). The Executive Order's signing sparked condemnation and worldwide outrage, which led to legal action against the order's implementation. Since President Trump had previously called for a temporary ban on Muslims entering the United States and because all of the affected countries had a majority of Muslims, even though the affected Muslims made up only 12% of the world's Muslim population, critics dubbed it a "Muslim ban" (Gore & Robertson, 2018).

Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates were also notably excluded, despite being located in the same region as the countries subject to the ban and home to large Muslim populations. Despite this, critics hypothesized that Trump's economic relationships with these nations were the cause (Warfield, 2023).

In *Washington v. Trump*, a national temporary restraining order (TRO) was granted on February 3, 2017, and on February 9, 2017, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit affirmed the TRO. This resulted in the State Department revalidating previously revoked visas and the Department of Homeland Security ceasing to

enforce parts of the order. Later, President Trump signed Presidential Proclamation 9645 and Executive Order 13780, which replaced Executive Order 13769. Chief Justice John Roberts authored the majority opinion in the June 26, 2018, 5-4 ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court, which affirmed the third Executive Order (Presidential Proclamation 9645) and the travel ban that accompanied it (Liptak & Michael, 2018).

Percentage Of People Affected by Trump's Travel Ban

On January 30, Trump tweeted, "Only 109 people were detained and held for questioning" (Glen, 2017). Homeland Security officials later clarified that this figure only pertained to the initial hours following the implementation of the order. On January 31, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) reported that 721 individuals were detained or prevented from boarding due to the order; CBP also noted that 1,060 waivers for green-card holders had been processed, along with 75 waivers granted to individuals with both immigrant and nonimmigrant visas, and 872 waivers approved for refugees (Nixon, 2017). The ACLU has identified at least 10 individuals who fit this description but are not on the Justice Department's list of 746 people who were detained or processed by CBP during the 26 hours following Judge Ann Donnelly's decision, which took place between 9:37 p.m. on January 28 and 11:59 p.m. on January 29. The Justice Department sent the list to the ACLU on February 23. On January 30, detentions at Chicago's O'Hare airport persisted.

However, the order's impact went well beyond the number of individuals it held. As for those who have been denied visas, the federal government stated that over "100,000 visas for foreigners inside and outside the United States have also been revoked, at least temporarily." According to the Washington Post fact-checker, which cited data from the State Department, 60,000 U.S. visas were granted in the seven impacted nations during the 2015 fiscal year. In the 2015 fiscal year, 86,000 nonimmigrant temporary visas were issued to nationals of the seven impacted nations, primarily for tourist, business travel, temporary employment, or study, according to the New York Times. The executive order also prohibited new immigration visas for citizens of the seven nations. Approximately half of recent new legal permanent residents are new arrivals to the country, and the other half had their status changed after living in the United States. In 2015, 52,365 individuals from the seven impacted countries received green cards, which are normally granted shortly after an immigrant visa holder arrives in the United States. The United States welcomed around 1,800 refugees each week (total) from the seven nations covered by the executive order in the weeks before the ban. Two refugees from those nations arrived in the United States during the presidential order's duration (Carlsen, 2017). But Trump's travel restriction on Muslims worldwide is still in effect, particularly in light of the rising support of the Gaza population, for instance. After 28,000 protesters gathered at airports and other locations across the United States to protest the signing of Executive Order 13780 and the detention of foreign nationals, President Joe Biden issued Presidential Proclamation 10141 on January 20, 2021, rescinding Executive Order 13780 and its associated proclamations. Members of the United States Congress, including U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and U.S. Representative John Lewis (D-GA), joined protests in their home states. Google co-founder Sergey Brin (who immigrated to the United States with his family from the Soviet Union at the age of five) and Y Combinator President Sam Altman joined the protest at San Francisco airport (Dominic, 2011).

There have been several online protests, and many people have taken to speaking out over social media. Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe joined the protest at Dulles International Airport on Saturday. (Whitehouse Briefing, 2021). Another point of reference to the insusceptibility of the U.S. travel ban on Muslims can be emphasized by the Social Media pressure following Trump's announcement of the order, the topic began to trend on social media. Hashtags such as #MuslimBan, #TravelBan and #BanTrumpFromUK emerged. Shortly after, protests arose urging for the cancellation of Trump's UK visit, garnering up to 1.5 million signatures (Molloy, 2017). Other social media pressures include the "Grandparents not Terrorists", "No Ban No Wall" Refugee Caravan and others. President Trump issued an executive order in 2017 barring citizens of Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria, and Yemen from entering the United States for 90 days after the Department of Homeland Security designated these countries as "countries of concern," citing numerous crimes committed by foreign-born people after 9/11. According to Goodman's (2017) analysis of the case study, Qatar may be trying to increase its power and influence in the Middle East by supporting radical groups and governments, even if they are thought to be hazardous or extremist (Prosor, 2014). In this case, there has been criticism of Qatar's alleged affiliations with terrorist groups in recent years (Prosor, 2014). But in these cases, Qatar's involvement in sports diplomacy, specifically, the 2022 FIFA World Cup acted as a tactic and

opportunity to alter or obscure Qatar's reputation, particularly about its alleged affiliations with extremist groups, as seen by the outside world when it won the bid to host the 2022 World Cup.

QATAR'S RICH SPORTING LEGACY: A HISTORICAL EXPLORATION

The Asian Games in 2006, the Asian Football Cup and Pan Arab Games in 2011, the Swimming World Cup in 2014, the Handball World Cup in 2015, the Road Cycling World Cup in 2016, and the Gymnastics World Cup in 2018 are among the world's biggest international sporting events that Qatar has hosted (Russo, 2022 & Azran, 2016). Qatar committed \$130 million to purchase the rights to broadcast league matches to French viewers (Ganji, 2022). The sovereign national fund of Qatar has invested in several international ventures, such as owning the football team Paris Saint-Germain and, most recently, bidding for the ownership of Manchester United. All of these initiatives have enhanced and elevated Qatar's reputation abroad in a favourable manner (Russo, 2022).

Table 4.1: Illustrating Qatar's Sporting Activities and the Cost-Benefit Accrued by Qatar.

Year	Sporting Event	Cost	Benefit
2006	Asian Games	Exclusivity about the scale of money invested: Over \$445 million has been invested to make the Asian Games Doha 2006 the sporting event of the twenty-first century.	Qatar accrued over \$2.5 billion from sponsors and donors.
2011	Asian Football Cup and Pan Arab Games	Qatar has spent over \$600 million in preparations and hosting of the Asian Football Cup and the Pan Arab Games.	Worldwide recognition of Qatar as a new centre for top-quality regional and international sport
2014	FINA Swimming World Cup	Qatar spent approximately \$32 million on hosting the FINA Swimming World Cup.	Qatar's ties to the Arab tradition of hospitality and generosity
2015	Handball World Cup	Qatar invested over \$250 million in hosting the 2015 Handball World Cup	The numerous high-level championships across a range of sports demonstrate the city's and its people's passion and skill for hosting top-quality events that attract top athletes from around the world.
2022	FIFA World Cup	200 billion dollars	As per the figures from the Investment Promotion Agency Qatar (IPA Qatar), the country attracted USD 29.8 billion in inward FDI projects in 2022: a total of 135 new FDI projects were recorded, creating 13,972 new jobs in 2022.

Source: Foreign Direct Investment International Trade (2022)

Hosting The World Cup 2022: Qatar's Chance to Improve Its External Reputation and Boost Tourism

Amara and Bouandel (2022) assert that sports provide a forum for the presentation of political and cultural ideas as well as a way for nations to exhibit their national identities. According to Anderson (2021), sports diplomacy has become a significant economic sector of tourism overall. One of the biggest and most successful sporting events in history, the FIFA World Cup, has had a profound effect on Qatar's public image and has attracted people all over the world. Qatar won the right to host the FIFA World Cup in 2022 in 2010 after outbidding other potential host countries such as the US, Australia, South Korea, and Japan (Russo,

2022). According to Russo (2022), there has been a discernible increase in the number of foreign visitors to the nation. The number of tourists increased gradually, from one million in 2007 to two million in 2014. According to Russo's (2022) projection, during the World Cup, there were 4.5 million in 2016, 7 million in 2018, 8.6 million in 2019, 12 million in 2022, and 13 million in 2023. This suggests that the number might increase to 20 million by 2030, indicating an approximate yearly growth rate of 20%. Events of such magnitude as the FIFA World Cup present a rare chance to draw visitors to the host nation who might not have otherwise thought about going (Anderson, 2020). Large-scale athletic events are frequently staged at less well-known venues to increase public awareness of the host country (Kaplanidou, 2016).

Qatar Foreign Direct Investments in Pre-World Cup and Post-World Cup

As per Akoyol and Ozkan (2023), foreign direct investment (FDI) is characterized by an investment that involves a long-term relationship and signifies a persistent interest and control by a resident entity in one economy (either the parent enterprise or the foreign direct investor) over an enterprise situated in an economy different from the investor's own (FDI enterprise, affiliate enterprise, or foreign affiliate). The investment in question encompasses not only the first transaction between the two entities but also any subsequent exchanges between them and their foreign affiliates, whether they are incorporated or not (Aksan & Ozkan, 2023). Both people and corporate entities may engage in FDI. Before the competition, ten years ago, Qatar, which is among the biggest producers of oil and LNG globally, participated in an enormous expenditure binge on infrastructure projects in addition to initiatives to draw in foreign direct investment (FDI). The World Cup raised FDI in Qatar despite the previous difficulties. The Investment Promotion Agency of Qatar estimates that 135 new FDI projects produced 13,972 new jobs between 2017 and 2023, and that about \$29.8 billion (QR108.47 billion) in foreign direct investment entered Qatar in 2022 (IPA, 2023). After the Big Sports Event in 2022, IPA over 800 new foreign commercial firms launched under Qatar's business licensing processes in 2022, according to information provided to Investment Monitor by the country. According to Barklie (2023), head economist at Investment Monitor, Qatar is one of the most recent examples of FDI success. "Compared to 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, and even 2021, the country's number of greenfield FDI projects increased almost sixfold in 2022," according to him. In contrast, according to Global Data, Qatar came in at number 79 among all the nations that received inbound greenfield foreign direct investment projects in 2019. Following the competition, it rose 45 positions to rank 34th in 2021 and then 30 spots to rank fourth in 2023 (Hazar, 2023).

Table 5.1.1: The table below illustrates the annual growth of Qatar FDI in Billions of Dollars before and after the World Cup.

Pre-World Cup Year	Amount of FDI	Percentage of FDI	Post-World Cup Year	Amount of FDI	Percentage of FDI
2017	1.6120387233	16.1%	2022	2.9798212500	29.7%
2018	1.1924725376	19.1%			
2019	1.9947253776	19.9%	2023	3.8811000000	38.8%
2020	2.4855085930	24.8%			
2021	2.7985396528	27.9%			

Source: World FDI Development Growth Indicators (2023)

According to the US-Qatar Business Council (2022), Qatar ranked 22nd in the FDI ranking Per Million Population in the world. As of 2023, Qatar moved up 18 positions, making it to the 4th position (US-Qatar Business Council, 2022).

Table 5.1.2: The table below illustrates Qatar's FDI ranking Per Million population in the world in 2023

Position	Country	FDI Initiatives for Every Million People
1	Singapore	62.34
2	Ireland	62.12
3	UAE	61.72
4	Qatar	59.34
5	Finland	32.71
6	Luxembourg	29.92
7	Costa Rica	29.54
8	Norway	27.52
9	Estonia	27.07
10	Croatia	24.05

Source: World Investment Monitor Statistics (2023)

Barklie (2023) emphasizes that businesses have noticed Qatar's appeal after the country successfully hosted the FIFA World Cup, drawing attention from all around the world; Using the United Kingdom as an example, the total value of commerce in goods and services (exports + imports) between the UK and Qatar was £11.4 billion at the end of the second quarter of 2023, up 28.9%, or £2.6 billion, at current prices, from the same period the previous year. Out of this £11.4 billion: In the four quarters ending at the end of Q2 2022, total UK exports to Qatar came to £5.3 billion, up £2.2 billion (or 69.7% at current prices) over the previous four quarters ending at the end of Q2 2022; a rise in current prices of £2.2 billion, or 69.7%, during the four quarters ending at the end of Q2 2022); In the four quarters ending at the end of Q2 2023, total imports into the UK from Qatar came to £6.1 billion (a 6.6% increase, or £375 million at current prices, over the four quarters ending at the end of Q2 2022). Before the FIFA World Cup, Qatar ranked 28th among all trading partners with the UK, making up 0.6% of all trade. However, following the tournament, Qatar is now the third-largest commercial partner with the UK. Fact Sheets, World, 2023.

Table 5.1.3: The table below illustrates the FDI trade between Qatar and the UK after the World Cup.

S/N	The top five goods exported to Qatar from the United Kingdom over the final four quarters of 2023	Top Five Products from Qatar Imported into the United Kingdom in the Final Quarter of 2023
1	Aircraft (792–Aircraft, worth £1.2 billion, or 29.1% of total UK exports to Qatar)	34- Gas (importing £4.5 billion, or 81.0% of all commodities from Qatar into the UK)
2	71MIIntermediate mechanical power generators (£1.0 billion, or 24.9%)	71 mi: Intermediate mechanical power generators (£642.5 million, or 11.6%).
3	87C: Jewellery (10.5% or £433.0 million).	33R: Refined oil, with a value of £244.2 million (4.4%)
4	78M: Automobiles (10.4% or £431.1 million)	87K: Capital for scientific instruments (£46.4 million, or 0.8%)
5	87K- Scientific instruments (capital) (£119.4 million or 2.9 %)	75K: Capital (£17.6 million or 0.3%) for office machinery

Source: World Trade and Investment Fact Sheets (2023)

The government remains the main actor in the economy, even if it continues to take steps to encourage more foreign direct investment (FDI) and encourages private engagement in many industries. The primary driver of

Qatar's economy is the oil sector, which has attracted tens of billions of dollars in foreign direct investment (FDI) from firms including Sinopec Oil Company of China, ConocoPhillips, Exxon Mobil, Total, and others (EIA, 2022). The country's National Vision 2030 goal of building a knowledge-based and diversified economy aligns with the substantial opportunities for foreign investment in the infrastructure, healthcare, education, tourism, energy, information and communications technology, and service sectors. \$20 billion was allocated by the government in 2022 for major projects in these areas. Depending on the amount of foreign direct investment entering the nation, the primary industries that attract foreign investors include manufacturing, mining and quarrying, banking, insurance, and FDI stocks.

According to Hazar (2023), Qatar has placed fourth in Kearney's 2023 Foreign Direct Investment Confidence Index (FDICI), highlighting the country's appeal to international investors. The Kearney FDICI, which rates markets based on their investment prospects for the next three years, is determined by an annual poll of specialists in international business. Foreign direct investment has grown in Qatar in recent years, particularly in the country's infrastructure, real estate, and tourism industries. Qatar's strategic position, stable political environment, and business-friendly laws make it an appealing destination for foreign businesses looking to establish a presence in the Middle East (Hazar, 2023). A 70% yearly increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) projects in Qatar was made achievable just by Qatar's sports diplomacy between 2019 and 2023. With investments reaching \$23 billion and the launch of 135 real estate projects in 2022, the real estate business in Qatar is one of the fastest expanding, coming in second only to the energy sector. This significantly enhances Qatar's infrastructural accomplishments. In his opening remarks at the Qatar Real Estate Forum on Sunday, Qatar's Minister of Municipality, Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Subaie, (2023), praised the impressive increase in foreign direct investment projects and stated that it is anticipated to grow by 2.4% by the end of 2023, placing the country among the top nations luring international FDI (Al-Subaie, 2023). Al Subaie (2023) added that the 2022 FIFA World Cup event strengthened Doha's standing as a flourishing financial hub that facilitates discussions and offers a forum for exchanging opinions to improve synergies between the major economic actors at the local, regional, and global levels. The Qatar Real Estate Forum was praised by Al Subaie for emphasizing laws and regulations and their function in creating a sustainable real estate sector (Subaie, 2023). The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) area has seen a rise in foreign investment. This increased the number of Greenfield projects in 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. The area currently makes up 8.4% of all Greenfield foreign direct investment projects worldwide, up from 5.1% in 2019. According to FDI project figures, Qatar was the ninth most popular FDI destination in the MENA region in 2019, according to Barklie (2023). By 2021, it had risen to fourth place, and it is now on course to surpass Egypt and finish third in 2022. This is a noteworthy accomplishment considering the size and degree of development of other countries in the region. Dubai is the most sought-after city in the MENA region for foreign direct investment.

CONCLUSION

It is clear from relying on official government records and secondary sources such as papers and journals that Qatar sees its sports policy as an essential instrument for fostering new international contacts and elevating its stature and status. The sports plan is also a crucial component of Qatar's national goal, which seeks to become a great nation by 2030. Qatar is working hard at sports diplomacy; interest in the nation has increased since it was awarded the privilege to host the FIFA World Cup. In conclusion, the study's findings also demonstrate that Qatar has a fantastic opportunity to undertake sports-based diplomacy and increase its worldwide reputation thanks to its bid to host the FIFA World Cup in 2022. Qatar has successfully established new partnerships with other countries, particularly those in the West. The FIFA World Cup is one of the world's most significant cultural events. Approximately 3.572 billion people (more than half of the world's population) watched the FIFA World Cup in Russia in 2018, and 4.5 billion in Qatar in 2022. Hosting important international athletic events, making investments in sports facilities, and employing these tactics to draw attention from across the world were three essential elements of Qatar's sports diplomacy plan to enhance the nation's external image.

Most importantly, Qatar chooses to use international sports as a mechanism of sports diplomacy to achieve the country's objectives, because it is a general knowledge that Football is the major sporting event that unites and brings the entire world together regardless of culture, values, religion or racial difference. For example, it is in

world history that World War I was stopped for two days in 1914 on Christmas Eve just to play a two-day friendly football match between the German and British Soldiers from 24-26 December 1914, known as the December Truce, exactly one hundred and nineteen years ago. Through a variety of strategies, Qatar has effectively promoted soft power. Due to its significant participation in sports, Qatar has become more active in international communication; the FIFA World Cup 2022 has improved Qatar's external reputation three times over its previous standing in terms of dispelling negative stereotypes, growing the country's tourism industry, and attracting foreign direct investment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Through the use of soft power theory, this paper examines Qatar's use of sports diplomacy to create positive impressions of the country in the eyes of the world while earning worldwide recognition and popularity in the political arena. Sports diplomacy and soft power, which are concepts or frameworks rather than theories in and of themselves, frequently fall short of understanding the goals of state and non-state actors when they interact with sport (for commercial, political, or purely athletic reasons). Nevertheless, the study suggests the following:

1. To further its national interests, the State of Qatar shouldn't rely exclusively on soft power. Although soft power is useful in small states' foreign policy plans, it is insufficient on its own since it does not offer a comprehensive set of tools for a nation to safeguard its security and pursue its interests in a complex and competitive international environment.
2. To achieve their foreign policy goals, small states like Qatar and others that are comparatively lacking in population size or military force should adjust to using soft power techniques.
3. Since sports diplomacy cannot ensure the nation's internal security and defence on its own, defence diplomacy should be developed as an emerging soft power tool in Qatar's foreign policy that collaborates with its defence policy to protect the nation from external aggression in the Gulf region.
4. The social science literature on Qatar's involvement in international sports is lacking in discussion. Based on research, previous studies in this field have been extremely rare, with just a small number of scholars concentrating on Qatar's goals for international sports. Furthermore, further information about Qatar's measurable gains from sports diplomacy is needed, regarding the 2022 FIFA World Cup.
5. Qatar has other soft power tools other than the 2022 FIFA World Cup, which can gain the country more prestige than the hosting of the 2022 FIFA World Cup gained by the state of Qatar. However, to project a more dynamic international image in the corridors of global politics, Qatar must learn to identify and combine these resources.

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