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Business legacy planning for mega events: The case of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar

Kyriaki (Kiki) Kaplanidou^{a,*}, Ahmed Al Emadi^b, Michael Sagas^a, Abdoulaye Diop^b, Gerald Fritz^c^a University of Florida, United States^b Qatar University, Qatar^c Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore the processes of business networking which lays the foundation for business legacy outcomes initiated by the award of a mega event in a region. Building on the work of Spilling (1996) on mega event business impacts, we interviewed 24 stakeholders in Qatar from sport organizations about business planning and impacts of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. Qualitative data analysis revealed a process that involved a relationship between certain factors. For example, country context factors included political, religious and cultural elements. These country context factors can create business drivers and barriers that lead to sustainable business networking event legacy outcomes. Drivers and barriers included networking complexity factors, speed of internationalization, and country constraints. Targeted sustainable business networking legacy outcomes involved cultural change, innovation, social and human capital development and re-positioning of the country in the business world.

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1. Introduction

Mega events can bring a number of changes in the host country. From the moment the host country decides to bid for the event to the time of selection and throughout the preparation for the event hosting, there are opportunities to leverage the event to achieve long term goals. Event leveraging is defined as efforts to take advantage of potential development opportunities a mega sport event can bring in a number of areas such as economic, tourism, socio-cultural, environmental, sport and health (Chalip, 2004).

One of the potential legacies of mega sport events lies in the idea of business networking (Manzenreiter, 2008). Many business opportunities are born from the creation of business relationships among national and international business entities involved in successful event planning and delivery. Recent studies have discussed the concepts of innovation, networking, risk taking, and pro-activeness in business development initiatives that include the development of small-medium enterprises and increases in a country's exports (Dimitratos, Amorós, Etchebarne, & Felzensztein, 2014).

Many of the event impacts can be characterized as tangible and intangible (Kaplanidou & Karadakis, 2010; Preuss, 2007). Among the tangible impacts, infrastructure development is the most characteristic

example, while the intangible impacts often involve development of social capital (Gibson et al., 2014) and expanded business networking (Kaplanidou & Karadakis, 2010). The catalytic nature mega sport events have for a country's development is not a novel idea (e.g., Kaplanidou & Karadakis, 2010). With the event acting as an accelerator for change, a number of expected and unexpected business relationships are created among private and public business networks (Spilling, 1996). The relationships among key event organizations (regional and global) can positively stimulate not only pure business economic indicators such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and salary but also learning and business related competencies as discussed by Spilling (1996). For example, for the 2010 Vancouver Games the Province of British Columbia witnessed the creation of 1500 new businesses from 2003 through 2010 and the cost of real estate remained fairly unchanged (VanWynsberghe, 2013).

Objective economic indicators can be found in mega event impact studies and include GDP growth or company sizes, real estate market or airport traffic (Economic & Social Research Council, 2010). The latter indicators can perhaps confound a chain of developments related to a framework of business networking legacy in the country. Surprisingly, the literature is rather poor and scarce in business networking legacies. O'Brien's (2006) study on event business leveraging is perhaps the only study that examines business leveraging in tandem with mega events and tourism impacts. O'Brien's study however, was delimited in terms of its scope as it focused primarily on post event tourism business networking legacies. Nevertheless, the literature on successful legacy frameworks discusses the importance of planning (Kellett, Hede, & Chalip, 2008; Preuss, 2007), so our study aims to explore and understand the process that creates sustainable business legacy outcomes

* Corresponding author at: 190 C Florida Gym, University of Florida, PO box 110208, Gainesville, Florida 32611-8208, USA.

E-mail addresses: kiki@hhp.ufl.edu (K.(K.) Kaplanidou), ded3aga@qu.edu.qa (A. Al Emadi), msagas@ufl.edu (M. Sagas), adiop@qu.edu.qa (A. Diop), gfriz@uni-mainz.de (G. Fritz).

that derive from the hosting of a mega sport event in the early planning stages of the event.

2. Understanding the impact of business networking

2.1. The country context: Qatar

The country of Qatar is a peninsula in the Gulf region and according to the 2010 census, its population is 1,670,389 individuals out of which 399,421 are females (Qatar Information Exchange, n.d.). Approximately 250,000 Qatari nationals comprise the country population with very high wealth concentration among them (Kinninmont, 2013). The population has tripled from 2001 to 2011 and it's the majority is male immigrant non-Qatari employees (Kinninmont, 2013). Qatar's economy is driven by its massive global reserve of natural gas behind Iran and Russia (Wazir, 2013).

Qatar is a monarchy with power resting with the Emir, his wife, the prime minister and the Crown Prince. Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa was Emir till June 25, 2013 and was an advocate of a diversified post oil economy (Wazir, 2013). Hosting the 2022 World Cup is bringing in a fast pace an influx of business opportunities to Qatar but also enhances media attention to negative issues such as migrant workers' job conditions (Kinninmont, 2013). Qatari nationals may have to face the impacts of a more liberated economy, with dominant Western-style education and an expanding expatriate population who brings along their culture and way of living (Kinninmont, 2013).

According to El-Bassiouny (2014), Islamic religion permeates life in Islamic countries. El-Bassiouni suggested the existence of “transcendental value integration” (p. 45) in all aspects of life. El-Bassiouni recommends that company activities should be accepting and supporting such values and should be reflected via corporate social responsibility and cause related programs and actions. These ideas suggest country context and religion could influence business relationships and networking.

2.2. Business relationship development and networking

Business legacies and networking can be an outcome of preparing a large operation such as the hosting of a mega event (Kaplanidou & Karadakis, 2010). Håkansson and Ford (2002) explained “the history of a business network is the process through which time and money have been devoted to build, adapt, develop, understand, relate and combine different human and physical resources together. A business network has a specific intense structure with economic, technical, and social dimensions” (p. 135). Given the various dimensions involved in a business network, it is natural to assume that understanding relationships and interactions within such networks is important for strategic success (Hardy, Phillips, & Lawrence, 2003).

Similarly, Hohenthal, Johanson, and Johanson (2014) further explained that we can define networks from three viewpoints. The first viewpoint suggests the network is a system of actors who include customers, suppliers, and competitors but also public and private organizations. The second viewpoint suggests networks are defined from a social or business relationship standpoint. The third viewpoint is based on the structure of the network and the number of interconnected relationships. Both studies by Håkansson and Ford (2002) and Hohenthal et al. (2014) suggested layered relationships among a number of actors who are influenced by the environment in which they operate. Taken together, these definitions allude to a relationship development approach, which according to O'Brien and Gardiner (2006) can result in the establishment of long term impacts on trade development, as well as, tourism and investments within the country. However, Beesley and Chalip (2011) cautioned about the leveraging of impacts of mega events from country to country as the cultural context requires earlier planning than the usual seven years assigned for event preparation. Further, compatibility with local systems and values for

successful knowledge integration from past host cities is also essential (Beesley & Chalip, 2011).

Spilling (1996) reviewed the business climate and environment for the 1994 Lillehammer Games. Spilling discussed that the hosting region receives a number of “actors” who want to enter the business environment of the mega event. Due to the mega event stimuli, the region had to face a process of change which was not infallible. Spilling specifically identified the increase in the number of business actors, competences, new roles and role models, networking and showcase-effects and community and private business development. Thus, the business relationships created a sequence of outcomes in the country. The sequence of outcomes involved an exchange process among a network of actors who created activities and also controlled resources (Olkkonen, 2001). Extending the work of Olkkonen, O' Brien (2006) examined network relationships for *Austrade Olympic* an organization focusing on leveraging efforts from the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games. O' Brien observed that institutional support and legitimacy, public sector leadership and the temporal dimension of leveraging correlated directly with the overall strategic event leveraging plan and goals.

Given that the initiation of business relationships is one of the first and thus longer lasting steps a country takes after assuming the contractual responsibility to host a mega event, it is important to understand the process that creates a business network legacy within a network of actors that have been engaged with the preparation of a mega sport event. Considering the duration of the impacts (usually up to 7 years), the possibility of converting impacts to legacy outcomes can be a very realistic goal if planned early.

Legacy outcomes from business networking and business relationships can have tangible and intangible profiles. Tangible legacies include “structures” such as creation and sustainability of venues that generate permanent jobs. Intangible legacies include knowledge development in the human resources of the host country or social and political legacies observed through governance reform efforts (Kaplanidou & Karadakis, 2010; Kellett et al., 2008; Preuss, 2007). Legacies therefore relate to “economic, technical, and social dimensions” discussed by Håkansson and Ford (2002, p. 135).

The literature discusses that “network structure can affect organizations' capacity for adaptive change” (Kraatz, 1998, p. 623). In that sense, the relationships of organizations involved in event preparations may have to adapt to the global spotlight the mega event brings to the country which can result in employees learning how to adapt to change. Within the networks, there are strong and weak ties. Strong ties are less likely to provide novel information or insights, as actors are more likely to form strong ties with socially similar actors with similar opinions (Kraatz, 1998). Kraatz explained that although strong ties among organizations may not lead to novelty effects, they can still promote and facilitate a two-way communication and exchange of detailed information between organizations. Within the process of establishing relationships and ties, intersectorial integration is considered to lead to knowledge development (Parent & Séguin, 2007), while new relationships can lead to innovative capacity (Sallent, Palau, & Guia, 2011). In the building of a network to support the hosting of an event, Larson (2002) suggested that political power games are born from relationships created to support the completion of a project.

Mega events are international and their organizing committees have a short life span. As a result they have to function and adapt faster than permanent organizations within a global market (Odio, Walker, & Kim, 2013). Literature discusses the notion of speed of internationalization (Chetty, Johanson, & Martín Martín, 2014) when an organization enters the international market domain. Speed of internationalization entails speed of international learning, which in the case a mega event it may be necessary to deliver a successful event.

According to Spilling (1996) the award of a mega event in a region creates developments in a) short-term markets (e.g., local market investments through sport and tourism related infrastructure, consultant services), b) awareness (media coverage, sponsors' promotions of

the event, early tourism) and c) competitiveness and creativity (e.g., local business entities have to show creativity in order to compete with new companies entering the market to manage mega event projects). These developments happen within public and private domains with the public domain setting the framework to stimulate private development (Spilling, 1996). Spilling also talked about the networking and showcase effect created by opportunities mega events bring to the region.

The benefits of organizational learning and knowledge relate to the additional value produced from the relationships created beyond the project for which the strategic collaboration among organizations was initially formed (Hardy et al., 2003). For example, the creation of new ties with other businesses that have a peripheral role in the delivery of a project may change the manner in which information goes in and out of the network and impacts the operations and knowledge levels of a company for the long-term. (Hardy et al., 2003). In addition, the acquisition of resources that cannot be developed internally can have a long term strategic effect in how core business is carried out (Hardy et al., 2003). In the case of Qatar for example, the preparations for the World Cup can create a collaborative environment that enhances the involved entities' knowledge and contribute toward long-term intangible legacy outcomes. Based on the literature review above and the exploratory nature of the study, we formed the following research questions to understand the planning process for long term business and networking legacy planning due to a mega sport event:

RQ1: How does a mega event such as the World Cup create new business networking legacies and what are they?

RQ2: How do the relationships among involved organizations influence business networking outcomes?

RQ3: What are the factors that facilitate or impede networking with other organizations?

RQ4: Do organizations adjust their working relationships to achieve effective collaborations for the hosting of the mega event?

RQ5: How is the cultural context of an Islamic country influence the way of doing business for a mega event?

3. Method

Given the exploratory nature of the study, a qualitative methodology was deemed appropriate to gather richer data. The research team conducted 24 semi-structured interviews with employees from sport organizations in Qatar. For this study, impacts were defined as short term changes while legacies were defined as long lasting outcomes that extend and remain beyond the event (Ritchie, 2000). An interview guide was developed based on the previous literature. The semi-structured interview guide focused on the research questions of the study with a few introductory questions as warm up questions about the overall expected impacts for Qatar from the 2022 World Cup. The warm up/introductory questions included the following: What is your name and title of your position? How long have you been in organization [name]? How does your position allow you to be involved with the preparations for the 2022 World Cup? How did your organizations get involved with the planning and preparations for the event? In your opinion, what factors will contribute to the successful preparation and hosting of the 2022 World Cup? What programs and initiatives does your organization currently have or will apply to capitalize on 2022 World Cup coming to the region? How do you think your organization will benefit from hosting the 2022 World Cup? How do you think the state of Qatar will benefit from hosting the 2022 World Cup?

The semi-structure interview guide questions were the following: Did you develop any new business relationships with other organizations because of the hosting of the World Cup? With which organizations involved with the planning and preparations of the 2022 World Cup are you working closely? Which ones are not as close but still important for your organizations' role in the planning of the event? What factors facilitate or impede networking with other organizations

regarding the planning of the event? Did you have to adjust your working relationships with other organizations to achieve effective collaborations toward the planning of the 2022 World Cup? How do you see the cultural context influencing the way of doing business for the World Cup?

4. Interviews

Overall 24 stakeholders (subjects) participated in the study. Subjects were identified from a database of business contacts the research team had in Qatar and represented a variety of sport organizations and media. The interviews took place during December 2013, and January 2014. The research team visited Doha, Qatar where the majority of the interviews took place. Some of the subjects that were not able to meet during the research's team visit in Qatar were interviewed via Skype in January, 2014 by one of the research team members. One of the subjects who could not be accessed in person or via Skype provided his thoughts to the questions via email to one of the research team members. The email response to the questions provided some insights but it was not as rich as the face to face interviews. However, given the exploratory nature of the study we kept the response for the data analysis. From the 24 interviews, 17 were conducted in English and 7 in Arabic. The Arabic interviews were translated and transcribed into English for the analysis.

The semi-structured interviews in English ranged in duration from 30 to 60 minutes while the Arabic interviews ranged in duration from 10 to 20 min. The participants were informed about their human subject rights and anonymity and provided their consent to participate in the research per the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved process. The research team also took notes during the interviews. Interview locations were chosen according to the availability of the interviewees. The interview locations included offices, hotels, private homes, coffee shops, or sport complexes.

5. Detailed sample description

5.1. Stakeholders

The 24 stakeholders represented key sport organizations of Qatar which were directly or indirectly involved in the preparations for the 2022 FIFA World Cup. These organizations were the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy (previously named Supreme Committee 2022), Qatar Football Association (QFA), Qatar Stars League (QSL), Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC), Aspire Logistics, Aspire Academy of Excellence, International Center of Sport Security (ICSS), Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum, Al Sadd Sports Club, Lekhwiya Sports Club, Qatar Sports Club, Women Sports Council Qatar, 2015 Handball WC Qatar Organizing Committee, Qatar Table Tennis Federation, Qatar Volleyball Federation, QSports, Al Kass TV, Doha Stadium Journal, and MJR Communication Group.

The interviewees' job positions ranged from higher level decision makers in their organizations such as General Secretary, CEO and director ($n = 9$), to middle management positions like managers and department heads ($n = 13$), and lower level positions like officers and technical experts ($n = 2$). Due to IRB requirements, we cannot provide a table that describes the person's position and the organization he/she belonged to, as anonymity was part of the consent form.

6. Data analysis

The transcription process resulted in 281 single-spaced pages of text. The 24 interview files were inserted in Nvivo 10. Data were coded by two researchers. Before the full completion of the coding, two researchers compared the coding schemes of a smaller set of interviews to verify consistency in the names of open codes with similar content. A

sample of coded interviews was sent to a third independent researcher to verify the validity of the codes.

We followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) framework analysis steps. First, reading of the interviews allowed for data familiarization. Then we identified a thematic framework that related to concepts discussed in the literature review but also allowed for emerging codes to be included in the results. The thematic framework also guided the nature of the questions that related to impacts of mega events and business networking. First, indexing or open coding took place. Then two researchers engaged in charting, a process which groups the indexed data in themes (Srivastava & Thomson, 2009). This process resulted in 20 themes. The final step of this process was mapping and interpretation. In this stage the themes were examined for relationships and were further clustered into seven larger categories. These larger categories were classified as (a) process factors that included networking complexity, country constraints and facilitators, speed of change, and (b) business networking legacy outcomes that included innovation, cultural change, social and human capital development, and regional perception change through business development.

7. Results

The coding and charting process resulted in seven categories related to the business networking impacts. However, cultural, religious and political factors connected to the country context were raised within the categories and were identified as antecedents for any development. Looking at the extent of variability in responses for each theme across participants we observed the following: networking complexity and cultural change were referenced by all 24 participants, country constraints and facilitators and minimization of operational constraints was referenced by 21 participants, social and human capital development by 19, innovation by 12, and speed of change and regional perception change through business development referenced by 7 participants. Table 1 summarizes these results.

7.1. Networking complexity

Network complexity was extensively discussed by the participants. Network complexity was defined as the direct and indirect relationships an organization has with primary and secondary actors involved in the event preparations including contractual and non-contractual relationships such as those originating from the Qatari government toward the local and global community. In the complexity of the network theme the notion of top down decision making and the influential role of leading organizations for the event preparations such as the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy and the QFA was also included. Table 2 refers to the summary of the sub themes in terms of number of interviewees who referred to them and how many times they were referenced.

7.1.1. Diversity of actors involved in the WC and legacy

With regard to the diversity of actors involved with the 2022 World Cup preparations the interviewees indicated a number of national and

Table 1
Summary of main categories identified from stakeholder interview data.

Name	Sources	References
1. Networking complexity	24	458
2. Cultural change	23	133
3. Country constraints and facilitators	19	171
4. Social and Human capital development	17	43
5. Innovation	12	36
6. Regional perception changes through business development	9	14
7. Speed of change	7	10

Table 2
Network complexity category and its sub-themes.

	Sources	References
Diversity of actors involved in the WC and legacy	23	147
Closeness and cooperation between organizations	23	146
Operational networking constraint minimization	21	162
Networking-government to global community	14	31
Top down decision making	8	38
Coordination of activities and programs	6	15
Contractual and official relationships between sport organizations and government	6	13

international organizations they are working with. The actors included the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy which plays a pivotal role as well as the Qatar Football Association (QFA) and the Qatar Olympic Committee as the umbrella institution for sport development in Qatar. Indirect stakeholders for the event included Ashgal (developer of roads & urban infrastructure), Qatar Foundation, Qatar Diar (real-estate developer), the Rail, the Airport, Lusail (Lusail City project) Qatar Museum's Authority, Qatar Tourist Authority, Qatar Airways, Sport hospitals (Aspire), Ministry of Municipality and Urban Planning, Ministry of Finance, and Josoor Institute (a new organization designed to maximize impact in Qatar and the Persian Gulf region from the World Cup hosting). In addition, all organizations were involved in the WC planning process.

7.1.2. Closeness and cooperation between organizations

Most of the interviewees referred to the importance of working together with national and international organizations to develop the sport of football before the World Cup is hosted. A stakeholder discussed the national development strategy and the sport sector strategy as a formal platform for cooperation.

Another stakeholder emphasized the role of cooperation and collaboration by saying that for the event to succeed the answer is: "Working together. The way that Qatar will do it. Get the right support from the government, get the right support from the local people, from the nation of Qatar, from the Qatari...this is the only way that this tournament will be successful." He also added that the local expatriate communities offer information about how to incorporate their needs in the design of the stadiums close to their neighborhoods so they can use them in the future.

7.1.3. Operational networking constraint minimization

With regard to the operational constraint minimization subtheme, the interviewees discussed how to reduce obstacles for business development. The role of 2022 bid obligations was also important in this theme because it gave guidance to reduce operational constraints. One of the operational constraints mentioned was about the expatriate work force wanting to make money fast. Another stakeholder mentioned that when your organization is governmental then access to any opportunities is feasible, but when it is not, it could be difficult. The same stakeholder also mentioned that getting access to the Qatari people for business is very difficult and access alone is not enough, you need access to the right people.

Access many times was accomplished through personal private meetings in Qatari's homes, or in their mejilis. Mejilis is an Arabic term for "place of sitting" used in the context of "council", to describe various types of special gatherings among common interest groups such as administrative, social or religious in countries with linguistic or cultural connections to Islam (Salem, 2009). If you are not Qatari is very difficult to enter the personal spaces of Qataris (e.g., mejilis) as was discussed by another stakeholder. Level of trust was also mentioned as an operational constraint in doing business by a stakeholder who said: "Here it takes a while to build trust, and to establish a certain level of trust to cooperate." The legal system was another factor

of operations to consider for business development. A stakeholder noted:

“I think you need to have a very clear understanding of the legal framework in which the exchange occurs. The exchange of goods and services. The system is based on an Arabic Legal System.”

The ability to reach the leaders for business development was another point of discussion for one interviewer who emphasized that talking directly to decision makers is the way to do business in Qatar.

7.1.4 Networking: government to global community

This topic was about the relationships with international sport organizations and FIFA regarding event preparations. Specifically, one of the stakeholders noted there are relationships with international companies Qatar seeks to establish.

7.1.5 Top down decision making

Within the network complexity theme, the importance of top down decision making was discussed by various interviewees. One interviewee discussed that in Qatar people do not use “*lateral communication*” while another stakeholder indicated that “*the way things work here everything has to come from the top down nothing goes from the bottom up.*” And another stakeholder discussed the power of the Emir very simply: “*so the Emir can create a new law, saying this law has a validity of 10 years and then it's gone...*”.

7.1.6 Coordination of activities and programs

With regard to the cooperation and coordination of activities and programs, a stakeholder described coordinating a number of initiatives for sport development that involved:

“a clear strategy in hosting big sport events and creating a wide field for the cadres and other institutions which focuses on volunteering...on hosting the national championship and on the impact of sport activities on our lives are considered as regular targets.”

7.1.7 Contractual and official relationships

With regard to the contractual and official relationships, one stakeholder noted there are contracts with the Supreme Committee for specific services that need to be delivered while another emphasized the accomplishment of a number of signed contracts and agreements in a short time by saying:

“In only the last year, for me personally, I have signed, helped to sign, more than eight cooperation agreements with other Federations in the world... It's now coming to a point that we have copy-paste MOU [memorandum of understanding].”

7.2. Cultural change in business settings

This theme involved programs and initiatives designed to increase long lasting outcomes in the country. The stakeholders covered topics from sport development for both genders, to workers' rights, to cross-cultural interaction and development, to Qatari lifestyle, to resident support for changes in society. Table 3 summarizes the number of interviewees and points of reference for each sub theme.

The topic of generating new business ideas to serve the local community, and change with regard to the blue collar workers quality of life was discussed by a stakeholder from a private sport organization who organized sport events for blue collar workers. This stakeholder revealed how the sport events positively influenced the blue collar worker participation and he also noted the number of spectators for these events to be quite high.

The Qatar 2030 strategic vision of the country was mentioned as a driver for change within the country given the large number of

Table 3
Cultural change in business and its sub-themes among business stakeholders.

Cultural change-sub themes	Number of interviewees	Timed referenced
Cultural change within country for social and business issues	21	97
Change workers' quality of life	7	23
Educational advancement	6	10
Increased sport participation and development	3	4

expatriates in the country. A Qatari stakeholder further added to this theme by saying:

“Now we have many people from different countries. It is not new. We must know this, we must agree with this. I think it is not big thing to sit with the people and to see how to make relations with other people. Qatari people, I think are very friendly. They are respectful of other people.”

Another stakeholder indicated how the World Cup will impact industry development and cultural change in the country:

“You know, throughout history, wars facilitate change. Here you have no revolutions but change of industries that facilitate change...They cost billions of dollars. It's a mindset change, it's a cultural change. You have to have these giant events and for Qatar...I think it [World Cup] will open the door for people of Qatar... I think it will have a major positive impact on the culture.”

Similarly, another stakeholder noted that mega events bring mentality change because of the way you have to conduct business. This idea was further reinforced by yet another interviewee who said:

“We need to enhance our intellectual and cultural level in parallel with this event because we are going to host many different cultures from different parts of the world, so we had to have a high cultural level in order to deal with these cultures”.

Looking collectively at the categories generated from the analysis and the sub-themes presented above we can identify a number of factors that can describe a process for the business legacy development resulting from the hosting of the 2022 Qatar World Cup. The interviewees indicated certain factors that help or prevent the accomplishment of certain business goals that will help the country in the long run. These factors include context factors related to country profile and resources, business legacy drivers such as speed of change, and the country's overall strategic vision for the future but also barriers such as cultural mindset and ways of doing business.

7.3. Country constraints and facilitators for business

Almost all interviewees indicated certain country characteristics relevant to business networking and long term development. Discussion among interviewees included certain constraints (discussed by 14 interviewees) present in the country for business development, such as the issue of worker conditions for the country's reputation. The interviewees also discussed facilitating factors for business development.

For constraints one of the stakeholders indicated that accessing the female market for sport development is difficult due to the country's cultural context. Another stakeholder indicated the power of decision making was in the top and that creates a vertical structure of communication and bureaucracy that makes people find unofficial ways to

accomplish tasks. The bureaucracy was also mentioned by another stakeholder who said:

“when we talk about business, culture and environment relates to business. I would say, it could be difficult. To come to the point, to sign the contract, it's very bureaucratic, it's very complicated”.

The size and demographic landscape of the country was mentioned by another stakeholder who discussed the country is small and the population profile diverse as the majority consists of blue collar workers with the female population within that group having lower opportunities for sport because they have to work.

Along the same lines, another stakeholder indicated the importance of job title in getting “buy-in” in the business: *“so I might be able to get a couple of meetings with people because I'm a department head, whereas others who do the exact same work, being an officer, doing the exact same work, wouldn't be able to get in.”*

Another stakeholder indicated simply the country's leadership and religious profile in creating power distances:

“the Qatari society is a society that is characterized by an extremely high power distance and in addition to that power distance, you have some very complicated family structures. Even you can say some religious structures. So it's a dual legal system, you have these elements of more powerful families and less powerful families, and this is beyond the leadership. But because of power distance and because of the way the society is structured, leaders are involved in dialogues that some people never see.”

A stakeholder alluded to the lack of spectators in the stadium due to the country's culture but also the weather while another stakeholder very briefly noted the reactive culture in doing business and disbelief for completion of projects on time.

The country's culture in terms of time management and gender roles was discussed by another expatriate stakeholder who noted that Qataris are not used to time management and do not have adequate know-how about the industry. He emphasized that the goal was to improve the locals through education: *“We had a comprehensive workshop for the staff, for the admin staff to get the best out of them [Qataris] which would help us to work better. And that I think is the most important part”.*

The role of women in the workforce was mentioned by another stakeholder who discussed that expatriate women although treated with respect, they face difficulties when it comes to the authority in the workplace. Arabic colleagues have difficulty accepting guidance or directions from females and other means of finishing the job are needed.

Similarly, a stakeholder discussed human resources management in terms of working culture, time management and patience:

“Patience is the biggest challenge for me! I have worked with UEFA before and European Championships 2008 and so on. So, I think it is very hard to push here. Because it is a different culture, different atmosphere and you can't force people to do the job. You have to motivate them to do the job....You can burn yourself quickly here if you want to deliver and we need to deliver. But if you don't like it, work somewhere else (laughs).”

Workers conditions were discussed by a number of stakeholders as a threat to business development and the country's reputation. A stakeholder discussed the inflexibility in utilizing talent within the country due to the Kafala system (sponsorship system of migrant workers where a company is responsible for the visa issuing of their employee and their legal status and whereby the employee or worker is tied to one organization and cannot move employers). A Qatari stakeholder indicated the need for change in the Kafala system: *“I think we need to change something. We will change this thing [Kafala]*

to improve the system.” While another stakeholder discussed the controlled market with regard to employment:

“For sure, I mean, it's clear that it's a very controlled market. Kafala or not Kafala, it's a controlled market. Even by virtue of the fact that the structures in each of these countries, and this is historically documented, in numerous sectors. That certain things were set up at the times that these countries came into power, that certain families have licenses or you say concessions, for certain sectors, and this is... you know, I think, yes it's a challenge for any of these economies, which consider themselves frontier”.

Another stakeholder also suggested that for business can be difficult to establish a business presence in Qatar due to the partnership restrictions and the need for personal Qatari connections.

With regard to country context facilitators for business development a few of the interviewees mentioned the Qatar's leadership and the 2030 Qatar Vision (Strategic plan for the country). A few stakeholders discussed the country's past experience with international sport events as a factor of development. Another stakeholder from a local soccer club discussed the attitude of the Qatari people for achieving goals by saying:

“I think Qatari people have that winning attitude. They used to have this winning attitude so when they organize something they want it to be the best. When they have something they want it to be the excellent on the excellent level”.

The role of government funding and support was also important in facilitating business relationships, primarily because of the common source of funding for a number of government organizations. One stakeholder said: *“I think one of the biggest advantages here in Qatar is that I don't see any, any rival issues within the organizations.”*

7.4. Social and human capital development

This theme was identified based on the new knowledge influx coming in the country to prepare people for the event. In addition, the social impacts the large number of expatriates hired to work for various organizations directly or indirectly tied to the World Cup preparations in the country of Qatar was also identified. The main idea in this theme was about training the Qatari population, who in the future will not have to rely on expatriate workforce to deliver on sport events, infrastructure. As one Qatari stakeholder indicated: *“If you always have to rely on expat communities, you will never fill in the gap you will never build the right foundation.”* While another stakeholder said that:

“The country benefits from this one (World Cup), the next generation will benefit from this one in terms of knowledge transfer, in terms of people getting experience, in terms of everybody being part of such big event. It's not just the organizations, it's not just the governmental authority, it's a local business, it's a local manufacturer, bringing knowledge from all over the place to Qatar.”

7.5. Innovation

Innovation was identified as a theme based on the new relationships and ideas established from the opportunity to host the 2022 World Cup. Different approaches in doing business in the country of Qatar, stadium design innovations, and creation of new programs. A stakeholder from a private sports organization indicated that they used new technology to construct an indoors sport venue using air and making it into an air dome while another said:

“We're helping the locals, the small, medium enterprises to grow. We're helping people by bringing more innovative technologies and innovative ideas to the country to help people uses, as upgraded for the next

generation. So I think the whole country, the whole generation, the whole nation of Qatar will benefit.”

7.6. Regional perception changes about the Middle East through business development

For this theme, most of the stakeholders discussed how the World Cup will familiarize the world with the Qatari and Middle Eastern culture. One of the stakeholders with the Women Sports Council specifically said:

“I think it is great that Qatar managed to get this WC because it is an opportunity to show the rest of the world that not every Muslim is a terrorist. I mean, I am saying this in a very drastic way because I feel that many of the Western world doesn't know what it is a Muslim, doesn't know the religion, doesn't know what is going on here.”

Another stakeholder from the 2022 Supreme Committee reinforced the notion of business capacity building in the region from the World Cup by saying that Qatar will “prove to everybody that the next Middle Eastern country that will bid for the World Cup, it will be easy for FIFA to say yes you can do it.”

7.7. Speed of change

This theme was identified based on the speed of the country's reaction and adaptation toward hosting a mega event. Societal changes in terms of education, infrastructure are accelerated. A few stakeholders expressed some skepticism of the acceleration benefits. A sport organization stakeholder said:

“The accelerated pace of development is going to be much, much more than other programs usually. Many other countries are simply adapting their infrastructure, whereas Qatar is building it. So the ROI over time for me is very questionable.”

Comments such as “the whole country is directed to work too fast” (local sport club stakeholder), or “You have to see how the society is growing it [women sport participation] and accepting that thing, otherwise it is too fast, too quick.” or “in a night we will get the decision accelerated and will get the project moving forward”, suggest that there is change happening in the country in a very fast pace.

Taken together, these factors can interact to lead to sustainable (long term) business legacy outcomes such as cultural change in doing

business in the country, innovation, social and human capital development through the sport development in the country and the people's expertise and the business positioning of the country globally. From the respondents' responses we could observe that the country profile precedes any preparations and then the event preparations face some of the country barriers and drivers which then can interact with strategic outcomes identified through the interviews. Fig. 1 summarizes this process.

8. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the process that creates sustainable business and networking legacy from the catalytic effect of hosting a mega sport event. Given the literature review on business networking we synthesized our results to propose a new model that presents areas of business legacy planning based on stakeholders' input eight years before the event is hosted. Specifically, the model presents outcomes related to context factors such as the profile of the host country in terms of religious, cultural and political aspects in tandem with the sport event, and how the event in combination with the country context collectively create drivers and barriers for long term business development that have enduring effects for the host country. The enduring effects included shifts in culture of doing business with Western influential parties, innovation that permeates certain fields such as venue construction and new ideas in event delivery, social and human capital development and changes in perception about the region globally through the creation of business relationships.

Connecting our model to the literature on business networking and legacy we can observe that a number of factors such as innovation, networking and pro-activeness in business development initiatives (Ciravegna, Lopez, & Kundu, 2014; Dimitratos et al., 2014) have been discussed. In addition, the literature provided insight into learning and growth in business related competencies combining networking and showcase effect created by the opportunities the mega event brings to the region (Spilling, 1996), which connected to our results directly. The “intense structure with economic, technical, and social dimensions” of a business network emerged in our results and was noted by Håkansson and Ford, (2002, p. 135) while the importance of relationships and interactions within business networks emerged in our results as well and was emphasized by Hardy et al. (2003) as important for strategic success. More importantly, Kraatz (1998) discussed that the structure of the network can influence “organizations' capacity for adaptive change” (p. 623) which in the case of a mega sport event and

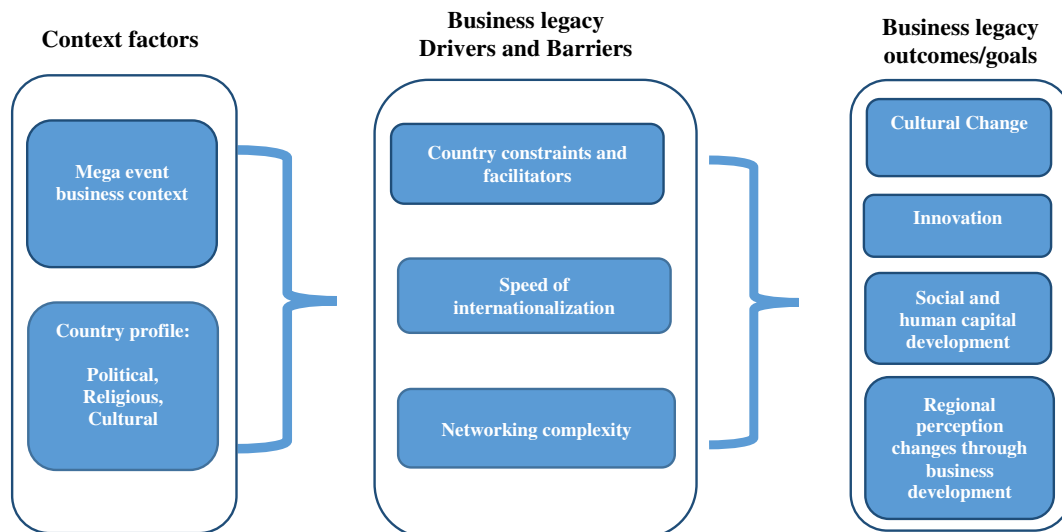


Fig. 1. Business legacy and networking process for a mega sport event.

in combination with speed of internationalization (Chetty et al., 2014) due to international market exposure, may enhance international knowledge development as evidenced in our study. Our findings stand in agreement with Kellett et al. (2008), who emphasized the importance of collaboration and coordination among and within organizations.

Looking back at the literature, we can propose that drivers and barriers connect with a number of discussions made about the notion of business networking having specific economic, technical and social aspects (Håkansson & Ford, 2002). These relationships are complex, and involve a diversity of actors that need to work together to create long lasting business impacts as identified by the interviewees of this study (Håkansson & Ford, 2002; Hohenthal et al., 2014; O'Brien & Gardiner, 2006).

The richness of the results allowed for a more specific discussion regarding the constraints and facilitators related to the country. The results revealed that a number of socio-cultural constraints hold back business development and relationships, including the norms of the local community and the social sanctions imposed by the violation of these norms. Relationship values related to trust and respect to authority emerged from the interviews, which suggests adaptation to change toward the country's functioning norms for business development is needed to achieve networking (Kraatz, 1998). Indeed, culture can be the greatest strength of a country or a society. However, it may also be a source of rigidity, as cultural change takes time and disrupt operations. This may lead businesses to see culture as a constraint and a barrier for transformation of the country's industry. Nevertheless, some researchers suggest that Islam encourages business activity and considers religion as a beneficial and valuable function that takes interests of different stakeholders into consideration (Beekun & Badawi, 2005; Rice, 1999).

In parallel to the points made above about culture, time management has also a bearing on business development and relationships. Although globalization and modernity have caused some change to the Arab perspective on time management, many Westerners would tend to be frustrated and at times disappointed when coping with time management of Arabs in business dealings (Feghali, 1997). This disappointment or frustration was mentioned by interviewees and formed a potential constraint for business development. Similarly, gender roles and differences in Arab societies tend to remain very strong, and the social structure is largely male dominant, which given the World Cup preparations may need to change for more efficient and diverse workforce training.

The results of this study also shed light to a need for cultural change for business development and networking. As Hofstede (1991) claims in his model of Culture Dimensions, cultures are categorized in different ways. Specifically, his binary dimensions of culture (individualism/collectivism, power/distance, uncertainty/avoidance, and masculinity/femininity) can assist in understanding cultural differences. The results suggest that in Qatar, like many Middle Eastern countries, masculinity is dominant as women neither fully participate in the labor force nor do they run businesses for cultural and social reasons. However, the organization of a mega event, such as the World Cup can create some changes in that front based on the comments provided by the interviewees.

Most importantly, this study contributes to the mega event legacy business planning literature by suggesting that business networking and development can have multiple influences on creating a mentality of innovation for long term development through the creation of new infrastructure and knowledge (Ciravegna et al., 2014; Dimitratos et al., 2014). In addition, the business development from the mega sport event creates impacts related to the improvement of local sport culture, which can be part of social capital and societal improvements (Gibson et al., 2014). Thus, the notion of interactivity between impacts and legacies can be introduced here in the sense that impacts can be transformed into legacies with proper planning and focusing on human and social capital changes, where sport and capacity building is

introduced as a result of hosting a mega event. As Parent and Séguin (2007) discussed, intersectorial integration leads to knowledge development resulting from the process of establishing relationships and ties. Finally, the global positioning of the country for business development and the change in perceptions of global markets among business leaders are both potential long term legacies per Håkansson and Ford's (2002) discussion about connecting time and money resources toward enhancing human and physical resources.

In summary, we would conclude that planning for business and networking legacies of mega events can diffuse within a country and interrelate with a number of factors that can prevent or promote long term strategic legacy outcomes. These legacy outcomes relate to tangible and intangible goals such as mentality change in a seemingly rigid culture structure, the building of a work culture that focuses on innovation and the improvement of human and social capital. Finally, the repositioning of the country's business profile globally to sustain business relationships after the conclusion of the event is another legacy goal that requires strong networking structures. Future research can examine the attitude change among stakeholders using a quantitative design and document the evolution of legacy planning for a new sport event business market such as the Middle East.

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