Sports Events and Hospitality Industry

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Introduction

Qatar’s population is growing rapidly, and there is a struggle to cope with the developed countries. In 2011, Qatar’s successful bid to host the 2022 World Cup was announced. The event is prestigious, and this will be a great honor to the country and its citizens. Hosting the 2022 World Cup will be a sign that Qatar, which is a small country, is able to compete with the world’s leading countries. This great honor comes with great responsibilities. The government will be required to develop the country’s hospitality industry in order to offer the best environment possible throughout the event. Accommodation and hotel services will be necessary, mostly for tourists, competing teams and spectators.

Qatar plans on investing up to $17 billion in the hospitality industry in anticipation of the 2022 FIFA World Cup. It currently has the third largest channel of hotels in the Middle East (Conde, 2012). This shows that it is already a landmark even with the existing number of hotels. An increase in this number might prove to be a white elephant once the World Cup is over.

Objective

If the country hosts the 2022 World Cup, it will set Qatar’s status closer to the developed countries. This is a positive move towards growth of its hospitality industry and of the country in general. In order to host this big event sufficient manpower in the construction and preparation of ultra-modern hotels for guests and participants will be required. The objective of this proposal is to research how the government of Qatar is going to ensure that the constructed 60,000 hotel rooms, intended to host the 2022 World Cup guests, are not left vacant and deserted after the event (Conde, 2012). Qatar is a small country that has previously not attracted a multitude of tourists. This event will change this fact for the period of the World Cup’s duration. After a
beehive of activities and a boosted hospitality sector, the country will need to maintain this status. It will be a challenging task to keep these new hotels in use.

**Literature Review**

According to a research conducted by the Alpen Capital’s Hospitality Industry in Qatar and its neighboring countries in the Gulf, the 2022 FIFA World Cup will have a positive impact on the hospitality industry in the region. Qatar will not only grow in terms of increased hotels but also in its financial position. It is estimated that daily income earned from the occupancy of rooms will oscillate around $257 per room. The research has also showed that about 67% of all rooms will remain occupied throughout this sporting period. This will be the highest price ever asked by the country for its rooms and accommodation services (Conde, 2012).

The impact of the World Cup is bound to be a lasting one. Qatar is situated in the Gulf region, exhibiting serenity and great beauty that will make tourists want to return. It is expected that with a lucrative amount set aside for the construction of up to 60,000 hotel rooms, the rich class of citizens from the USA, China and the UK will visit the country frequently. Expectations are that business will improve between the richer developed countries and Qatar. Business trips are expected to help in the growth of regional demand and investment. Qatar is already a tourist destination. The construction of ultra-modern hotel rooms will attract more tourists and make Qatar a major tourist destination, a lifestyle and business center, a hub of international expositions and other high-profile activities.

A possible flop in the hospitality industry could result from the lack of sufficient tourists and businesses investors after the 2022 World Cup. Qatar will experience a rise in the pricing of its hotels during the World Cup period. This rise in pricing will only be maintained during the
World Cup. Thereafter, the country will have to regulate these prices for the hotel industry to make profits from its visitors after the 2022 FIFA World Cup (Victoria, 2013).

There are different perceptions related to Qatar hosting the 2022 World Cup. A number of researchers have undermined the country in terms of size and facilities. It will take a large amount of the country’s resources to facilitate the construction of hotels and infrastructure for the event. Citizens of such countries like the USA and European countries are likely not to return to Qatar in the future in case the event does not turn out as expected. It is a great burden and challenge to Qatar as a Gulf country to present the best atmosphere for the World Cup. Qatar depends highly on oil for its economic gain. The hospitality industry will help in boosting Qatar’s finances alongside its oil industry (Victoria 2013). A kind of revolution will happen, if the hospitality industry is able to beat oil as the main source of the country’s income.

Another perception related to the 2022 World Cup in Qatar is that there will be a rise in immorality as a result of an increased price for hotel rooms and other services. An increase in the population of people in a certain locality may lead to a rise in a number of commercial sex workers. Qatar is no exception to this problem, despite its strict Muslim culture. This will be a difficult task to realize the intentions of occupants of hotel rooms and to regulate immorality especially during the World Cup period. The aftermath of this situation might be a dented image of Qatar in terms of morality to the rest of the world.

Qatar will have the responsibility of marketing its hotels after the World Cup, to ensure that they do not remain vacant. It shall be a good idea for the country to grab other available opportunities in the future that may bring lots of tourists like the World Cup, for the hospitality industry to remain vibrant. During the event, a step towards advertisement and promotion of
Qatar’s other facilities, like its wildlife and tourist attractions, will help the country maintain a constant inflow of tourists to ensure that the hotels remain active after the event. After the construction and furnishing of hotels, Qatar should advertise them in the international spectrum for the outside world to be aware of the available services (Allmers, 2009).

To maintain a reputable image in the hotel industry, Qatar will need to train its hotel staff on the best practices and the latest acceptable trends in the industry. The treatment accorded to the visitors who will attend the 2022 World Cup will give an indication of the standards expected even in the future to the outside world. It will be the responsibility of the hospitality industry to ensure that the hotels are maintained and kept up with the international standards.

A possible effect of the 2022 World Cup is that Qatar could be maintained as a Sporting Centre. The standards set at the World Cup event and the treatment accorded to visitors will be a determinant to future events like the IRB Rugby 7’s series. Athletics organizers may also choose Qatar as a hosting country if they see a desirable picture during the 2022 World Cup.

**How Other Countries that Have Hosted the World Cup Have Overcome the Problems in Hospitality Shortfall**

Countries that have previously hosted the World Cup, for instance, South Africa in 2010 have curbed the problem of their hotels remaining vacant by hosting other events immediately after the World Cup. South Africa hosted the Africa Cup of Nations Tournament in 2012, which was a similar event. This brought an influx in the hospitality industry, as a need to provide accommodation and hotel services was created. South Africa ensured that advertising was done, and many Small and Medium Enterprises were developed in the hospitality industry and not only the main hotels. The problems faced during that time by the SMEs with regard to the hospitality
industry were solved using advertisement of their services on various websites during the World Cup period (Oliver, 2010).

The 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany was characterized by an increase in hotels and the entrepreneurial spirit. There were additional jobs and the income rose considerably. Germany has maintained high standards in its hospitality industry, ranging from business travel to hotels and site seeing. Proper renovation of these facilities has also helped in the maintenance of a clean record in the hospitality industry. Event planners have also used Germany for international events as it is an outstanding country that has set a reputable standard. The main issue that comes up every once in a while is that of immorality and decency. With the accessibility by people of diverse lifestyles, immorality is bound to crop up. The hospitality industry in Germany has only gotten better after the 2006 World Cup (Feddersen, 2010).

The 2002 FIFA World Cup in Korea increased the number of visitors in South Korea. Korea took this as an advantage on its side to expand its tourism sector. South Korea employed a multiplier tactics as advocated by economists. It spent a lot for the maintenance of its hotels and in return these expenses were paid off due to an increased number of tourists. South Korea has maintained this status and it continues to be one of the leading tourism destinations. The fact that the World Cup was held there is one of the reasons for tourists to flock into the country just to feel as part of the history makers (Matheson & Baade, 2002).

**Advantages of Hosting the World Cup**

There are more advantages than disadvantages in hosting an international event such as the World Cup. It is honorable in itself to be the host of such an event. Economic benefits that accrue from hosting the World Cup majorly revolve around the development of Small and
Medium Enterprises and an increase in the entrepreneurial spirit. A properly planned and coordinated World Cup event brings millions of dollars as profit to the hosting country.

The rise in GDP is evident after hosting such a big event. Employment opportunities are created for the locals, and as a result their living standards are raised. The 2022 World Cup to be hosted by Qatar, for instance, will result in positive changes. There will be employment opportunities created for workers who will build the stadium and infrastructure such as roads and any other buildings necessary for the event. Construction of the anticipated 60,000 hotel rooms will also require workforce which will also give employment opportunities to the country’s population (Matheson & Baade, 2002).

The World Cup 2022 will play a major role in publicizing Qatar as a tourist destination. Many visitors, who will visit the country with the main aim of witnessing the football matches broadcast live, will realize that there is much more to see in the Gulf country. This publicity will make many tourists return later on, after the World Cup 2022. Hosting the World Cup will give Qatar experience and a chance to be considered as a country which can host other events later on as they come up.

For an international event such as World Cup to be hosted in a certain country, the country has to go through a transformation in its infrastructure to ensure that the best is displayed during the event. This is an advantage to a hosting country as it will receive a boost in its structures thus its development will be increased. Development of the hosting country will improve its economic and social status.

During the World Cup period, the hosting country is supplied with a great security force to ensure that the visitors are safe during the international event. Enhanced security is an
advantage to the hosting country as its citizens will also experience the period of safety and protection. Security in a country attracts tourists and business partners who help in its economic growth.

Hosting a world event is a challenge but a strong advantage that will ensure that the hosting country exploits its full potential. In terms of available resources, it is easier for a country to identify dormant potential when under pressure than when things are calm. Qatar, for instance, is mainly an oil-based country. With the 2022 World Cup, great potential in football and games sector is likely to be discovered. This advantage will help to increase interest in sporting activities and with time it will be reflected internationally.

Investors are likely to identify undiscovered potential during the World Cup event. Most tourists who will attend the World Cup are likely to be open-minded in terms of any other lucrative opportunities other than football. It may not come as a surprise that international organizers of these events may be pleased with the success of the event being hosted in Qatar, for instance, that they recommend other similar events to be held in the same country.

**Disadvantages of Hosting the World Cup**

International events attract people of lifestyles. With their varying beliefs and practices, they are bound to carry along with them habits that may not be acceptable in the hosting country. Issues related to sexual immorality and drugs are the main issues that crop up during such international events. Drugs are smuggled into the hosting country to be consumed by locals as well as international visitors (Johnson, 2000). The growth of the hospitality sector is also affected in that it is hard to determine the intention of hotel occupants and to bar them from using these facilities. This taints the image of hosting countries.
The shortfall of the hospitality industry is another problem which may be faced by countries that host the World Cup. The country may be unable to maintain a large number of tourists and provide all of them with hotels, and this may have a negative effect on the economic status of the country. The hosting country is more likely to increase prices for commodities during the World Cup period. This will have a negative impact on locals as they will not be able to afford those commodities. Inflating the prices may be a good step towards attaining the maximum achievable profit during the time, but it will have a negative impact on citizens of the hosting country (Weed, 2008).

Negative publicity may come as a consequence of hosting the World Cup. Issues that may come up during the period may be blown out of proportion and present negative results for the country once they hit the international scene. An example of such a situation is the issue presented in South Africa during the 2010 World Cup, where a small hotel had an issue with clients over the pricing of bed and breakfast (Oliver, 2010).

**Methodology**

For this research to be successful, interviews with at least ten managers related to the hospitality sector will be paramount. These managers will be sampled from all major towns, and they must be managers of five star hotels in Qatar. Questionnaires filled in by general public on their suggestions and perceptions on the hosting of the 2022 World Cup will also important. The results of the interviews and questionnaires will be used to gauge the responsiveness of the citizens to issues and solutions that managers may be willing to implement. The data collected from face-to-face interviews will be represented graphically, showing the past and future expectations in the hospitality industry. Analyses of this data will help in the implementation of
new ideas proposed by these managers. The interviews will help gather information regarding the hospitality industry. Using managers as the source of information it will be possible to get a clear picture of what is already on the ground.

The use of questionnaires will be effective in acquiring information and data presenting the views of the country’s citizens regarding the hosting of the 2022 World Cup. About 1,000 questionnaires will be distributed in the main towns of Qatar, mainly in universities and colleges. The questionnaires will not disclose the identity of respondents, to ensure that they provide information freely. Questionnaires are considered as a method of data collection since they reach a vast population in a short time. Many views will be considered since 1,000 copies of questionnaires are to be filled in. This will help in coming up with a detailed research that will reach a substantial number of citizens.

**Conceptual Model**

- Development of infrastructure
- Improved GDP and Economic status of the country
- The 2022 World Cup in Qatar
- Growth of the tourism sector and potential of the country
- Opening more chances to host other similar events
- Increased immorality and drug abuse
- Bad publicity in case of issues arising related to the event
Conclusion

The proposal is concerned with the impact of the 2022 World Cup on Qatar. The advantages and disadvantages of hosting the event for the citizens, economy and social status of the country have been discussed. The methods of data collection suggested will give a clear picture of the outcome of hosting the event. The selected participants in data collection methods are also likely to present professional feedback on the proposal. The anticipated Qatar 2022 World Cup will elicit success in the Gulf countries as a whole if Qatar is able to live up to the expected standards. The hospitality industry will need to lay down strategies to ensure that this industry does not collapse after the World Cup event.

Other countries that previously hosted the World Cup have been successful in maintaining their hospitality industry after the event. It is a challenge to the country since Qatar is a small country to host such an important event. Qatar’s beautiful sceneries will play a part in the growth of the tourism sector, not forgetting the boost that will follow after the hosting of the FIFA 2022 in the country. Economic growth and exploitation of Qatar’s full potential will be among the benefits that will follow after the hosting of the World Cup in 2022. The advantages outweigh the disadvantages, but it will be upon the government of Qatar to regulate the detriments that will be caused by this event.
References


