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Interest in volunteering for the FIFA 2022 World Cup in Qatar: a nationally representative study of motivations

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ABSTRACT

Qatar is the first Muslim and Arab country to host the FIFA World Cup. The Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy, the organisation responsible for providing the required infrastructure, host country planning and operations, is already offering volunteering opportunities across numerous activities, events and tournaments. However, few studies have examined citizens and resident expatriates' attitudes toward volunteering for such mega-events in both Qatar and the rest of the Arabian Gulf. In the following paper, we address this research gap by exploring the determinants of Qatari citizens and expatriates' interests in volunteering for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™. Drawing on two waves of nationally representative surveys from Qatar, we explore various elements that affect Qataris and expatriates' interest in volunteering. In general, and after controlling for a wide range of demographic variables, our study found that previous volunteering experiences, interest in football, and positive attitudes about Qatar hosting the games had the strongest effect on the respondents' interest in volunteering for the upcoming FIFA World Cup to be held in Qatar. The study provides a non-Western perspective and insight into volunteering motivations and, as such, is an important tool for event organisers developing volunteer recruitment and retention strategies.

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Introduction

Worldwide, host countries spend an enormous amount of resources to build the necessary infrastructure for mega-events. These expenditures are made in the hopes of attracting tourism and investment opportunities as well as attaining long-lasting prestige. When, in December 2010, Qatar was awarded the hosting rights for the 2022 FIFA World Cup™, it was in recognition that the Gulf state would have the resources to pull off a successful sporting mega-event of such proportions, the first Muslim and Arab country to ever be selected.

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Qatar will also be the smallest country ever to host the World Cup. Like other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)¹ states, Qatar's native population is itself smaller than the expatriate population that provides both blue and white-collar labour to help the country achieve its goals of diversification and modernisation. In terms of demographics, for the GCC states as a whole, non-nationals comprise 52% of the population. For Qatar, this figure is 88%, with non-nationals constituting 95% of the active labour force (GLMM, 2020).

Although Qatar is a small state, it has one of the highest GDPs per capita in the world. A significant proportion of the country's wealth accrues directly to the state sector itself, giving the leadership enough financial resources for patronage and governance. This affords the State of Qatar great ambit for maneuver relative to other competing societal and business interests and allows the staging of mega-events such as the FIFA World Cup.

In addition to massive resource expenditures, Qatar's march towards preparing for the World Cup suffered further shocks from a 2017–2021 blockade by its Gulf neighbours along with the financial pinch from the Covid-19 pandemic. The blockade led the country to seek out new supply chain routes (Ulrichsen, 2020) and to diversify its foreign direct investment strategy (Whiteaker, 2021). Through all of this economic turmoil, and amidst extensive reforms to its labour laws, along with changing the timing of the World Cup to correspond to Qatar's winter season, progress towards the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ continued at a steady pace. To date, the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy (SC), the organisation charged with planning and executing the event, has screened 500,000 volunteer applicants from around the world and selected 16,000 from Qatar and 4,000 from abroad (Ataullah, 2022). Ultimately, the success of this sporting mega-event rests on generating and sustaining engagement from fans and volunteers.

In this paper, we will explore various demographic and behavioural factors that potentially affect an individual's interest in volunteering for the upcoming FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™. The rest of the paper is organised as follows: a comprehensive review of literature discusses individual choice literature as well as the organisational perspective on recruitment and motivations for volunteering. This is followed by the materials and methods section about the data collection and the survey instrument. The next section presents the findings from our large-scale face-to-face survey and the logistic regression before moving on to discuss the results and their implications. The paper concludes with some recommendations for policymakers and event organisers, as well as suggestions for future studies.

Literature review

Generating and sustaining engagement from fans and volunteers poses a critical challenge for all countries charged with hosting mega-events. Unsurprisingly, there is a substantial body of literature on the wide variety of reasons and motivations for volunteerism. Understanding the driving forces behind individual decisions to volunteer requires an examination of their demographic characteristics, potential altruistic and egoistic motivations, as well as their previous volunteering experience and satisfaction.

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations in the United Kingdom defines volunteering as:

Any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. This can include formal activity undertaken through public, private and voluntary organisations as well as informal community participation and social action (National Council for Voluntary Organizations, 2022).

This definition looks at the issue of volunteering from the point of view of individual choice. From the organisational or community perspective, the concern is to understand why individuals choose to volunteer in order to encourage them to become more engaged. Indeed, one is struck by the breadth of studies spanning a wide range of methodologies that examine factors affecting levels of volunteerism. This is even more evident when it comes to volunteering for specific occasions, such as sporting mega-events. This earlier research has shown that these factors are crucial determinants for volunteer recruitment and retention, and hence should be carefully examined to inform organisations and event managers (Bang & Lee, 2014).

The association between volunteering outcomes and various demographic characteristics such as gender, age, and employment status has been well demonstrated, particularly in relation to sports events and organisations. Gender has been widely acknowledged as an influencing factor in sports volunteering settings (Coakley, 2007; Messner & Bozada-Deas, 2009). Women's participation in sports and related events remains stifled by traditional gender roles and expectations. This is partly due to having less control over the family's resources of time and money, a constraint that often precludes them from having access to necessary support networks (Downward et al., 2005). In addition, a study of volunteers at the 2017 European Youth Olympic Winter Festival found that female volunteers are more likely to experience role ambiguity with regards to the scope and performance of their duties, suggesting lower-level confidence in asking event managers for guidance (Koutrou & Berber, 2021). In their review of participation rates by gender in different types of voluntary organisations, Helms and McKenzie (2014) noted that the proportion of men volunteering for sports and exercise organisations is significantly higher than that of women. The sports event industry seems to be a meeting place for the traditional volunteers – older age cohorts of men who are members of sports organisations with previous event experience – thereby reinforcing the social composition of sport in general as predominantly male (Downward et al., 2005; Skirstad & Hanstad, 2013).

VanSickle et al. (2015) examined motivational differences between volunteers based on several demographic characteristics, including age, gender, educational level and income, and found that volunteers were motivated by four main factors: (1) Community Support (altruism), (2) Love of Sports, (3) Personal Growth, and (4) Career Development. These four factors all significantly predicted satisfaction with the volunteering experience. Females were more likely to rate Community Support (altruism) as a motivating factor, similar to older volunteers and those with higher household incomes. On the other hand, a study by Pauline and Pauline (2009) about volunteering motivations at a tennis event found no significant effect of gender and age as factors, similar to Bang

and Chelladurai (2009) who also found no motivational differences between genders in their study on volunteer motivations.

The literature also suggests that various forms of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation affect volunteering. Whether or not an individual decides to volunteer will depend on their time availability, level of skills, education, as well as social networks within which they are embedded (Helms & McKenzie, 2014). Career enhancement, in particular, has been explored as an important motivating factor in previous research (Bang & Ross, 2009; VanSickle et al., 2015), and confirmed by Wallrodt and Thieme (2020), who found that sports volunteering experience has a positive effect on candidates' employability. Parboteeah et al. (2004) additionally found that individuals with higher levels of human capital, social capital, and cultural capital (religion in particular) are more likely to engage in volunteering.

While altruism as a concept has some theoretical and practical measurement concerns (Deb & Smith, 2021), it has nevertheless been suggested as an intrinsic element at the forefront of what motivates individuals to volunteer (Khoo & Engelhorn, 2011). Lee et al. (2014) defined altruism as a 'behaviour that promotes the welfare of others without conscious regard for one's own self-interests' (p. 39). Warner et al. (2011) examined volunteer motivation in terms of its different dimensions, and found altruism (a desire to contribute to society) to be one of the most important motivating factors. While there have been several practical research studies that cite altruistic reasons among primary aspects of volunteerism (Carpenter & Myers, 2010; Khoo & Engelhorn, 2011; Warner et al., 2011), other research Lee et al. (2014) contradicted those findings by concluding that the relationship between altruism and individuals' satisfaction with volunteering was not significant. Namely, it appeared that those who participated in the mega-event under their study were motivated by patriotism (helping their country), rather than altruism (helping others).

Hoeber (2010) studied altruism in volunteering by focusing on native communities and found that Aboriginal individuals volunteer in informal ways for the benefit of their communities. In an ethnographic study, she posited that they were mainly motivated by a sense of honour, obligation and necessity. Volunteering in many Aboriginal groups in Canada and Australia is symbolised by a strong ethical sense of helping others, caring, and sharing in their communities (Hoeber, 2010), supporting the claim that altruism can be an important motivational drive. Practically speaking, it may be the case that in trying to motivate volunteers, organisers might consider a broad theoretical continuum between egoistic and altruistic appeals and that these appeals may differ in their effectiveness as a function of different cultural expectations. Ethnographic studies may provide some guidance here.

Other researchers, however, focused on quantitative work and the construction of scales to measure volunteer motivation in sporting mega-events. For example, Bang and Ross (2009) examined the impact of motivations on an individual's volunteering satisfaction using a modified version of the Volunteer Motivations Scale for International Sporting Events (VMS-ISE) (Bang & Chelladurai, 2003). They noted the limitation of the previous scale with six factors and added 'love of the sport' as a seventh category specific to sporting mega-events, as it was a strong motivational factor among event volunteers. The study concluded that one of the main reasons for volunteering was the sport itself, and not necessarily a desire to help others. The extended scale was validated by

Hallmann et al. (2018), who used it to conduct their own quantitative research, confirming that 'love of the sport' was indeed an important factor leading individuals to allocate their time to volunteering at sporting events. Bang et al. (2008) similarly concluded that 'individuals might want to volunteer for sporting events because they enjoy a sport and they love being involved in activities related to the sport' (p. 127).

While research on determinants of volunteerism has given considerable attention to factors such as organisational and communal identity, few attempts have been made to extend social identity theory to examine the effect of national identity on voluntary work involvement. In their study of volunteer motivations during the 2002 FIFA World Cup, Bang and Chelladurai (2003) noted the role of pride, love, and allegiance to one's own country (patriotism). This was a particularly significant factor in international sporting events, where local volunteers felt a patriotic duty to help their country succeed as a host nation.

In their study of Chinese citizens and volunteering behaviours, Lai et al. (2013) were able to hone in on the role that national identity can play as a motivation mechanism. They argue that individuals from collectivist cultures are particularly prone to the influence of national identity since it is embedded as a salient part of their own personal identity. Unlike previous studies, they paid particular attention to individuals who reported a willingness to volunteer but were yet to take any action, referring to them as 'potential volunteers' and postulating that they would have higher motivation compared to other non-volunteers. Their empirical analysis revealed partial support for such postulates, indicating that individuals with an intention to volunteer expressed a stronger proclivity for national identity motivations than those with no intention. However, they observed no significant differences between actual volunteers and potential volunteers in terms of their national identity sentiments. As such, the study suggests a need to further explore specific mechanisms that could convert potential volunteers into actual ones.

Karkatsoulis et al. (2005) also found national identity to be a major motivational factor, focusing on volunteering experience during the Athens 2004 Olympic Games. They argued that Greek-Hellenic identity was an underlying motivation for the volunteers, helping them to overcome operational challenges and bolster their productivity. The study provided evidence of the benefits that an affective aspect of national identity can have on group morale, i.e. the degree to which event volunteers as individuals have emotional bonds with their nation, in contrast to other alleged negative connotations of nationalism.

Another notable motivational factor for volunteers is perceived event prestige (PEP). Kim et al. (2013) studied its effect on the volunteers' intention to continue volunteering and the resulting commitment and satisfaction as mediating factors. By surveying volunteers at the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) Championship held in 2011 in South Korea, the study found that volunteers were more likely to feel satisfied and develop a strong commitment towards the event when they perceived it as highly prestigious. The resulting satisfaction and commitment have a further direct effect on the volunteers' intention to continue volunteering for similar future events. In other words, PEP indirectly influenced the intention to continue volunteering via volunteer satisfaction and commitment effects. Bang et al. (2019) similarly found that volunteers' satisfaction could affect their future intentions to volunteer, and hence

recommended that event organisers tailor their volunteer recruitment and management techniques to ensure future engagement.

To examine future volunteering intentions, Doherty (2009) drew upon social exchange theory to frame and examine the extent to which volunteers' positive and negative experiences acted as predictive factors. The author discovered six factors representing benefits of volunteering using a modified version of the Sport Event Volunteer Motivation Scale (SEVMS) (Farrell et al., 1998), including community contribution, skills enrichment, connection with sport, privileges of volunteering, positive life experience, and social enrichment. The study is unique in that it distinguished the impact of these experiences on volunteers engaged in planning versus on-site stages of the event and their future intentions to volunteer. While both groups indicated being very likely to volunteer for future events, on-site volunteers with no previous experience were more likely to increase their community volunteering than those with previous experience. These findings contrast with those of Downward et al. (2005), who made no distinction between planning and on-site volunteers and hence found no variation in future intentions among those with previous volunteer experience and those with no experience.

Similarly, the importance of situational and tactile influences can be found in a study by Neufeind et al. (2013) of volunteers at the 2008 European Football Championship. They found a strong relationship between assigned job characteristics and volunteer satisfaction with a stated intention to seek future engagement in similar events. Dickson et al. (2014) found that previous volunteering experience likewise affects future volunteering motivations: unlike first-time volunteers who saw the event as an exposure and learning opportunity, repeat volunteers felt that their skills and experience were vital for the successful execution of the event. Another potentially important predictor of volunteers' engagement in sports mega-events is perceived organisational issues faced during the preparation and execution of the event: Riberio and Abel (2021) found that there is a direct positive relationship between volunteers' perceptions of an event's organisational issues and its negative social impacts on the host city. The authors argue, therefore, that involving volunteers in the process of bidding, planning, and managing sports mega-events is imperative to ensure both the event's social legacy as well as volunteer retention. Overall, when examining the effect of volunteering on future behavioural intentions, the literature favours delving deeper into variation among volunteering job characteristics as well as potential volunteers' previous event experience.

Middle East and north Africa (MENA)

While countries such as the United States, Australia, and many European nations have a well-established history of hosting sporting mega-events and therefore boast a large volunteer base, bids to host major events have only recently been awarded to Asian and Middle Eastern countries (Fairley et al., 2013). Accordingly, there is a dearth of research on volunteering, particularly so in relation to the sports industry in the non-Western parts of the world generally and the Middle East in particular (Strigas, 2013). Indeed, a recent literature review of volunteerism drew its conclusions from an extensive literature section almost entirely derived from the experiences of Europe, North America, and Oceania (Wicker, 2017). Another recent book, *Sports Volunteers around the World*, did have a broader perspective, with half of its case studies coming from outside those

regions. However, these country studies are mostly broad overviews, including one from Oman, and not systematic quantitative analyses (Hallmann & Fairley, 2018).

Owing to the rising economic power and infrastructural modernisation witnessed by Asian and Arabian Gulf nations, a series of major sporting events have recently been successfully undertaken in these parts of the world. Qatar, in particular, has been at the forefront of securing hosting rights for several past and future sporting mega-events. Indeed, Qatar has been awarded hosting rights for 24 major sporting events since 2004 (Grix et al., 2019). Some of the past mega-events that the country hosted include the 2006 Asian Games, the 2015 World Men's Handball Championships, and the 2019 IAAF World Championships. Preparations for several future events are already underway, including the 2022 FIFA World Cup, the 2023 World Aquatics Championships, as well as the 2030 Asian Games. Hosting these sports mega-events requires a large volunteer component, the acquisition of which is currently understudied in this part of the world (Giannoulakis et al., 2015).

One of the reasons volunteering in the Middle East needs to be further explored in its own right has been highlighted by Handy et al. (2000), who found that there are varying cultural interpretations of what constitutes the act of volunteering and whether or not someone is considered a volunteer. For instance, some researchers have found that when it comes to the Islamic cultural context, volunteering should not be studied from the perspective of an expected recognition or reward (Zal, 2011). Instead, it is claimed that the concept of volunteering expresses the will to help others and a sense of obligation in belonging to a society. The few existing studies on the Middle Eastern region have supported this proposition that social factors such as a sense of group belonging may have a more prominent influence on volunteerism compared to other parts of the world. For example, during the 2006 Asian Games held in Qatar, the Arab Muslim ethno-cultural background was perceived as the common characteristic of many volunteers. Moreover, Qatar itself was viewed as the 'country of adoption' or 'second country' for the foreign nationals residing there, generating a feeling of duty to help ensure the success of the event (Attali, 2016). Hence, researchers recommend that policymakers and event planners in this part of the world focus more on appealing to altruistic rather than egoistic motivational aspects of volunteering (Giannoulakis et al., 2015).

In their pre-event study of Dubai Expo 2020, Vij et al. (2019) found that a majority of the participants in their study expressed interest in volunteering for the event, while also agreeing that the Expo would have an overall positive socio-cultural impact on the community and foster a sense of pride for the host nation. In a similar sense, the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ is expected to leave a lasting sporting and social legacy with a measurable effect on the sense of pride and confidence gained by people in Qatar and in the broader Middle East region (O'Kane & McCloskey, 2013).

Qatar University's Social & Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI) has been conducting quantitative studies in the country and Gulf region since 2010. This particular SESRI study aims to bridge the literature gap by honing in on one of the world's biggest sporting events to be hosted for the first time in the Middle East – the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™. In this study, we examine various demographic and motivational factors for expressing intentions to volunteer among both Qatari citizens and foreign residents living in Qatar. In particular, the study results find that volunteering experience, interest in sport, and positive views of the impact of the games in Qatar

are predictive of the interest in volunteering for the upcoming World Cup among Qatari nationals and resident expatriates.

Materials and methods

Our empirical analysis draws on data from the first and second waves of the Survey of Perceptions and Attitudes towards the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™, conducted by the Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI) at Qatar University in 2018 and 2019. The Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy funded both waves of the survey. The survey interviewed representative samples of respondents from the three subgroups comprising Qatar's population: Qatari citizens, white-collar expatriates, and blue-collar resident expatriates. Overall, 6,071 face-to-face interviews were completed between the two waves (3,008 in the year 2018 and 3,063 in the year 2019), including a total of 2,016 Qatari nationals, 2,022 white-collar expatriates, and 2,033 blue-collar expatriates.

The survey data were collected in April 2018 (Wave 1) and April 2019 (Wave 2). Both face-to-face surveys were conducted using the Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) method. Interviewers were selected from an existing pool of experienced interviewers, who have been trained in data collection methods and have participated in a training programme covering the fundamentals of CAPI interviewing and standard protocols for administering survey instruments. During the 2018 study wave, 90 interviewers took part in the household units' data collection phase (Qatari and white-collar expatriate respondents), while the blue-collar expatriate respondents were interviewed by an additional 14 interviewers inside of their communal dwelling units. Similar to the first wave, 98 interviewers participated in the second wave's data collection for household units, while an additional 18 interviewers were involved in collecting data on blue-collar expatriate respondents. During the period of data collection, the project management team used a monitoring system to ensure that questions were asked appropriately and the answers were recorded accurately.

During the 2018 wave, the household survey took 22 days to complete, while the blue-collar survey took 20 days. In 2019, the household survey took 20 days to complete, while interviews with blue-collar workers took 15 days. All respondents provided their informed consent at the beginning of the survey and participated voluntarily in the study. Native speakers interviewed respondents in their own language using standard interviewing protocols known to sustain high data quality. This study was approved by Qatar University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) Office of Academic Research (approval number: QU-IRB 897-E/18). Survey responses were weighted before analysis to adjust for probabilities of selection and non-response. We used the STATA 16 software on this weighted data to explore the determinants of interest in volunteering for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ among the three population sub-samples (Qataris, white-collar expatriates and blue-collar resident expatriates).

The survey asked a variety of questions pertaining to the upcoming sporting mega-event, and from these we selected one question to capture the respondent's reported level of interest in volunteering. Each respondent was asked to select one of the following five response categories: (1) very interested, (2) somewhat interested, (3) neutral, (4) somewhat not interested, and (5) not interested at all. Respondents were not read the

middle ‘neutral’ category, which was only selected by interviewers if the respondent volunteered this response. For analysis, this outcome or dependent variable is dichotomised with ‘1’ including very/somewhat interested responses, while ‘0’ comprises answers ranging from neutral, somewhat not interested, to not interested at all. This measure, which again represents our explanatory or outcome variable, captures Qatari nationals and resident expatriates’ interest in volunteering during the upcoming FIFA World Cup Qatar, taking place in November and December 2022.

For a better understanding of Qataris and expatriates’ interest in volunteering, we use separate models for each of the three respondent subgroups and estimate a series of logistic regressions. We used 14 survey items, including 6 about demographic characteristics, 1 about respondents’ previous volunteering experiences, 4 about interest in football, 5 about following football in the news, and 2 about respondents’ feedback regarding the Qatar 2022 FIFA World Cup.

We employed the standard logistic regression to study volunteering. In the regression, the dependent variable is interest in volunteering (y) and the independent variables (x) consist of the demographics, volunteering behaviour, interest in football, following football news, and views about the Qatar FIFA World Cup variables as described in Table 1.

$$Prob(y = 1) = \frac{e^{\beta_0 + \beta'x}}{1 + e^{\beta_0 + \beta'x}} Prob(y = 1)$$

is the probability that a respondent is ‘very/somewhat’ interested in volunteering in the upcoming Qatar FIFA World Cup, e is the natural base of the logarithms, β_0 is the

Table 1. Survey items used in the logistic regression analysis.

	Domains	Survey Items
Dependent variable	Interest in volunteering for Qatar 2022 FIFA World Cup	How interested would you say you are in volunteering during the upcoming FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™?
Model 1	Demographic characteristics	Gender Marital status Age Level of education Employment status Income
Model 2	Previous volunteering experience	How often do you volunteer for football events?
Model 3	General interest in football	How often do you follow football news through ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media? • Sports websites? • Newspapers? • Radio? • Television?
Model 4	Views about FIFA World Cup 2022	How interested are you in football? How often do you attend football matches? How often do you actively play football? During the past 12 months, have you purchased any football merchandise for yourself or for someone else (such as t-shirts, cups, balls, stationary)? How do you feel about the FIFA World Cup 2022™ being hosted in Qatar? (level of excitement) Overall, the positive impacts from hosting the 2022 Qatar World Cup will be greater than any negative impacts (agree/disagree)

constant term, and β is a vector of coefficients reflecting the effect of independent variables (x) on the dependent variable (y).

We used this logistic regression model as our data met the general requirements of a large sample size, binary or ordinal of the dependent variable, and independence of the observations from each other. Our dependent variable is binary [interest in volunteering (1) or not (0)] and our analysis is based on a large sample size of 6,071 observations based on a cross-sectional survey (and not on repeated measures).

For each subgroup, the base model (Model 1) contains the individual, household, and demographic characteristics as control variables. These controls include dummy variables for gender, employment, and marital status; household income; age of the respondent; and level of education of the respondent. Collectively, these variables capture a variety of individual, household, and demographic characteristics that might influence someone's interest in volunteering in the upcoming FIFA World Cup. The model also includes a dummy variable for the wave or year of the survey to test for any significant changes in attitudes between the two waves (2018 and 2019). Based on the literature review, we introduced three hypotheses, which are outlined in models 2, 3, and 4.

Model 2 introduces respondents' volunteering experiences to capture the behavioural dimension of volunteering. All respondents were asked to report the frequency of volunteering for football events. This question, which can take 6 values, including daily, more than once a week, once a week, once a month, more than once a month, a few times a year, or never, was also dichotomised to '1' for responses ranging from daily to a few times a year and '0' for never.

Hypothesis 1: Volunteering experiences are associated with an interest in volunteering for the upcoming FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™, with a higher level of volunteering experiences associated with a stronger interest in volunteering for the World Cup.

The third model, Model 3, introduces elements of general interest in football. The general interest in football is measured through a set of questions including whether respondents follow football news through social media, sports websites, newspapers, radio, or television. Responses for each medium range from daily, more than once a week, once a week, once a month, more than once a month, a few times a year, or never. After reverse coding, we combined the responses to these questions into one index and recoded them into three categories (high, medium, and low). General interest in football additionally included questions about reported behaviour, including purchasing football merchandise for themselves, their family members or friends during the past 12 months preceding the survey, as well as the frequency of attending football matches and actively playing football.

Hypothesis 2: General interest in football is associated with a strong interest in volunteering at the upcoming FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™.

The fourth model, Model 4, tests whether having positive attitudes toward Qatar organising the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ is associated with a positive impact on Qataris and expatriates' interest in volunteering during the upcoming event. All respondents were asked how they feel about the World Cup being hosted in Qatar using a five-point scale (very excited, somewhat excited, neutral, somewhat not excited, and not excited at all). We dichotomised this variable with '1' including very excited responses

and '0' for all other responses. Additionally, respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree that, overall, the positive impact from hosting the event will be greater than any negative consequences. As with the previous question, we dichotomised this variable with '1' including strongly agree responses and '0' for all other responses. We used these two variables together to measure respondents' attitudes towards Qatar hosting the 2022 FIFA games.

Hypothesis 3: Positive attitudes towards Qatar hosting the 2022 games are associated with a strong interest in volunteering during the upcoming FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™.

Results

As our aim in this paper is to explain the determinants of Qataris' and resident expatriates' interest in volunteering in the upcoming World Cup, we will present the effects of our independent variables in the different models. Our prior analyses on bivariate associations found that, except for the demographic variables to some extent, all our independent variables are significantly associated with the respondents' interest in volunteering.

Table 1 summarises our explanatory variables. Tables 2–4 present the results from the substantive analyses of Qataris, white-collar and blue-collar resident expatriates' interest in volunteering in the upcoming World Cup in November – December 2022. Data in the latter tables pertain to Average Marginal Effects (AME). At the overall level, 61% of Qataris, 75% of white-collar expatriates and 79% of blue-collar expatriates said they are very or somewhat interested in volunteering during the FIFA World Cup in Qatar 2022. In both years of the study (2018 & 2019), blue-collar expatriates were most likely to say they were interested in volunteering during the upcoming FIFA tournament (81% and 77%, respectively) as compared to Qatari nationals (57% and 64%, respectively) and white-collar expatriates (74% and 76%, respectively).

Overall, with regard to individual and household characteristics, in terms of net effects, most variables in this domain (gender, age, education, marital, employment and financial status) have notably higher associations with Qatari citizens' expressions of interest in volunteering in the upcoming FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 (Table 2) as compared to that of resident expatriates. For white-collar expatriates, demographic characteristics have no significant impact on their interest in volunteering for the upcoming games (Table 3), while blue-collar workers with higher educational levels, higher incomes, and those who were unemployed are significantly more likely to express interest in volunteering (Table 4).

Among Qataris, age and household income have a negative impact on their interest in volunteering for the upcoming games: older respondents and respondents from more affluent households are less likely to be interested in volunteering. Employment, on the other hand, has a positive impact: employed Qataris were more likely to express interest in volunteering compared to those who were not employed (Table 2).

To evaluate the impact of previous volunteering experiences, we use the respondent's self-reported frequency of volunteering for football events. We dichotomised this variable to divide the sample into those respondents who report frequent volunteering and those who report otherwise. A strong and positive association was found between Qataris, white-collar and blue-collar expatriates' interest in volunteering for the

Table 2. Average marginal effects (AME) of Qataris' interest in volunteering for the FIFA World Cup 2022.

Variables	Qataris			
	Model1	Model2	Model3	Model4
Male	9.3***	4.2	-2.6	-1.3
Married/ever married	-5.2	-5.3	-4.8	-4.4
Aged 31-40	-10.2**	-10.7**	-9.9**	-9.9**
Aged 41-50	-13.1***	-11.1**	-9.3**	-10.1**
Aged 51+	-21.0***	-16.1***	-13.0***	-13.3***
Secondary	5.0	-1.2	-2.3	-1.4
Graduate/higher	5.0	-2.1	-3.8	-3.3
Employed	14.3***	11.3***	10.2***	10.1***
Household income $\geq 50,000$ QAR	-7.6***	-8.6***	-7.9***	-7.2***
Year 2019	4.8*	3.1	2.3	2.3
Volunteering for football events		30.7***	27.2*	27.7***
Interest in football			9.2***	6.1**
Following football news (1)			5.9*	5.3*
Following football news (2)			13.8***	12.1***
Attending football matches			4.1	2.6
Actively play football			6.7*	6.1*
Very excited about Qatar World Cup				19.0***
Positive impact from hosting World Cup 22				8.7**
Wald CHI-SQ	112.14	112.54	146.04	166.80
Pseudo R2	0.019	0.1046	0.1295	0.1558
n	1,761	1,456	1,454	1,450

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

Notes: Table 2 shows the average marginal effects in percentage points. Reference categories are female, non-married, aged 18-30, with primary education, non-employed, household income $< 50,000$ QAR, survey year 2018. 1 QAR = 0.27 US Dollar.

Table 3. Average marginal effects (AME) of white-collar expatriates' interest in volunteering for the FIFA World Cup 2022.

Variables	White-collar expatriates			
	Model1	Model2	Model3	Model4
Male	7.7***	3.4	-0.8	0.3
Married/ever married	-7.1	-4.9	-4.5	-4.7
Aged 31-40	-0.9	1.0	0.0	-0.4
Aged 40-50	2.3	5.3	4.4	3.9
Aged 51+	-6.6	-4.6	-5.4	-6.7
Secondary	10.9	0.5	0.1	-1.4
Graduate/higher	16.6**	5.5	3.8	2.5
Employed	7.5**	4.0	2.6	2.1
Household Income $\geq 15,000$ QAR	-5.1**	-4.5*	-3.9	-3.9*
Year 2019	1.9	3.8*	2.9	2.8
Volunteering for football events		24.3***	19.4***	19.3***
Interest in football			8.0***	6.5**
Following football news (1)			-0.6	-0.7
Following football news (2)			11.0***	11.6***
Attending football matches			7.7***	7.0***
Actively play football			2.5	1.8
Very excited about Qatar World Cup				9.8***
Positive impact from hosting World Cup 22				3.2
Wald CHI-SQ	57.18	67.05	99.60	109.67
Pseudo R2	0.0390	0.0668	0.0994	0.1110
n	1,832	1,624	1,623	1,615

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

Notes: Table 3 shows the average marginal effects in percentage points. Reference categories are female, non-married, aged 18-30, with primary education, non-employed, household income $< 15,000$ QAR, survey year 2018. 1 QAR = 0.27 US Dollar.

Table 4. Average marginal effects (AME) of blue-collar expatriates' interest in volunteering for the FIFA World Cup 2022.

Variables	Blue-collar expatriates			
	Model1	Model2	Model3	Model4
Male	–	–	–	–
Married/ever married	–2.6	–4.3	–3.8	–4.5
Aged 31–40	–4.2	–2.5	–2.1	–0.3
Aged 40–50	–6.7*	–1.4	0.1	0.8
Aged 51+	–6.1	–4.0	–4.2	–5.4
Secondary	11.6	8.7**	5.0	1.2
Graduate/higher	20.2	17.2***	14.2***	8.8**
Employed	–10.3	–8.5	–9.0	–12.2***
Household Income ≥1,250 QAR	7.0***	4.3*	4.0*	4.7**
Year 2019	–3.9*	–2.8	–2.6	–4.6**
Volunteering for football events		13.2***	8.3**	8.9***
Interest in football			10.9***	7.1***
Following football news (1)			–3.9	–3.5
Following football news (2)			–7.6**	–7.8**
Attending football matches			0.6	–0.5
Actively play football			8.6***	8.0***
Very excited about Qatar World Cup				9.1***
Positive impact from hosting World Cup 22				7.2***
Wald CHI-SQ	51.75	39.71	96.83	108.70
Pseudo R ₂	0.0427	0.0506	0.1036	0.1312
n	1,902	1,606	1,602	1,548

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

Notes: Table 2 shows the average marginal effects in percentage points. Reference categories are non-married, aged 18–30, with primary education, non-employed, household income <1,250 QAR, survey year 2018. 1 QAR = 0.27 US Dollar.

upcoming FIFA games. Accordingly, this volunteering variable was deemed a good behavioural indicator of volunteering. Frequent volunteering experiences proved significant (at the 0.01 level), indicating that Qatari nationals, white-collar and blue-collar expatriates who frequently volunteer for football events are more likely to express interest in volunteering for the upcoming 2022 FIFA games. This result offers strong support for Hypothesis 1.

General interest in football seems to play an important role as well. To capture it, we used a set of variables including: interest in football; following football news on social media, television, and newspapers; attending football matches; and actively playing football. Regression analysis of these variables, however, had mixed results. Among Qatari nationals, reported interest in football and following football news had a significant impact in the last model, indicating that they tend to make Qatari nationals more inclined to express interest in volunteering for the upcoming FIFA games (Table 2). Their impact is significant in the third and fourth models (3 and 4). Similarly, among white-collar resident expatriates, general interest in football had a significant effect on expressed interest in volunteering for the upcoming FIFA games as well (Table 3). Specifically, reported interest in football as well as following football news had a positive impact on white-collar expatriates' interest in volunteering for both models 3 and 4. Additionally, for white-collar expatriates, attending football matches likewise had a significant positive effect on their interest in volunteering, in line with models 3 and 4. Among blue-collar expatriates, general interest in football was positively correlated with, that is, had a statistically significant effect in the same direction with respect to expressing interest in volunteering for the World Cup (Table 4). Namely, reported

interest in football and following football news as well as actively playing football had a significant positive effect on expressed interest in volunteering for the upcoming event in both models 3 and 4.

These results would initially suggest support for Hypothesis 2. However, attending football matches and actively playing football turned out to have no significant impact on Qatari nationals' interest in volunteering for the upcoming event. As with Qatari nationals, actively playing football likewise had no association with white-collar expatriates' expressed interest in volunteering. For the third segment of the population residing in Qatar, blue-collar expatriates, they also paralleled Qatari nationals in that attendance of football matches was not significantly associated with expressed interest in volunteering.

On the other hand, being very excited about the World Cup and believing that hosting the event would have a positive impact on the country were positively associated with the respondents' interest in volunteering for the event.

In the final model (4), two variables ['How do you feel about the FIFA World Cup 2022™ being hosted in Qatar?' (1) and 'Overall, the positive impacts from hosting the 2022 Qatar World Cup will be greater than any negative impacts' (2)] were deployed to capture attitudes towards the World Cup and its expected impact on the country. Results from this analysis offered partial support for Hypothesis 3. Among Qatari nationals and blue-collar expatriates, being very excited about the World Cup as well as believing that hosting the event would have a positive impact on the country both had a significant positive effect in relation to their interest in volunteering for the upcoming event. For white-collars, on the other hand, results were split. Being very excited about the World Cup had a significant positive effect on expressed interest in volunteering, whereas attitudes about the impact of hosting the games had no significant effect among white-collar respondents.

Discussion

Our cross-sectional analysis revealed a range of motivating factors that affect the respondents' interest in volunteering for the upcoming FIFA 2022 World Cup in Qatar. Demographic characteristics, previous volunteering experience, interest in football, and event support and excitement were all found, to various degrees, to be significant predictors of participants' reported interest in volunteering.

Echoing previous research, study results did not point to a consistent pattern in terms of the effects of demographic variables on respondents' interest in volunteering. Notable differences in motivation by gender were not observed, similar to findings from Bang and Chelladurai (2009) and Ma and Draper (2017). Among Qatari and white-collar expatriate respondents, males were significantly more interested in volunteering only in Model 1, and the effect diminished in the later models. Gender differences were not explored for blue-collar expatriates, as only males were included in this study for that subpopulation. The effect of different demographic characteristics on white-collar expatriate respondents will not be discussed below, as none showed a significant effect on their interest in volunteering.

Likewise, level of education had no significant effect except among blue-collar workers – those with higher educational attainment were more likely to express interest

in volunteering for the upcoming World Cup event. VanSickle et al. (2015) found that individuals who are more educated engage in volunteering for personal growth reasons, while those who are less educated do so for career development opportunities. In the context of Qatar, FIFA's award of the rights to host the 2022 games has come with unrelenting scrutiny of the country's treatment of blue-collar migrant workers building the infrastructure for the event. Since December 2010, the government of Qatar has been introducing several labour reforms to improve the working and living conditions of blue-collar workers. One possible explanation in this context is that those blue-collar workers with higher levels of education might better understand the link between the games and their working and living conditions and thereby develop an inherent interest in volunteering for the upcoming event. Alternatively, they may simply be following the news more closely and have a higher awareness of the opportunity to volunteer.

Age was only a factor among Qataris. Younger Qatari respondents were more likely to express interest in volunteering. Previous research has similarly shown younger people to be more interested in volunteering, as they may be motivated to develop their social capital as well as their career growth prospects (Holmes, 2009). Likewise, younger individuals are more likely to have free time away from family and work responsibilities that would allow them to pursue volunteering opportunities. In addition, Qatari respondents from less affluent backgrounds were also more likely to express interest in volunteering for the upcoming World Cup. This could be interpreted against the backdrop of the local culture, where participating in such activities may be deemed as inappropriate for both older and wealthier individuals, a social class effect that has been previously explored elsewhere (Hayton & Blundell, 2021) albeit in a European context.

On the other hand, higher-income blue-collar workers were more likely to express interest in volunteering, indicating that income has an opposite effect on this subpopulation of the study. It should be noted, however, that blue-collar expatriates' income range is considerably lower relative to that of Qataris, thereby complicating the interpretation of such findings.

Differences between the populations under study were most obvious with respect to the effect of employment: unemployed blue-collar expatriates and employed Qataris were more likely to express interest in volunteering for the upcoming World Cup. While unemployed blue-collar expatriates might see the event as a career-enhancing and networking opportunity (Bang & Ross, 2009; VanSickle et al., 2015), employed Qataris might consider volunteering for other reasons, such as love of sports or altruistic motivations (Bang et al., 2008; Bang & Chelladurai, 2003).

Consistent with previous research, our study found that respondents from all three subgroups (Qataris, white-collar and blue-collar expatriates) with previous volunteering experience in football events were more likely to express interest in volunteering for the World Cup compared to those who had no prior experience. Previous volunteering experience arguably acts as a motivating factor, as volunteers might consider the knowledge and skills they attained before as an asset critical to the success of the future event (Dickson et al., 2014).

A range of items – including interest in football, following football news, actively playing football, and attending matches – were all used to measure the 'love of sport' as a motivating factor. Respondents who express interest in the sport, follow news or actively play football represent a useful source of volunteers as they are primarily

motivated by the love of the sport (Bang et al., 2008). Therefore, volunteers who enjoy playing football could be matched with responsibilities that would contribute to their personal development in that area, or those who enjoy attending games could be given in-stadium responsibilities, etc., as doing so would contribute to their overall satisfaction and retention.

Reported interest in football and following football news were found to have a significant impact on interest in volunteering for all three respondent subgroups, as similarly observed in previous research (Neufeind et al., 2013).

Attending football matches, by contrast, was found to have an effect only on white-collar expatriates' interest in volunteering. In general, Qataris are unlikely to physically attend in-stadium matches and prefer to watch the games from the comfort of their homes, while blue-collar workers are often precluded from attending due to their long working hours and residence in remote areas distant from the stadiums. Therefore, it could be argued that the frequency of attending football matches among respondents from these two groups would not have been large enough to have had a measurable effect on their volunteering intentions. In-stadium game attendance in Qatar has already been noted as generally low for local tournaments (Staniforth, 2018), while large-scale international football events are few and far between and so unlikely to leave a notable behavioural footprint.

Actively playing football was significant only among blue-collar expatriate respondents. Due to the nature of their living arrangements and lack of family life in Qatar, blue-collar workers are more likely to engage in leisure activities that involve large groups as a form of social capital building (Dun et al., 2022). In fact, the Supreme Committee, responsible for organising and delivering the FIFA World Cup in Qatar, has been annually hosting the Workers' Cup since 2013, a football tournament designed to foster a sense of unity and promote a healthy lifestyle among blue-collar workers in Qatar (FIFA, 2020).

Event support and enthusiasm among the local population could also be useful in predicting their level of interest in volunteering, as individuals might be particularly motivated to take part in delivering a successful event and establishing a legacy.

Qatari respondents who are very excited about the World Cup as well as those who believe that hosting the event will have a positive impact on the country were more likely to express interest in volunteering for the event. This is perhaps expected considering that this respondent subgroup represents the citizens of Qatar, who are more likely to feel patriotic and proud of their nation. While white-collar expatriate residents' excitement for the event had a similar effect on their interest in volunteering, whether or not the event will have a positive impact on Qatar was not a significant factor for this population. Perhaps this can be explained by the nature of their temporary stay in the country, during which they might not be as invested in local long-term developments (Al-Emadi et al., 2017).

Conclusion

While people in Qatar and the rest of the GCC countries are familiar with the concept of volunteering for sporting events, doing so for an event of mega proportions such as the FIFA World Cup is a novel experience within the region. Consequently, studies on GCC

nationals' or resident expatriates' interests in volunteering for sporting events of such proportion and significance are scarce. In this paper, we have carried out what we believe to be the first systematic study on Qatari nationals and resident expatriates' interest in volunteering for a sporting mega event. Drawing on data from two waves of a nationally representative survey, we used a whole range of socio-demographic, attitudinal, and behavioural survey items as explanatory variables to explore the determinants of Qatari nationals and resident expatriates' interests in volunteering for the upcoming FIFA 2022 World Cup.

Even though most socio-demographic attributes are significantly associated with volunteering interest for all three respondent subgroups at the bivariate level, net effects show that demographic, economic and educational differences had limited and at times opposing effects. Similarly, general interest in football plays different roles: attendance at football matches is significant only among the white-collar expatriate respondents, while actively playing football was significant only for blue-collar expatriates, and neither attendance nor playing football had an effect on Qatari nationals' interest in volunteering.

As authorities and policymakers in Qatar work to deliver a successful 2022 FIFA World Cup, these findings on potential determinants of interest in volunteering could be useful guidelines for how to recruit volunteers. Indeed, the Supreme Committee has recruited and plans to deploy 20,000 volunteers, providing nationals and expatriates with volunteer opportunities across a variety of activities at the upcoming FIFA World Cup. It could therefore use these findings to further develop appropriate volunteer targeting and recruitment strategies.

While this study focuses solely on pre-event intentions to volunteer, future research could compare pre and post-event volunteering experiences and perspectives by conducting a similar survey after the FIFA World Cup closes in December 2022. Additionally, since Qatar will also be the host of the 2030 Asian Games, future studies could compare and contrast interest and experiences in volunteering for that event with that of the FIFA World Cup, where the former is a multi-sport, single-continent event while the latter is a single-sport, global event.

Note

1. The Gulf Cooperation Council consists of six states in the Arabian Gulf and was founded in 1981 to encourage cooperation on defence, intergovernmental and economic issues.

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