A Middle Eastern Showcase: Qatar’s 2022 World Cup

Teaching Notes

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Teaching Notes

Educational Objectives

1. Identify and explain ethical issues at the international sporting level using basic ethical concepts.
2. Identify who is responsible for dealing with ethical issues in sport governing bodies.
3. Identify who is affected by ethical issues at the international sporting level.
4. Develop and examine new and existing solutions regarding the 2022 Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup and defend these recommendations using proper support and evidence.
5. Understand the various cultural and political practices that can affect staging a large-scale sporting event.

Target Audience

This case is intended for use in university-level classes at both the undergraduate and graduate levels and is recommended for courses focusing on ethics and global issues in sport but could also be used in management and organizational behavior classes.

Summary

Background of the Case

The protagonist is one of the Junior Ethics Committee Members who have been selected by FIFA to work as a part of Ethics Committee. It should be noted that this Junior Committee was fictionalized by the authors of this case for the purpose of allowing the reader to analyze the case study more efficiently. Each Junior Member works closely with one of the six Investigatory Chamber members who make up FIFA’s Ethics Committee. The committee is responsible for investigating ethical issues that affect FIFA.

Recently, the organization has entered a very tumultuous time in its history. Qatar’s bid for the 2022 World Cup has been fraught with scandal, and FIFA has decided to step in and solve the issues at hand. It is late November, and an emergency Ethics Committee meeting has been called to analyze and potentially solve some of these problems. The chairmen of the committee want to put the new Junior Ethics Committee Members to the test. They have proposed that the Junior Members analyze the various issues involving Qatar and its bid and present what they believe to be the most ethical solutions. The Junior Members have 2 weeks before the next Ethics Committee meeting to complete the assignment. Furthermore, the Junior Members will be required to present and defend their decisions in front of the committee. Each Junior Member is expected to work alone, but they may seek advice from their supervisor.

History

On December 10, 2010, Qatar was announced as the 2022 host for the FIFA World Cup, making it the first Middle Eastern country in terms of land area to host the event. In addition, Qatar, the world’s richest nation, will also be the smallest country to ever host the tournament. The Qatari bid committee was made up of several powerful individuals, including the son of...
the former emir of Qatar, the director of the Legal Department at the Qatar Investment Authority, the president of the Qatar Football Association, and a former member of the London 2012 and Rio 2016 Summer Olympic Bid Committees. Football is the most followed and played sport in the Middle East. Likewise, the most watched football event in the region is the FIFA World Cup. However, the Middle East has never hosted the tournament. In the past, Qatar has hosted the following large scale sporting events:

- 1995 FIFA U-20 World Cup
- 2006 Asian Games
- International Association of Athletics Federations Diamond League
- 2011 Asian Football Cup

The Bid

The Qatari bid document proposed to host the World Cup in seven cities within the emirate. The key event facilities and venues would all be located within a 60-km radius. The document contained a budget of $3 billion USD that would be used to construct nine new stadiums and renovate three existing stadiums. These proposed plans changed over time and are explained below.

Key Issues

Major Issues

- Climate
- Cost
- Migrant workers
- Bribery

Other Issues

- Qatar’s football culture
- Alcohol
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender fans
- Israeli qualification

Possible Solutions

There are many possible solutions to the key issues outlined above. Table 1 provides readers with these solutions and their pros and cons.

**Table 1: Solutions to the Key Issues and Their Pros and Cons**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue and Possible Solution</th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Climate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooling technology</td>
<td>Qatar will not lose any money already invested</td>
<td>Lower health risks to players and fans</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter World Cup (January–February OR November–December)</td>
<td>Money saved on cooling technology</td>
<td>Qatar will not lose any money already invested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cost</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decrease the number of stadiums from 12 to 8 or 9</td>
<td>Decrease costs related to construction and renovation of facilities</td>
<td>Construction of the stadiums may finish on time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter World Cup</td>
<td>Decrease costs related to cooling technology.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow neighboring countries to help host games</td>
<td>Decrease costs related to facilities</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Migrant workers

| Human rights/working condition policy enforcement by FIFA Organizing Committee | • Ethical treatment of all workers  
| • Human rights issues would be resolved on the basis of FIFA policy  
| • Qatar and FIFA will avoid humiliation when it comes to migrant worker issues | • Construction and renovation of facilities would be slowed down drastically or completely halted  
| • Could lose a major portion of the workforce |

| Involvement of federal government | • Ethical treatment of workers | • May not enforce labor laws or ethical treatment of workers |

### Bribery

| Termination of bribed committee members | • FIFA will avoid humiliation when it comes to bribery issues | • FIFA’s Ethics Committee may receive backlash from the football community  
| • FIFA will have to strengthen its Code of Ethics |

| Re-vote | • FIFA will avoid humiliation when it comes to bribery issues | Should Qatar lose the World Cup, it will lose all money already invested  
| | | • Qatar could file a lawsuit against FIFA  
| | | • Any infrastructure in Qatar will not be put to use  
| | | • The new host nation will have to expedite the construction process |

### Qatar’s football culture

| • No weather related risks to players or fans.  
| • No money spent on cooling technology  
<p>| • FIFA will avoid humiliation when it comes to some |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location change</th>
<th>No location change</th>
<th>Alcohol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issues</strong></td>
<td><strong>Issues</strong></td>
<td><strong>Qatar will lose any money already invested.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>The new host nation will have to expedite the construction process.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Qatar could file a lawsuit against FIFA.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Any infrastructure in Qatar will not be put to use.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The LGBT community is recognized in the countries that lost the bid to Qatar&lt;br&gt;- It is legal to sell and drink alcohol in public places in those countries&lt;br&gt;- Israeli players would be welcomed in those countries&lt;br&gt;- All other countries have qualified to the play in previous World Cups and have stronger football cultures</td>
<td>- Allow Qatar to grow its football culture</td>
<td>- Continue sponsorship with Anheuser-Busch&lt;br&gt;- Happy fans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No alcohol sold</td>
<td>No alcohol sold</td>
<td>- Qatar would not have to make any exceptions to existing laws.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Poor fan experience because of weak football culture</td>
<td>- Unhappy fans</td>
<td>- Unhappy fans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Isreali qualification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recognize Israel as a qualifying nation</th>
<th>Relationship between Qatar and other Arab countries may suffer (Israel is not recognized by most Arab states)</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>- Israel would be able to participate in the World Cup should they qualify&lt;br&gt;- Qatar would be acknowledged for using sports to promote peace within the Middle East&lt;br&gt;- FIFA’s no-discrimination policy would be upheld.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Alcohol**

| Alcohol sold in designated fan zones and stadiums | - Continue sponsorship with Anheuser-Busch<br>- Happy fans | - Qatar’s federal government would be required to make exceptions to very strict laws<br>- Anheuser-Busch may choose to terminate its FIFA sponsorship. |
| No alcohol sold | - Qatar would not have to make any exceptions to existing laws. | - Unhappy fans |

### SAGE Business Cases

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| Do not recognize Israel/do not allow qualification | • Potential to increase political tensions between Qatar and Israel | • Potential political turmoil between the two countries
• Qatar would be seen as being discriminatory
• FIFA’s no-discrimination policy would not be upheld
• Israel is recognized as an independent state by FIFA, and it would not be ethical to disqualify the Israeli squad |

**LGBT fans**

| Welcome LGBT fans to attend the World Cup | • Qatar and FIFA will avoid humiliation when it comes to human rights issues
• FIFA’s no-discrimination policy would be upheld
• The LGBT community would be welcomed | • Potential backlash against LGBT fans who choose to attend the World Cup from nonsupporters
• Potential boycott of the World Cup by nations that support the LGBT community to protest the treatment of LGBT fans |

| Do not welcome LGBT fans to attend the World Cup | • Qatar would be able to uphold its law against homosexual individuals | • FIFA’s Ethical Committee may seem faulty
• Nations may boycott the World Cup |

**Note:** FIFA = Fédération Internationale de Football Association; LGBT = lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender; NFL = National Football League.

**Concept Prerequisites**

The following section will provide teachers and professors with references to relevant academic material and which portions of the material are relevant to the case study. The material should be taught and reviewed with students before conducting the case study. The materials below will provide students with relevant knowledge about different ethical theories, conflict of interest, and ethics and morality in sport that they can apply to the case study.


Students should be familiar with and able to explain various ethical theories. Utilitarianism and the theory of justice are most relatable to the material in this case study. Students should be able to apply ethical theories to the case.

Students should be able to explain the relationship between sport and business as well as the ethical issues that often occur in sport management. For the purposes of this case study, students should be able to recognize and explain conflicts of interest in sport management and how to avoid or deal with instances of conflict of interest. Students should also be able to identify when conflicts of interest could occur.


Students should be able to explain the concepts of ethics and morality in the sport management context. Students should be able to apply ethics and morality to the case material.

**Supplemental Materials**

**Videos**
- Qatar 2022 World Cup Stadiums (YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DcAi3GLQyO1
- FIFA Announces Russia, Qatar as World Cup Hosts for 2018, 2022 (full presentation): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YfyPi5MnPSY

**Textbooks**

**Other**
- FIFA’s Ethics Committee: http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/organisation/bodies/standingcommittees/committee=1882034.html

**Case Analysis**

**Setting**

The case takes place during a tumultuous time in the organization’s history because multiple controversies, scandals, and ethical issues have arisen in both the bidding and the planning processes of the Qatar World Cup. Upon hearing the latest news about the various scandals, FIFA’s Organizing Committee for the World Cup has become concerned about the multiple
ethical issues plaguing the 2022 World Cup. Consequently, FIFA has asked the Ethics Committee to analyze each of the issues at hand over the next 2 weeks and report back to the Organizing Committee at the emergency board meeting that has been called in response to them. Members of the Ethics Committee’s Investigatory Chamber have asked each Junior Member to analyze and summarize all of the issues at hand, develop suitable solutions, and provide the best possible recommendations for how to proceed regarding the 2022 World Cup. Each Junior Member will be responsible for presenting his or her analysis to the Ethics Committee and field any questions from the committee members. Along with a report from the Ethics Committee itself, the findings will be presented to the Organizing Committee for the FIFA World Cup.

Teaching Plan

Class activity (approximately 90 min)

Students will work in pairs or groups depending on the size of the class. Each group will be given one of the eight ethical issues facing the Qatari World Cup Organizing Committee (if there are fewer than eight groups, one group may be given multiple other issues because these require a shorter analysis than the major issues in the case). Groups will be given 30 minutes to analyze the issue. Each group will then be given the opportunity to present a brief summary of the issue, whom the issue affects, and their recommended solution to the problem with an explanation.

1. Before the class, students should read the case study and come prepared for discussion.
2. 1–5 min: Using one of the video clips provided above in the Supplemental Materials section, begin an introduction of the case to the class.
3. 1–5 min: Verbally give a brief introduction to the case.
4. 30 min: In groups, the class will analyze one major issue or two minor issues listed above. Using relevant class materials provided by the teacher or professor or materials found above in the Concept Prerequisites section, they should complete an analysis of the issue and create a brief 5- to 10-min presentation on their analysis and recommended solution with an explanation.
5. 30 min: Allow groups to present their issues and analysis. In larger classes, this may take up two class periods.
6. 10 min: Explain the real-life outcome of the case and solutions provided by the author.

Written activity

Working individually or in pairs, students will be required to conduct a thorough analysis of the major ethical issues at hand and one analysis regarding the other ethical issues affecting the 2022 World Cup. Students should be able to explain why the issues are important, whom the issue is affecting, and possible solutions to the issues. Students should also outline their overall recommended solution and their rationale for that choice. Each issue should be described, and connections must be made to various ethical theories in the Concept Prerequisites section. The teacher or professor should provide students with access to information from the Supplemental Materials (Textbooks and Other).

Discussion activity
The following questions should be used to guide a class discussion.

1. Discuss the various issues outlined in the case and why they are ethical issues. Whom do they affect?
   a. Rank the issues from most controversial to least controversial. Provide a rationale for your ranking.
   b. Who should be responsible for solving these issues? FIFA Executive Committee Members? The FIFA Ethics Committee? Other FIFA committees?
   c. Think of the possible solutions for the issues at hand. Is there a solution or a combination of solutions that could solve all eight issues? Is it possible to solve all eight issues?

2. As mentioned in the case, it is illegal in Qatar to sell or consume alcohol because of the country’s Islamic sharia law. How should FIFA approach this situation in a manner that respects Qatar’s cultural practices?

3. How should FIFA approach future World Cup bids after the issues and allegations that they have faced in regard to the 2022 Qatari World Cup?

4. On what elements of the bid should FIFA’s decision be based? Should the bid document be the only thing taken into consideration during the bidding process? Should FIFA consider other issues such as politics, economics, or human rights issues outside of the bid document?

5. There have been rumors circulating that England’s Football Association may choose to boycott the 2022 World Cup and that other countries may also be influenced to do the same. How should FIFA address this rumor? What kind of repercussions could this have on FIFA, the 2022 World Cup, and future World Cups?

6. One of the major issues outlined in the case regards the use of migrant workers to construct the necessary facilities required to host the FIFA World Cup. As mentioned, working conditions in Qatar have been referred to as modern-day slavery. Who should be required to enforce labor laws during the construction of the infrastructure for international sport competitions such as the World Cup? Should FIFA be responsible? Should the country’s federal government be responsible? Explain.

7. Can you think of any other international sporting events that faced ethical controversies? What was the issue at hand? How was the issue solved, if at all?

Case Wrap-Up: What Happened

Note: The following section was updated as of January 6, 2015.

Climate

The 2022 Qatari World Cup will be played in the winter months from November to December.

Cost

Only eight of the originally planned stadiums will be constructed. Four already existing stadiums will be renovated.

Migrant workers

Qatar’s 2022 Supreme Committee said that it will aim to ensure a lasting legacy of improved worker welfare by changing working conditions. Furthermore, the committee says that it will
ask contractors to enforce a clause to ensure that working standards set by the International Labour Organization are met. At the time of publication, Qatar had made little or no improvements to the situation.

Bribery

Former FIFA vice president Jack Warner was banned for life from soccer. Sepp Blatter, president since 2008, along with his heir-apparent Michel Platini, were handed an 8-year ban from football. A total of 18 individuals and two corporations have been indicted on charges related to bribery. Seven FIFA officials have been arrested on charges related to bribery. The bid process for the 2026 FIFA World Cup has been postponed until the bribery investigation is over. FIFA has cleared Qatar of all allegations of corruption (Robinson, 2015).

Alcohol

Alcohol sales and consumption will be permitted during the World Cup in designated fan zones as well as throughout the stadiums. Some businesses such as hotels will also be granted permission to sell alcohol. Drinking in public will still be considered illegal.

Israeli qualification

The Qatari bid committee has stated that should Israel qualify for the 2022 World Cup, they would be welcome to compete as an independent nation.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender fans

Qatar’s Sports Minister Salah bin Ghanem bin Nasser Al-Ali said that the emirate will be creative in finding a way to respect the fans but at the same time honor the essence of Qatar’s culture.

References

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