

The challenges of managing volunteers in the Emerging MENA (Middle East and North Africa) sports events industry

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Keywords: challenges, managing volunteers, emerging markets, culture

Synopsis/Ultra Short Summary

The MENA region is one of the most eagerly anticipated emerging markets for hosting sports events. This session aims to present a timely debate on examining the importance of developing human capital within the region in relation to engendering a new and highly anticipated culture of sports events volunteering.

Practice description

To consider the implications for building human capital in the MENA region in relation to the hosting of major and mega sporting events. The importance and relevance of a culture of volunteering will be discussed within both an academia and practitioner contexts – what are the challenges for the different stakeholders in undertaking such a cultural shift?

Context description, actors involved

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is one of the most eagerly anticipated emerging markets for hosting major and mega events. This session aims to present a timely debate, examining the approaches and challenges related to the development of host nation human capital being undertaken by MENA sporting events rights holders and organising committees and their partners in preparation for hosting major and mega sports events.

The complexities of human resource management theories and the application to the management and motivation of volunteers will also be considered. The process goes well beyond recruitment, selection and training and it includes logistics, motivation, development, recognition and reward programmes.

The region is developing its own global sports events identity and it is the human resource capacity to deliver this vision that will be critiqued and debated. The temporal pulsating nature of this diverse workforce needs to be understood. The management of volunteers is paramount – motivation is high on the agenda with volunteers creating social capital, helping to build and consolidate social cohesion and stability not only in a single country but within the MENA region as a whole.

Implications for practice

There will be a case study focus on Qatar and an introduction will be made to the Josoor Institute and the role of Leeds Beckett University in relation to workforce and volunteer development within the region prior to the Qatar World Cup in 2022 and how this will strategically contribute to the Qatar 2030 National Vision. The session to be delivered will be work in

progress and this is due to the limited research currently available on this subject within this geographical context.

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