

Harnessing sport for CSR: a study of Qatar Stock Exchange-listed companies

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Abstract

Purpose – This research addresses the integration of sport into corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies by companies listed on the Qatar Stock Exchange (QSE). Theoretically underpinned by neo-institutional isomorphic pressures, the study aims to fill a gap in the literature on CSR practices in the Middle East by examining how Qatari firms use sport-related CSR initiatives to foster community engagement and meet sustainable development goals.

Design/methodology/approach – The research involved a comprehensive analysis of annual reports from QSE-listed companies ($n=47$), ensuring reliability through an automated data retrieval and analysis framework. The study handled extensive data sets consisting of annual reports spanning 10–15 years and primarily used two components: prompts and retrieval augmented generation.

Findings – The results highlight an increased focus on and utilisation of sport within CSR strategies across various sectors. They further demonstrate significant sectoral differences in CSR strategies, with banks and financial services leading in activities linked to philanthropy, sponsorships and personnel engagement. Given Qatar's strategic emphasis on sport, related CSR initiatives have seen parallel and substantial growth, strengthening their role in promoting societal well-being.

Originality/value – This study contributes to the understanding of CSR practices in the region, by offering theoretical and practical insights on developing effective “CSR through sport” programmes. The research further provides a methodological and data foundation for application into other/adjacent regional or sectoral contexts.

Keywords Sport-based corporate social responsibility, Corporate CSR strategies, Sustainable development, Community engagement through sport

Paper type Research paper



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