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THE SOFT POWER IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL EVENT HOSTING: THE CASE OF UAE AND EXPO 2020

by

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Date & Venue

Time: 11am-1pm

Wednesday, 11 October, 2023

Room 1116, H1 Building

Abstract

The study aimed at identifying and evaluating the soft power impact of international event hosting by considering the case of the UAE and EXPO2020. To attain this aim, a qualitative methodology has been incorporated, wherein data have been collected through semi-structured interviews with 20 managers involved in the organization of the Dubai Expo 2020, which were correspondingly analyzed through textual basis or content analysis. The study found that the soft power of the UAE can be measured using the six parameters of Soft Power 30 of McClory, which are Engagement, Government, Culture, Education, Enterprise and Digital. The challenges associated with event hosting to attain soft power are related to financial, political and administrative, infrastructure and human resources, logistics and transportation, as well as environmentally sustainable development. The potential solutions to the identified challenges are proper budgeting and planning, proper monitoring of the expenses, maintaining a greater transparency level, upholding an internally diverse culture, development must be innovative, training for the hired employees, creating specific mobile applications for visitors, and developing new low-carbon vehicles.

Keywords: Soft power, Governance, Empowerment, Expo2020, Hosting, Culture, Event.