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Olympic Engagement and the Use of Olympic Solidarity Programmes by Gulf Cooperation Council States

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Abstract

This paper seeks to address the extent to which Olympic Solidarity funding patterns are consistent with the organisation's explicit mission, namely to serve the interests of National Olympic Committees and in particular those in greatest need. In addition the paper reviews the extent to which Gulf Cooperation Council States have been able to avail themselves of such resources. While OS funding has tended at the level of the World Programme, to reflect a tendency to favour NOCs from less affluent economies, this tendency towards progressive funding has been weakening and to some extent reversed, since the mid 2000s.

Funding of GCC states has tended to be well below that of other NOCs of comparable dimensions, reflecting the fact that Gulf States have not followed a 'linear' path to 'modernity' in sport. Such a linear path might be characterised as in an initial concern with growing participation, improving governance (through issues such as women's role in sport), and enhancing performance, but GCC states have instead focused on elements of a what might be characterised as a post-modern approach in the form of hosting of major events and the celebration of spectacle, and thus drawing relatively modestly on OS resources.

1. Introduction

In an analysis of the history of the recognition and development of National Olympic Committees Thierry Therret¹ organises the evolution of the establishment and recognition by the IOC of National Olympic Committees into five 'waves'. The first he terms 'the power of traditional Europe 1894 to 1922'. This period saw the founding and early members of the Olympic movement drawn almost exclusively from Western Europe. 25 of the 34 NOCs in this group of early joiners were from Europe, while the remaining nine, the USA, Australia, Canada, Egypt, China, Japan, New Zealand, the Philippines and Haiti, were largely associated with imperial powers (Britain, France and the US) which had been influenced by the British sporting model.

The second wave was constituted by NOCs from 'Latin America, South Asia, and the Middle East (1923 to 1959). The enthusiasm for joining the Olympic movement in South America which saw Argentina, Mexico and Uruguay joining in 1923, followed by Peru, the Netherlands Antilles, Bolivia, Chile, Panama, Brazil, Venezuela, Bermuda, Guyana, Jamaica, Colombia, Cuba, Trinidad and Tobago,

the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Puerto Rico, Ecuador, El Salvador, the Bahamas, Costa Rica, Barbados, Honduras, Nicaragua and Surinam. This enthusiasm to join the Olympic movement reflects the struggle for international recognition of South American and Caribbean island states and in particular their concern to emerge from the shadow of US hegemony. For similar reasons of establishing an international profile and 'sloughing off' colonial identities, NOCs from South-East Asian countries were established, namely India, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Korea, Indonesia, Singapore, Pakistan, Thailand, Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and from the Middle East namely Israel, Lebanon, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic, and Jordan. While this group incorporates some Asian and Middle Eastern nations, the Arabian Gulf was not as yet represented.

The third reflected the 'New Africa' (1948 to 1972). This group is constituted of NOCs from new African nations predominantly formed in the process of decolonisation which accelerated after the Second World War. While the English speaking nations were quick to join the movement, French speaking African nations were rather slower to develop NOCs and to apply for recognition such that concern about this on the part of the IOC, and in particular of its President, Avery Brundage, was a significant factor in the establishment in 1962 of the International Committee for Olympic Aid, the forerunner of Olympic Solidarity, under the leadership of the French aristocrat and IOC member Jean de Beaumont².

The fourth group incorporated 'Islands, small nations, South Asia, and the Arabic world' (1964 to 1987). This group includes Saudi Arabia and Kuwait whose NOCs were recognised in 1965 and 1966 respectively, and, Bahrain (recognised by the IOC in 1979), Qatar (1980), the United Arab Emirates (1980), Oman (1982) and Yemen (1981). This group incorporates the nations of the Gulf Cooperation Council (with the exception of Yemen up to 2014), most of which had access to petro-chemical resources which generated rapid development, and all of which sought to enhance their position in the global politico-economic hierarchy. As Therret remarks:

*Without a doubt, Yemen, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Brunei Darussalam had to enhance their international image after the rise of the petrol price, which had degenerated into a world crisis in the early and mid-1970s.*³

Therret's fifth and final configuration relates to the reshaping of Eastern Europe (1989 – 2007). This group incorporates the ex-Eastern Block nation states eager to give cultural expression to their political independence from the Russian Federation in the post Soviet era. To this final group one might add a number of micro-states in Oceania whose NOCs received IOC recognition in the 1990s and early twenty first century (Kiribati, Palau, Marshall Islands, Nauru and Vanuatu).

This then represents the chronology and landscape of the development of recognition of NOCs, a landscape which reflected initially the demise of empires, subsequently the development of the bi-polar political system of the Cold War, and the political realities of international relations in a new multi-polar environment in the post-Cold War context. In the discussion which follows we wish to address the patterns of usage of Olympic Solidarity funds which emerged in the period after the initiation of high levels of funding in the post Los Angeles Games era with the introduction of lucrative broadcasting projects and of the TOP Sponsorship scheme. Specifically we focus on the activities of the Gulf States (members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, namely Oman, Qatar, UAE, Bahrain and Kuwait) as they give expression to their engagement with the Olympic Movement in part through their participation in Olympic Solidarity funding programmes. This discussion of GCC countries' use of OS funding will however first be situated within a more generic analysis of the role and effectiveness of Olympic Solidarity funding programmes.

2. The role and Function of Olympic Solidarity in the 21st Century

The history of the development of Olympic Solidarity is bound up with the use of sport as soft diplomacy in the contexts of the Cold War struggles between East and West, the decolonisation process in Africa and Asia, and in the emergence of a new multi-polar reality in international relations (Al-Tauqi, 2003, Henry and Al-Tauqi, 2007, Henry and Al-Tauqi, 2008). ⁴Sport aid was used in the period from the early 1960s as a means of fostering cultural dependency between the new states and the Western dominated Olympic movement but with the growth of new NOCs and the growing reluctance of some established NOCs to be beholden to the IOC for such aid, the Permanent General Assembly of NOCs (the forerunner of ANOC, the Association of National Olympic Committees) was established at world level to negotiate with the IOC from a position of collective strength (Chatziefstathiou et al., 2008). As a result of this the IOC under pressure from the PGA of NOCs established Olympic Solidarity with initially little financial aid of substance. However after the watershed of the Los Angeles Games of 1984, with the advent of a more commercial approach to managing the Games, funding from broadcasting and sponsorship became available, and the principle of Olympic Aid grew in substance.

The primary function of Olympic Solidarity is to manifest solidarity between developed (in sporting and in economic terms) and developing nations, within the Olympic movement through a progressive redistribution of funds. The aim of the Olympic Solidarity Commission as stipulated in Chapter 1, Rule 5 of the IOC Charter is as follows:

*The aim of Olympic Solidarity is to organise assistance to NOCs, in particular those which have the greatest need of it. This assistance takes the form of programmes elaborated jointly by the IOC and the NOCs, with the technical assistance of the IFs, if necessary.*⁵

One of the two principal aims of this paper is to evaluate the extent to which Olympic Solidarity is able to disperse its funds in ways which reflect this redistributive mission⁶. Further within the context of the developing oil economies and their impact on Gulf states, the paper will identify the ways in which Gulf states have engaged with Solidarity programmes as an (admittedly) small element of their strategies to express membership of the global sporting community.

3. The Structure of Olympic Solidarity Funding Programmes

The size of Olympic Solidarity funding has grown considerably, more than doubling over the last three quadrennia since 2001-4 despite the economic downturn of the late 2000s, as indicated in Table 1.

The major categories of Olympic Solidarity funding are: the World Programmes devised and administered by Olympic Solidarity directly; the Continental Programmes which fund the activities of the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) and its individual Continental Associations, which in turn provide funding for individual NOCs; and the Olympic Games Subsidy which provides subsidies to meet the costs of participating in the Summer and Winter editions of the Games. In the current quadrennial for the first time funding allocated to the Continental programmes (controlled by the Continental Associations of NOCs) exceeded that dispersed directly by Olympic Solidarity through its World Programmes. In 2013-16, 37.7% of expenditure was allocated to the World Programme, 39% to the Continental Programmes, 14% to Olympic Games Subsidies and 4% to administration.

Table 1: Olympic Solidarity Funding Distribution (US\$ m.)

	<i>2001-4</i>	<i>2005-8</i>	<i>2009-12</i>	<i>2013-16</i>
World Programme	99,800,000	109,500,000	134,000,000	165,000,000
Continental Programme	69,944,000	90,000,000	122,000,000	191,000,000
Olympic Games Subsidies	31,240,000	34,000,000	42,000,000	43,000,000
Administration / Communications	8,500,000	9,500,000	13,000,000	18,000,000
Total	209,484,000	243,000,000	311,000,000	438,000,000

World Programmes incorporate four funding streams: athletes, coaches, NOC management and Olympic values. The first three streams relate to enhancing standards in performance, coaching and NOC management, while the fourth incorporates a broad range of programmes loosely defined under Olympic Values, namely Sport Medicine; Sport and Environment; Women and Sport; Sport for All; the International Olympic Academy; Culture and Education; and Olympic Legacy. In earlier quadrennia access to some World Programmes was restricted to the less developed or less affluent NOCs, but all NOCs now have been given access to all 19 World programmes since the 2005-2008 quadrennial, and

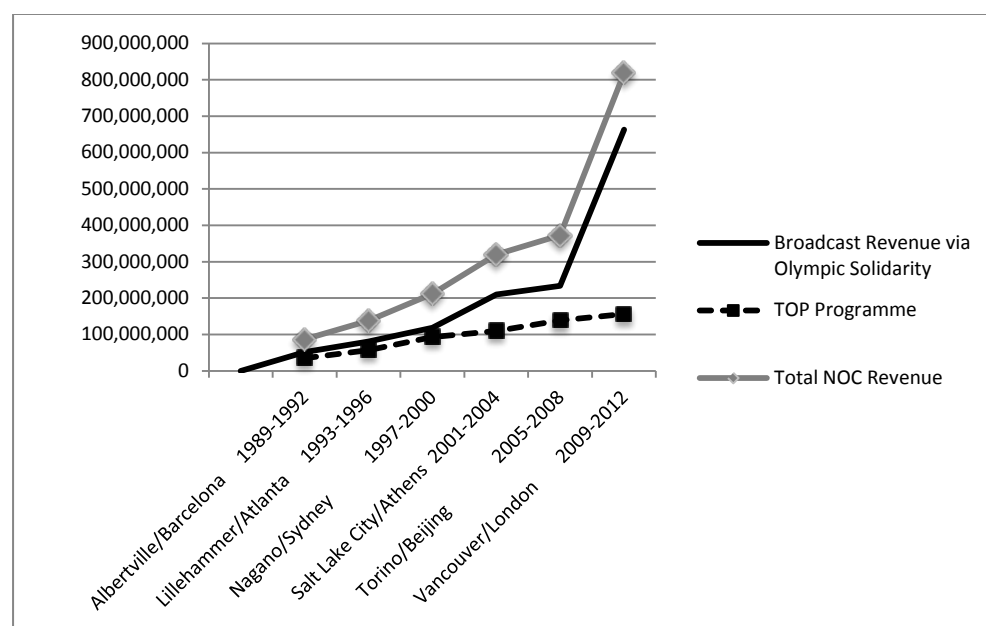
this factor partly explains a change in the statistical relationship between national GDP per capita and the level of funding of individual NOCs (see discussion below relating to data in Figure 4).

The *Continental Programme* was initiated with decentralisation in 1997, when a budget was established to cover operating costs, and financial assistance for meetings and assemblies of the Continental Associations. Subsequently from 2001 aid for individual NOCs was developed within the Continental Programme under priorities or programmes decided by each Continental Association independently. Although the budget allocated to each continental association is declared by Olympic Solidarity the precise nature, amount, and thus effectiveness of funding allocated to individual NOCs is difficult to establish and there is thus a lack of transparency in terms of publicly accessible documentation provided by the Continental Associations.

Through the *Olympic Games Subsidy* each NOC receives funding directly related to its participation in both the summer and winter Olympic Games for logistics, transport and a subsidy for each participating athlete. The most significant element of Olympic Games participation subsidies is directly related to the size of the participating contingent with the larger teams coming generally from more affluent countries, thus while all NOCs benefit from these subsidies, a relatively few with very large teams are substantially better funded.

The sources of Olympic Solidarity funding from the IOC are indicated in Figure 1 which highlights the recent rapid growth in such funding and the importance of broadcasting revenue which is the source of 81% of the funding from the IOC for NOCs.

Figure 1: Sources of Revenue from the IOC for National Olympic Committees



4. How effective is the Olympic Solidarity Funding System as a Redistributive Mechanism?

There are four elements to our analysis in this section of the article. The first constitutes *descriptive* analysis of financial disbursements, on a quadrennial basis, to individual National Olympic Committees worldwide from 1985 to 2012. This is provided through box plots of the patterns of funding for each continent. The second element involves *analysis of the correlations* between, on the one hand World Programme Grants and Olympic Games Subsidy levels, and, on the other, selected variables chosen as indicators of NOC characteristics in order to establish the levels of funding received by different kinds of NOC. The third element involves *standard multiple regression* of World Programmes Grant and Olympic Games Subsidy grant as dependent variables to identify the contribution of selected independent variables to the explanation of variance in the levels of grant awarded to NOCs under both categories. Finally the fourth element is to provide an analysis of how the strategies and approaches to use of Olympic Solidarity funds are manifest in the funding patterns exhibited for the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

In order to address this research question we review the distribution of funds for the World Programmes and the Olympic Games Subsidy across the period from the beginning of quadrennial planning (1985-8) to the most recently reported quadrennial distribution 2009-12⁷. Data for this analysis was sourced from a review of annual and quadrennial reports published by Olympic Solidarity across the period.

(a) Descriptive Analysis

The relative distribution of World Programme Grants between continents is described in the box plots provided in Figure 2 for the first and last quadrennial for the period 1985-8 to 2009-1. For the quadrennial 1985-8 the distribution of grant is most widely dispersed for the Americas. Outliers at the top end of the range are relatively large nations, Argentina, Mexico, Canada, USA, and Chile, while the outliers in terms of low levels of grant aid are island micro-states, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Aruba. In the 2009-12 quadrennial however values for each of the continents are more closely grouped around the median and there is only one continent (Oceania) with two outliers, New Zealand and Fiji.

The boxplots in Figure 2 for 2009-12 represent a picture of a more closely regulated and normal distribution of grants, a pattern that may be attributed to the growing maturity of the grant aid system. The lack of large nation state outliers above the median suggests that the gap between large and small states in terms of World Programme Grants size is much less marked than it had been in the earliest quadrennial. In 2009-12 Oceania and Asia have the lowest median values, reflecting in the

case of the former the fact that the continent contains a high proportion of micro states whose relatively small grants would reduce the median value.

Figure 2: Boxplots of NOC World Programme Grants 1985-8 and 2009-12 by Continent

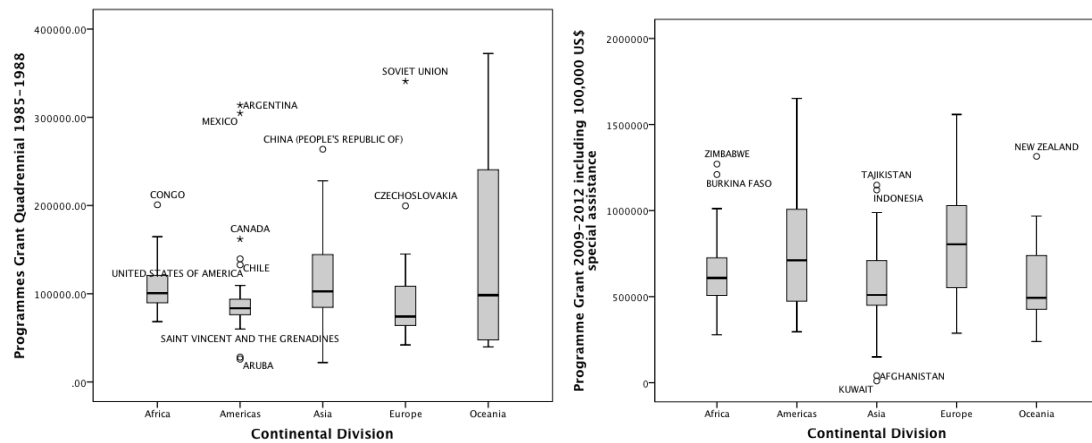
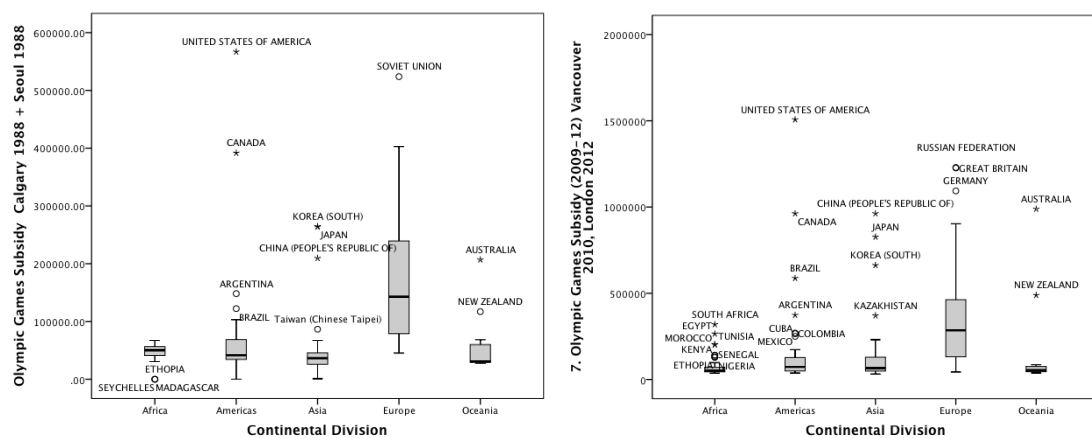


Figure 3: Boxplots of NOC Olympic Games Subsidy Grants 1985-8 and 2009-12 Provided to meet the Cost of Participation in the Summer and Winter Games




The distribution of Olympic Games Subsidy by continent is provided in Figure 3. This contrasts significantly with the picture for the World Programmes. The boxplots provide an illustration of highly dispersed values with 14 and 23 outliers across all continents for the 1985-8 and 2009-12 quadrennials respectively, indicating a marked difference in terms of large state outliers above the median, and small state outliers below the median demonstrating that large states benefit disproportionately from Olympic Games Subsidy.

(b) Analysis of Correlations

Moving on from the description of the geographical distribution of funding, an analysis of the correlation between grant outcomes as dependent variables and selective independent variables is instructive in terms of whether the factors influencing Olympic Solidarity funding are consistent with the policy priorities of the organisation. Given that a primary aim of Olympic Solidarity is to be redistributive – providing resources to those NOCs in greatest need (by implications this may be relative economic or sporting need) – we seek to evaluate the extent to which Olympic Solidarity has been able to employ positive discrimination in respect of its funding allocations (and subsequently to review ways in which GCC countries have gained access to, and made use of, such funds).

Table 2: Variables Employed in the Correlation and Regression Analysis

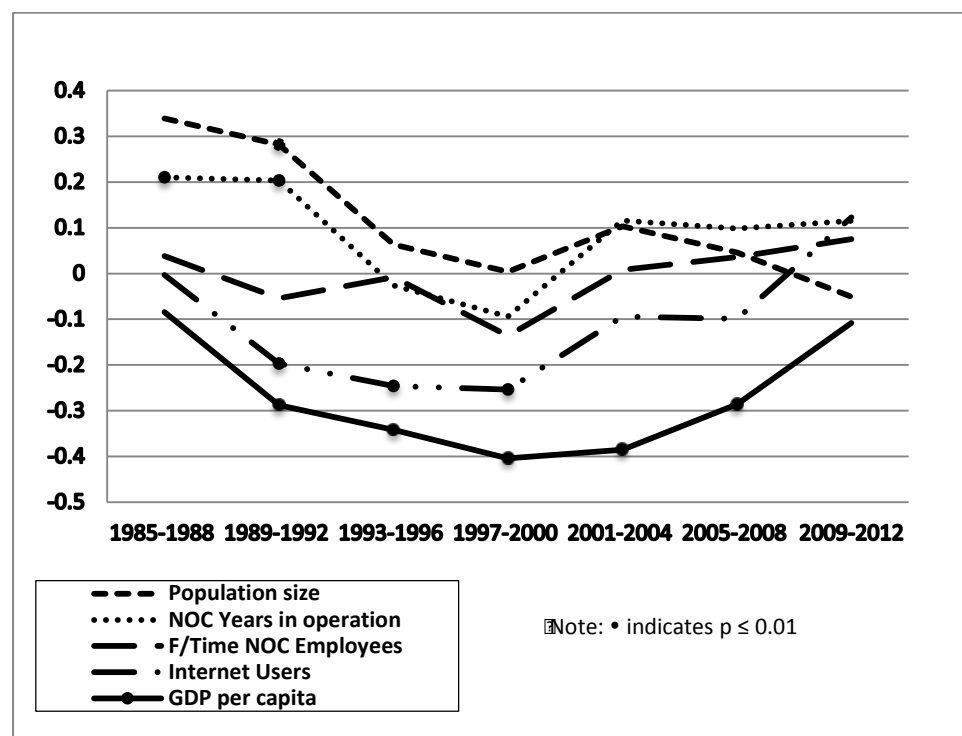
Independent Variables		Dependent Variable
Population size (<i>Indicator of size of country and of NOC</i>)		Level of NOC World Programme Grant Level of NOC Olympic Games Subsidy Grant
GDP per capita (<i>an indicator of level of affluence of country</i>)		
Internet users per capita (<i>Indicator of access to technology / technological development of country technology</i>)		
NOC years of recognition (<i>Indicator of Experience of the NOC in OS funding system</i>)		
No. of NOC Full-time staff (<i>Indicator of the level of professionalisation of the NOC</i>)		

The use of the indicators outlined in Table 2 allows us to evaluate the extent to which there is a statistically significant relationship between what NOCs receive under both types of grant and the size of a country (population size); its relative affluence (GDP per capita); the number of full time staff in its NOC (and by implication the level of professional support available within the NOC in making applications); and the experience of the NOC within the Olympic system (number of years as an IOC-recognised NOC). The implication of the use of these independent variables is that grant levels should be negatively related to GDP per capita if economically weaker nations are to be favoured, and that factors such as the experience of NOCs, their level of professionalism, and the technological advantages of developed communications infrastructures should not be significantly positively correlated to grant aid levels.⁸

Figure 4 illustrates a number of relevant features of the data. The first is that with one exception the trend in terms of the relationship between independent and dependent variables is to a greater or

lesser degree 'U-shaped'. The exception is that of population size. In the first two quadrennials in the series, larger countries with older NOCs tended to receive larger World Programme grants, there is a negative correlation between internet users and level of grant received for the middle three quadrennials.

Figure 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlations of Selected Variables with Size of NOC
World Programmes Grant 1985-8 to 2009-12¹



The implication of the U-shape is that the influence of age / experience of the NOC, of the size of its professional staff, the national context in terms of access to internet communication and in terms of affluence of the nation declined until the 2001-4 quadrennial, but that from this point such trends were reversed.

Relatively few of the correlations are statistically significant with the exception of those for GDP per capita which is increasingly negative until 2000, but although it remains significantly negatively correlated in the following two quadrennials the relationship while remaining negative is weaker and in 2009-12 is negative but not significant. This suggests that although Olympic Solidarity had been moving in the right direction in terms of favouring economically weaker nations over the early part of the period under review, the direction of travel has not simply stalled in the last two quadrennials but

¹ For Tables 4 and 5 in relation to the variables incorporated here, preliminary analyses were undertaken to ensure that there was no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity.

has actually reversed (though we should reemphasise that the correlation in the last quadrennial is not statistically significant). In the next section on regression analysis we can consider the importance of the variables which correlate with the dependent variables while controlling for the influence of other independent variables in the regression equation.

A comparison of the relationship between levels of Olympic Games Subsidy received and their correlation with the indicator variables is given in Table 3, and this provides a stark contrast with that for the World Programmes. Here all variables are **positively** and significantly correlated with Olympic Games Subsidy. Effectively the older NOCs, with larger staff sizes, from countries with larger populations, in more technologically developed contexts receive significantly higher levels of subsidy because they send larger teams to the games. Thus while the distribution of the World Programme grants is progressive (favouring the economically weak, though only moderately), the Olympic Games Subsidy Grants are regressive, favouring economically stronger nations and in sporting terms more established nations. Particularly significant from the point of view of the aims of Olympic Solidarity, GDP per capita is **positively** correlated to Olympic Games Subsidy level, meaning that the NOCs from more affluent countries will tend to receive higher subsidies. Although Olympic Games Subsidy grants represent a significantly lower level of grant than the World Programme for the vast majority of nations, and therefore are less significant in terms of the size of the grant provided, nevertheless the outcome of the distribution process is regressive.

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation of Selected Variables with Size of Olympic Games Subsidy Grant 1988-2010

	Population size	Years of recognition NOC	F/T Employees	Internet Users	GDP Per Capita
Calgary 1988 + Seoul 1988	0.206**	0.642**	0.517**	0.556**	0.379**
Barcelona 1992 + Albertville 1992	0.252**	0.526**	0.518**	0.484**	0.304**
Lillehammer 1994 + Atlanta 1996	0.267**	0.463**	0.548**	0.470*	0.300**
Nagano 1998 + Sydney 2000	0.262**	0.489**	0.542**	0.399**	0.306**
Sydney 2000 + SLC 2002	0.264**	0.493**	0.551**	0.499**	0.385**
Athens 2004 + Torino 2006	0.313**	0.486**	0.580**	0.386**	0.282**
Beijing 2008 + Vancouver 2010	0.323**	0.479**	0.575**	0.498**	0.288**
** p≤0.01; * p≤0.05					

(c) Multiple Regression Analysis

The application of standard multiple regression analysis is employed here to allow us to analyse the level of variance which can be explained in the two dependent variables (level of World Programmes Grant and level of Olympic Games Subsidy received by NOCs), and in addition to establish the unique contribution to explanation of variance made by each independent variable. Multiple regression analysis was conducted to predict the level of World Programme Grant and of Olympic Games Participation Subsidy (the dependent variables) from the five independent variables outlined in Table 2, for each of the quadrennials from 1985-8 to 2009-12.⁹ The five predictors were entered simultaneously into the analysis: population size (indicator of size of country and of NOC); GDP per capita (an indicator of level of affluence of country); internet users per capita (indicator of access to technology / technological development of country technology); NOC years of recognition (indicator of Experience of the NOC in OS funding system; number of NOC Full-time staff (Indicator of the level of professionalisation of the NOC). The overall variance explained by the five predictors for the World Programme varied from 10.6% to 22% over the five year period, and from 53.3% to 60.6% for the Olympic Games Subsidy over the same period.

Table 4: Contribution of Independent Variables (Beta Values) to Explanation of the Variance in World Programmes Grant Level

[illegible]

Table 5: Contribution of Independent Variables (Beta Values) to Explanation of the Variance in Levels of Subsidy for Olympic Games Participation

Selected Independent Variables	1985-1988	1989-1992	1993-1996	1997-2000	2001-2004	2005-2008	2009-12
Population size	.286*	.311**	.364**	.339**	.241**	.315**	.339**
NOC years of recognition	.279*	.315**	.082	.096	.119	.115	.077
F/Time NOC Employees	.149	.147	.277**	.273**	.321**	.320**	.306**
Internet users per capita	.409*	.436**	.489**	.477**	.522**	.439**	.525**
GDP per capita	-.069	-.137	-.162	-.150	-.206*	-.148	-.188**
Total Variance Explained (R^2)	.580**	.606**	.554**	.536**	.547**	.533**	.586**
** $p \leq 0.01$; * $p \leq 0.05$							

Tables 4 and 5 show the statistically significant values of standardised beta coefficients for the independent variables indicating their influence on the respective dependent variables while controlling for the effect of other independent variables in the regression. Perhaps the first thing to note about the regression on the World Programme dependent variable is that the level of variance explained is overall fairly small (14.7% in the last quadrennial). In addition the only variable to explain a significant amount of that overall variance is GDP per capita. By contrast the data for the multiple regression in the case of Olympic Subsidy in Table 5 illustrates how a much greater level of variance in the dependent variable is explained.

The regression analysis thus provides further support for the claim that while funding in the case of the World Programme is mildly progressive, the Games Subsidy supports the larger nations with more professional NOCs, in technologically better developed national contexts.

(d) Comparative Analysis of Olympic Solidarity Aid Received by the Gulf Cooperation Council States

Within this broad context of the pattern of disbursement of Olympic Solidarity funds, we consider here the nature of the GCC States' receipt of such funding. Figures 6 and 7 indicate the relative level of funding from the two principal Olympic Solidarity funds. While both sets of figures show a predominant trend of growth over the last three quadrennials, it should be noted that in the most recent quadrennial Kuwait received almost no funding from the World Programmes since its NOC was temporarily suspended by the IOC because of a dispute over governmental interference in the running of the NOC.

Figure 5: World Programme Grant Received by GCC States 1985-9 to 2009-12

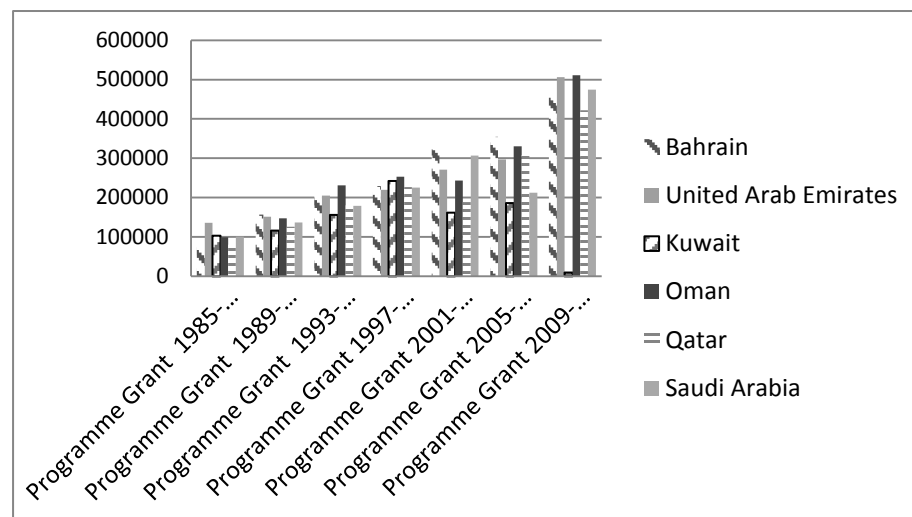
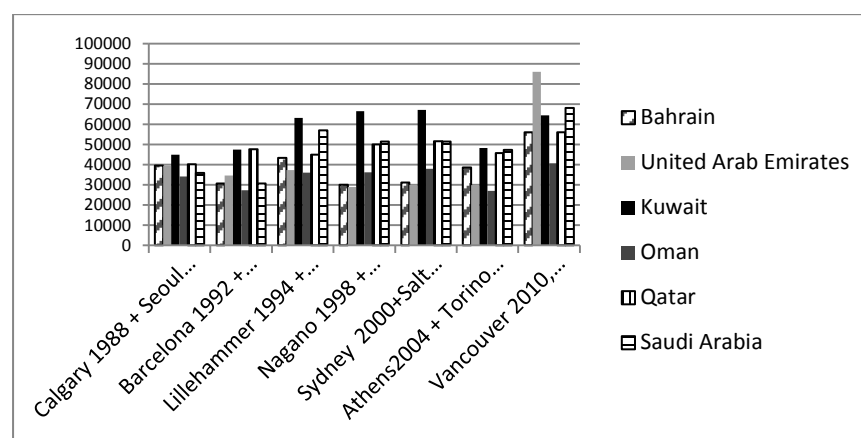


Figure 6: Olympic Games Subsidy for GCC States 1988-2012



Analysis of variance was carried out to identify where there was a significant difference in means between GCC states and the continental groups of NOCs for the two dependent variables across the three quadrennials. Tests for normality of distribution and equality of variance were carried out, with where necessary the exclusion of extreme outliers. In addition where unequal variances were detected, Tamhanes T2 test was employed with a critical level of significance of $p < 0.05$. Table 6 identifies the level of difference of means where the ANOVA is significant at $p < 0.05$, and where Tamhanes T2 test also meets the criterion of the same level of significance.

Table 6: Analysis of Variance in World Programme and Olympic Games Subsidy by Continent and GCC States: Differences in Means (p<0.05)

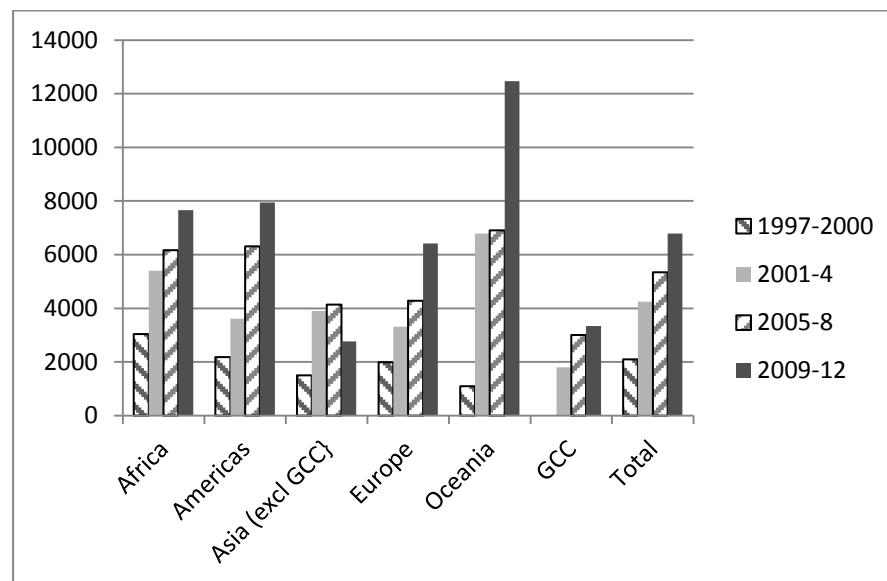
		2001-4					2005-9					2009-12				
<u>World Programme Funding</u>		Africa	Americas	Asia (excl Gulf States)	Europe	Oceania	Africa	Americas	Asia (excl Gulf States)	Europe	Oceania	Africa	Americas	Asia (excl Gulf St)	Europe	Oceania
Overall World Programme Funding		-168828	-184080	-131122	-136630		-247346	-277268	-173803	-201182			-368368		-414383	
Athletes	Olympic Athlete Scholarships	-58409	-77979	-73265	-88378		-84553	-87713	-73036	-92639			-97463	-79340	-208777	
	Young Athlete Scholarships							-25049		-18763		-35244	-53716	-34396	-58720	
Coaches	Olympic Coach Scholarships	-22094	-23296				-43131	-29463	-20365							
NOC Management	Management Courses											-30055				
Olympic Values	Sport Medicine															
	Sport and Environment										-3597	-8475		-10544	-11356	
	Women & Sport	-3038	-2179	-1499	-1994											
	Sport for All											-15396		-12976		
	IOA									-5103			-6339	-5294	-4432	
	Culture and Education						-10387			-19197		-6820	-10115	-9326	-29413	
	Olympic Legacy						-3149	-6588		-6626		-3351	-13140		-16102	
<u>Olympic Games Subsidy</u>																
Overall OG Subsidy					-174388		-22954			-221385					-282438	

In relation to every statistically significant difference in means, the level for the GCC states was below the means of the continental regions. This is particularly evident in relation to overall World Programme funding where there were statistically significant differences in means between the GCC NOCs and those of four of the five continental groupings in both 2001-4 and 2005-8 and two out of five in the final quadrennial, 2009-12. The differences in mean tended to be increasingly weighty, (- \$368,368 compared to the Americas, and - \$414,383 compared to Europe in the last quadrennial).

Differences in means within the overall World Programme figure were particularly noteworthy in the case of funding for Olympic Athlete Scholarships and Young Athlete Scholarships, though restricted in the latter case to the most recent quadrennial. Shortage of athlete numbers in the Gulf countries goes some way to explain this but size as indicated by the size of the population is not correlated to level of World Programme Grant.

The Women and Sport programme incorporates a range of initiatives targeted at gender equity. Apart from miscellaneous activities for women aimed at increasing participation in sport and in leadership of sporting organisations, funding for attendance at regional forums and training seminars and the quadrennial IOC Woman and Sport World Conference are covered by this programme. By the London Games in 2012 all NOCs included at least one female competitor in their Olympic team, and for Saudi Arabia, and Qatar this was the first occasion on which they had done so, it is thus hardly surprising that the GCC countries lagged behind the continental groups (with the exception of Asia) in respect of applications to the Women and Sport funding programme. (see Figure 7). The programme began in 1997 with only the Irish NOC from Europe and 10 NOCs from the Americas receiving funding, followed in 1998 by Argentina, 30 NOCs from Africa and 37 NOCs from Europe. The participation rate increased overall in 1999 but decreased in 2000, by which time the programme was at least present in all continents with 4 NOCs in Oceania organising projects under this programme for the first time in that year. Comparing the three most recent quadrennia, the highest participation rate has been in Africa, where 51 NOCs participated in both 2001-2004 and 2005-2008. All the African NOCs participated in the programme in at least two of the quadrennia. However a number of NOCs from the other continents have never received funding under this programme i.e. Nicaragua, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Luxembourg, Monaco and Guam. Indeed in the first four years of its existence no GCC country participated in the programme and while the GCC states' mean level of funding exceeded that for all other Asian countries in the 2009-12 quadrennial, this is as a result of a single significant grant to one country (Oman).

Figure 7: Participation in the Women and Sport Programme 1997-2012 by Continent and GCC Countries



While the fact that the GCC countries are outperformed by others in respect of attracting funding for women and sport activities is unsurprising because of the nature of the debate around Muslim women and sport, it is perhaps somewhat less obvious why the GCC states have not participated more fully in the Environment programme. Oman and Saudi Arabia have each received grant aid in two of the three quadrennia, with Qatar also receiving aid through this programme on one occasion. In addition funding from the Sport for All, Culture and education, and Olympic Legacy programmes has been negligible for the GCC states.

5. Conclusions

In this overview of the participation of the six GCC states in Olympic Solidarity funding programmes, a picture emerges of somewhat patchy engagement. Analysis of the World Programme funding for all NOCs overall demonstrates that the affluence of a country is the only strong predictor of variance in the dependent variable, and given that GDP levels per capita in GCC states are significantly greater than those for each of the continental groups, this serves to explain in large part the lack of successful applications for Olympic Solidarity funding by GCC states. The GCC states are much less likely to be dependent on such funds to engage in Olympic related activity since they are likely to have alternative sources on which to draw.

However, accessing IOC funding is likely to be about more than financial need, and the receipt of an Olympic Solidarity grant can perform a legitimating function, as for example with the application for a Women and Sport or a Sport and the Environment grant, which may be used to signal adherence to

the principle, if not the detail, of Olympic Values as determined by the IOC and manifest in the sub-programmes defined within the World Programme. Although the GCC states are relatively small in population size with only Oceania having a smaller average population, they have NOCs with much larger staff numbers and thus the capacity to research opportunities, to work up and submit, and to subsequently monitor implementation of such applications for Solidarity Aid.

However there are other ways of playing the game, and demonstrating one's commitment to the Olympic family. Both Qatar and UAE have publicly considered submitting bids to host the games with Qatar actually becoming an applicant for staging the 2020 Games. Qatar and the UAE, and to a lesser extent Bahrain, have pursued a policy of hosting major sporting events as evidence of their participation in the global sporting community, and Oman has recently sought to stage events such as the Asian Beach Games. In effect the process of modernisation in sport outlined by Alan Guttman¹⁰ has been superseded in the case of some at least of the GCC states, as the stage in the modernisation of sport of mass participation by domestic populations has, in a sense, been leap-frogged when these small states have jumped straight into the process of staging global sporting spectacles. This is part of the well acknowledged soft power strategy of establishing reputation and cultural influence by becoming major players in the staging of global sport rather than in participation in sport per se. Such an approach would seem to obviate the need to apply for funding of grass roots participation, though demonstrating adherence to centrally defined interpretations of Olympic values will remain a task to be resolved.

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¹ Therret, T. 2008. Contribution to a political history of the National Olympic Committees. *International Convention on Science, Education and Medicine in Sport (ICSEMIS)*. Guangzhou: (Unpublished).

² Al-Tauqi, M. 2003. *Olympic Solidarity: Global order, the diffusion of modern sport and the hegemony of the Olympic Movement*. Ph.D. (unpublished), Loughborough University.

³ Therret *ibid*, p. 2.

⁴ See Al-Tauqi, M. 2003. *Olympic Solidarity: Global order, the diffusion of modern sport and the hegemony of the Olympic Movement*. Ph.D. (unpublished), Loughborough University; Henry, I. & Al-Tauqi, M. 2007. Evaluating Alternative Theoretical Perspectives on Sports Policy. In: Henry, I. & Institute of Sport and Leisure Policy (eds.) *Transnational and Comparative Research in Sport: globalisation, governance and sport policy*. London: Routledge; Henry, I. & Al-Tauqi, M. 2008. The Development of Olympic Solidarity: West and Non-West (Core and Periphery) Relations in the Olympic World. *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 25, 355.

⁵ International Olympic Committee 2011. *The Olympic Charter*. IOC: Lausanne, p. 3.

⁶ We have partially addressed this research question elsewhere through statistical analysis of Olympic Solidarity grant aid programmes for the period up until 2005-8 (Zammit, M.-T. & Henry, I. 2013. Evaluating Olympic Solidarity 1982-2012. In: Henry, I. & Ko, L.-M. (eds.) *Handbook of Sport Policy*. London: Routledge). This paper however presents new data and extends the analysis previously undertaken as well as incorporating a commentary on the funding position of an economically strong but in sporting terms relatively new group within the Olympic family in the form of the Gulf states.

⁷ At this stage it is only possible to review the nature of funding allocations for the World Programmes and the Olympic Games Subsidy funding schemes. Details of the distribution of funding in the Continental Programmes are not available, nor are they controlled by Olympic Solidarity directly.

⁸ These indicators were derived in a former study of Solidarity funding (Zammit, M.-T. & Henry, I. 2013. Evaluating Olympic Solidarity 1982-2012. In: Henry, I. & Ko, L.-M. (eds.) *Handbook of Sport Policy*. London: Routledge). which deals with earlier period and does not incorporate the current analysis.

⁹ Independent variables were employed in the regression analysis after checking for multicollinearity, outliers, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and independence of residuals to ensure that requirements were not violated.

¹⁰ Guttman, A. 1978 *From Ritual to Record*, New York, Columbia Press