

Qatar's Foreign Aid Policy: Evolution, Motives and Values

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Abstract

This paper presents pertinent aspects of the foreign aid policy of the State of Qatar as a Muslim emerging donor with rising soft power. The study traces and explains the evolution of Qatar's Foreign Aid Policy (QFAP) and identifies the various critical milestones of the policy that has been successfully transformed from a small Gulf Emirate into one of the leading players on both regional and global issues including aid giving. Although, Qatar's motivation for aid giving is quite similar to the global setting, the country's sociocultural background and values play a vital in shaping and inspiring its aid policy. As QFAP is closely tied to the country's active foreign policy agenda, political and security motives are heavily reflected in the country's aid practices. In collecting both primary and secondary data this study used various qualitative methods such as face-to-face interviews with key Qatari officials and scrutinized official state documents and quoted speeches, particularly of past and present Emirs as well as other archival sources.

Keywords: Muslim aid, Foreign policy, Policy-making, Determinants, Aid Giving.

1. Introduction

The state of Qatar emergence as aid donor since the end of last century, as a part of the growing "Muslim aid" contribution in the global aid regime, has been associated with its growing soft power regionally and globally. Besides some other Muslim countries, particularly in the

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Middle East, the state of Qatar has been rapidly involved in the aid giving activities and aid donorship. This tendency has been more visible since a new Amir came to power in 1995 in which many political and economic aspects of the country were changed. Qatar's political agenda has been well reflected in its aid behaviours including the development of its foreign aid policy. The country's motives and values are noticeably shaping this policy and the country's aid behaviours.

This paper explores the evolution of QFAP as well as its motives and values considering the country's ambitious foreign policy as a base. Apparently, Qatar's political changes and sociocultural background have been reflected in the evolution and shape of its aid policy. QFAP motives and other aspects are reflections of this background. The effect of the political elite and social norms and values of the people and the state on foreign aid policy is evident. Qatar's international involvement and its humanitarian diplomacy also is reflected in various global and humanitarian values that are portrayed by the Qatari state. This can be seen in the country's involvement in issues related to humanitarianism and global partnership for development. This paper comprises four main sections. The next section presents the basis of the methodology of this research followed by Section 3 which offers the analysis of the data and discussion of the findings while the final Section 4 is the conclusion.

2. Methodology

This study used a number of qualitative research methods. Due to its topic and nature of information, such methods link practice and theory by considering and interpreting meaning, beliefs, preferences, poses and actions of the actors and evaluating how they have been influenced by broader content in which they find themselves (Bryman, 2008; Hacking, 1999; Hay, 2002). This research used primary and secondary sources of data. Besides the semi structured interviews, it included reviewing official documents related to QFAP such as annual reports, bilateral agreements, official statements and press releases, speeches of Qatari government officials as well as Qatar's profile in the international aid reports and technical reports of international organizations and global aid institutions. The secondary sources of data included books, journal articles,

magazines and other related and online sources. These data were gathered from the academic field, university libraries and online sources.

Similar to other policy studies, an analytical framework which considers both of scholarly work on aid policy and the existing grey literature and field research feedback about the Qatari instance was applied. This scholarly marriage has helped in discussing and understanding the policy dimension especially when referring to other donors' examples. Subsequently, this framework has guided in articulating the appropriate results out of the tremendous themes that emerged from the research. Also, it has helped in easing the various challenges related to studying and analysing policy, including challenges related to interpreting data and overlapping of information.

3. Analysis and Discussion

Qatar's growing involvement in the global aid regime through its aid partnerships and humanitarian initiatives has been more obvious since Sheikh Khalifah bin Hamad AlThani took power in 1995. The country's aid contribution before that was very humble compared to its neighbouring donors; Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and United Arab Emirates (UAE). Also, the 1995 change in Qatar led to a radical change in the country's aid frameworks changing it from a typical aid practices aligned with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) objectives to a tangible aid policy that has its motives, values and operative institutions. This policy change is more understood when examined through four main aspects: 1) Qatar's aid donorship, 2) evolution, 3) motives, and 4) values of QFAP.

3.1 Qatar's Aid Donorship

Since the discovery of oil in the Gulf by the second half of last century, Qatar's foreign aid has gone through various stages till it reached its current shape of today. Along with its growth in quantity and recipient countries, this aid is acquiring more importance in the country's foreign policy where the state utilises as a strategic instrument to achieve its foreign policy goals. Many factors have influenced Qatar's aid behaviours and frameworks throughout the past decades such as the state political system, the socio-economic change in the country and the situation

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in the Arab and Muslim new-born countries. Apparently, Qatar's foreign aid has gone through two main stages before and after 1995.

Since the independence of Qatar in 1971 till 1995, Qatari foreign aid was insignificant and limited to certain countries due to certain reasons associated with Qatar's humble production of oil compare and shortage of well-oriented policy objectives. The political setting of GCC framework has obliged Qatar to follow similar aid patterns to other GCC states. The Qatari aid also was exposed to the common characteristics of Arab aid in the post-independence era, which was the time of Arab nationalist movements and unity slogans. The Muslim world revival and the solidarity and unity spirit especially with the hegemony of Saudi Arabia contributed in that shape which corresponded with the regional setting and the foreign policy of the state of Qatar.

Thus, Qatari foreign aid, before 1995, was traditional and in line with Arab aid and the GCC policies and frameworks. Qatar's aid was targeting some Arab and Muslim countries and used to be distributed through multilateral organisations like the Muslim World League (MWL), Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), and Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) and Islamic financial institutions like the Islamic Development Bank (IDB). That Arab aid, which concentrated in Asia and Africa, was focusing on economic and social development projects, social welfare programmes, educational and cultural activities and religion-oriented projects and activities and according to Williams (1984).

The volume of Qatari aid was small compared to the other Arab donors as indicated in figure (1). The total amount of Qatari aid disbursed through the multilateral organisations during the period 1970 till 1995 was estimated to be about USD 2 billion, equivalent to 2% of the total Arab aid during the same period (AMF, 2001: 301). That volume of aid was ranking far behind countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE and even behind Iraq and Libya.

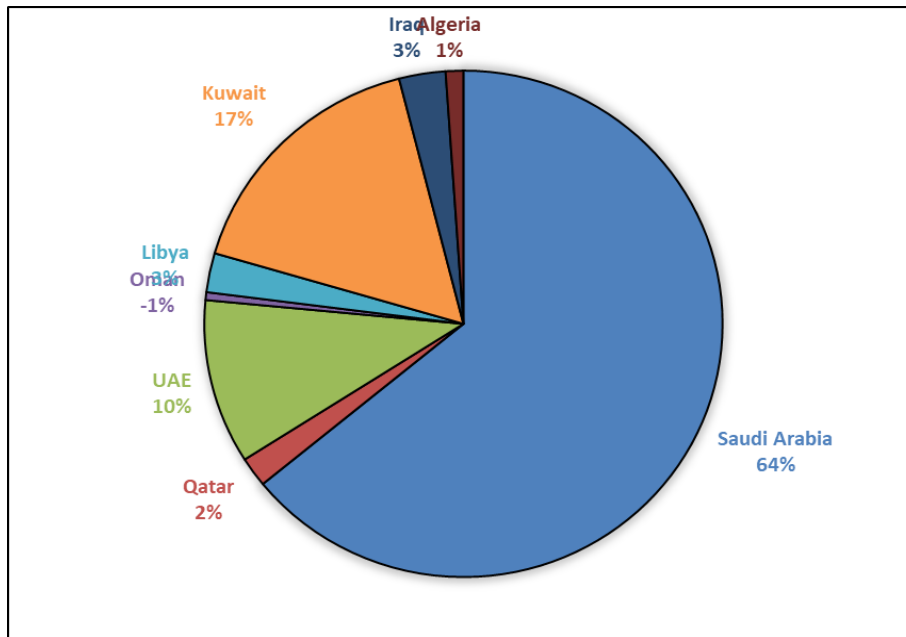


Figure (1) Qatar Aid compared to Other Arab Donors (1970-2000)

Source: (The Joint Arab Economic Report, (AMF), 2001;304).

The crucial change that occurred in Qatar, when Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifah Al Thani ascended to throne, has been reflected in all aspects of political, economic and social life. Consequently, radical changes occurred in the Qatari foreign aid. Its volume expanded tremendously to include various areas of development and humanitarian programmes in several regions worldwide. The Qatari aid started to be transformed, organised and designed based on a well-established and structured policy considering the vital and holistic changes in the country. This shift in Qatari aid is believed to have been caused by reasons related to political leadership, the accumulation of financial resources mainly from Gas industry and the active and ambitious foreign policy agenda of Qatar.

With the overall change and political and economic progress in the country, Qatar stepped up as a recognized aid donor participating in various regional and global aid events. It has recently become a mid-sized aid donor, comparable in size to New Zealand and Portugal (Kharas, 2015). Qatar's foreign aid has tripled many times since 1995 (as indicated in table no. (2), making Qatar one of the emerging donors global-

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ly and a well-known Muslim donor. Also, Qatar is recently ranked the highest in the world in ODA per capita ratio among non-DAC members and the second highest globally as indicated in table no. (1).

Table (1) ODA Per Capita for the Highest 10 Donors (2014)

| No | Donor | ODA Per Capita | ODA/GNI | Remarks |
|----|-------------|----------------|---------|------------|
| 1 | Norway | \$815 | 1.04 | DAC member |
| 2 | Qatar | \$757 | 1.16 | Non-DAC |
| 3 | Sweden | \$703 | 1.00 | DAC member |
| 4 | Luxemburg | \$610 | 1.05 | DAC member |
| 5 | UAE | \$465 | 0.55 | Non-DAC |
| 6 | Denmark | \$447 | 0.71 | DAC member |
| 7 | Switzerland | \$422 | 0.44 | DAC member |
| 8 | Netherlands | \$338 | 0.59 | DAC member |
| 9 | UK | \$284 | 0.70 | DAC member |
| 10 | Finland | \$234 | 0.42 | DAC member |

Source: Calculated from OECD ODA Reports 2013, 2014, 2015

Table (2) Qatari Foreign Aid (1995 -2017)

| Year | Governmental | Non- Governmental | Total in Million USD |
|------|--------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1995 | 11.2 | 11.6 | 22.8 |
| 1996 | 12 | 12 | 24 |
| 1997 | 16.7 | 12.1 | 28.8 |
| 1998 | 16 | 14.2 | 30.2 |
| 1999 | 34.5 | 14.3 | 48.8 |
| 2000 | 78.4 | 20 | 98.4 |
| 2001 | 93.2 | 22.1 | 115.3 |
| 2002 | 120.4 | 72.3 | 192.7 |
| 2003 | 64.6 | 62 | 126.6 |
| 2004 | 90.1 | 13.7 | 103.8 |
| 2005 | 122 | 22 | 144 |
| 2006 | 575 | 61 | 636 |
| 2007 | 356 | 70 | 427 |

| | | | |
|------|------|-----|------|
| 2008 | 329 | 112 | 440 |
| 2009 | 159 | 217 | 376 |
| 2010 | 301 | 219 | 521 |
| 2011 | 740 | 221 | 961 |
| 2012 | 548 | 274 | 822 |
| 2013 | 1397 | 364 | 1762 |
| 2014 | 1589 | 493 | 2082 |
| 2015 | 272 | 447 | 718 |
| 2016 | 512 | 367 | 879 |
| 2017 | 679 | 214 | 893 |

Sources: Calculated on aid Reports & Documents of MOFA, QFD, WB and & OECD

Apparently, many regional events, such as Arab Spring and its associated conflicts, wars on Gaza, in 2008 and 2014 and war on Lebanon in 2006 have triggered Qatar to increase its aid spectrum. That has resulted in increasing the number of recipient countries as well as the humanitarian and development programmes. Qatar's aim to reaching widespread geographical areas has widen its aid allocation criteria to include non-traditional aid recipients allowing for new political, socioeconomic and cultural interests to be integrated in its aid policy. For example, though Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE have been disbursing huge sums of foreign aid years ahead, the innovative aid approach taken by Qatar in its foreign aid policy allowed it to stay more relevant in the global context (Khatib, 2013).

The global recognition of Qatar's role in the international aid regime has strengthened its constant aid disbarments and aid flows bilaterally and multilaterally. On 22 April 2016 Qatar became a Participant in the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) as a provider of substantial concessional finance for development co-operation and humanitarian aid (OECD, 2018). That has enhanced the country's involvement in international aid regime and its associated frameworks as DAC is the leading forum for providers of development cooperation and humanitarian aid. As a donor, Qatar's relation with big and medium donors as well as with multi-lateral institutions is progressively reflected in its policy and aid allocations.

Also, the diversification of Qatari aid supported sectors for development and humanitarian purposes has denoted Qatar's holistic aid frameworks. That has enhanced its position portraying its strategic intent towards global development and showing its humanitarian and global values as a modern open state. The growing capacity of Qatari aid institutions, both the formal (state agencies) and informal (charities and NGOs), has effectively contributed in setting this extra feature of Qatar as an emerging "Muslim" donor.

3.2 Evolution of Qatar's Foreign Aid Policy

Qatar foreign aid policy (QFAP) has gone through certain stages since the country's independence. In this regard, QFAP remains a clear reflection of the state's foreign policy. First, it was in complete alignment with Saudi aid policy since independence till 1995, then Qatar started to follow an activist foreign policy approach and to be a major regional actor in development assistance and humanitarian aid. That shift impacted QFAP and made it framed within the principles and objectives of Qatar's foreign policy agenda (Kharas, 2015).

The origins of QFAP can be traced back to the period of post-Qatar independence from Britain in 1971. The evolution of QFAP in the first years of independence derived directly from the regional atmosphere and the financial revenues that came to the Emirate and the region following the discovery of oil. The values of aid-giving were based on sharing wealth with Arab and Muslim brothers (Neumayer, 2002, 2003; Villanger, 2007). As relations with the five other member states of the GCC have been a central feature of Qatar foreign policy, pre-dating the formation of the Council itself in 1981, QFAP was crucially influenced by their aid policies and frameworks. The very similar political and socio-economic characteristics of GCC countries have made them viewed, by many international organizations and academia, as individual entity in terms of aid policy and donorship (Tok, 2015).

Qatar's maintenance of solidarity within the Arab World formed an important milestone for its aid policy. In formulating the policy, the Qatari Government used aid wherever possible to support issues considered as significant to the entire Arab world. This was a common implicit

and visible regional policy with a tendency in aid-giving that Gulf donor states followed since the initiation of their donorship. Similarly, supporting fellow Muslim countries and communities was prioritised in Qatar's aid. Islamic beliefs, values and concepts played a major role in setting this tendency in QFAP, especially with the socio-religious aspects that occurred and stigmatised the Muslim world at that period.

In fact, the era of Hamad Al-Thani formed a crucial change for the foundation, evolution and development of QFAP as a part of the overall progression and growth that occurred in the country (Roberts, 2016). Such transformation can be obviously seen in two aspects: first, the QFAP framework deviated from tradition and the usual alignment with GCC and Saudi Arabia in particular, and second, the expansion of Qatari aid geographically accompanied by a drastic increase in its volumes. Apparently, that change is attributed to the intention of the state to rank itself in a prestigious position as a regional and global player and the instrumental role of aid in obtaining this position. The QFAP was formed in line with the new country's active policy, and to serve its interventionist aspects such as conflict mediation and global development efforts.

In the course of the interviews, most of the respondents referred to Emir Hamad as the "Father of the current policies formulation and process" in the Qatari state. This consensus has revealed the remarkable impact of this leader in developing and setting policy aspects in the country, which has led to the current position Qatar's acquiring (Kamrava, 2015). An interesting observation about this consensus is that all participants mentioned his name when talking about the policy making and process related to the country's foreign aid. Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim AlThani was also mentioned as a pioneer figure in setting aid policy as a part of the new country's active foreign policy agenda.

Apparently, the recent political power moves in the Middle East have contributed to the current setting of the QFAP. The Arab progression drove Qatar to introduce a broad foreign aid strategy to aid and impact the Arab nations to its maximum extent (Khatib, 2014). Qatar began financing the neighboring nations like Egypt, Sudan, Yemen and Palestine. Gradually, and with the move in the geo-political nexus in the Mid-

dle East, the emirate likewise acquired a chance to grow its aid programmes beyond the provincial framework. The “Arab Spring” that started to shape the Middle East region by the end of 2010, was obviously a crucial time for the insurgence of QFAP facilitating Qatar’s tactic of “pragmatic opportunism,” (Khatib, 2013).

Technically, the country’s foreign aid has witnessed a rapid increase in its size since the emergence of the Arab Spring (Kharas, 2015; Manjang, 2015; Zureik, 2017). According to the data reports of the UN OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS) and the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Qatar has folded its aid especially after 2010, especially for Arab countries such as Egypt, Syria and Palestine (OECD, 2018). This has been confirmed in the Qatari foreign aid reports in the past years. Notably, the radical increase in aid size has been accompanied and contributed to the development of related strategies and frameworks as well as institutions.

Qatar’s active involvement in international cooperation and development efforts has influenced the development and enhancement of aid policy and its institutional capacity. For example, the participation of Qatar in the OECD DAC, has enabled the countries to benefit the organizations and other members experience in aid policies, practices and frameworks (ibid, 2018,). Besides adoption of international development outlines such as MDGs and SDGs and commitment towards global aid frameworks such as DAC and aid effectiveness, Qatar’s relations with big donors and aid organisations have contributed to developing its foreign aid policy. The current vision of QFAP has identified objectives and designed frameworks that represent the country’s ideology, values, and foreign policy principles as well as a wide range of actors. QFAP is evidently a cumulative outcome of various historical and social factors and political process which includes the willingness of the country leadership.

3.3 Motives of Qatar’s Foreign Aid Policy

There are several debates about the foreign aid motivations. In fact, foreign aid, which is inherently altruistic, is never to have been given as an honest gift but given for goals and interests of donor countries

(Hancock, 1992; Mehmet, 1999; Cohen et al., 2007; Alesina & Dollar, 2000; Amoako-Tuffour 2008; Healy, 2010; Lancaster, 2015) . Likewise, the State of Qatar has several distinct motives for aid giving and uses aid to advance its respective national interests. These motives can be of political, social and economic nature alongside other significant motives related to security and survival. A diverse set of values, norms, circumstances, and interests influence Qatar foreign aid policy, which reflect the decisions on scope and distribution of aid. The extent and relevance of these motives vary from one recipient country to another or from one situation to another and to understand that, we need to examine the main dimensions of these motives, which are detailed in the following subsections.

3.3.1 Political Motives

Political interests are constantly observed to be one of the significant motives behind the foreign aid policy of each donor. In the case of Qatar, achieving foreign policy goals and diplomacy is the main political purpose for aid giving. Qatar offers aid to reward allies and build strategic alliances in different parts of the world. Aid has been utilised by Qatar as a diplomatic tool both to assert its links with many Arab countries and countries in Africa and Asia. Qatar also has been using its foreign aid to express certain political values and principles in the foreign policy of the country such as solidarity with Palestinian statehood and supporting the Arab uprising movements. Politically also, Qatar is using aid as a key tool for the country to assert and exercise its growing international influence and to possess soft power elements regionally and globally (Roberts, 2012; Khatib, 2013; Kamrava, 2011). Aid disbursement to countries like Eritrea, Cambodia, Haiti, and Nepal and supporting peace efforts and reconstruction projects in many fragile economies, conflict-driven and war-torn countries are significant evidence in this regard.

As Qatar is trying to fulfil and maintain its role as an ambitious regional player, foreign aid is a key foreign policy instrument to enhance the Qatari political values and establish allies. Qatar has used its foreign aid to support those countries which represent these values and went through democratic transition in the “Arab Spring” such as Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. For example, Qatar supported many development projects

in Tunisia, including a USD one-billion loan, as a sign of alignment with the country after the “Arab Spring” (Antwi-Boateng, 2013). Egypt, during the Morsi era, was favoured in Qatar’s aid allocation that it received 3 billion dollars loan received as well as five free shipments of liquefied petroleum gas at a time that the West was hesitant to grant Morsi government financial assistance. Likewise, Qatar has used foreign aid for building up allies and supporting them in many other cases such as in Turkey, Yemen, Iraq, and Morocco.

In addition, Qatar’s efforts and partnership in global development are also considered politically motivated. Its solid footing in the international arena is reflected in many benefits for Qatari politics, and foreign policy agenda in particular. Qatar’s eagerness and willingness to partner with the UN and other international organisations, is an essential element of the country’s foreign policy (Al-Attiyah, 2013). Foreign aid, assigned for development and humanitarian purposes, has been a key aspect in achieving such goals. The country’s foreign aid is more influential when associated with areas such as conflict mediation and peace efforts as Qatar usually uses the provision of financial support, though a carrot and stick style, to bring the conflicting parties together for mediation.

It is apparent that the UN has been one of the main platforms for Qatar to establish allies and friendly relations with many countries. Countries that maintain diplomatic relations with Qatar and which support Qatari positions in the UN voting system and acquire membership in the UN agencies are more likely to receive Qatari aid (Cooper & Momani, 2011). This approach at the UN has been a well-recognised pattern for traditional western donors (Alesina & Dollar, 2000). Similarly, this has been a common aid behavior of the GCC donors (Neumayer, 2003; Villanger, 2007; Shushan & Marcoux, 2011). Qatar’s aid is observed to be disbursed more to countries with good bilateral relations and in-consensus positions in the UN system such as Turkey, Tunisia and Morocco. This has strengthened Qatar’s positions when leading certain UN initiatives and resolutions as well as in acquiring managerial seats in various UN agencies.

As using foreign aid to achieve foreign policy goals is a prevalent behaviour of all donors, Qatar has embarked on this approach especially

with the change of Emir in 1995. As Qatar went through an unprecedented change in its foreign policy, increasing its soft power has been a significant aspect of this foreign policy transition. Qatar has prioritised soft power generating policies and invested resources to brand the country as a rising soft power hub in the region (Peterson, 2006; Kamrava, 2015). In addition to other soft power instruments, foreign aid has been an effective and integral part of the targeted soft power policy. With its new foreign policy doctrine, Qatar has been more aggressive and ambitious to score regional and global influence using all possible ways including aid (Khatib, 2013; Antwi-Boateng, 2013). From statements of Qatari foreign policy elites, as well as empirical evidence from analysis of Qatari foreign aid since 1995, one can conclude that Qatar has been trying to use aid to increase its soft power towards targeted states, nations or groups of individuals. For example, Somalia has been a major recipient for Qatari aid as an allied country as well as an expression of alignment with Turkey, which is a core ally of Qatar.

3.3.2 *Security Motives*

As a small state situated in a politically volatile region, the State of Qatar places high importance on its security and survival. The location of Qatar in the middle of an area dominated by political and military rivals such as Saudi Arabia and Iran as well as its abundant resources and small population make security one of the primary concerns for the country (Abdullah, 2014; Roberts, 2016). Thus, one of the real concerns for Qatar is to remove the foreign risks that hamper the uprightness and power of the country. In this respect, there are both regional and global pressures that push Qatar to develop a solid security framework in parallel with its prosperity and development progress. The security notion of the state of Qatar does not revolve only around the external threats but goes further to affect its survival and existence. Kuwait's invasion by Iraq in 1990 was a significant lesson that many small states in the region, including Qatar, have effectively learnt from and considered in their policies, relations and frameworks.

Internal security and cohesion is another motivation for Qatar's aid giving due to the evident demographic realities. The small size of Qa-

tari citizens in the overall country's population, constitute around 15%, and the big size of the expatriate population, estimated at 85%, form another security dimension in the Qatari aid practices. (Please see appendix no. III). As most foreign expatriates are from low or middle-income countries such as the Philippines, India, Bangladesh, and Nepal, Qatar chose to strengthen its bilateral relations with these countries using aid as a major instrument. Supporting development programmes and participating in relief and humanitarian efforts in their countries of origin help ease tensions that might exist with the expatriate population, especially with the constant international criticism Qatar has been facing related to immigrant labour rights. Thus, Qatar's aid disbursement to its resident expatriates' countries has been clearly noticed in the past two decades. For example, QFD has been constantly financing development projects in Nepal, Philippines, Bangladesh and India. Qatari organisations also, such as the Qatar Charity and Qatar Red Crescent have operating missions and regular programmes in those countries.

Qatar aims to protect itself from the perils of anonymity and vulnerability, as small states tend to be more concerned with their survival than larger states (Browning, 2006). Thus, Qatar pursued a classic vulnerable small-state policy aimed either at pleasing as many players as possible and foreign aid was one of the main instruments to achieve this goal. The constant increase in Qatar's multilateral aid and involvement in the global aid system can directly be linked to the state's security dimension. This is expected in small states politics where they cooperate with international organisations to shape an 'international political culture', thereby promoting attitudes favourable to their survival (Keohane; 2006). Accordingly, security considerations have influenced Qatari donations to the UN and other international organisations, which coincided with regional crises that risked creating chaos and influxes of refugees. For example, Qatar has constantly funded UNICEF, WHO and UNHRC programmes in various neighboring countries such as in Jordan, Lebanon and Yemen. This has been confirmed by many Qatari officials emphasizing that humanitarian and development aid can lead to avoiding future immigration and collapse of states which will affect other neighboring countries (MOFA, 2018b).

3.3.3 *Sociocultural and Religious Motives*

The socio-cultural background of Qatar plays an important role in setting the QFAP and its related aid-giving patterns. Such a motive actually evolves around two interrelated dimensions; locally, related to peoples' values and beliefs, and externally related to the state policies and foreign relations. Qataris, as Muslims and Arabs, try to portray their values of Islamic solidarity and charity and Arabic generosity. The Qatari state gives a high consideration to this culture and its values and norms in its foreign aid policy. As per QNV 2030, strengthening the cultural role of Qatar has been clearly emphasised as a key element in the country's foreign policy and external relations. Foreign aid plays a significant role in promoting Qatari culture and cultural values. This role is demonstrated in two aspects: enhancing Qatar's cultural values as an Arab and Muslim nation and boosting cultural development of the country. The utilisation of foreign aid to advance cultural character, philosophy, and image is a persistent approach used by Qatar as a rising soft power.

In such a manner, the Qatari elite believes that soft power is also associated with some other concepts of cultural affinity, geographical proximity, historical and religious companionship, and social imagery. The foreign aid strategy contributes a key segment to grant delicate power resources and build up a global picture for Qatar's cultural values such as generosity, ideology and philosophy, integrity and solidarity. Definitely, this will create cultural fascination and increase its attractiveness towards the country, especially among a particular audience, which is essential element for regional powers to obtain soft power (Nye, 1990).

Moreover, the religious factor is an effective force on charitable giving in Qatar. The principles of faith charitable giving certainly emphasise humanitarianism in various ways (Ferris, 2011). The principle of charitable giving is preserved in Islam and manifested in various forms such as Zakat and Sadaqa . Religiously, such principles in charity giving would be based on solidarity with the poor and needy, particularly Muslims, and that is explained in the persistent public campaigns, of Qatari organisations and NGOs, which are mainly targeting Muslim countries. Such preferences in people's aid giving is evidently supported by the

state especially that most of the Qatari individuals are rich which makes them persuasive local donors.

Moreover, the Qatari government and people portray that the provision of aid is a moral obligation based on humanitarian principles, regardless of who the recipients' background. Qatari officials claim that most of Qatari aid goes to poor countries based on moral commitment which is an essential element of the Qatari philosophy and culture. This genuine humanitarian concern, despite other motives, is underlining a substantial volume of Qatar, and GCC donors, aid contributions (Barakat and Zyck, 2010).

Evidently, QFAP is influenced by a set of cultural and religious norms, ideas and values of the Qatari state and Qatari people. Such a set contribute in determining the country's course of action and the orientation of its policies. Although the lack of democratic legitimacy within the autocratic Arab regimes, especially in the monarchy GCC states, may mean that the influence of domestic public opinion on foreign policy decisions is negligible, issues related to solidarity with Arabs and Muslims span across polities and constrain individual leaders' and governments' foreign policy decisions (Telhami, 1993). This makes the state give a considerable attention to peoples' cultural values and norms when formulating and implementing policies.

3.3.4 *Economic Motives*

Although Qatar is not an industrialised country that seeks recipient countries' markets and raw materials, securing stable long-term customers for its oil and gas exports is considered as a significant economic motive. Qatar also considers safe destinations for its foreign investments in both developed and developing countries using foreign aid as a tool to express its contribution as a rich country. In addition to that, Qatar, which relies heavily on trade, due to many geographical and natural reasons, seeks to strengthen its trade relations with many countries. Foreign aid plays a role in this issue as Qatar is keen to maintain its commercial relations with the major marketable partners especially those who are concerned with the stability and security of the region and Qatar in particular. Besides maintaining defence agreements and arms sales, Qatar

continues aid partnership with such countries to express friendship and alignment.

Thus, Qatar's relations with its commercial partners and potential investment destinations as well as Western industrialised countries, has been a key influential component in QFAP setting. Qatar is always looking for good investment opportunities, and the more stable countries in the region are, the better the opportunities. While Qatar can look selfish in trying to pursue lucrative investment opportunities, it should be seen as a win-win situation as recipient countries are often much more eager for foreign investment inflows. However, Qatar does not maintain the commercial-interest philosophy through strategies such as Tied-aid, which is practiced by the typical modern bilateral donors. As most of Qatar's aid is disbursed in the form of cash, no Qatari companies are involved in implementing any projects in the recipient countries.

3.4 Values of Qatar's Foreign Aid Policy.

Qatar has been constantly expressing that its foreign aid policy interventions are based on humanitarian and global values that are rooted in the people and the state of Qatar. This has been repeatedly stated by Qatari officials through all channels including official publications, media and international platforms. National documents such as QNV and NDS reveal that Qatar's involvement in international cooperation efforts is a representation of these values, in which they include moral and principle standards. The cultural and Islamic values are also integrated in Qatar's humanitarian framework through which the country is contributing to political, economic, developmental and humanitarian initiatives (MOFA, 2019). This propaganda, which is similar to that of many other donors, has been advocated in parallel with the rising soft power Qatar has been achieving in the past two decades.

On the ground, foreign aid has formed a practical method for Qatar to reflect these values and show endorsement of and commitment to the moral dimensions deemed in the foreign policy agenda. For example, the previous Foreign Minister of Qatar confirmed that Qatar's intervention in supporting other countries and people, including economic development, is not only political responsibility but moral duty (Al-Attiyah,

2013). Qatar claims that its global partnership efforts are aimed at improving people's well-being and development. Qatar has been showing the culture of humanitarianism in various aspects of its foreign aid policy such as conflict mediation, peace building and peace-keeping efforts, development cooperation and improving institutional capacity. The establishment of the Islamic Forum of International Humanitarian Law, in 2002, based in Qatar, was a clear example in this regard.

In practice, the country's engagements in the provision of development and humanitarian aid including active response to disasters and crises in various parts of the world has provided an extra opportunity for Qatar's foreign policy "humanitarian diplomacy". Creating a nexus between humanitarian action and the diplomatic tools is a heavily-used approach by Qatar in exploiting support for humanitarian operations and reaching vulnerable communities with full respect for fundamental humanitarian principles. The initiatives that Qatar has introduced in the UN for protection of children and youth and provision of education in emergencies as well as Qatar's negotiations with armed groups, in Syria for the sake of allowing delivery of humanitarian aid to certain cities are purely humanitarian diplomacy practices. Furthermore, Qatar's humanitarian operations in countries like Haiti, Japan, and USA as well as Pakistan, Syria and Somalia, have given a global dimension to Qatari aid and Qatari's principal values. Likewise, the humanitarian involvement of Qatari aid organisations, businesses and corporates, such as Qatar Airways, has embedded this impression especially in the systematic humanitarian initiatives.

Qatar's involvement in global aid regime activities, especially related to multi-lateral and humanitarian aspects, has given worldwide credibility to its principal values. Also, the international community's recognition of Qatar's contribution in the international aid regime, for example, its participatory membership in OECD DAC, has provided an extra certification to these values. QFAP has set a decent base for the state of Qatar to show that its humanitarian imperative forms an essential foreign policy driver. Qatar's engagement in development and humanitarian action with Western countries and UN agencies has, likewise, contributed to stretch a more global impression of its policy values.

Furthermore, in the course of the research process, it was obviously noticed that much of Qatari foreign aid and its policy are derived from the Qatari values, principles and cultural heritage. That has been stated clearly by various policy documents, reports and other sources including speeches of the Emir and statements of top government officials. For example, many of the state publications quote this statement for the Emir:

“...Qatar draws its momentum from its solid cultural heritage and adopts a policy of moderation and cultural and religious tolerance with all. We will spare no effort to spread the culture of peace, coexistence and acceptance of the other. We condemn all forms of extremism, violence and terrorism, whose roots must be addressed”

Such an emphasis on its values of supporting world's welfare and development, obliges the Qatar to give high consideration for these values and ideas in determining its foreign aid policy. Similarly, the Qatari government is extensively emphasising on morals and ethics, in its propaganda and media including Aljazeera Channel. Such display obliges states to take moral aspects into account when determining their foreign policy issues (Hoffmann, 1981). This makes Qatari state ideology and philosophy as a determinant of foreign policy especially when it compels others to subscribe to those values and ideas.

Accordingly, in the course of the interviews, most respondents confirmed this argument and mentioned brought abundant examples. One policymaker said:

“The country's aid policy is highly correlated with the country's cultural and religious values. Peoples heritage, such as giving and helping, are determining aid size and scope. That is seen in the huge amount of donations given through the country's charities such as, Qatar Charity”,

Evidently, as an Arab and Muslim country, cultural, religious and social norms and ideas are affecting various aspects of life in Qatar (Khatib, 2014; Kayaoğlu, 2015). Besides its Permanent Constitution, Qatar's legal system is based on Islamic and civil law which widely dominates public and social life. Also, one very related aspect that is noticed in Qatari society, in the past three decades is their decent self-perception and self-esteem. The revelation of the energy and oil repositories and the radical increase in the income encouraged a financial blast and as such, the Qatari society effectively moved its course from a poor itinerant society to a well off one with rich cultural underpinnings (Scharfenort, 2012). Such change is reflected in various aspects of their social life and moral values which directly affect the country's involvement in international aid system and QFAP.

Moreover, the development and modernization, especially with the state intention to introduce Qatar as liberal country as a part of its soft power attainment, made Qatari people more integrated in the world system. This has impacted the state and people's obligation towards the global challenges including aid policy values and other related issues. In maintaining these values of Qatari society, the Qatari state gives high considerations to the people views and values "Public Opinion", although it is not a democratic country. Thus, the socio-economic and cultural background of Qatar acts as a determinant in shaping its foreign aid policy.

Apparently, Qatar's political and sociocultural motivations and ideologies are reflected as values and principles in the QFAP forming its independent and progressive path. These values are generated from valid and pragmatic factors related to the country's social and political background. As Qatar constantly expresses that it draws its policy momentum from its sociocultural heritage and religious tolerance, related political and sociocultural values are well adopted in aid policy as the case in other policies and initiatives in the country.

In the Qatari case, policy values and ideas have been playing a very pivotal role. They have prioritized Qatar's distant interests and collective action regarding aid giving, including policy outlines and objectives. Policy values are the foundational principles that guide institutions

and different actors in initiating aid operations and framing its operations and activities. Throughout the research process, it was obviously noticed that much of Qatari foreign aid allocations and disbursements are underpinned by those political, social, cultural, and religious values. For example, aid was constantly utilized as a tool to support Arab and Muslim causes which reflects the religious and cultural value of solidarity with fellow brothers like Palestinians and Rohingya people.

Eventually, values play dual role as a motivation and as a determinant in QFAP. Values and ideas set moral and pragmatic aspects of Qatari aid and influenced other related factors. This makes Qatar's involvement in global partnership for development and humanitarian relief efforts to be underpinned by the country's political, altruistic and philanthropic values in achieving international development and welfare and prosperity. Determining role of values in Qatari aid can be seen also in the active engagement of Qatari NGOs in the country's aid

4. Conclusion

Qatar's aid has gone through two main stages since the independence of the country till its current shape. The change of political leadership in 1995 has influenced Qatar's foreign aid and its policy especially with the country's ambitious foreign policy agenda and growing soft power regionally and globally. Qatar's aid has radically changed in terms of quantity and number of recipient countries as well as establishing a concrete aid policy that comprise strategic and pragmatic objectives. Qatar's foreign aid policy is mainly motivated by political, security and socio-cultural purposes with minor economic derives. Such precedence has made Qatar's foreign aid policy more oriented and influenced by Qatar's political and sociocultural values such as humanitarian global values and solidarity with Arabs and Muslims.

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