



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i4/13068>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i4/13068

**Received:** 06 February 2022, **Revised:** 10 March 2022, **Accepted:** 27 March 2022

**Published Online:** 03 April 2022

**In-Text Citation:** (Hammadi et al., 2022)

**To Cite this Article:** Hammadi, H. M. Al, Bayouomi, K. A., & Rosman, A. S. Bin. (2022). The Impact of Abolishing the Sponsorship System (Kafala) on the Peaceful Co-existence of Population Groups in Qatar In light of the Migration Goals of the Alliance of Civilizations. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(4), 388–408.

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Vol. 12, No. 4, 2022, Pg. 388 – 408

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ISSN: 2222-6990

## The Impact of Abolishing the Sponsorship System (Kafala) on the Peaceful Co-existence of Population Groups in Qatar In light of the Migration Goals of the Alliance of Civilizations

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### Abstract

Qatar is one of the most attractive countries for immigrant labour. The sponsorship system (Kafala) was introduced in the 1960s, regulating expatriate employees' affairs. In recent years, many requests for the abolition of the sponsorship System (Kafala) in line with reform calls for achieving more peaceful co-existence as a lofty goal of the Alliance of Civilizations. Qatar implemented the abolition of the sponsorship system (Kafala) in 2018. This study aims to identify the impact of the abolition of the sponsorship system from the employee and the employer perspective, based on the descriptive-analytical and comparative approach and using a survey as a research instrument. The data were collected from 604 expatriate employees and 64 employers. The study's findings revealed that the abolition of the sponsorship system (Kafala) generally satisfied expatriate labours while local employers were less satisfied. This study recommends that the presence of a sponsor (Kafeel) should be optional for expatriate employees.

**Keywords:** Sponsorship System (Kafala), Coexistence, Population Groups, Qatar, Alliance of Civilizations

### Introduction

The Arab Gulf countries are among the best destinations for attracting immigrant labours because they provide wide-range job opportunities with high salaries. The oil wealth of the Gulf countries in the 1950s has resulted in a comprehensive development in various fields in the Arab Gulf countries. Since the national workforce is not sufficient to carry out the large development projects due to the small population of the Gulf countries, this led to the attraction of a foreign labour force to contribute to the renaissance of these countries. Hence, most of the migration to the Arab Gulf states was voluntary migration to search for work and improve the economic situation of the individual and the family.

Qatar is one of the most attractive Arab Gulf countries for the immigrant labour force contributing to the comprehensive development in all sectors, including the infrastructure, economic, social, urban, and service. According to the Planning and Statistics Authority (PSA), Qatar has the highest percentage of the expatriate labour force globally, with 89.5% in 2019. However, this massive percentage of the foreign labour force coexists with distinct and diverse religious, cultural, and social backgrounds, sometimes even contradictory ones (QCAC, 2010).

According to the United Nations Population Fund, Arab States Office (UNFPA) stated that the population of Qatar is growing from year to year, which is due to the increase in the proportion of expatriate labour force migrating to Qatar in search of work to improve their livelihood. UNFPA indicated that the proportion of expatriates' labour force is 89.5%, while 10.5% for local citizens (UNFPA, 2019).

The large proportion of expatriates labours is because, in 2010, the State of Qatar succeeded in organizing the 2022 FIFA World Cup Final. This major event required the work of infrastructure projects and the construction of large stadiums, facilities, and hotels to receive the world's guests attending this event. This event is one of the most significant reasons for increasing the country's population. Qatar's Economic Prospects report issued in 2019 by the Planning and Statistics Authority reported that the annual increase in the country's population from 2010 to 2020 amounted to 1.2% (Dawam, 2020). Their average growth rate reached 4.8% from 2015 to 2019 (IOM, 2020).

Qatar enacted new laws to manage and supervise expatriate labour to guarantee social, economic, political, and cultural security like other Gulf countries. One of the most significant laws were introduced in the 1960s of the last century was the sponsorship system (Kafala) to regulate and control the entry and exit of expatriates labour.

### **The Sponsorship System (Kafala)**

The "Kafala system" is a legal system that identifies the relationship between the foreign worker and the employer (QLP, 2009a). Every person (expatriate) who wishes to reside in Qatar for work must have the approval to enter the country (Visa) and a sponsor (Kafeel). According to the law, the sponsor shall be a Qatari citizen, an expatriate residing in Qatar, or a legal person (company/institution) whose head office is in Qatar or has a subsidiary administration. The sponsor (Kafeel) must be qualified to bear the consequences of sponsorship imposed by the law regulating it and to abide by the work of the expatriate for him and under his supervision.

The sponsorship (Kafala) includes obtaining a legal residence permit (professional Visa) for expatriate labour and renewing it every two years. The employer (Kafeel) provides workers accommodation, food, transportation, and health insurance. In turn, the worker committed to working only for his sponsor (Kafeel) and is not allowed to move to another job without the approval of his sponsor, except if the sponsor grants the worker a secondment for 6 months. This secondment is renewable. The country's entry and exit are done with a letter of approval from the employer (NHRC, 2009). In other words, the Kafala system allows local citizens to employ migrant workers. The employees agree to relinquish some of their political and social rights to the employer. The Kafala system creates a significant power

imbalance, favouring local employers over migrant workers. As a result, migrant workers are at risk of falling prey to human trafficking and forced labour (Ryu, 2021).

Therefore, voices have been raised in recent years calling for abolishing the sponsorship system (Kafala system). They considered the sponsorship system a fundamental cause of social exclusion, a barrier to integrating expatriate workers, and implicit exclusion exploitation of workers' rights. Since Qatar is a responsible member of the international community, in 2016, the government of Qatar has been issued reforms steps and enacted new laws to preserve the rights of migrant workers in light of international agreements and labour standards. These reforms included abolishing the sponsorship system (Kafala) and replacing it with employment contracts between the worker and the employer.

### **Abolishing the Sponsorship System (Kafala)**

In line with the requirements of the International labour organization (ILO), Qatar officially announced the abolition of the sponsorship system (Kafala) on December 12, 2016. The decision was to replace the Kafala system with an employment contract to improve the expatriate workers' living conditions and protect their rights. The abolition sponsorship system was a part of a reforms package issued to improve Qatar's labour market.

However, this law was implemented in 2018. Thus, the migrant worker has the right to exit and enter Qatar without obtaining prior permission from the employer and allowing them to change their workplace freely without requesting a certificate of objection from the employer. Table 1 compares the sponsorship laws before and after the abolition:

Table 1 compares the sponsorship laws before and after the abolition

<b>Procedures of Sponsorship System (Kafala)</b>	<b>Abolishing the Sponsorship System (Kafala)</b>
Every migrant worker granted permission to enter Qatar must have a sponsor (NHRC, 2009).	According to the state's laws, the expatriate worker does not need a sponsor but a work contract between him and the recruiter (QLP, 2009b).
The sponsor is obligated to complete and renew residency procedures.	The expatriate worker can renew the residence visa without referring to the employer.
The expatriate worker is obligated to work for the sponsor only, except in the case of a secondment by the sponsor.	The expatriate worker can change the employer before the expiry of his contract without obtaining a letter of objection subject to further notice to the employer of the period specified by law.
The sponsor is obligated to provide a commendation, food, transportation and health insurance to the worker, following the decent work standards by the International Labor Organization.	The conditions written in the employment contract determine the obligations of the employer and the expatriate worker.
The sponsor shall be responsible for the obligations owed by the sponsor if he does not have money.	The employer is not responsible for the financial obligations of the migrant worker unless it is stipulated in the contract
The expatriate worker must obtain a temporary or permanent exit permit from the employer.	An expatriate worker (subject to the Labor Law) shall have the right to exit and enter Qatar without obtaining prior permission from the employer, subject to further notice of the period specified by law. "On January 16, 2020, Minister of Interior Decision No. 95 of 2019 was issued, cancelling exit permits for all expatriates who are not subject to the labour law in the State of Qatar".
The sponsor may send back the expatriate worker to his country upon the expiry of his residence or the issuance of an order to deport him.	An expatriate worker may not be excluded or deported except for the state's legal reasons specified and approved.

Therefore, this study attempts to assess the experience of migration in Qatar and focus on voluntary migration as the main factor in the presence of population diversity in the State of Qatar and investigate the impact of abolishing the sponsorship system (Kafala) on promoting peaceful co-existence among population groups living in Qatar.

### **Definitions of Research Study**

**Population Groups:** Refers to human groups that live in one place and at the same time and culturally and religiously different (QLP, 2009a).

**Peaceful co-existence:** Refers to creating an understanding between peoples away from tensions, war, and violence (QLP, 2009a).

**The operational definition in this study of peaceful co-existence:** refers to a migrant worker as a person who carries out a paid activity in a country where he is not one of its citizens (OHCHR, 1990).

On the other hand, Qatar has a group of objectives consistent with the goals of the Alliance of Civilizations concerning immigrant labour as a section of international migration and legal migrants (MoFA, 2018). First, migration is directed to play a positive role in introducing civilizations and achieving rapprochement between peoples. Second, migration should be an opportunity for positive co-existence between different religious, cultural, and ethnic groups. Third, migration reduces intercultural tensions, especially between religious and cultural minorities. Fourth, migration is direct to preserve the identity and cultural and religious privacy of minorities in their countries of residence. These objectives will be adopted in discussing the data and the statistical analysis results.

### Literature Review

In his critical analysis, Arif (2020) described why Qatar moved towards integrating migrant labours. Arif (2020) claimed that the sponsorship system (Kafala) is one of the reasons for social exclusion and a barrier to the integration of expatriates. No matter how many years the expatriate has resided in the Gulf countries or the degree of his job, he does not obtain permanent residency. There are children of the second and third generations of expatriate workers born and raised, and their affiliations might be to the Gulf countries. However, they still need annual approval for the renewal of their residency by their sponsor. They do not have the right to permanent residence or request citizenship. The matter is nothing more than an employment contract between the expatriate and the employer forever (Arif, 2020).

Similarly, a study by Rahman (2010) indicated the negative aspects of the sponsorship system (Kafala) that exists in the Gulf countries. He described it as a system of slavery and servitude with a new name for the expatriate workers, which amounted to 17 million expatriates in the Arab Gulf countries. This system robs workers of freedom of movement, grievance, or resignation. Thus, It is exposed to Gulf countries for criticism from international labour organization (ILO), human rights organizations, and the international pressure to protect workers' rights.

In another study by Storbeck (2011), it was shown that the historical relations, geographical proximity, and surplus workforce led to the interdependence between India and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). India relies on the immigration of Indian workers to reduce the unemployment rate, improve their living conditions, and the remittances that Indian workers send to their families in India. In return, the GCC countries depend on the cheap Indian workforce adaptable to all living forms to fill the national workforce shortage and increase its developmental projects. The study concluded that since the Gulf states cannot be dispensed with the expatriate workforce, in the long run, the GCC will have to make concessions and take steps toward achieving a balance between the foreign workforce, which life and development in the GCC countries depend greatly.

Storbeck (2011) pointed out that the expatriate Indians were subjected to exploitation, harassment, and contempt. Their increasing numbers in the Gulf countries and their demands



threatened both sides. He believed that the interdependence between India and the Gulf countries represented a curse on both sides.

A recent study by Robinson (2021) described the sponsorship system (Kafala system) as a new system of slavery and an imbalance in the power centers between employers and migrant labours and harmed the worker. This description agrees with the International Labor Organization that employers in the GCC countries and Jordan and Lebanon exploit migrant workers through the sponsorship system. The worker cannot move, exit, and enter the country except through them. The worker cannot change his workplace except with the employer's approval, and the employers have the right to withhold workers' passports, entry visas, and residence.

Additionally, the United Nations report 2020 pointed out the racism in Qatar against dark-skinned people and South Asian workers. The report indicated that foreign workers of all income levels reported that their salaries depend on their nationality despite obtaining professional certificates. The report also shows that significant changes were made in 2020 to the sponsorship system (Kafala) because Qatar is organizing the World Cup 2022, where the international community monitors its preparations for this international event. The changes included abolishing employers' written consent to a worker to change employers. Besides, in 2021, Qatar set a minimum wage and tightened penalties for employers withholding wages.

Moreover, the Government of Qatar established an online platform to provide job change notifications and launched an awareness campaign to inform workers and employers of the reforms. The government said nearly eighty thousand successful job transfers by 2020. However, workers reported that they still faced obstacles in changing jobs, including administrative delays and threats from sponsors. It is not enough, Amnesty International has warned that the reforms do little to protect domestic workers, and a backlash from employers has led to concerns that Qatar may reverse the decision to abolish the kafala system.

In February 2021, the country's Shura Council, whose responsible for issuing the legislative laws, recommended limiting the number of times a worker can change jobs and increasing the percentage of workers who need an exit permit to leave the country. In addition, Human Rights Watch criticized Qatar for continuing to impose harsh penalties for absconding, refusing to allow workers to renew their residency permits, and not adequately punishing wage violations. On the other hand, the report cited some reforms in Saudi Arabia's sponsorship system (Kafala) In 2021. For example, Saudi Arabia began allowing migrant workers to leave the country without the sponsor's permission.

The United Nations report 2020 concluded that despite the supporters of the kafala system who see the Kafala system as economically beneficial for migrant workers. In contrast, the countries of origin prefer the kafala system to remain because their economies depend on the financial transfers of these workers. Many global voices, including the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), strongly recommend abolishing the sponsorship system. They claimed that the reform in the system would not be enough because there is a gap between law and implementation that must be avoided.

Similarly, another recent comparative study by Zahra (2015) between the six Arabic Gulf countries in the sponsorship system (Kafala) legislated in the 1960s of the last century to regulate the relationship between employers and migrant workers, and the reforms recently adopted in the last ten years. The study revealed that the GCC countries' sponsorship systems (Kafala) are structurally and functionally similar due to GCC countries' economic, social, and political conditions. Furthermore, the similarity of the reasons that called for attracting immigrant workers to participate in building infrastructure for these countries, especially after the discovery of oil, as well as because of the similar challenges faced by the six GCC in terms of the increase in the number of expatriates over the number of citizens in these countries, except for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the Gulf states agree to name migrant workers as expatriate workers, as foreign workers come with a temporary work contract, which is the basis of the sponsorship system (Kafala).

The study indicated that the GCC countries had taken more significant steps in amending the sponsorship system that leads to better protection for migrant workers, under pressure from international organizations for the rights of migrant workers and human rights. For example, Bahrain started and, followed by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), eased restrictions on sponsorship (Kafala) transfer, leading to greater workforce freedom. The worker, Kuwait was the first to grant enforceable domestic workers' rights, followed by Qatar and the UAE in 2017.

The study concluded that the issues are based on the sponsorship system in the six GCC would require more significant changes at the legislative level with new procedures to activate those changes to ensure their proper implementation. The study by Zahra (2019) and Robison (2021) agreed that even with the progress of reforms of the sponsorship system (Kafala), there might be an implementation gap. They pointed out that it still needs more legislative steps to implement the reform steps properly.

Likewise, the study by Glind et al (2017) discusses the concept of the sponsorship system (kafala) leads to an imbalance of power between employers and migrant workers by delegating responsibility and authority to employers over the migration, residence, employment, entry and exit of the migrant worker, which creates an imbalance between the rights of workers and employers. This impedes the movement of work and movement in the local market. It also presents a series of calls for reform of the current kafala systems, reforming the relations between migrant workers and employers in the Middle East, and calling for the abolition of the kafala system that could contribute triple benefits for governments, employers, and migrant workers. Among these recommendations is that the worker is responsible for the work visa and entry to the country of destination, residence permits, freedom of movement in the labour market, and freedom to terminate the work contract and exit from a country. Besides, follow the principles and standards of the Organization for Migration and the International Labor Organization to promote fair migration.

On the other hand, Glind et al (2017) listed the benefits of abolishing the sponsorship system, including supporting the resettlement policy similar to the Western countries. The resettlement policy contributes to improving labour market economies, creating an economy based on knowledge, increasing productivity, and ranking higher in the global



competitiveness index, which may attract more foreign investments and international events. It may also improve workers' performance and enhance their capabilities. It may create more competitiveness and enrollment of citizens in the private sector and create dynamic national labour markets. It also leads to the protection of workers' rights, the provision of higher wages and better working conditions to obtain skilled labour, and the reduction of full care responsibility and burdensome costs on employers. Understanding emotional and cognitive processes can help researchers to better understand the traits of skilled labour and burdensome costs on employers (see Alsharif et al., 2021a; 2021b; 2021c; 2021e; 2021f).

On the other hand, The study by Malit and Naufal (2016) pointed out the conflicting information that reaches migrant workers (especially domestic workers) that shows a lack of accurate and complete information in the destination countries. The study confirms that this information came from five sources: the governments of the origin countries and destination countries, employment agencies (which are managed by sub-contractors), employers, and social networks, which are not compatible with each other. In addition, lack of awareness of many expatriate workers and ignorance of migration regulations and the rights of the migrant worker led to his exploitation and the loss of his rights. The study concluded that the difference in information is due to the absence of a bilateral agreement specifying the details of immigration conditions between the sending and receiving countries.

To conclude, the researcher supports the two previous studies that the sponsorship system is a system of slavery that the Gulf countries adhere to when bringing in expatriate workers. The sponsor controls the worker completely, so the worker cannot move to another job without a letter of objection from the sponsor even if the contract period has expired. The difference in salaries and wages is huge between the expatriate and the local citizen for the same work. The sponsor can deport the worker to his country and terminate the sponsorship contract at any time without any financial compensation.

### **Research Gap**

Previous studies reviewed the disadvantages of the sponsor system (kafala), listed the benefits of abolishing the kafala system, and strongly recommended that the countries of the Middle East abolish the kafala system. However, to the researcher's knowledge, no empirical study examined the impact of abolishing the sponsorship system on expatriate workers and employers in Qatar from the perspective of both parties and the impact of abolishing this system in supporting social integration and peaceful co-existence. This study might be the first study that serves the issues of migration and peaceful co-existence as a lofty goal for the Alliance of Civilizations in the Arabic context.

### **Methodology**

#### **Data Collection and Population**

The survey consists of 13 items developed based on an extensive literature review. Primary data was collected from 604 respondents from 33 nationalities via random probability and sampling techniques. The standard questionnaire with tested validity and reliability has been used.

### Data Analysis and Results

The data were analyzed via SPSS 24 statistical software. Cronbach's Coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) was used for measuring the reliability of the survey measurement items.

Table 2 Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.861	12

Table 2 presents the reliability statistics of the survey instrument. The reliability statistics of the 12 survey items were (Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) = .861), which indicated good internal reliability. The results of the statistical analysis of the questionnaire related to expatriate workers: Through the following two tables, we find that the results of validity and reliability are high, which indicates the validity of the questionnaire as follows:

Table 3: The internal consistency of survey measurement of expatriate workers

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13
<b>Spearman Reliability</b>	.577**	.552**	.671**	.694**	.601**	.487**	.398**	.621**	.659**	.682**	.087**	.679**	.660**
<b>Sig</b>	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<b>.033</b>	<.001	<.001

Table 3 shows the Spearman's coefficient results indicated more than 0.3, which indicates the validity of the internal consistency, and it is significant at <.001, except for statement No. 11, where Spearman's Coefficient was less than 0.3; hence, it had been deleted from the data set.

### Demographic Information

Table 6 demonstrates the descriptive analysis of the sample size. The demographic information shows that 604 respondents from 33 nationalities completed the survey, including Asians, Arabs, Africans, Europe, America, and Australia. Table 6 also presents the percentage for each statement; the mean and the standard deviation were calculated.

Table 4: Demographic information of Expatriate Workers

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>		<b>Female</b>				
Percent (%)	77.3		22.7				
<b>Age</b>	<b>15-20</b>		<b>21-35</b>		<b>36-50</b>		<b>51-65</b>
Percent (%)	0.7		53.8		42.2		3.3
<b>Position</b>	<b>Private Sector</b>		<b>Governmental Employee</b>		<b>FreeLancer</b>		
Percent (%)	96.5		1.8		1.7		
<b>Monthly Income</b>							
Percent (%)	Less than QR 5000	QR 5500-10,000	10,500 – 15,000	15,500 – 20,500	20,500 – 25,000	25,000 – 30,000	More than 30,000
	62.9	18.4	9.4	3.5	2.2	1.2	2.5
<b>Level of Education</b>	<b>Primary and Less</b>		<b>Secondary and Less</b>		<b>Unversity</b>		<b>Postgraduate</b>
Percent (%)	4.3		27.3		54.3		14.1

Table 4 shows that most of the respondents are young, between 21-50 years, at a rate of 96%, and within a good level of education. The university students are 54.3%, while the high school and less is 27.3%. The postgraduate holders are 14.1%. Most of the respondents work in the private sector at the rate of 96%. Accordingly, they are more affected by the sponsorship system (Kafala), and the role of the sponsor is prominent in their lives. Moreover, 63% of their monthly income is less than QR 5,000, while 18.4% ranges between QR 5,500-10,000.

## Results of the Statistical Analysis

### 1. Results of the Statistical Analysis of Expatriate Workers

Table 5 shows that 70% of the expatriate workers have sufficient information about abolishing the sponsorship system low (Kafala), with a mean of 3.8. and 23% of the neutrals. Consequently, the expatriate worker's satisfaction rate with this procedure is high as the percentage of strongly agree and agree is very high concerning the two statements (2 and 3), reaching 90% and approximately 77%, respectively, which increases the job opportunities for the worker in the statement (10) with strongly agree and agree with the rate of 77.5%. This result was consistent with the study by (Glind et al., 2017, p 13-14), which pointed out that freedom of movement between jobs enriches the worker's skills, gets a higher wage, and benefits employers by attracting skilled workers. Thus, attracting skilled workers may diversify the economy, support the knowledge economy, and increase competition in the labour market. Furthermore, Human Rights Watch indicated that "These are Qatar's most significant labour reforms to date, and could vastly improve the working and living conditions of migrant workers if implemented (HRW, 2020).

The current study's findings also found a high rate of strongly agree and agree for statement (4) related to the worker's freedom to leave the country without written permission from the employer, with 67.2%. The Writer Faisal Al-Marzouki commented in the

Al-Watan newspaper that giving the worker the freedom to leave and enter the country significantly reduces workers' escape from work, so the employer does not bear the consequences worker's escape (Marzouki, 2014). The high percentage of satisfaction may reduce tension and problems between the worker and the employer, similar to the statement (5), by 82.7%, which is a high percentage of strongly agree and agree. It may contribute to the worker's feeling of psychological stability and job security with 84% and 80%, respectively, as stated in the two statements (8 and 9). It may be a way to integrate the worker into the work and community environment and more significant support for stability and peaceful co-existence among the residents in Qatar, including expatriates, residents, and citizens. It plays a positive role in bringing people together and introducing civilizations. Strongly agreeing is 67% and 79%, respectively, as stated in the statements (11,12). Arif (2020) confirmed this argument that the sponsorship system is one of the causes of social exclusion and a barrier to the integration of expatriates, regardless of the expatriate's years of residence or the degree of his employment.

Statement (1) is related to the sufficiency of information about abolishing the sponsorship system (Kafala). The results draw attention that 23% of the respondents have natural answers. On the other hand, the findings presented that 30% of the respondents did not notice any differences in the expenses decreased or increased after abolishing the kafala system, as stated in a statement (6). The findings also indicated that 51% of the respondents in the statement (11) did not notice the actual implication of the law on the ground, or they accepted the work and adapted themselves to reality. It might indicate that the percentage of satisfaction or conviction with the current situation indicates that this serves peaceful co-existence. Thus, the percentage of neutral answers in question (12) decreased and reached 18.4%.

As for the worker's freedom in the presence or absence of a sponsor, we find that this choice received a strongly agree and agree with 54.5%, representing almost half of the sample. In comparison, the percentage of neutrals is 30%, representing approximately one-third of the sample. These findings may be because work and life expenses may be increased for the worker to renew the working permit, travel tickets, and housing expenses may be added. Accordingly, 47.8% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed with an increase in the expenses as in statement (6). In contrast, 22.3% showed strongly disagree and disagree. Thus, we find that the freedom to choose the worker may be satisfactory for the worker and the employer.

Table 5: Results of the statistical analysis of expatriate workers

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard deviation
1. I have enough information about the modifications that have taken place that has taken place regarding the abolition of the sponsorship system.	1.8	5.3	23.2	50.0	19.7	3.80	.876
2. The freedom of movement of expats from one job to another is a way that would serve the interest of the expat employee.	1.0	1.5	7.8	51.2	38.6	4.24	.742
3. The freedom of movement of expats worker from one job to another is a way that would serve the interest of the business.	1.0	7.9	14.1	48.5	28.5	3.95	.912
4. The expate worker's ability to travel from and to the country without pre-written approval from the employer would serve the interest of the business.	2.0	13.1	17.7	39.7	27.5	3.77	1.05
5. Abolition of the sponsorship system (kafala) has reduced the tensions and problems between expate employees and employers.	0.8	3.8	12.6	49.3	33.4	4.10	.822
6. Abolition of the sponsorship system (kafala) led to an increase in expenses for the expate worker in Qatar.	3.8	18.5	29.8	35.4	12.4	3.34	1.03
7. It would be better to leave the (kafala) system as an option for the expate worker.	7.9	15.6	21.9	39.9	14.7	3.37	1.14
8. Abolition of the sponsorship system (Kafala) contributed to improving the sense of psychological stability of the expate worker.	0.8	1.5	13.7	53.1	30.8	4.11	.752
9. Abolition of the sponsorship system (Kafala) positively impacted the expate worker's sense of job security away from the sponsor's control.	1.2	6.6	11.9	51.2	29.1	4.00	.883

10. Abolition of the sponsorship system (Kafala) increased the job opportunities for the expats workers.	1.3	5.6	15.6	48.5	29.0	3.98	.889
11. Abolition of the sponsorship system (Kafala) helped the population groups in Qatar to integrate.	1.3	2.0	29.0	50.8	16.9	3.79	.786
12. Abolition of the sponsorship system (Kafala) contributed to promoting peaceful co-existence among population groups in Qatar.	1.0	1.3	18.4	54.1	25.2	4.01	.760
<b>Average Overall Ratio of (12) items</b>	<b>1.99</b>	<b>6.89</b>	<b>17.97</b>	<b>47.64</b>	<b>25.48</b>	<b>3.87</b>	<b>.564</b>

Tables 6 and 7 present the reliability statistics of the survey instrument related to employers (the sponsor):. The reliability statistics of the 8 survey items were (Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) = .897), which indicated high internal reliability. This result confirms the validity of the questionnaire as follows:

Table 6: Measuring the internal consistency of the survey measurement related to employers

	No. Items	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
<b>Spearman Reliability</b>	8	.829**	.772**	.678**	.704**	.815**	.808**	.699**	.787**

Table 7: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.897	8

### Demographic Information for Employers

The sample included 64 respondents from 6 nationalities (Qatar - 57 individuals), Saudi Arabia (1), Kuwait (2), Lebanon (2), Palestine (1), and Yemen (1)). The results of the demographic information are as presented in Table 8:

Table 8: Demographic Information for Employers

Gender	Male	Female	
Percent (%)	43.7	56.3	
Age	21-35	36-50	51-65
Percent (%)	35.9	50	14.1
Position	Private Sector	Governmental Employee	FreeLancer
Percent (%)	21.9	71.9	23.4
Level of Education	Secondary and Less	University	Postgraduate
Percent (%)	.47	27.3	23.4



Table 8 shows that most of the respondents have a high level of education, where university education is 72%, and postgraduate is 23.5%. The majority of the respondents, 55%, work in the governmental sector. The respondents from the private sector are 22%, while self-employment is 24%. The respondents were characterized as a youth, ranging from 21 to 65 years. While 50% of respondents were aged 36 to 50 years, followed by 36% aged 21 to 35 years, 14% of respondents were 51 to 65 years.

### **Findings of the Statistical Analysis of Employers (the Sponsors)**

Table 9 demonstrates the employers' measurement survey (the sponsors). The results revealed dissatisfaction with abolishing the sponsorship system (kafala) by employers in general, as the percentage of strongly disagree and disagree is 57%. For example, regarding the worker's freedom to move from one job to another without the written consent of the employer in the statement (3) is in the interest of the work, the findings show strongly disagree and disagree by employers was 53.8%, which represents more than half of the sample, while agreeing and strongly agree is 21.6%. In contrast, 54% of the respondents (disagree and strongly disagree) believe that the sponsorship system's abolition did not reduce tensions between the expatriate worker and the employer. In comparison, agree and strongly agree with 23%, as stated in the statement (5). On the other hand, the findings show employers' dissatisfaction with the decrease in the costs of recruiting expatriate workers after the abolition of the sponsorship system by 72.3%. While the agreement rate did not exceed 15.8%, as stated in the statement (2).

Table 9: Results of the statistical analysis of employers (the sponsors)

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard deviation
1. The abolition of the sponsorship system contributed to solving many problems faced by employers.	21.5	35.4	20.0	15.4	6.2	2.54	1.25
2. The costs of recruiting expatriate workers decreased after the sponsorship system was abolished. (such as residency renewal, travel tickets, etc.)	35.4	36.9	10.8	13.8	1.5	2.14	1.19
3. The freedom of movement of expatriate workers from one job to another benefits employers instead of recruiting new workers from abroad.	21.5	32.3	23.1	15.4	6.2	2.57	1.26
4. The abolition of the sponsorship system resulted in exempting the employer from bearing the consequences of violations that the sponsor may commit outside work.	10.8	32.3	21.5	32.3	1.5	2.86	1.14
5. Abolition of the sponsorship system (kafala) has reduced the tensions and problems between expate employees and employers.	15.4	38.5	21.5	15.4	7.7	2.66	1.25
6. The recent amendments to the sponsorship system (kafala) balance employers' and expatriate workers' interests.	18.5	29.2	23.1	24.6	3.1	2.70	1.23
7. The abolition of the sponsorship system enhanced the integration of expatriates into the Qatari community.	16.9	26.2	29.2	18.5	7.7	2.78	1.24
8. Abolition of the sponsorship system (Kafala) positively promoted peaceful co-existence among Qatar's population groups.	18.5	26.2	27.7	18.5	7.7	2.75	1.26
<b>Average Overall Ratio of items</b>	<b>19.8</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>2.62</b>	<b>1.22</b>

Regarding recent amendments to the sponsorship system (kafala), which balance employers' and expatriate workers' interests in the statement (6), the respondents disagree and strongly disagree with 47.7% and 27.7%, respectively. The employers pointed out that the law abolishing sponsorship did not balance the employers' and the expatriate workers' rights.

On the other hand, the findings revealed that employers believe they still bear the consequences of violations committed by the migrant worker at 43%. While we find strongly agree and agree with 34% that the abolition of the sponsorship system helped exempt the employer from bearing the consequences of violations that the sponsor may commit outside work.

The sponsorship system's abolition (Kafala) promoted peaceful co-existence among Qatar's population groups, as stated in statements (8,7). Employers disagree that the law abolishing sponsorship contributed to the integration of expatriate workers and promoting peaceful co-existence in Qatari society, at 43.1% and 44.7%. In contrast, agreement and substantial agreement with equal by 26.6, 26.2% believe that the abolition of the sponsorship law helped with integration and promoted peaceful co-existence. Notably, neutral answers are significant, at 29.2%, 27.7%, or approximately one-third of the study sample, and this may be due to a high degree of adaptation to their work environment, and this achieves a promotion of stability and peaceful co-existence, primarily that they represent approximately 90% of the population.

Regarding the high level of neutral answers of respondents, both the employers and expatriate workers. The average neutral answer was 17.97 in the workers' measurement survey. While in the employers' measurement survey, it was 22.1, which leads us to several possibilities. First, it might be that abolishing the sponsorship system (kafala) has not yet reached the stage of maturity because it is a recent law implemented in 2018. Therefore both the sponsor and the worker did not sufficiently count its impact and did not form a point of view that provided clear answers with agreement and disagreement. It could be that after some time, the changes brought about by abolishing this law become more apparent.

Second, the changes that occurred may not have an effective practical impact on the worker and the employer. Third, it might be that this law lack of activation, which means that the expatriate workers do not benefit from it. For example, when the worker does not change his work and remains with his sponsor with only a change of names, he may not consider a clear difference, making his answer lean towards neutral.

Fourth, it could be that many expatriate workers were not aware of the amendments that took place in the sponsorship system (kafala). This lack of awareness was apparent in the first measurement survey. This is similar to what respondents claimed in the first statement (I have enough information about the modifications that have taken place that has taken place regarding the abolition of the sponsorship system), where the total of respondents strongly disagreed, disagreed, and neutral at 30.3%.

Fifth, on the other hand, from the positive perspective, these neutral percentages indicate that the sponsorship law (whether at the time of its activation or after its abolishing) is not the only reference for obtaining rights and a decent living in Qatar. The workers and employers have enjoyed a stable condition that explains the high percentage of neutral

answers, which can be considered healthy. Thus, no significant gaps affect the stability of expatriate workers and employers.

In the comparison of the two repeated statements (11,12) in the expatriate workers' measurement survey and the two statements (7,8) in the employers' measurement survey related to the migration objectives of the Alliance of Civilizations, it remarkably a significant discrepancy in the answers from the perspectives of both as follows:

Table 10: Comparison between the answers of employers and expatriate workers related to the migration objectives of the Alliance of Civilizations

Items	Employers		Expatriate Workers	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
1. The abolition of the sponsorship system (Kafala) enhanced the integration of expatriates into the Qatari community.	26.2	43.1	67.7	3.3
2. Abolition of the sponsorship system (Kafala) positively promoted peaceful co-existence among Qatar's population groups.	26.2	44.7	79.3	2.3

Table 10 demonstrates that 43.1% of the employers believe that the abolition of the sponsorship law did not help integrate expatriates into the Qatari society, while 26.2% believe it contributed to that. In contrast, 67.7% of expatriate workers believe that the abolition of the law has already contributed to promoting peaceful co-existence. Furthermore, only 3.3% of the workers believe that it did not help integrate population groups in Qatar.

On the other hand, 44.7% of employers believe that the abolition of the sponsorship law did not positively affect the promotion of peaceful co-existence among population groups in Qatar. In contrast, 26.2% believe that it has a positive effect. At the same time, only 2.3% of the expatriate workers believe that the abolition of the sponsorship law did not contribute to the promotion of peaceful co-existence. In comparison, 79.3% believe that it has contributed to promoting peaceful co-existence among Qatar's population groups.

This discrepancy can explain why most expatriate workers strongly agree with abolishing the sponsorship law. Because abolishing the sponsorship law targets the worker in the first place, since workers are the most numerous group compared to the number of employers, this law came to be in their interest in general, which resulted in the employers' dissatisfaction to some extent. As stated in the results, this indicates that the State of Qatar is primarily concerned with serving the interests of immigrants, of whom expatriate workers constitute the largest proportion, which serves the migration goals of the Alliance of Civilizations in general.

### Discussion and Recommendation

This study examined the impact of the abolition of the sponsorship system (Kafala) on the peaceful co-existence of population groups in Qatar in light of the migration goals of the alliance of civilizations. The findings revealed the satisfaction of the expatriate workers with the abolition of the sponsorship system (Kafala), as most of their answers agreed with the

survey items. In contrast, the employers' responses tended to be generally dissatisfied with the abolition of the sponsorship law. They claimed that it was in the interest of expatriate workers and neglected the employer's interest. The expatriate workers argued that the abolition of the sponsorship system (Kafala) contributed to enhancing psychological stability and job security for the migrant worker.

Accordingly, the percentage of expatriate workers' satisfaction with the abolition of the sponsorship law is a positive indicator of achieving the objectives of Qatari immigration for the Alliance of Civilizations through achieving integration, stability, and peaceful co-existence. On the other hand, the rates of neutral answers notably increased, indicating that the law on the abolition of sponsorship law is still in the early stage, as it was implemented in 2018. It must take time to implement and practice until its advantages and disadvantages become clearer. The high rates of neutral answers indicate a kind of adaptation and satisfaction from migrant workers in general, indicating the existence of stability that supports peaceful co-existence. More generally, the abolition of the sponsorship law has caused some damage to many employers. Therefore, it may need to reconsider some of its items related to employers.

### Recommendations

This study recommends several recommendations; the most important is making the sponsorship law optional so that the worker chooses to have a sponsor or not since the abolition of the sponsorship system (Kafala) entails additional expenses for the immigrant worker. Therefore, making the sponsor's presence optional will be in the public interest. Further, considering the damages incurred by employers due to the sponsorship law's abolition, reconsider the loopholes and fix them. The necessity of informing the worker and the employer of full details of the labour law has significantly been updated regarding abolishing the sponsorship system (Kafala). Thus, each party knows his rights and duties. Moreover, conducting more empirical studies on abolishing the sponsorship system (Kafala). Lastly, continuing with legal reforms to serve peaceful co-existence.

### Conclusion

Investigating issues of peaceful co-existence is one of the crucial studies that significantly affect world peace for achieving the goals of the Alliance of Civilizations. The abolition of the sponsorship law is one of the tangible reforms that serve the issues of migrant labour in Qatar. It works to serve human rights and support co-existence issues within diverse communities. Therefore, the abolition of the sponsorship law in Qatar is a positive step in this field.

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