

QATAR UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
A COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF ENERGY
IN QATAR'S EAST ASIAN FOREIGN RELATIONS:
CASE STUDIES ON CHINA, JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA
BY
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ABSTRACT

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Title: A Comparative Assessment of the Role of Energy in Qatar's East Asian Foreign Relations:

Case Studies of China, Japan and South Korea

Supervisor of Thesis: Dr. Steven Wright.

Energy is an important factor in international relations and recently the global energy paradigm has been seen to be shifting towards the East. In light of such change, a comparative assessment of the role of energy in Qatar's East Asian foreign relations will be conducted by taking China, Japan and South Korea as case studies. The research aimed to assess each of the bilateral relationships in terms of their origin and development in the energy sector generating an interpretation of their growing interdependence, taking into consideration the various domestic, regional and international influencing factors. At this level, LNG development and trade was adopted to see the extent of energy cooperation. In general, energy cooperation played the leading role in the three relationships, but to different degrees. Furthermore, all three bilateral relationships pertain to the 'complex interdependence approach' that is supported by the use of institutionalism and soft power.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Literature Review.....	2
Purpose of the Study	5
Research Question	6
Theoretical Framework.....	6
Research Design	13
Chapter 2: Energy in Qatar’s Foreign Relations	18
Qatar’s Natural Gas Overview.....	18
Qatar’s Development as an Energy Supplier	22
Qatar’s Further Development through Soft Power	24
Conclusion	26
Chapter 3: Qatar-China Relationship	28
Energy Relationship.....	29
Diplomatic Efforts and Strategic Relationship	35
Economic Relationship	38
Trade Activities and Trade Volumes.	38
Investment Activities between Qatar and China.....	43
Other Factors Enhancing Qatar-China Relations.....	44
Conclusion	46
Chapter 4: Qatar-Japan Relationship	47
Energy Relationship.....	48
Diplomatic Efforts and Strategic Relationship	53
Economic Relationship	57
Trade Activities and Trade Volumes.	57
Investment Activities between Qatar and Japan.	61
Other Factors Enhancing Qatar-Japan Relations	63
Conclusion	64
Chapter 5: Qatar-Korea Relationship	66
Energy Relationship.....	67

Diplomatic Efforts and Strategic Relationship	71
Economic Relationship	73
Trade Activities and Trade Volumes.	73
Investment Activities between Qatar and Korea.....	76
Other Factors Enhancing Qatar-Korea Relations.....	78
Conclusion	79
Chapter 6: Comparative Analysis	81
Energy Relationships	82
Diplomatic, Economic and Cultural Association:.....	95
Summary Conclusion and Identification of Challenges	98
Chapter 7: Summary and Conclusion.....	102
Limitations	104
Future Contribution.....	104
References.....	105
Appendix: Interview Questions	129

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Total trade value between Qatar and China in USD	40
Table 2: Total trade value between Qatar and Japan in USD	58
Table 3: Total trade value between Qatar and Korea in USD	74
Table 4: History of bilateral relationships	85

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Gross production of natural gas of Qatar (1980-2013)	19
Figure 2: Qatar’s LNG export to China	33
Figure 3: Total trade volumes between Qatar and China in billion USD.....	41
Figure 4: Qatar export of LNG to China compared to total trade volume (in billion USD)	42
Figure 5: Qatar’s LNG export to Japan	50
Figure 6: Total trade volumes between Qatar and Japan in billion USD	60
Figure 7: Qatar export of LNG to Japan compared to total export volume (in billion USD)	61
Figure 8: Qatar’s LNG export to Korea	69
Figure 9: Total trade volumes between Qatar and Korea in billion USD.....	75
Figure 10: Qatar export of LNG to Korea compared to total export volume (in billion USD)	76
Figure 11: Qatar LNG exports to Japan, Korea and China.....	82

Chapter 1: Introduction

As the global energy paradigm seems to be shifting primarily towards Asia, the oil producing countries of the GCC seem also to follow that trend. There is a strong and growing interdependence between the GCC and the economically growing Asian countries. The three major East Asian countries, i.e. China, Japan and South Korea (will be used simply as “Korea” in this research), also have been showing strong relations with the Gulf when it comes to energy trade. There are various studies conducted with regards to the bilateral relationship between the GCC or the Middle East in general and China, Japan and Korea, with energy being the essence of that relationship, and explaining how there are growing economic exchanges. However, there is not much studies available that examines their relationship with Qatar in particular. Furthermore, with those separate studies, it is hard to understand the extent of each of those relations in further details, and one may easily overlook the differences and simply assume that they all have similar interdependencies as a regional bloc. There is a lack of research that examines the differences of these relationships in an empirical and analytical context, and this paper aims to provide empirical data of each of the bilateral relationships that can be compared within a qualitative method.

It is important to address this matter as it will provide a better understanding of the particular bilateral relations in terms of energy, while energy is a key component in the policies of both countries. Furthermore, the three bilateral relationships have evolved in a strategic way, being characterized as a complex interdependence relation that involves further issues apart from pure energy interactions. By looking at the similarities

or differences, feasibility and the necessity of future opportunities for coordination and cooperation between the two regions can be defined according to the extent of its importance. It will provide a gateway for further studies to be conducted.

Literature Review

GCC countries are considered to be world's primary source of hydrocarbon energy sources, due to the enormous amount of energy reserves that reach up to 33% of the world's proven crude oil reserves and 22% of the world's proven natural gas reserves (Körner & Masetti, 2014). According to the book *Energy Security in the Gulf* published by The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research (2010), the GCC's stance as an energy hub still stands firm as it mentions:

“While overall the six Gulf members account for 65 percent of OPEC's crude oil output and 60 percent of its marketed production of natural gas. Their share of proven reserves is slightly higher, at 72 and 79 percent respectively, which testifies to the Gulf region's global importance. It possesses 57 percent of the world's crude oil reserves and 40 percent of its natural gas. The fact that its share of world output is just a fraction of this – 30 percent of oil and 11 percent of gas – suggests that these reserves will last longer than most of those located elsewhere in the world” (p.13)

Qatar in particular possesses an enormous amount of oil and gas within its territory. Especially, for its proven gas reserves, along with crude oil and condensate reserves, totaled 188bn barrels of oil equivalent (boe) in 2013, which is not only the largest among the GCC member states but also the third largest in the world after Russia and Iran (QNB, 2015). Gray (2013) elaborates how Qatar has emerged, in a different manner from

its neighboring countries, in a dramatic and interesting way in its political economy that can be accounted through different factors varying from political, such as the leadership and the decisions made by the ruling elite, to economic, that involves the development of the oil and gas sector. Through his book, the author continues to explain how Qatar's economy is an "energy driven" one as even the diversification of its economy has been built on the oil and gas sectors, with the development of other sectors supporting this core pillar. Eventually, although it follows the general trend, Qatar practices a unique theory of "late rentier" state, dealing with the happenings of the contemporary era and making it worth exploring exclusively on its own (Gary, 2013).

So from such description, it can be implied that ever since the Gulf countries, including Qatar, had access to the vast amount of oil and gas, its position in the energy field has been growing drastically and its role as an energy supplier was duly implemented. The fact that Qatar and the Gulf is geographically located in a strategic position that is considered to be in the middle between the West and the East, must have helped it further to be a favorable choice as an energy exporter. Chapter 2 of the research will develop further on the case of Qatar among the GCC countries, as it is considered an important energy component in a global sense, as well as an essential, strategic energy partner to the Asian countries under study.

On the other hand, the East Asian countries lack energy resources, and thus are obliged to import energy sources. China, unlike Japan and Korea which have no conventional energy reserves in their territory, enjoys considerable amount of those resources (BP, 2015). Nevertheless, with the increase in the demand and consumption rates of such energy fuel, China joined Japan and Korea to become an importer of energy,

and even the largest (BP, 2015; EIA, 2015). In any case, these East Asian countries have undergone and some still undergoing economic development; Japan and Korea have a big industry-based economy that has developed until they became a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and China has been witnessing a tremendous growth rate over the past decade or so, making it the highest ranking in Asia, and the focus of many studies. However, for such an economic growth to be possible, the acquisition of energy sources to back this growth was of paramount importance to those countries.

The continuous economic growth, and thus the increase in energy demand in China, Japan and Korea has allowed it to establish a strong relationship with the Gulf, in particular Qatar, which are in turn seeking for markets to sell their hydrocarbon reserves. Building on this, what began as a marriage of convenience based on hydrocarbon trading has now evolved into a comprehensive, long-term mutual commitment involving many other factors such as non-hydrocarbon trade, investment, financing, diplomacy etc. (Davidson, 2010). This is further enhanced recently, as the GCC countries are adopting a 'Look East' policy, as it considers the economically growing Asia as a strategic market and partner, while its Western partner, the US, moves towards energy self-sufficiency through 'shale revolution' (Al-Tamimi, 2013; Körner, & Masetti, 2014). On the other hand, there are views that advocate Qatar's continuous interest to its western allies, the U.S. in particular, that is based on military cooperation and that wishes to expand further to economic and political spheres (Finn, 2015). However, this research aims to focus on the expansion and development of Qatar's relationship with its energy trade partners apart from its traditional allies, as they are emerging and revealing greater strategic

affiliation.

For sure, the energy demand of China, Japan and Korea from the Middle East increased over the years, and eventually they established energy relationship with Qatar as well, and has moved beyond the simple energy trade relationship. In light of such major shifts, and the fact that there is no literature provided for the topic of interest, it is important to assess the origin and the development of Qatar-China, Japan and Korea's relationship in terms of energy and generate an interpretation of its growing interdependence.

As for the remainder of the literature review, it will be threaded throughout the study in an attempt to integrate it with the findings of the research and convey an inductive design (Creswell, 2014).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this case study is to assess and interpret Qatar's bilateral relations with China, Japan and Korea in terms of energy, followed by a comparative analysis that would provide a clearer picture of how each of the three bilateral relationships are different in terms of their development and involvement in Qatar. Energy is an important element that cannot be missed, as it is considered the motivation behind the establishment of the bilateral relationship under consideration. The study will examine the domestic, regional and international factors that led and affected the development of such relationships, drawing an explicit linkage to the energy deals and agreements of cooperation in that field. Furthermore, by examining other activities of diplomacy, economy (trade and investment) and culture, the research will discuss the emergence of a complex interdependence relations that is built on institutionalism and soft power.

Research Question

A growing interdependence between the GCC and the Northeast Asian countries with increased diversification is witnessed (Al-Tamimi, 2013; Körner, & Masetti, 2014). While myriads of studies conducted on such relationship show general assessment, not many have examined the particular relationship of Qatar and the three main Northeast Asian countries, namely China, Japan and Korea, and even less of a comparative study. As these relationships are strong and still developing in an on-going way, addressing this gap in the literature was seen appropriate with the following research questions: What does energy imply in the existing interdependent bilateral relationship of Qatar with China, Japan and Korea?

Theoretical Framework

In the traditional understanding of foreign policy, realism has played a central role in explaining the foreign policy actions in which military and security issues were overemphasized. However, by the 1970s, the role of the economy in international relations and in foreign policy tools increased remarkably (Tyfur, 1994). Tyfur further explains that such changes in the agenda of international relations and foreign policy has led to the immergence of a new theoretical framework, namely 'Complex Interdependence Approach', challenging the existing basic assumptions of the realist point of view. The term was first introduced by Keohane and Nye (1987), who argued that Complex Interdependence Approach was actually a middle range between realism and neorealism on one hand with liberalism on the other, regarding the two as a necessary complement to one another. In their view, 'complex interdependence approach' is an ideal approach in which they focus on the fact that both have their roots in a utilitarian

view of the world in which individuals behave in a rational way to pursue their own interests by responding to incentives. The odds were that while realism focused on military hard power for survival, liberalism put more importance on the economic incentives and international cooperation. That being said, 'complex interdependence approach' seems to create a balance in between the two theories, overcoming in particular the traditional understanding of foreign policy, which emphasizes the role of military hard power.

In their integrated analysis, 'complex interdependence' defines an ideal type of international system in which it 'refers to a situation among a number of countries in which multiple channels of contact connect societies (that is, states do not monopolize these contacts); there is no hierarchy of issues; and military force is not used by governments towards one another' (p.731, Keohane & Nye, 1987). It can be drawn from such definitions that 'complex interdependence' suggests governments do not impose control over the different transactions, and societies are connected by multiple channels of communication of interstate, transgovernmental and transnational (Williams, 1989). Apart from the governments, there are state-owned corporations, as well as non-state actors such as international organizations and private business sector etc. Furthermore, the level of importance given to military power is reduced while other interests are given higher attention, producing a balance between hard power, soft power and other economic, diplomatic and cultural activities. For this characteristic, the distinction from domestic and foreign issues becomes blurred, and the interstate agenda formation are affected by both domestic and international factors created by economic growth and enhanced sensitivity in interdependence, sometimes depending on the role of

transnational actors (Williams, 1989). Finally, it sums up to the point that governments do not refer to military force anymore as the main factor of foreign policy.

Building up on the above analysis, transnationalism adds meaning to the increased interdependence between the states. Williams (1989) advocates that merely pointing out the presence of non-state actors does not add any significance and thus proves nothing, rather stating the strategic linkages available, and thus the continuity in international relations, among the different actors is important. Transnational relations suggest multinational corporations as being either independent or under government control, affected by domestic and international conditions and focus also on how they communicate through various channels. This indicates the complexity in the relationship as each actor would tend to follow their own means or goals, which might not pertain to each other's and might not necessarily be of national interest. Maintaining coherence in such multifaceted relationship would provide better options to manipulate uneven interdependence.

A brief mentioning of the concept of 'economic interdependence' can be seen adequate for the case studies mentioned in this research. Economic interdependence, as asserted by Cooper (1985), refers to some measure of the value of economic transactions between countries pertaining to financial outputs, depending on the sensitivity of such transactions to economic developments within those nations. Whitman, as cited by Baldwin (1980), further elaborates how interdependence refers to the sensitivity of economic behavior in one country based on the development or policies of others that is outside its borders. The author contends that such kind of interdependence that depends on economic variables can be supported by evidence, and the case of Qatar's relations

with the three East Asian countries under study can be considered a suitable one, as strong economic motivations back these relationships.

In this regard, Qatar's relationship with the three countries under research, namely China, Japan and Korea has developed in such a way that it can be enlightened from the 'complex interdependence' point of view. Military approaches are not considered in their bilateral relationship, but rather the main focus is on economic ties that has developed in such a way to tackle the economic challenges on both sides for mutual benefits through stronger interdependence and reciprocity in various fields. In this case, 'mutual awareness of potential gains and losses...limits the use of asymmetrical interdependence' (p. 250, Williams, 1989), giving both countries in relations some kind of strategic linkages that would mainly benefit them both. Likewise, transnationalism reinforces these effects and the involvement of different actors in enhancing this relationship based on mutual interests provides further indication that such relationship can be described as being complex. Williams (1989) gives energy as an example of an issue that has an increasingly overlapping domestic and foreign policies depending on the goals that must be pursued. In that sense, the presence and the roles played by the state, state-owned enterprises, and private business enterprises and how they impact each other will be examined.

The research will also tackle on the strategic mutual relationship that has developed between Qatar and the three East Asian countries borrowing some theoretical concepts such as institutionalism and soft power. Institutionalism see that cooperation between nations, which are rational actors that seek self-interest is possible (Slaughter, 2011). Since the bilateral relationship mentioned in this research is more of a strategic

long-term relations and existing institutions help collect information about each state's behavior and add greater efficiency, institutionalism, with reference to its conditions given as a rationalist theoretical view (Slaughter, 2011) seems applicable in this case. As for soft power, it is defined to be as an aspect of power 'when one country gets other countries to *want* what it wants, [and] might be called co-optive [power]' (Nye, 1990). In his article, Nye recognizes that the world is growing in transnational interdependence and its acknowledgement should supplement the traditional military power, which shows limitations. Furthermore, he mentions that transnational corporations have enormous economic resources, making their role increasingly important, and that different issues have different balance in importance, reducing the hierarchy of those issues, and thus building on the 'complex interdependence approach' delineated above. This is observed in the empirical analysis conducted on each of the three cases in chapters 3,4 and 5 that reveals comprehensive cooperation on various fields apart from the main stream, that is energy relations.

Nevertheless, providing a guiding framework to assess and evaluate the policy options might be considered in order to explain the bases of the bilateral relationship. To begin with, defining energy in international relations, and through that identifying the nature of the bilateral relations, analyzing the domestic and international factors affecting these relations would be implemented. In this way, the research would be able to conduct an empirical investigation on the three cases producing an inclusive comparative study.

Energy, as an economic resource is a very important factor in international relations and even has a substantial influence when used as a tool for foreign policy in some cases, and the best example in history is the Arab oil embargo in the 1970s. As

such, energy is an important element to be studied and some of the common energy concepts in international relations are security, diplomacy and statecraft (Dalgaard, 2012). In his study, Dalgaard elaborates about the four elements of energy security - availability, reliability, affordability and sustainability, and advocates that the need for a state for energy security gives rise to energy diplomacy and energy statecraft. Whereas 'energy diplomacy uses political means for energy ends, energy statecraft uses energy means for political ends' (p.65, Dalgaard, 2012). As such, there are myriads of studies on energy, however, there is no general consensus on what those terms mean.

Nevertheless, in order to understand further each of the concepts, other definitions are introduced. Goldthau (2010) defines energy security as, 'reliable supply at affordable prices in the case of consuming nations and as reliable demand at sustainable prices in the case of producing nations' (p.26). Yergin (2013) gives a straightforward and a more collective definition of energy security as, 'the availability of sufficient supplies at affordable prices' (p.74), and adds that energy security is a system that involves policies and institutions that promote its sustainability and development. In general, it seems like energy security is focused more on the accessibility of energy resources (and markets in the case of exporters) in line with all the dimensions that have been mentioned above. In addition, the means of attaining energy security corresponds to institutionalism as well, such that energy policies and institutions are used in a rational behavior that increases efficiency and strategic cooperation in securing energy.

When it comes to energy diplomacy, the term in itself connotes the involvement of government and thus giving it a political approach. Goldthau (2010) best explains energy diplomacy as follows, "While a generally accepted definition of energy diplomacy

does not exist, it would seem appropriate to define the term as the use of foreign policy to secure access to energy supplies abroad and to promote (mostly bilateral, that is, government to government) cooperation in the energy sector” (p.28). As it can be drawn from the definition, government and government actors (like state-backed NOCs) are the main units involved and thus cooperation in the energy sector indicates political means that seek national energy goals and energy security.

On the other hand, little is mentioned about energy statecraft but Dalgaard (2012) makes a clear guide to the meaning by saying that “energy statecraft means the use of a sender state’s domestic energy resources as a means to get one or more other international actors to do what they would otherwise not do, in order to achieve the political goals of the sender state’s foreign policy. This is achieved by manipulating or exploiting another actor’s fundamental need for energy security” (p.67). Such a hegemony would be effective for exporting countries that has sufficient energy resources whose price elasticity is low and is not easily substitutable for the importing countries, affecting its basic needs.

The bilateral relationship between Qatar and China, Japan and Korea can be explained based on the scope of the definitions given with regards to energy. Qatar and the three East Asian countries have enjoyed a strong relationship that is mainly based on energy, but the choice of the countries under study to approach each other differs in some degrees. While economic and commercial aspects overshadow the three bilateral relationships, diplomatic and government efforts to expand and enhance the relationship cannot be denied. Further discourse analysis will be given in chapter 6, where an in-depth comparison of the three cases is attempted.

Research Design

From the four philosophical worldviews involved in a research approach, the epistemology intended to use for this research is the pragmatic worldview, in which actions, situations and consequences of the practical case to be studied are observed (Creswell, 2014). The case to be studied in this research is the actions, situations and consequences of the role of energy in the bilateral relationships of Qatar with China, Japan and Korea. As for the research design, a mixed methods design, which incorporates both quantitative and qualitative data will be used, trying to make use of all approaches to better understand the problem. However, this research will be largely qualitative, and quantitative data drawn from secondary data will be used partially, in order to build up the qualitative data for a more valid understanding. Among the mixed methods designs, the convergent parallel mixed method allows the researcher to “collect both forms of data at roughly the same time and then integrate the information of the overall results” (p.15, Creswell, 2014). This being said, the convergent parallel mixed method of the type is adopted as it is used to converge the data collected to provide a comprehensive analysis of the topic.

As for the methodology, both qualitative and quantitative methodology is used through which primary and secondary data is collected. As for the quantitative method, numbers and data are analyzed using statistical procedures. These data are found in official publications and reports on official websites of ministries and international organizations. However, the most renowned quantitative method of using closed-ended surveys are not used. Although it would have added greater validity and depth to the research, it is not adopted here due to the nature of the research topic and the narrow and

limited options available for creating such surveys as it is beyond the scope of this research at this stage. Instead the research is enriched with a qualitative methodology, in which open-ended interviews were conducted to provide primary data. Then both data will be inferred and integrated to provide an overall analysis. An additional research approach in the qualitative inquiry of the adopted methods is the case study approach that would provide an in-depth understanding of the role of energy in Qatar's foreign relations with the three East Asian countries, and how it has evolved. A collective/multiple case study where one issue is selected and multiple case studies are chosen to illustrate the issue is considered (Creswell, 2013). Each of the three East Asian countries is a case study in its own right, and comparative observations provides the essence of the research. Comparative analysis is adopted as 'it is often easier to understand phenomena when they are compared with similar phenomena from another time or place' (p.90, Walliman, 2001).

To elaborate further on the methodology, open-ended questions for the interview were prepared and a pilot interview was first conducted with the supervisor of this thesis, who is also an expert in this field, in order to create a sequence of questions that would lead the interviewee to elaborate on their answers. The interview questions are attached in the appendix. As for choosing the samples for the interview, purposeful sampling and snowball sampling were used, and the samples includes officials and academic experts from governments and academia who have a background knowledge on the topic. The government officials were chosen through purposeful sampling, and they included relevant Embassy officials who have an expertise in the energy and economic field and who are based in Doha, as they would have empirical idea on the bilateral relations under

discussion. As for the academics who were interviewed, some were chosen according to purposeful sampling and others were introduced through snowball sampling, in which one participant would introduce the other. Academics included professors at Qatar University with a background on the bilateral relationships to be studied and professors/scholars in each of the intended country of study. These participants are of established researchers who published distinguished academic work and research in regards to the topic, and some even had field experiences of several years to enrich their research. All participants were contacted through email, and a total of seven interviewees participated in this research.

Interview with officials and academic personnel who are based in Doha was conducted through face-to-face interview. Attempts to contact the Chinese, Japanese and Korean embassy officials were continually done through reminder emails. However, interview with the Chinese and Japanese officials could not be conducted as the Chinese Embassy was in a transitional phase for the economic attaché, and the previous personnel could not be reached, and there was lack of time to interview with the Japanese official. Only the Energy Advisor, Amr Soliman, of the Korean Embassy was interviewed among them. Nevertheless, quotes of embassy officials from news releases and embassy websites were referred to in the case of China and Japan. Officials representing the Qatari government in the Ministry of Energy and Industry and officials from Qatari energy firms such as RasGas was also contacted via email, but in vain.

As for the academic scholars, there was a chance to interview four of the scholars who are originally not based in Doha in person during their visit to the country. These include Tim Niblock, Emeritus Professor of Middle East Politics at the Institute of Arab

and Islamic Studies of University of Exeter, Koji Horinuki, Research Fellow at JIME Center, The Institute of Energy Economics of Japan, James Mirrione, a previous professor at Qatar University and is currently based in Beijing, and Jeongmin Seo, Head of Department of Middle East & African Studies of the Graduate School of International and Area Studies at Hankyong University of Foreign Studies. Scholars from Qatar University include an anonymous interviewee, and Curtis Andressen, Associate Professor and Marubeni Chair in Social Sciences. One of the academics who is based abroad was reached through email and the interview was done via a telephone call. The interview was prepared in English and the interview itself was conducted in English generally, but in the case of the Korean participant, he preferred to have the interview in Korean language, which was later translated into English by the researcher. All the interviews conducted with the professors and scholars were audio-recorded with their consent, except for two academics as one refused and the other was sudden that it was not prepared for. However, all interview contents were noted and written. Since the interview had open-ended questions, it was difficult to manage and control the conversation within the scope of the study and some interviews continued for more than an hour. For the interview to be safe from any ethical issues, approval from the International Review Board (IRB) of Qatar University was received. Since the topic of energy relations is not a sensitive matter in relative to other socio-political issues, the approval was released in a relatively short time.

Subsequently, empirical data collected through interviews and from official sources were analyzed in an inductive approach where the researcher attempts to generate an interpretation for the meaning of the data, and thus interpreting the nature of the

relationship of China, Japan and Korea with Qatar in terms of energy and how it has developed in a more complex nature. Then, the results were compared and incorporated explicitly into the theoretical framework introduced in order to explain the various factors including geopolitical influences affecting the three cases under study.

Chapter 2: Energy in Qatar's Foreign Relations

Qatar enjoys an excessive amount of hydrocarbon resources, in particular natural gas in its offshore, making it the third-largest field in the world (QNB, 2015). Natural gas was first discovered in the North Field in 1971, the year of its independence, and Phase I of the North Field development project was launched in 1991 (Abi-aad, 1998). As the demand for natural gas increased during the last decade, Qatar has been able to reach a prominent position as the world's largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) exporter (QNB, 2015) especially towards Asia (EIA, 2015). Abi-aad (1998) elaborates that Qatar's suitable location between the established gas consuming markets of the west and east, and its proximity to developing markets such as Southeast Asia have allowed Qatar's gas exporting projects economically viable and commercially attractive. Not only LNG, but Qatar has also engaged itself with a substantial production and export of crude oil and other petroleum byproducts as well. Indeed, as the QNB report indicates, Qatar's wealthy revenue comes from the export of its hydrocarbon resources.

In light of such wealthy condition, this chapter will look into Qatar's energy dynamics and policies and link it to its foreign relations, in order to provide an overview of Qatar's global activities, particularly its relationship with the Northeast Asian countries.

Qatar's Natural Gas Overview

In 1991, the Qatari government announced the inauguration of Phase One of the North Field development project, which is the biggest gas field in the region with the highest proved reserves is the North Field, which is located 6,000km² off Qatar's

northeast coast in border with the South Pars reserves of Iran (Metz, 1993). The EIA reports that in the beginning of 2015, the total amount of natural gas reserves for Qatar was 872 trillion cubic feet (tcf), which comprises third largest volume in the world, and most of this production comes from the North Field. Qatar’s dry natural gas production reached 5.6 tcf in 2013, making it the fourth largest producer. Below graph shows the gross production of natural gas of Qatar available from 1980-2013 given by OPEC.

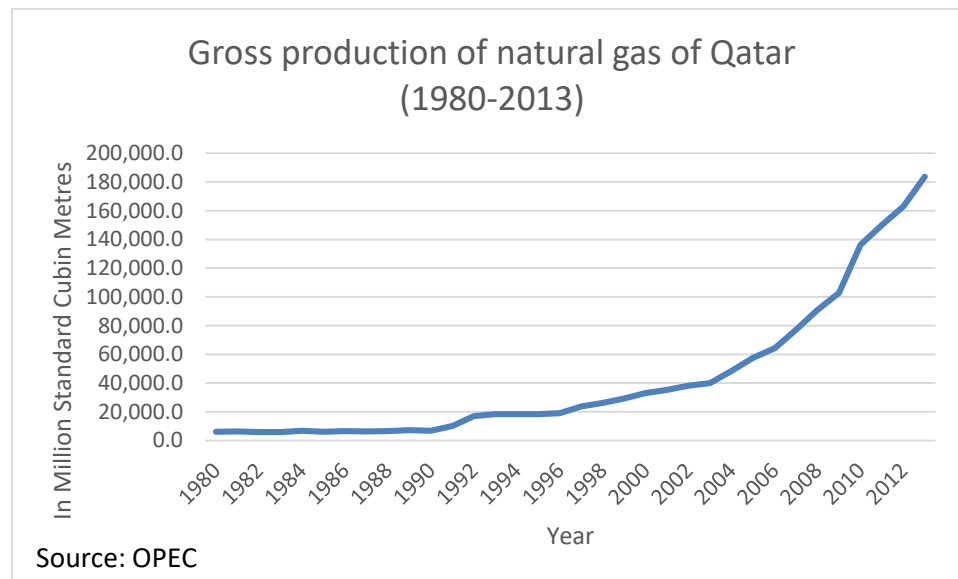


Figure 1. Gross production of natural gas of Qatar (1980-2013).

Other minor associate gas fields, in addition to the North Field, were operational before 1980s, but during the early stages, Qatar failed to pursue an aggressive production policy (Dargin, 2011). Nevertheless, a sharp increase of almost 68% is seen after the year 1991, in which Phase I of the North Field development project was launched. Production rates continued to increase at an incremental rate. Further increase in growth rate is

detected after the year 1997 in which Qatar exported its first cargo of LNG. This delivery was headed to Japan, the dominant force amongst LNG importers (Flower, 2011) and its procedure will be further discussed in chapter 4, and further discussion of its trade to China and Korea will be done in chapters 3 and 5 respectively. With the expansion of its export market, Qatar has put significant effort to keep up with global demand.

The domestic consumption of natural gas is relatively small, reaching up to 0.69 tcf and ranking 35th by country in 2014 (indexmundi.com, 2014). On the other hand, this allows Qatar to export huge portions of the extracted natural gas to different customers. With the increase in natural gas demand in international and regional markets, coupled with a failure to reach into an agreement for its regional exports due to its political and commercial factors, Qatar grasped the chance to expand its global export markets (Dargin, 2011). In fact, Qatar is the biggest exporter of LNG since 2006 with a capacity of 77 million tons per year, approximately 3.7 tcf. This is mostly delivered to Asia (72%), Europe (23%) and others (5%), including the delivery to the UAE and Oman via the Dolphin pipeline that connects them. By 2014, Japan, Korea and China topped the list as LNG export destinations for Qatar getting 36.6%, 15.6% and 8.2% of the total LNG exported respectively (Reed, 2015). On a side note, Qatar directed all its oil export to Asian Pacific countries as well, with Japan getting the most portion (OPEC, 2015).

Recently, however, the rate of domestic consumption has been increasing rapidly, and reached a 1.2 bcf/d in 2013, which is almost a 50% growth within three years according to the EIA report. This accounts for the increased industrialization and diversification of the country with electricity and water (desalination) sector consuming it the most. Natural gas is used for electricity generation, and demand for energy has been

increasing rapidly with the fast growing economy. The report continues to mention that there are further plans to invest in enhancing the generation capacity of electricity, such that it will increase by 51% by 2018 (EIA, 2015).

In addition, Qatar operates two facilities using Gas-to-Liquid (GTL) technologies, which is one of the three countries that have active operational facilities, and processes natural gas into heavier hydrocarbon. The first is Qatar's Oryx GTL plant and the second is the Pearl GTL project, which is also the largest GTL plant in the world as well as the first integrated GTL operation (EIA, 2015).

Currently, Qatar is a member state in the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF), which was established in 2001, aiming to enhance dialogue and cooperation between producers and consumers to ensure the development of the gas industry (GECF, n.d.). With its 12 members, GECF has a strong position within the global gas market and among international energy organizations, and the headquarter is located in the capital city of Qatar.

In light of this, the rapid development of Qatar's LNG capabilities revealed that gas exports became more important than oil exports by the turning of the century (Gary, 2013). In fact, given the rise in environmental concerns of greenhouse gas emission, the demand for natural gas grew considerably as it releases less carbon dioxide. Coupled with the openness of Qatari energy firms to foreign partners that comes from the support and push of Sheikh Hamad and Abdallah bin Hamad Al Attiya, former Minister of Energy and Industry, and the improvement and development of technologies and infrastructure of using natural gas, especially for exporting, Qatar was able to stand as the active player in the region and in the world. Qatargas and RasGas were established as the main two

projects in gas development, giving way to further diversification although partial. With greater production expansion and diversifying of its export destination, Qatar showed great efforts and has succeeded in promoting itself as the prominent energy supplier (Gary, 2013).

Qatar's Development as an Energy Supplier

Ever since the discovery of oil and gas resources during the 1930s, the Arabian Gulf region has become the hub for energy trade. Oil reserves were first discovered in 1938 in Dukhan, on the west coast of Qatar, and immediately joined the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1961 after a year of its formation in order to gain some leverage with regards to revenue, pricing and production (Metz, 1993). However, although Qatar is a member of OPEC, its exports activities remain relatively low. Instead, Qatar is more known for its enormous natural gas deposits.

Just a decade ago, not many people were familiar with a country named Qatar. As one of the smallest countries in the region, Qatar started with a relatively late production of oil in the 1940s and gas production and export did not pick-up speed until 1980s, when the Qatar Liquefied Gas Company (Qatargas) was established in 1984 for commercializing LNG from the North Field (Metz, 1993). In view of such late development and small capacity, Qatar was not an eye catching place from the beginning. However, with the ruling of a well-educated, ambitious and tolerant elite, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, and with the active involvement of many companies and individuals, Qatar actively promoted a strong pro-market philosophy with a flexible marketing strategy (Dargin, 2011; Flower, 2011). Furthermore, as Crystal (1995) mentioned in her book, with the start of accumulation of huge amounts of wealth

resulting from the discovery and production of oil and gas and their trading, the country went through a revolutionary shift both economically and politically. In a political point of view, there was a shift in the political institutional structures. On the other hand, with its massive hydrocarbon revenues, the country was transforming into a more developed economy with new welfare systems and better materialistic lives for the citizens (Crystal, 1995), reaching the highest economic growth rate per annum among its neighbors (Dargin, 2011).

As a matter of fact, Qatar produces the cheapest gas in the world, giving it greater advantage as a gas supplier. Daiss (2016) explains that this is possible as the break-even price for Qatari gas sums up to zero due to its production of wet gas. This means that as it extracts and produces its gases, an abundance of Natural Gas Liquids (NGLs), including propane and butane is also produced that brings about the bulk of their profit (Daiss, 2016). With the growth of its production plants and facilities, accompanied by the financial wealth that comes from the hydrocarbon revenues, allowed Qatar to further expand its stance as a global energy supplier, reaching out to the Asian markets.

In view of the statistics shown in the previous section, particularly the ones related to energy trade, one can see how Asian markets are very important target for Qatar's energy trading. Looking at the fact that Asian countries, especially North East Asian countries lack energy resources, it seems ideal for the energy rich countries of the GCC, including Qatar, to provide for those demands. However, this simple reason cannot be relied on for a long-term energy relation. Instead there should be a more strategic approach to the enhancement of the bilateral relations that allows for a continuous extension, bringing reasonable justifications for a mutual interdependence. Some efforts to

expand international trade volumes as GCC through the establishments of free trade agreements with those countries are underway (Oxford Business Group, 2015). As for now, the bilateral relations in terms of energy, which is considered to be an essential pillar, will be assessed first for basic steps in going forward with the relations.

It is worth mentioning about the actors behind the decision-making process of the energy sector. It is clear that the royal family of Qatar is hovering over the essential businesses in the country, in particular that related to those integral to Qatar's late rentierism strategy and processes (Gary, 2013). As Gary explains, as the main business related to the energy sector is state-owned, it makes the state the driver for its economy, providing support for all the other private businesses in return to sustain the country's economy. This is a feature that needs close attention in this research, as it can also mean that the role and the decision of the high government officials in diplomacy is seen as an important factor in conducting a deal with another country. This creates different channels of communication, as it is not the same case with the Asian markets, and there is the involvement of international business actors as well. Nevertheless, the amicable relations between Qatar and the three East Asian countries allows for a smoother process, and as Gary (2013) mentions, this highlights Qatar's very close linkage of foreign policy and energy policy.

Qatar's Further Development through Soft Power

Qatar's development was clearly evident with the development in the oil and gas sector. However, Qatar did not stop at the economic development that resulted from hydrocarbon trade, but rather it continued to expand its position and diversify its development by using soft power. For example, Qatar used its vast amount of

hydrocarbon revenues to provide foreign aid, using it as a tool for foreign policy and enhance its influence over those recipient countries. Despite being a small country, both in size and population, yet Qatar managed to be part of an influential power in the regional, sub-regional and international levels. As a small state with big ambitions, Qatar emerged as a more independent state that practiced soft power to elevate its geopolitical position.

Dramatic changes in its foreign policy was observed since 1995, when Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani took over the throne through a bloodless coup. The first notable change was the founding of Qatar Foundation in 1995, as it was the initial step for Qatar to step up as a center for technological and scientific innovation, social and economic development, political liberalization, philanthropy, cross-cultural dialogue, women's rights and other worthwhile goals in the Middle East and around the globe (Zambelis, 2012). Furthermore, by creating the education city, which consists of world renown universities, this further opened up opportunities for both the national and international students to gather in Doha, thus promoting an active educational image of the country. The other step was the establishment of Al-Jazeera networks in 1996. This revolutionary broadcasting station debated far broader aspects of political discourse through its Arabic and English channels. With live broadcasting of Osama bin Laden's footage during the 9/11 terror attack to the lively scene of the Arab Spring revolution, Qatar played an active and independent foreign policy role in showing support towards the opposition groups without thinking about the consequences. Mediation efforts in the region that emerged through its perceived neutrality is also highly considered (Kamrava, 2011). Furthermore, using sports and major international conferences as foreign policy

tools for branding the country's name was also one of Qatar's foreign policy strategies (Peterson, 2006). It did succeed in promoting and exposing itself to the world by using labels such as "Doha Asian Games" and "Doha Declaration".

As is the case of most of the GCC countries, Qatar's foreign policy seems to be reflected on the personality of the leadership. First evidence, is the change in foreign policy with change in leadership. While Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani was promoting a more open foreign policy, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani is concerned more about the domestic issues, in light of the drop in oil prices and thus the country's economic regression. In this regard, while establishing foreign relations with Qatar is conducted on the national level, developing and enhancing such relations deeper might be easier and more effective on the state leaders' personal relations. The friendly relationship between the leaders create an easier path for further political and economic consolidation.

Qatar did not miss the chance to enhance its bilateral relationship with China, Japan and Korea as well. By actively using diplomatic means and soft power tools in its foreign policy, Qatar has gained favorable grounds towards these countries, as will be discussed in the following chapters.

Conclusion

Qatar has emerged as a powerful and influential actor both regionally and internationally, despite being a small state. This was possible for two main reasons discussed in this chapter, which are the vast hydrocarbon revenues that resulted in great economic development and the use of soft power as its foreign policy tool to expand its area of influence. At the bottom of such development lies the vast deposits of natural gas

in the Qatari territory, that allowed Qatar to enjoy benefits arising from the production and selling of natural gas. With this, Qatar also engaged with the three Northeast Asian countries, namely China, Japan and Korea. These three countries top the LNG export list of Qatar, making them important partners in Qatar's trade relationships. The emergence of strategic interaction between Qatar and China, Japan and Korea will be further discussed in the following chapters.

Chapter 3: Qatar-China Relationship

China was the last country of the three Asian countries to establish ties with Qatar in 1988. The relatively recent bilateral relationship on energy trade between the two countries does not seem to be as strong as that with Japan and Korea. Unlike the continuous steady and growing relationship of Qatar with Japan and Korea since the establishment of bilateral relationship, Qatar-China relations experienced ups and downs throughout their history (Gafar, 2016). Nevertheless, with China's growing demand for LNG, together with other factors that will be examined throughout the chapter, Qatar-China relationship has been steadily enhancing during the last decade.

China is the biggest growing economy in the entire Asian continent, with indications from various studies verifying that. In their report, PricewaterhouseCoopers [PwC] (2013) indicated that China would overtake the US by 2017 as the largest economy measured by GDP at purchasing power parity (PPP) and by 2027 would exceed it in terms of market exchange rate. Others predicted that China will probably play a leading role in increasing the energy demand of Asia for at least the coming two decades (Al-Tamimi, 2013). In fact, the *World Economic Outlook 2016* by IMF has proved that China is already the world's largest economy on PPP basis, playing an important role in global trade and having great influence over the emerging markets and developing economies of the world. In light of such development, Daojiong & Meidan (2015) contend that increasing oil imports, combined with Beijing's ambitious foreign policy designs, are encouraging further commercial and diplomatic engagement between China and the Middle East.

When it comes to the Qatar-China relationship, it is quite recent that both countries enhanced practical interactions with each other. Although minimal in its start, Qatar and China have indulged in greater partnership in recent years (Zambelis, 2012). With fast growing economies and comprehensive achievements of both countries, this chapter will focus on China's energy dynamics and policies, and its implications on the development of China's relationship with Qatar, providing an analytical approach in examining the nature of the bilateral cooperation in terms of energy, diplomatic activities, trade volumes, investment and cultural activities.

Energy Relationship

With respect to the energy dynamics mentioned in the previous section, China's involvement with Qatar is mainly in the imports of the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), and Qatar is the largest LNG supplier to China comprising 34% of the total import sources (EIA, 2015). Borrowing the words of Hu Weiping, a former deputy general in the National Energy Administration, natural gas is the best choice as an energy source for China as it pertains to treat the environment and develop clean energy (Shek, 2015). He further adds that as opposing to the abundant coal resources, China does not have rich resource endowment of natural gas, and thus need to rely on imported gas. As will be discussed below, among the three national oil companies authorized to import LNG into China, China National Oil Corporation (CNOOC), PetroChina and Sinopec, only CNOOC and PetroChina have conducted deals with the Qatari side. With natural gas linking the two countries together, energy is an important factor between the two. It is of essence at this point to look over the history of the energy relationship between the two countries.

The first ever bilateral LNG trade between Qatar and China took place in 2009. Although there was a signed MoU in 1994 for LNG supply (Gafar, 2016), apparently it was not activated until the 2009. This can be explained due to the fact that natural gas was underrepresented in China, and it lacked LNG receiving terminals. The article in the magazine *The Pioneer* of Qatargas (2009) commemorated the delivery of the first LNG cargo to Guadong Dapeng LNG receiving terminal near the major industrial city of Shenzhen, after a first spot cargo on a conventional size vessel was delivered in September, and the delivered cargo was enough to supply energy for all Shenzhen households for two months. The article continues to elaborate that this was the first cargo delivery resulting from the execution of a long-term LNG sales and purchase agreement in 2008 between Qatargas and CNOOC to supply 2 million tons per annum (mtpa) of LNG to China for 25 years. Another agreement to supply 3 mtpa of LNG to China was signed with PetroChina in the same year 2008. In another edition, *The Pioneer* (2011) addressed the first delivery of LNG cargo to PetroChina's first LNG receiving terminal at Rudong, Jiangsu Province took place in 2011. In addition, Qatargas signed MoUs with each of CNOOC and PetroChina in 2009 for additional LNG supplies of 5 mtpa and 2 mtpa respectively, which is expected to take some time in order to be commenced (its initial start-off was supposed to be in 2013, however, it has been pending yet).

These extended MoUs are serving as the basis of the long-term relationship and its enhancement between Qatar and China. It can be learned through the articles in *The Pioneer* and the press releases regarding the LNG shipment, as China emerged as a new and a promising market, Qatargas did not hide their enthusiasm and encouraged further development of such relationship by emphasizing the safe, stable and reliable delivery of

their LNG to meet the energy supply diversification plans of China. It can be seen from the various media articles on Qatargas website, that Qatargas successfully delivered commissioning LNG cargoes to newly opened LNG terminals in the various provinces of China. The visit of Xi Jinping, the Vice President of China at that time, to Qatargas facilities in June 2008 as part of his official visit (Qatargas, 2008) proves the willingness of LNG trade cooperation between the countries.

There was further progress in the bilateral relationship when CNOOC opened its first office in the Middle East in Doha in March 2009 (Gafar, 2016). The inauguration ceremony of the opening of a representative office of Qatargas in Beijing in November 2009, symbolized the next milestone in the strengthening of the long-term relationship between Qatar and China (Qatargas, 2009). This came right after the first delivery of LNG from Qatar to China, and shows how Qatar considers China an important customer of the energy market and contends that China is poised to continually grow and be one of the biggest LNG consumers (Qatargas, 2009).

The LNG trade relationship between Qatar and China developed further and Qatar succeeded in exporting its LNG to even independent and private importers. Qatargas announced on 26 October 2014 that it sold its first cargo of LNG to JOVO LNG Storage and Transportation Co., Ltd., (“JOVO”), which is an independent and privately owned LNG importer of China. It is considered to be a significant event as it is first of its kind as Qatargas only dealt with state-owned oil national oil and gas companies. This was a result of a more than two years of hard negotiations and friendly communications between the two sides, and through the deal, 64,000 cubic meter cargo was sold on a free-on-board basis and loaded on to the vessel ‘LNG Lerici’ at Ras Laffan port on 22 October

pursuant to the FOB Master Sale and Purchase Agreement signed by the parties earlier that summer. This is unsurprisingly backed with government efforts. In a press release on the issue, Mr Zhang Jianguo, Chief Executive Officer of JOVO was caught stating that, “Vigorous support from China’s National and Guangdong Provincial Energy Administration has created a new prospect for Chinese Private Enterprise to import LNG” (Qatargas, 2014). Such actions from both public and private sector to turn towards greater usage of LNG is seen in line with government policies to promote the low carbon economy and the development of China’s Clean Energy Policy.

The following figure 2 shows the LNG exports from Qatar to China throughout the years, starting from the year of its first delivery of LNG. The decline in data after 2013 can be linked to the stuttering growth rate of the Chinese economy that is linked to the slowdown of industrialization. Furthermore, the peak increase of oil prices also pertains to such trend, as the long-term contracts, which Qatar and China have practiced, are fixed with the oil prices.

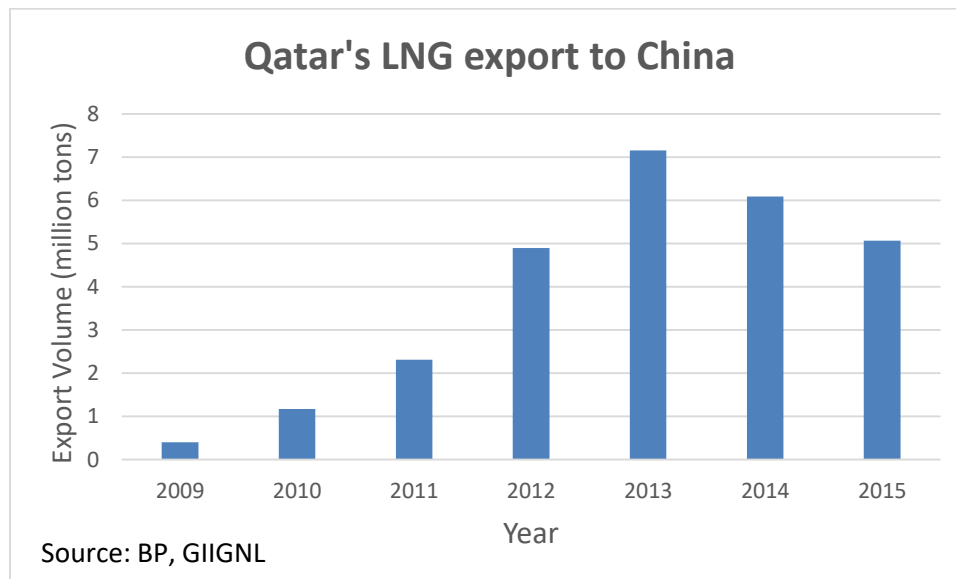


Figure 2. Qatar’s LNG export to China.

Other than the sales and purchase agreements, Qatar’s engagement with Chinese companies rest mainly in exploring natural gas in Qatar’s offshore. On 16 May 2010, Qatar Petroleum (QP) signed a new 30-year E&P sharing agreement with Shell and PetroChina International Investment, to jointly explore for natural gas in Qatar’s Block D area, in which PetroChina holds an interest of 25%. In the process, Qatar Petroleum will take any gas produced (IEA, 2011, Al-Malak, 2010). Qatar Petroleum signed a separate agreement with CNOOC, China’s biggest offshore oil explorer, in August 2009 for a duration of 25 years, to search for natural gas in another offshore field of Qatar (Alexander's Gas & Oil Connections, 2009). In 2012, yet another agreement of Exploration and Production Sharing Agreement (EPSA) was signed between QP, GDF SUDEZ and PetroChina for exploration programs in Qatar’s Block 4 (PetroChina, 2012).

On October 10, 2011, Qatar Petroleum International (QPI), China National

Petroleum Corp. (CNPC) and Shell (China) Ltd. (Shell) signed a cooperation framework agreement with Taizhou Municipal Government to jointly build a refining and petrochemical complex in Taizhou, Zhejiang province (CNPC, 2011). The integrated refinery and petrochemical complex will have world-class production capabilities to produce refined fuels and petrochemical products. While PetroChina will have a 51% shareholding in the project, the rest is divided upon QPI and Shell equally for 24.5% (CNPC, 2008). The result of such achievements comes from continuous communication and negotiation between the two countries. It started with the signing of a Letter of Intent (LoI) by QPI, PetroChina and Shell on June 23, 2008, during the visit of high-level delegation from Qatar to China (CNPC, 2008), where PetroChina is a listed subsidiary of CNPC (PetroChina, n.d.). Further discussions were undergone between Qatar's oil minister and the head of State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC), as they talked about planned joint venture projects in China between CNPC and QP (Reuters, 2011).

However, the project has been cancelled by the Chinese government due to several reasons including residents' environmental concerns, difficulties over land procurement and problems involving CNPC's management over corruption, and Shell has pulled out of the planned joint venture (Asian Oil & Gas, 2013; Platts, 2013). Furthermore, there was a reported withdrawal of Shell from the joint E&P sharing agreement with QP and PetroChina that was signed in 2010, as one of the well in Block D of the field came up dry (Tully, 2014).

In any case, the involvement of the Chinese national oil companies (NOCs) abroad has grown substantially, and it has seen greater interaction with Qatar as well. It is

important to note that although China's NOCs are majority-owned by the government, its relationship between the Chinese government is found to be complex with often divergent interests (Jiang & Sinton, 2011). In their assessment report, IEA advocates that the Chinese NOCs are not entirely government-run, but rather it is the result of a complex interplay between individuals and groups associated with the firms, whose interests are not always aligned but commercial incentives are the main driver. In this sense, the involvement of the Chinese NOCs with Qatar does not necessarily comply the bilateral relations between the two governments alone. Such characteristics of the Chinese NOCs, together with the involvement of other NOCs and IOCs, pertain to the complex interdependence approach that was discussed in the first chapter of this research. This can be deduced through linking back to the characteristics of this framework, in which the government is not the sole controller in such relationship but rather the transnational actors of governments as well as multinational corporations, who tend to follow their own means or goals through various channels of communication. Furthermore, military priorities are definitely not considered, but rather economic incentives are the driving force of such engagement.

Diplomatic Efforts and Strategic Relationship

It can be noticed that the establishment of bilateral diplomatic ties in 1988 between the countries is fairly new, as there were not much interaction between the two apart from small trade activities of fertilizers and petrochemicals. Based on the secondary data that was examined by Gafar (2016), it can be inferred that the forging of the Sino-Qatar relationship emanated from economic and energy interests for three reasons; first, China's interest and inquiry of Qatar's exports to the world, the size of its investment and

its oil production prior the establishment of such relationship, second, how the potential for cooperation in energy and investment was discussed at the first dialogue at the ministerial level in 1993, and third, there were on-going trade activities of exporting fertilizers and petrochemicals from Qatar to China even before official diplomatic engagement. This is as opposed to the traditional understanding of international relations of realism which contends that military hard power is the reason and interest of a state to seek partners. This brings us to theory of complex interdependence, which states that military force is not used by governments towards one another (Keohane & Nye, 1987).

The visit of Qatar's First Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Hamad bin Jasim bin Gabr Al Thani, to China in 2007 was considered to be a significant milestone (Gafar, 2016). This visit did change a lot with the signing of a significant number of agreements between the two countries and paved a way for all the major deals to occur starting from 2008, through which dramatic growth and greater cooperation on the energy front took place. On another account, according to the previous Chinese ambassador to Qatar, H.E. Gao Youzhen, high-level visits of top Chinese and Qatari officials in 2012 spurred greater economic cooperation (Aguilar, 2013, March 13). In light of such diplomatic and official visits and exchanges, one can think of energy diplomacy as a guiding framework in the Sino-Qatar relationship.

In his paper, Gafar (2016) frequently mentions the extensive efforts of the Qatari government and diplomats, including the emir himself, in developing further the energy relationship between Qatar and China, stating that diplomatic efforts led by the Qatari emir personally aimed at reaching a gas cooperation agreement with China. This was evident through official data and documents available at the Qatari Embassy in Beijing.

He even commented that, “the visit had clearly laid the basis for a lucrative strategic partnership in energy between the world’s largest LNG producing country and the world’s largest LNG consuming market” (p.10-11, Gafar, 2016).

Against such background, and by making a reference to the three key concepts of energy in international relations as elaborated in chapter 1, which are energy security, diplomacy and statecraft, energy diplomacy suits the Qatari position in such a case. Using diplomatic means to promote and reach a cooperation in the energy sector to attain the Chinese market, Qatar followed energy diplomacy in order to secure its market through winning a growing and soon-to-be-big customer, China. Even when the relationship between the two countries experienced a setback for six years after Qatar’s failure in winning a bid to build China’s first LNG terminal and a supply of 3 million tons of LNG, and thus creating a cold atmosphere between the two side, it was Qatari diplomacy with numerous dialogues and attempts of reconciliation from the failed agreement that ignited the bilateral relationship (Gafar, 2016). Furthermore, it is worth noticing that from the myriad of reasons, which the Qatari diplomats stated to achieve reconciliation, did not include military factors at all, and thus adds up to the idea of a complex interdependent relations.

Although there was some tension in the beginning of this relationship due to the turn-over of Qatari-Chinese collaboration, Qatar-China relationship indeed grew to be, and is still aiming for a strategic partnership. Since the effective visit of Sheikh Hamad to China in 2007, to the very recent visit of Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, the Emir of Qatar to China in 2014, there was significant enhancement in the bilateral relationship, not only in energy, but also in trade and investment in different fields. In his last visit,

there was a joint agreement from both sides to establish a “strategic partnership” that calls for further cooperation in economic, trade, energy, human and cultural exchanges, and investment in infrastructure, telecommunication and finance as well as joint investment in third countries (Gulf Times, 2014). Furthermore, China is considering Qatar as a key partner to promote their “Belt and Road” initiative as it shares common goals with the Qatar National Vision 2030, and thus promote for bilateral pragmatic cooperation between the two countries (Rakhmat & Cafiero, 2016; Xinhua, 2016). As Niblock advocates in his interview, *‘China is very conscious that it needs to depend on oil and gas imports. In such situation, GCC-China bilateral relationship is important, and for this to be successful, institutions, cooperative committee, schemes are necessary.’* With a continuous support of joint committees, schemes and institutions (such as cooperation with BRICS countries) in various fields, reinforced through similar interests in investment, the development of the long-term relationship and strategic partnership between the two countries has definitely led to its improvement.

Economic Relationship

Trade Activities and Trade Volumes. Trade between China and Qatar was achieved as early as in late 1950s according to the Economic and Commercial Counsellor’s Office of the Chinese Embassy in Qatar (2004). The trade between the two countries were mainly in fertilizer and petrochemical exports from Qatar to China (Gafar, 2016). However, in recent years, trade volumes between the two countries grew substantively from \$400mn in 2004 to \$10.6bn in 2014, which is a 26-fold increase in 10 years (Gulf Times, 2015). The report also highlights the signing of a major contracting

deals worth \$8bn in various infrastructure projects.

UNcomtrade (2016) provides data on the total value of trade between Qatar and China from 2000 till 2015. Based on these data, as can be seen from table 1 and figure 3 below, trade activities between Qatar and China has seen a continuous growth trend, with the exception of the sudden drop in 2002, which coincides with the year in which Qatar lost the bid to build the first Chinese LNG terminal and supply China with LNG, and 2009 that can be seen as the overall effect of the global financial crisis, as well as unavailability of data.

Table 1

Total Trade Value between Qatar and China in USD

Year	Qatar Export to China	Qatar Import from China	Total	Percentage Change of Total Trade (%)
2000	316,604,128	97,226,448	413,830,576	
2001	327,036,160	108,830,448	435,866,608	5.32
2002	116,529,480	128,346,232	244,875,712	-43.82
2003	258,059,826	166,169,519	424,229,345	73.24
2004	208,827,772	183,559,630	392,387,402	-7.51
2005	376,971,390	519,861,757	896,833,147	128.56
2006	398,247,042	956,831,792	1,355,078,834	51.10
2007	334,948,199	1,366,699,149	1,701,647,348	25.58
2008	770,211,404	2,012,811,927	2,783,023,331	63.55
2009	923,172,826	NA	923,172,826	-66.83
2010	2,225,216,061	2,103,892,597	4,329,108,658	368.94
2011	4,494,941,148	NA	4,494,941,148	3.83
2012	6,814,136,959	2,462,681,395	9,276,818,354	106.38
2013	8,864,560,969	2,659,725,624	11,524,286,593	24.23
2014	10,109,150,407	3,212,337,016	13,321,487,423	15.59
2015	5,238,216,655	3,765,052,451	9,003,269,106	-32.42

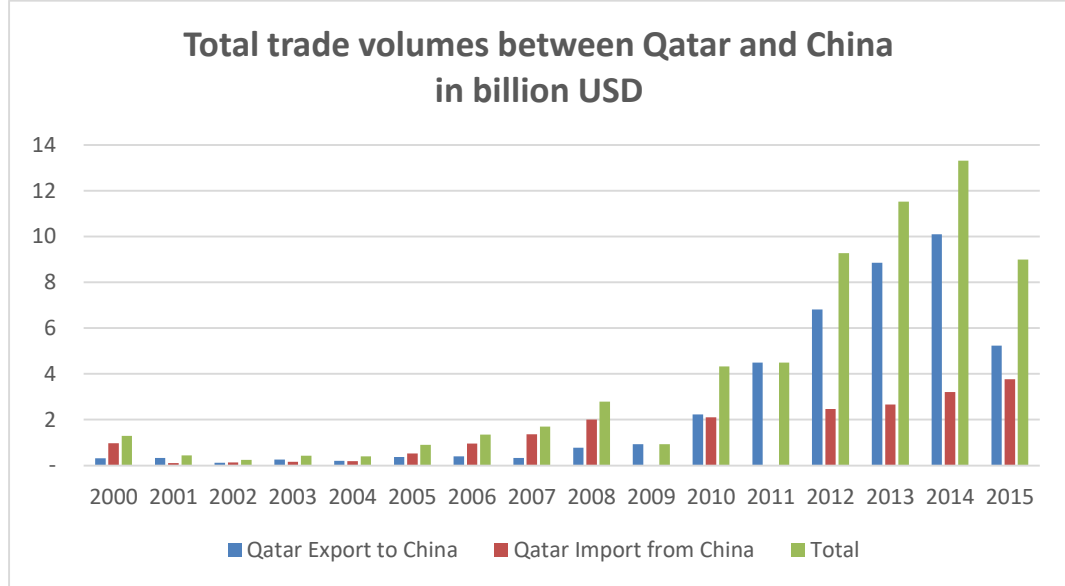


Figure 3. Total trade volumes between Qatar and China in billion USD.

There is a sudden increase in the export volumes from Qatar to China from 2009 to 2010. This can be explained from the supplement of Qatari LNG to China at that time. As mentioned earlier, after the fruitful visit of Sheikh Hamad to China in 2007, and especially after 2010, the trade volume in both imports and exports experience an exponential growth, pertaining to the growing importance of the bilateral partnership. Such growth adds value to the meaning of strategic bilateral partnership.

Further data shown in figure 4 reveals the amount of LNG exported in terms of total export volume that is extrapolated from data available on UN comtrade. It clearly shows how LNG trade volume dominates total export volume from Qatar to China with an average of around 53% increase in LNG trade volume over the years.

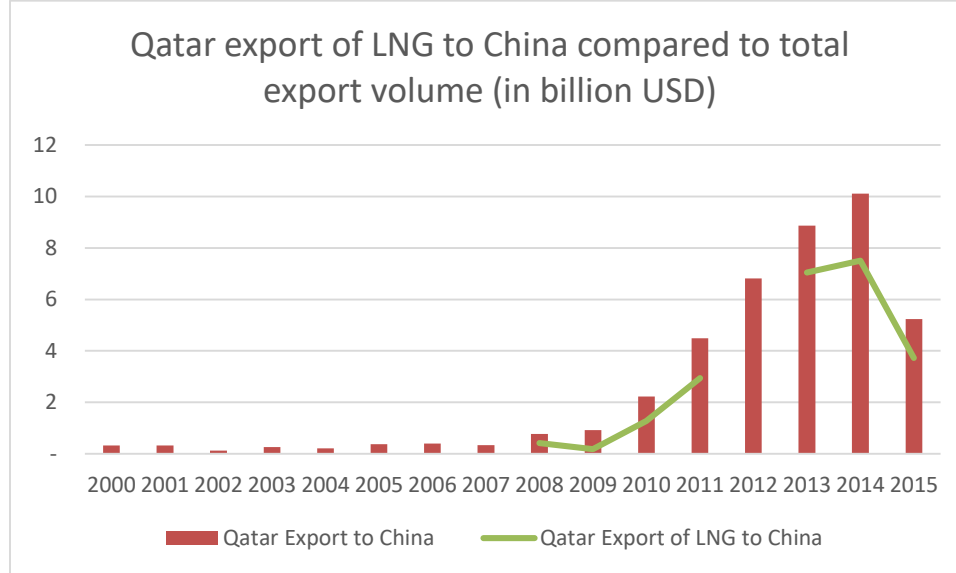


Figure 4. Qatar export of LNG to China compared to total export volume (in billion USD).

The latest drop in the trade value in 2015 can be seen parallel to the drop in the economic growth of China and the World. Nonetheless, whether coincidence or not, economic and trade cooperation in all commodities between Qatar and China started to increase incrementally as soon as they agreed on the energy trade. So one can deduce the importance of energy in achieving these changes. Furthermore, such interconnectedness in economic and trade activities of various commodities adds significant importance on the complexity of the relationship. Although it can be said that energy trade acted as an igniting source of the incremental increase, the relationship developed in such a way that it is hard to differentiate the hierarchy of the different issues of concern. This is true when we further add the other engagements of investment and cultural exchanges, as will be mentioned in the coming sections.

Investment Activities between Qatar and China. Although foreign investment was suffering in the investment unfriendly environment of China, recently, with the encouragement from the Chinese government, it takes up several forms in varying fields (Lam, 2005). The Economic and Commercial Counsellor's Office of the Chinese Embassy to Qatar (2015) announced that Qatar and China signed an agreement in 1999 concerning the encouragement and reciprocal protection of investment. The purpose of the agreement was to create favorable conditions for investment in each of the countries, and be conducive to stimulating business initiative of the investors and to intensify the economic cooperation between the two on the basis of equality and benefits. Considerable time passed for actually fruitful and large-scale investment between the two countries to occur.

With the basis of such bilateral agreement Qatar and China, and with the increased economic interaction between them, both countries have engaged into more investment throughout the years. One of the noteworthy activities occurred in the financial sector. In April 2015, China established a Renminbi (RMB) Clearing Center for the first time in the Middle East in Qatar (Rakhmat, 2015). The establishment of such financial institution within the territories of a strategically important partner is considered to be a crucial step for three main reasons; first, it would facilitate greater opportunities to expand trade investment between Beijing and Doha and thus strengthen the already existing links, second, it will allow Qatar to stand as a regional and international financial center, and third, expand the cross-border use of the RMB and thus more and more trade be dominated in RMB that would allow China to establish the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) as part of its Silk Road initiatives (Rakhmat, 2015; Rakhmat, &

Cafiero, 2016). The Silk Road, or the One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative of China aims to enhance networking and connectivity, reaching out to the Arab Gulf region as well. The OBOR has been invested in by \$40bn Silk Road Fund and a new China-led Asia Infrastructural Investment Bank (AIIB) (Leung, 2016).

In 2008, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Limited (ICBC), China's largest commercial bank, inaugurated the opening of its Doha Branch (ICBC, 2008), and in 2014, it was appointed as the RMB clearing Bank in Doha (Gulf Times, 2014). Later that year, the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) agreed with CITIC Group Corp, in which Qatar Sovereign Fund has bought a stake of 22% back in 2012, to launch a \$10bn fund provided equally from both sides, that will invest in the region looking at any promising investment from property to telecommunications (Reuters, 2014).

In response, Qatar Central Bank was allowed into China's interbank bond market that will allow greater investment opportunities for Qatar in China, and that is the first of its kind (Gulf Times, 2014). The report gave out details of cooperation saying that China gave a 30bn yuan (\$4.9bn) quota to Qatar under the "RMB Qualified Foreign Institutional Investor" program, and moreover, China's central bank signed a 35bn yuan currency swap arrangement with Qatar. In 2010, Qatar Investment Authority has agreed to invest \$2.8bn in the initial public offering (IPO) of the Agricultural Bank of China, and has further raised its stakes to \$6bn to further expand its portfolio in China (Doha Bank, 2013).

Other Factors Enhancing Qatar-China Relations

The number of Chinese residents in Qatar reached about 6,000 in 2014 according to the secondary data collected in BQ magazine through respective embassies in Doha

(Snoj, 2014). Not necessarily pertaining to such increase in the number of human exchange, however, in light of such increasing interaction, soft power use from both countries has picked up its role in strengthening both countries' position towards each other. Some of the soft power tools used by Qatar has already been mentioned in chapter 2 of this research. So this section will focus on the soft power practices by the Chinese side.

In a news article of Gulf Times (2014) that covered the visit of HH the Emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, to China, it was reported that HH the Emir donated a grant of \$10mn for setting up a Qatar Chair for Middle East Studies at the Peking University. Educational institutions to promote Chinese language and culture are one of the powerful and influential soft-power tool used. Further discussions of the possibilities of cooperation between Qatar University (QU) and PKU is on-going (Peking University, 2014). Chinese courses are being offered at the Translation and Interpreting Studies of Hamad bin Khalifa University (HBKU) on account of the MoU signed between it and the Chinese Embassy in Qatar in 2015 to collaborate in the areas of language teaching and cultural activities in line with the growing Qatar-China economic partnership (TII, 2015).

Media is another strong tool of soft power. China's Central Television (CCTV) signed a partnership agreement with Al Jazeera in 2013, and under such agreement, Al Jazeera opened its Beijing office in the same year (Rakhmat, 2016). Agreements in aviation has also increased the number of flight to and from Doha and China, and according to the information available on Qatar Airways website, currently there are flights to 6 destinations in China. This would further promote tourism for the citizens of both countries, providing another gateway of understanding each other in the cultural

theme. Cultural exchanges cannot be missed when speaking about soft power. As previously mentioned, exchange of people further promotes the exchange of culture in order to have a better understanding of each other and thus provide an amicable environment between the two. One of the prominent initiatives launched between the two countries is the Qatar-China Cultural Year 2016 run by Qatar Museums, in which various cultural programs such as exhibitions, festivals and different events were launched.

Conclusion

Qatar-China relationship development is considered to be relatively nascent, and LNG trade based on long-term contracts were signed in 2008. Economic interaction between the two countries started to increase visibly after the energy deal was signed, that was parallel to the increased amount of LNG exported to China. Secondary data prove that such energy interaction was a result of Qatari diplomatic efforts, pertaining to the use of energy diplomacy. Building on such efforts, China has revealed growing interest in Qatar through its trade and investment activities, and the establishment of financial institutions is considered to be a stepping stone for further strategic partnership. Based on the diversified and certainly enhanced interaction, Qatar and China proves to have developed into a complex interdependent relationship that is supported by the use of soft power tools such as culture, education, media etc.

Chapter 4: Qatar-Japan Relationship

Japan, a country with big economy is the third largest oil consumer and importer in the world, the largest importer of LNG and the second largest coal importer after China (EIA, 2015). The high statistics of imports comes from the fact that Japan lacks natural energy resources, that is of fossil fuels, which is needed to sustain its industry-based economy. This naturally led Japan to seek energy suppliers, and as GCC is rich with such energy resources, the partnership between the two was inevitable. This is evident in the long history that both countries share, and that dates back to 1956, when Japan won its first concession of oil from Saudi Arabia (Newendorp, 2011). Therefore, the need for energy imports in Japan was met with the need for the GCC to finance their economic development through oil and gas revenues (Abdullah & Al-Tamimi, 2015).

As for Qatar, the Japan-Qatar bilateral relationship was established in May 1972 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2015). In 2014, Qatar was the second largest LNG supplier to Japan after Australia, providing 18% of its total needs of natural gas, while being the third largest crude oil supplier after Saudi Arabia and UAE, providing 11 % of its total needs of crude oil (EIA, 2015). The main concern for Japan is to secure stable supply of energy as it is vulnerable to and easily affected by domestic and international energy situations (Agency for Natural Resources and Energy, 2014), such as the Arab oil embargo in 1973, the Iranian revolution in 1979, and the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster in 2011. Qatar promotes its energy sources via secure, reliable and stable supplies, and most probably this has led the Qatar-Japan energy relationship to deepen over the years, meeting the needs of both sides. Japan's engagement with the region

started off based on economic interests, however, it has developed and has established a deep complex interdependent relation with Qatar in particular as will be seen and induced from the following sections. The development of such relationship will be assessed throughout the chapter with further analytical approaches.

Energy Relationship

Japan's engagement with Qatar has a history that spans for over three decades, and it started with the import of crude oil from Qatar for over a long time, which then expanded to the import of LNG, and Japan is the first LNG customer for Qatar (Embassy of Japan in the State of Qatar, 2016). The oil trade will not be discussed in detail in this research, as obtaining data for it is beyond the capability of this research, because of its relatively small size. It is clearly evident that the start-off of this relationship came as a result of energy security, through which Japan, with a deficiency in energy sources needed to secure its energy supplies. Almost a decade ago, a decision to increase oil and LNG imports were made in Japan at a time when it adopted the New National Energy Security in 2006, in which it revealed its middle and long term energy security concerns and called for strengthening relations with energy rich countries through providing official development assistance and signing free-trade agreements (Masaki, 2006). Masaki elaborates that with a decline in imports from countries like Iran and Indonesia, and failed expectations of Russian supply, Japan is trying to adopt more energy supply diversification, which led to greater affiliation to Qatar. According to the US Energy Information Administration (2015), Qatar is now the second largest supplier of LNG after Australia by providing 18% of the total LNG supply to Japan.

Qatar's LNG supply to Japan is mainly based on long-term contracts. The very

first Sales and Purchase agreement was signed in 1992, as Qatargas agreed to sell Chubu Power 4 mtpa of LNG for a duration of 25 years, starting from 1997 (Oil & Gas Journal, 1996). Accordingly, Qatar succeeded in delivering the first shipment in 1997 safely until its delivery reached up to 2,300 LNG cargos in 2015 (LNG World News, 2015). Other major deals concluded with Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) and Kansai Electric Power Company (KEPCO) in 2012 (Qatar Petroleum, 2012). Al-Khulaifi (2009), Chief Operating Officer of Commercial and Shipping department of Qatargas, emphasized the reliability and flexibility of Qatar LNG delivery to Japan. This matches with the Japanese energy needs. Japan imports more than 90% of its energy resources, and as was visible through the announcement of its National Energy Security Policy in 2006 and other energy related policies, sustainability of its energy supply is of utmost importance to Japan. Qatar seized its chance to prove that its LNG supplies are safe, reliable and sustainable throughout the years under the contract. This must have allowed Qatar to expand its LNG trade size towards the Japanese market, overtaking Indonesia and Malaysia to become the second largest supplier as the amount of LNG exports to Japan continually increased. The establishment of such energy relations plays a role in satisfying the energy security issues of both countries.

The below figure 5 shows the growth of Qatari LNG exports to Japan ever since the first LNG cargo delivery in 1997. There is a sharp increase in 2011 and further added in 2012, which can be tracked to the Fukushima Daiichi disaster that occurred in March 2011. The rise in LNG demand came in order to compensate for the decline of nuclear power, as Japan had to shut down all its 48 nuclear reactors (Richards, 2014). As the graph only shows LNG supplies based on long-term contracts, the actual rise in LNG

imports that comes additionally from spot and short-term purchases should be statistically higher. There are many predictions that claim that LNG consumption in Japan is likely to fall if the nuclear reactors are restarted (Platts, 2015), however, Richards (2014) explains that the restarting of such reactors is realistically difficult for two main reasons; first, the Nuclear Regulatory Agency of Japan has put strict inspection qualifications, which makes it extremely difficult for the originally existing reactors to be restarted, and second, the new regulatory guidelines allow local communities whether to agree or disagree in reactivating the power plants.

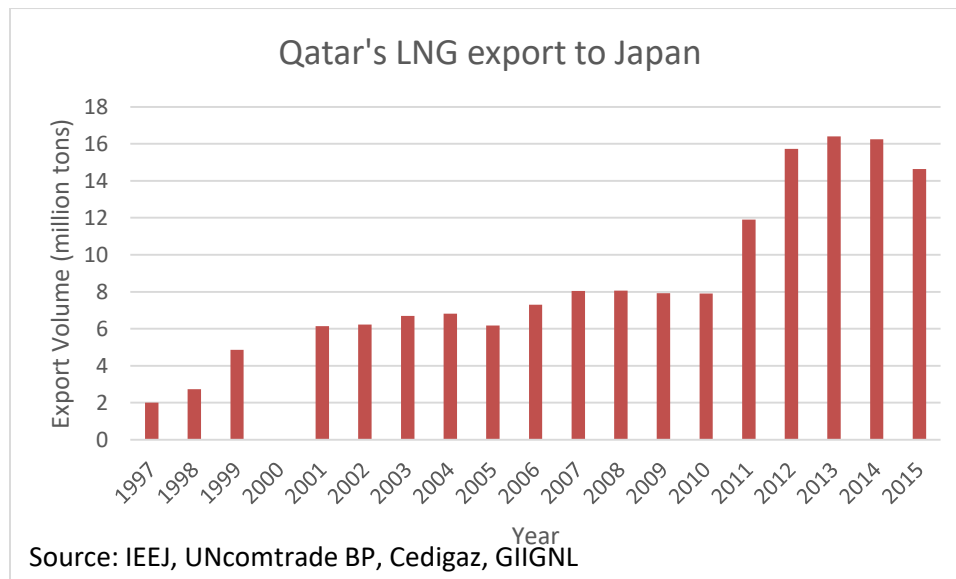


Figure 5. Qatar’s LNG export to Japan.

Horinuki seconds this through his interview, and when asked about the possibility of starting up the nuclear plants, he said that *‘It is very political, and I am not sure. Of course the Japanese government wants to restart the nuclear power plant, but it is a*

political action,' and thus the chances to see the reactors reactivated becomes obsolete. On the other hand, lowering the greenhouse gases is an important agenda to the Japanese government, and as it needs to reduce its reliance on oil and coal that result in high levels of greenhouse gases, turning further to use more natural gas as long as environmental concerns are under consideration (Clemente, 2016). The decline of LNG imports after 2013 can be referred to the decrease in the total energy demand. Japan's energy demand is continuously slowing down due to its maturing economy and falling population that is also coupled with the increased energy efficiency measures and the greater adoption of renewables for the country's future electricity needs according to the New Strategic Energy Plan announced in 2014 (IEA, 2014).

Other than the SPA contracts, Qatar-Japan energy relationship is also supported by strategic investments from Japanese companies in LNG supply projects in Qatar. Starting early from 1980s until recently, Japanese firms have contributed greatly in developing the oil and gas sectors of Qatar. The most prominent examples are Marubeni Corporation ("Marubeni") and Mitsui & Co. ("Mitsui"), as they were the first Japanese firms that entered into foreign partnership in Qatargas, creating a breakthrough in the LNG phase, eventually bringing with them the first customer (Flower, 2011). Marubeni has been involved in the construction of Ras Laffan Refinery, the first of condensate refinery in Qatar since 2006, that has a processing capacity of 146,000 barrels per stream day and a production capacity of various petroleum products (Monzer, 2010). In addition, Marubeni was awarded for 2,000MW power plant in Mesaieed Industrial city of Qatar in 2006, and signed a joint venture agreement with QP and Qatar Electricity and Water Company for a power purchase agreement that lasts for 25 years starting upon

completion of construction of one of the largest power plants in the world (Marubeni, 2006). On the other hand, Mitsui entered into a joint venture agreement with QP, Qatar Electricity and Water Company and SUEZ for power generation and water desalination project in Qatar's Ras Laffan Industrial city, in which it gets a 25% stake (Mitsui, 2008).

The achievements of Japan Drilling Co. Ltd. (JDC), and the establishment of Gulf Drilling International Ltd. (GDI) is also worth mentioning. GDI was first established in 2004 as a joint venture between QP and JDC, and it specializes in the provision of onshore and offshore drilling services to major oil and gas companies in Qatar (QP, 2012). Other major Japanese companies involved in Qatari projects include Chiyoda Corporation, Japan Cooperation Center Petroleum, Itochu Corporation and Cosmo Oil etc. which are actively involved in the upstream and downstream projects within Qatar. However, finding and listing up all the projects is partly impossible, due to the vast expansion of big and small projects that involve private actors and it is out of the scope of this research.

Certainly, the relationship between Qatar and Japan in the energy sector is spread out diversely even within the field. One can argue that the Japanese companies involved in the projects with Qatar are private companies, and thus cannot be used to explain the Qatar-Japan relationship. However, such activities of Japanese firms are generally supported by the Japanese government as is mentioned below, and the Qatari firms are of state-owned. In fact, this adds up to the definition of the complex interdependency approach, as the government is not the sole actor over the different transactions. Although they might have different initiatives and targets, they work together in a transnational feature in which they communicate through multiple channels. Domestic

issues, such as the Fukushima disaster, and international factors, such as the expansion of Qatari exports and the reduction of others' supply, are not seen separately but rather pursued in an interdependent way. This way, the hierarchy of the issues concerned are considered in a parallel manner that affect each other. Finally, as these transactions are clearly economic, military force is not the focus of Qatar-Japan relationship. All these features within the bilateral relationship refers to complex relationship between Qatar and Japan, which will be added upon through other engagements mentioned in the following sections.

Diplomatic Efforts and Strategic Relationship

As Japan experienced an immense damage due to the earthquake and tsunami that shook the country in 2011, its government and people feel grateful towards the GCC countries in general and Qatar in particular for standing with Japan (Abdullah & Al-Tamimi, 2015). In fact, Horinuki advocates in his interview that, *'2011 Fukushima and the Great West East Earthquakes has another new turning point of our relations'* as the Qatari support in restoring the disaster was high and diverse and *'Qatar tried to make it work'* and this will be further discussed in the last section regarding cultural ties.

After the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1972, the Qatar-Japan relationship has been further expanded from merely being an energy supplier-customer relationship. As delineated in the previous section, Japanese firms have been actively engaged in different economic sectors. In fact, Japan has been promoting economic diplomacy as a means to enhance the growth of its economy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2016), and in light of such proceedings, we can translate its diplomatic efforts conducted in Qatar as one of such kinds, and as energy is involved, it can be referred to as energy

diplomacy. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (2016), the dependency of Japan on other countries for its energy resources has increased considerably since the earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan in 2011, and the ministry has been exerting resource diplomacy strategically through strengthening comprehensive and mutually beneficial ties with resource-rich countries and through diversifying its energy sources. Furthermore, the support given to the Japanese companies abroad through the diplomatic mission (in Qatar) by providing necessary information and lobbying foreign governments has been enhanced through the public-private partnership in Japan (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2016).

In the case of Qatar-Japan relationship, the energy relationship has been strengthened further in two practical ways. First, it is through the visits conducted by the heads of state and high-level and ministerial level officials of both countries to each other, of which recently was the visit of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to Qatar in 2013, and the visit of HH the Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani to Japan in 2015 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2015; Gulf Times, 2015). Second, and this is referring to the Japanese efforts as mentioned by the Japanese ministry of foreign affairs, it is done through strengthening its systematic functions, including information gathering. Such activities can be translated as government and diplomatic efforts in enhancing and developing the already existing energy trade relationship with Qatar, and thus promoting energy diplomacy. As delineated earlier, Japan is an energy resource-poor country and it needs to rely heavily on energy imports. Qatar is an energy resource-rich country and it needs to find demand markets. In this regard, energy security (of supply) is of utmost importance to Japan, while energy security (of demand) is playing a role in Qatar's

outward market expansion. This sums up to the point that energy security was the primary reason and purpose for establishing bilateral ties between Japan and Qatar. However, the continuous development and expansion of such relationship pertains to energy diplomacy in the sense that the governments of both countries exert diplomatic activities to achieve energy-related ends.

As part of strengthening bilateral relationship, Qatar and Japan signed a Joint Statement to establish the “Japan-Qatar Joint Economic Committee” during the International Energy Forum (IEF) held in Doha in April 2006, and was officially launched in November later that year (Embassy of Japan in the State of Qatar, 2016). The “Japan-Qatar Joint Economic Committee” is a ministerial forum aimed at boosting bilateral economic relations, and during the first meeting, they agreed to establish working groups on energy and on improvement of the business and investment environment (Masaki, 2006). Further commitments such as the development of institutions and meetings that support the enhancement of bilateral relationships act as boosters in maintaining and developing a strategic partnership between the countries in focus. What is more, Mohammed Ahmed bin Tuwar, Vice Chairman of Qatar Chamber, said in a press release at the Japan Electronics Technology Forum for Sustainable Development that was held in Doha, “Qatar and Japan have had a long distinguished history of strong economic relations; they are further working hard to upgrade the level of cooperation in various fields such as culture, education, health, sport, science and technology. They intend to build multi-layered relations that go beyond energy and that extends to further cooperation and promotion of investments and mutual partnerships” (Gulf Times, 2016). By saying “multi-layered”, it just explains that both countries are

aware of the complex interdependence relations that they enjoy and aim to expand further.

On a side note, Miotto & Cafiero (2016) contend that Qatar and Japan are involved in military transactions in an indirect way, that Qatar arranged arms deals for purchasing Rafale fighter jets and missiles with funds, worth \$6.8bn borrowed from major Japanese financial firms. This follows the meeting between H.H. Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Emir of Qatar, and H.E. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan during 2013 and 2015, when they discussed bilateral cooperation beyond energy cooperation and were willing to expand their cooperation further into the security fields as well in order to tackle the threat posed by terrorism and work to maintain peace and stability in the Middle Eastern region (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2013, 2015). This, together with the recent military legislation of providing military aid to its allies, reveals how Abe's administration is keen to promote further its stance in the security field, and Qatar is considered to be one of its close allies. This can be contradicting against the third feature of the complex interdependence approach that says, 'military force is not used by governments towards one another' (p.731, Keohane & Nye, 1987). However, one should not misunderstand and assume that this approach advocates a new theory with no military issues involved, but rather, it suggests a middle point between the traditional understanding of realism and liberalism. That being said, the military transactions between Qatar and Japan is only partial and does not have equal importance as the economic interests between the two countries, concluding that Qatar-Japan relationship follows the complex interdependent nature. Furthermore, looking at the fact that a wealthy country like Qatar borrowing money from countries like Japan just

indicates how this relationship is further developing in a strategic manner of mutual interdependence and Qatar's increasing shift towards the east (Defense News, 2016).

Economic Relationship

Trade Activities and Trade Volumes. Supporting each other's economic development, Japan and Qatar have been engaged in trade relationship that has continually grown over the years, as shown in table 2. Indeed, Abdullah & Al-Tamimi (2015) advocate that trade is at the heart of the growing links between the GCC countries, that including Qatar, and Japan, which is mainly focused on crude oil and gas. In 2013, Qatar exported \$37.2 billion in energy resources to Japan, while Japan exported only \$1.32 billion to Qatar, primarily in the automotive, electronics, and machinery sectors (Miotto & Cafiero 2016).

Table 2

Total Trade Value between Qatar and Japan in USD

Year	Qatar Export to Japan	Qatar Import from Japan	Total	Percentage Change of Total Trade (%)
2000	2,468,563,712	358,299,776	2,826,863,488	
2001	5,542,626,304	357,857,568	5,900,483,872	108.729
2002	2,378,267,136	426,532,800	2,804,799,936	-52.4649
2003	6,158,401,379	512,738,648	6,671,140,027	137.8473
2004	7,778,903,805	313,543,420	8,092,447,225	21.30531
2005	10,304,033,668	1,171,166,694	11,475,200,362	41.80136
2006	14,117,648,358	1,973,325,004	16,090,973,362	40.2239
2007	17,052,785,528	2,361,761,143	19,414,546,671	20.65489
2008	23,223,053,944	2,688,208,313	25,911,262,257	33.46313
2009	15,473,457,519	NA	15,473,457,519	-40.2829
2010	21,484,375,534	1,750,869,492	23,235,245,026	50.16195
2011	29,867,826,336	NA	29,867,826,336	28.54535
2012	36,890,859,921	2,060,336,364	38,951,196,285	30.41189
2013	39,923,180,953	1,913,733,660	41,836,914,613	7.408549
2014	33,288,665,690	1,954,231,662	35,242,897,352	-15.7612
2015	16,194,230,593	2,134,154,321	18,328,384,914	-47.9941

The trade volumes of both countries are extracted from data from UNcomtrade (2016) for the available years of 2000 to 2015. As can be seen from first view, there is a huge trade surplus for the Qatari side, which can be explained through the high trade volume that results from LNG exports from Qatar to Japan, which is also conducted at high prices (as LNG prices of long-term contracts are linked to oil prices), as compared to the automotive, electronics and machinery exports from Japan to Qatar. The graph in figure 6 below illustrates the data from the table and shows that there is a sharp decline in 2009, which can be linked to the world financial crisis, but other than that, the trade volume trend is an increasing one. The decrease in the import, export and total trade volumes after 2013 can be translated to the drop in energy commodity imports by Japan as explained above. The significant decrease is explained due to the high gas prices that pertain to high oil price hikes that the world experienced in 2014 and 2015. Thus, a little drop in LNG import can result in a significant drop in the trade in terms of its value.

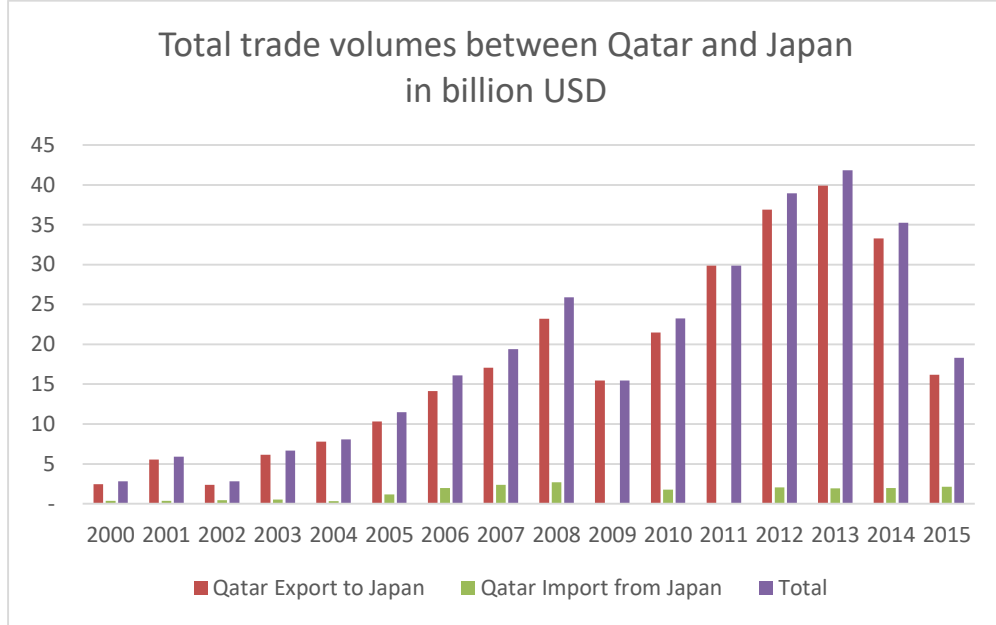


Figure 6. Total trade volumes between Qatar and Japan in billion USD.

At this point, one can think about the percentage of LNG trade against the total export volume between Qatar and Japan. Figure 7 below shows such comparisons from data obtained from UN comtrade (2016). It can be seen how LNG export is drawn parallel to the total export volumes, and its percentage in average reaches up to around 43%, even without the availability of data for the year 2012. A rise in the LNG portion in the total export of Qatar to Japan is seen in 2008, which comes after the decision of the Japanese government to diversify its supplies and thus increases the Qatari LNG share in its consumption. However, this is quickly declined due to the following world financial crisis. Nonetheless, the percentage of LNG export in the total export value exceeds the average of 65% after the year 2011, showing the further increased LNG imports by Japan due to its domestic crisis.

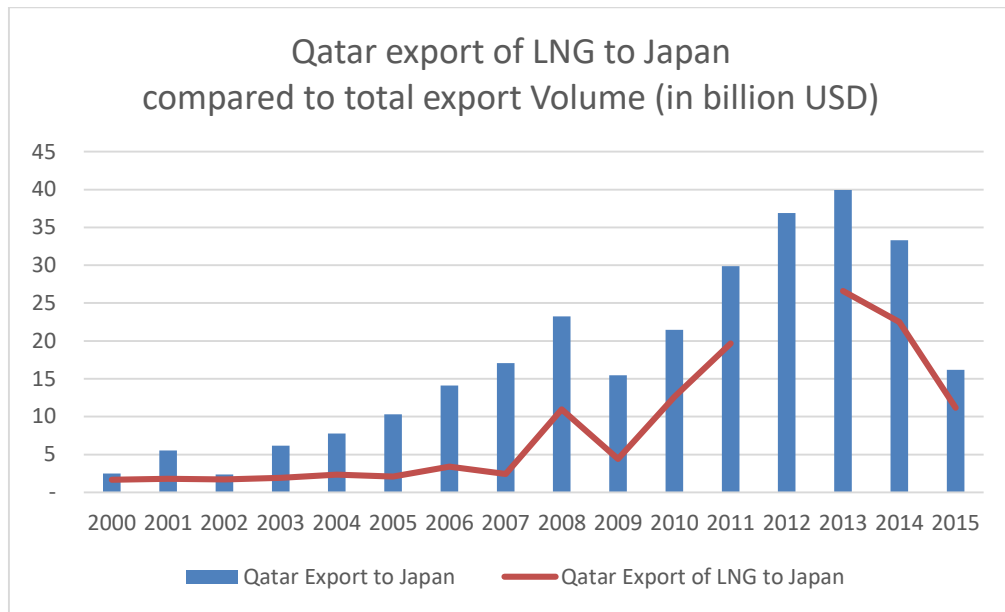


Figure 7. Qatar export of LNG to Japan compared to total export volume (in billion USD).

Investment Activities between Qatar and Japan. Since trade is mostly in energy resources, it is not surprising that bilateral investments are focused in the energy sector. In any case, such investment activities reveal the ambitions of both countries to move beyond simple hydrocarbon trade relationship. With increasingly close economic relationship between the two countries, both governments signed the agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal evasion with respect to Taxes on Income in 2015 (Ministry of Finance of Japan, 2015). According to the article in the *Diplomatic Bluebook 2016* published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, the signing of investment treaty with Qatar is still under negotiation. Although investment activities of Qatar in Japan is often located within other investments and thus are difficult

to track, the bigger picture indicates that Qatar is keen to invest heavily in Asia in general and Japan in particular (Andressen, 2016).

In line with increased bilateral interaction, the government-affiliated Japan Bank for International Cooperation signed a business-partnership agreement with Qatar Petroleum, in order to develop more favorable environment for Japanese companies to participate in energy resource development projects in Qatar (Masaki, 2006). In 2013, JOGMEC announced that it will guarantee 75% of bank loans to Japanese companies involved in LNG projects overseas (EIA, 2015). In 2008, Sumimoto Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC) announced its operations of its Doha office, a first Japanese bank commenced in Qatar, and aims for a prompt provision of highly professional financial solutions, such as financing projects to its customers (SMBC, 2008). Another Japanese financial institution that has come in to Qatar is the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ in 2009 (BTMU, 2014). This comes in parallel with government efforts to reduce the import fuel costs. As of October 2015, there are 46 Japanese companies in Qatar (Embassy of Japan in the State of Qatar, 2016). Some of the engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) projects awarded to Japanese companies have been mentioned in the section for energy relationship. The increased presence of such financial institutions just indicates the growing relationship between Qatar and Japan beyond simply hydrocarbon trade.

Investment and participation in infrastructure construction projects is encouraged by Japanese firms. Whilst Qatar is preparing itself for hosting the upcoming World Cup 2022, the Japanese companies are also actively participating in its preparation through infrastructure construction. The Embassy of Japan in Qatar (2016) mentions some of the

major projects operated by Japanese companies, such as the construction of the main and Emiri Terminals of the New Doha Hamad International Airport by Taisei and Takenaka respectively. Metro projects have been allocated to Japanese companies as well, including Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Mitsubishi Corporation, Hitachi, Kinkisharyo, Fujita. Furthermore, Obayashi Corporation is involved in the Msheireb project of renovating the city of Doha in preparation for the World Cup 2022. The Embassy also expressed its intentions and eagerness in further participation and cooperation of the Japanese firms within Qatari projects, which translates to further opportunities of enhancement of the bilateral relationship.

Investments of Qatar to Japan is not clear, however, QIA has revealed intentions to diversify and expand further towards Asia and invest \$15bn spending targeting China, Japan and Korea (Financial Times, 2014). At this moment, no direct investment in Japan by Qatar has been found.

Other Factors Enhancing Qatar-Japan Relations

Qatar aims to use soft power in order to gain the hearts of the Japanese people. Immediately after the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, Qatar Friendship Fund (QFF) was formed and a gift of \$100mn was given to effectively assist and accelerate the recovery of the victims. According to The Japan Times (2016) the QFF was used to fund fishery, healthcare and educational fields.

Since education is an effective tool of soft power, it cannot be missed in the Qatar-Japan relationship as well. Of recent developments, Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (JAIST) has concluded an MoU with Qatar University on October 2011 on academic exchanges (JAIST, n.d.). Qatar University also signed an

MoU with Marubeni, which agreed to sponsor a total amount of \$6mn over 5 years to Qatar University, in order to increase the understanding of Japanese culture and language (Marubeni, 2012). The visit of HH Sheikha Moza bint Nasser to Japan adds up to the increased cooperation between the two countries in the education and R&D field, in an effort to forge stronger cultural ties (Doha News, 2014). Speaking of culture, Qatar has already launched the Qatar-Japan Cultural Year 2012, that helped promote further understanding between the two distinct cultures.

Sports not only promoted increased construction projects between the two countries. As both countries are hosting two big international sporting events; 2020 Tokyo Olympics and 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar, and as Japan already has an experience in hosting the World Cup 2002, the two countries have greater affiliation and cooperation that stems up from sports events (Qatar Chamber, 2016). Sports is an influential soft power tool which Qatar has been promoting ever since its first hosting of the 2006 Doha Asian Games.

Conclusion

To answer the research question of what does energy imply in the Qatar-Japan bilateral relationship, the above analysis confirms that energy acts as the backbone. Japan enjoys the longest history with Qatar. In the beginning, it was energy security and economic objectives that linked the two countries together as Japan is an energy-deficit country. This was greatly enhanced after the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi Earthquake, which caused the shut-down of all the nuclear reactors in Japan and led Japan to rely on imported LNG sources for its power generation. Furthermore, this incident has acted as a turning point in the Qatar-Japan relationship, as Qatar actively supported Japan in its

recovery both in the energy and humanitarian aspects that created stronger bondage. This does not mean that the relationship was weak before that. Instead, the involvement of Japanese corporations in the upstream & downstream energy sectors from the early stages of development in Qatar gives more credit to Japan and its role in Qatar, further strengthening the energy relationship between the two. A large number of public and private Japanese firms are found in Qatar. Other activities include cultural and educational cooperation, which are used as soft power tools to enhance the existing bilateral ties.

Linking back to the theoretical framework of complex interdependence approach, the presence of multiple channels of communication within the transnational relationship, the increased cooperation in further various fields, and the lack of military motives in maintaining the bilateral relationship adds up to conclude that the theory applies in the Qatar-Japan relationship. In any case, as mentioned above, energy relationship is the prime factor that has encouraged the development of the now mutual and strategic relationship.

Chapter 5: Qatar-Korea Relationship

Korea has achieved a fairly rapid economic growth since 1970. The Bank of Korea reported that the GDP Annual Growth Rate in Korea averaged 6.89% during 1971-2016, reaching an all-time high of 18.20% in 1973, and a record low of -7.30% in the second quarter of 1998 (Trading Economics, 2016). Such rapid growth has allowed Korea to grow as the world's most diversified and technologically advanced country in 50 years, and with the strong manufacturing industry based economy, it has joined the OECD in 1996 (Carroll & Hynes, 2016).

Korea needed to import its hydrocarbon energy resources in order to fuel its rapidly growing industry. In that sense, Korea, more or less, is in the same situation as Japan with no energy resources but high consumption rate. For this reason, Korea is a major importer of energy resources. According to *BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2015* and US EIA's *South Korea Country Analysis 2015*, Korea was the world's ninth largest energy consumer in 2014, and fossil fuel imports accounted for 97% of its primary energy consumption. The reports explain further that Korea was the fifth-largest net oil importer, second-largest importer of LNG, and fourth-largest importer of coal. With regards to its oil and gas imports, Korea is highly dependent on the Middle Eastern countries for its supplies (Bustelo, 2008), as it imports almost 71% of its net oil imports (of which Saudi Arabia provides the biggest share of 34%) and above 45% of its LNG imports (of which Qatar provides the biggest share of 35%) from the GCC (EIA, 2015).

As Qatar provides the lion share of LNG, and as Korea's power generation capacity depends most on natural gas (30% of the total), it is worth examining the Qatar-

Korea relationship in terms of energy. Qatar also comprises 10% of the net oil imports by Korea (EIA, 2015), however, oil imports will not be discussed in this research pertaining to the same reason as the case of Japan; difficulty of accessing oil import data that is beyond the capability of this research. Nonetheless, 10% of the net oil import is not a small portion and it should be noted that it plays a significant role in supporting the energy consumption in Korea.

Bustelo (2008) argues that energy security is of great concern for Korea that led them to have a high dependence on the Middle Eastern countries, that is mostly from the GCC in general and Qatar in particular. It is true that energy security issue was the start-off of the Qatar-Korea relationship, and it still is for some degree, however, this relationship has developed far beyond energy relationship that depends only on the hydrocarbon trade, and has moved on and expanded in the diplomatic/strategic, economic and cultural aspects. This will be examined throughout this chapter taking the complex interdependence approach into consideration. Furthermore, the role of energy in the development of such complex relations will be highlighted.

Energy Relationship

In the absence of pipelines, Korea imports all of its natural gas supplies in the form of LNG. That being said, the main energy transaction between Qatar and Korea is in the trade of LNG, that is achieved through LNG shipment, and Qatar is the biggest gas supplier from which Korea imports 35% of the total LNG demand (EIA, 2015). The LNG transaction is achieved between RasGas from the Qatari side and Korea Gas Corporation (KOGAS) from the Korean side. According to the information provided by RasGas' website, KOGAS is the largest single long-term purchaser of RasGas LNG. The website

further elaborates about the timeline of LNG transaction between the two sides, which started in October 1995, in which a first long-term agreement was signed for the delivery of 2.4 mtpa of LNG, and the quantity was agreed to be increased to 4.9 mtpa over 25 years in 1997. This comes at a time when most GCC countries, including Qatar, were looking for ways to counteract deflated oil and gas prices through diversification projects attained by long-term contracts (Al-Sudairi, 2012). In light of such agreements, the first shipment of LNG was done in 1999 (RasGas, n.d.). In addition, Korea signed an extra 20-year contract for the delivery of 2.1 mtpa of LNG with Qatar in 2007 (LNG journal, 2007) and an additional LNG SPA to supply 2.0 mtpa of LNG for a duration of 20 years in 2012 (LNG World News, 2012). In total KOGAS has term contracts for around 11 mtpa from Qatar, and other than the long-term agreements, Korea has been increasing the number of spot purchases as well (Oxford Business Group, 2010).

The following graph illustrates the LNG exports from Qatar to Korea over the years 1999-2015. Data were not available for the years 1999, 2000, 2002. Nonetheless, the first agreed trade volume was 4.9 mtpa, and since there were no major changes during those years, the same figure for the 2001, which was found in *BP Statistical Review of World Energy June 2002* was used. The graph reveals a steady increase over the years. The downfall after 2008 can be linked to the world financial crisis, after which Korea had a relatively slow import of LNG. However, there is a considerable increase in the 2012. In 2012, the policy for the Management of Targets for Greenhouse gases and Energy was commenced, and the Act on the Allocation and Trading of Greenhouse Gas Emission Permits was announced (IEA, 2012), and thus companies were to reduce the emission of carbon dioxide gases, and further establish a cap-and-trade system for emission. An

immediate and short-term solution under such policies would have been the adoption of natural gas, which emits less environmentally harmful gases, and thus creating an upsurge of the graph. The decrease in the LNG imports in recent years is due to the economic downturn as well as greater use of coal and nuclear energy for power generation (Platts, 2015).

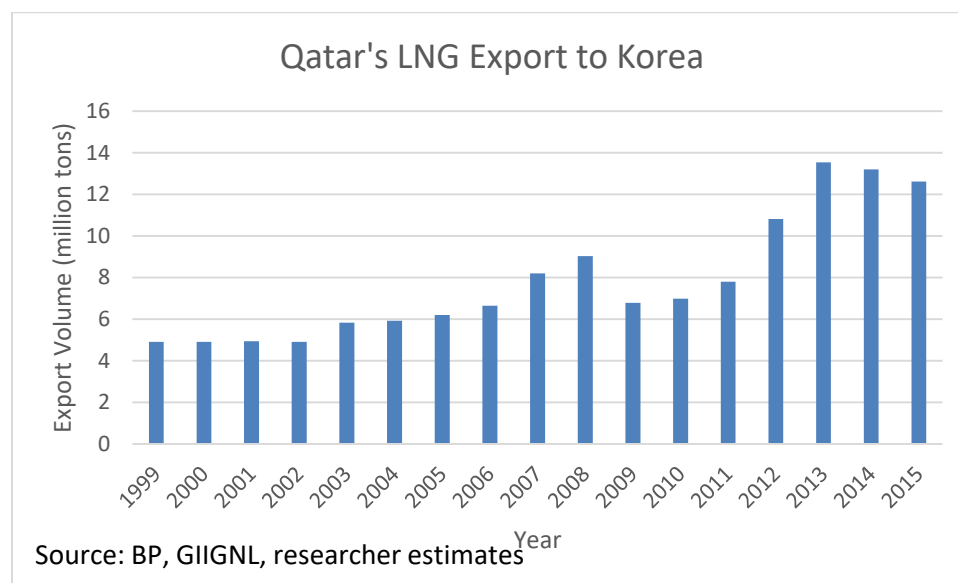


Figure 8. Qatar’s LNG export to Korea.

Over all, the LNG import by Korea from Qatar has seen a steady increase throughout the years. The rate of increase is not fast, and it is calculated to be at an average of 10.40% at which it recorded the highest of 38.59% in year 2012. If we look at the configuration of the total primary energy consumption in Korea, it is noted that petroleum and other liquids takes up the highest portion of 39%, followed by coal, and natural gas comes at the third position with a percentage of 16% (EIA, 2015). Thus,

although most of the electricity generated in Korea comes from natural gas, the total domestic consumption of the fuel itself is not as high. This explains the relatively slow, and rather steady growth in the imported volume of natural gas.

After Korea experienced an economic downturn due to the Asian financial crisis in 1998, the country started to pick up its industry and needed to introduce more energy inputs. Bustelo (2008) explains that there are four factors that contributed to such growth: the rapid rise in GDP, the significant expansion of heavy industry which is energy-intensive, increased number of vehicles, and the automation of the plants of automobiles and electronic component industries. Furthermore, he adds that during the same period, the country cut on the rate of oil consumption and rather tried to increase the usage of coal, natural gas and to a lesser extent, nuclear power. From such studies one can tell that the growth in energy needs of Korea resulted from the growth of the countries' economy.

In order to sustain such growth, Korea depended on the energy imports, and thus energy security is of essential matter to be considered. From the three terminologies discussed in the first chapter, energy security is the most appropriate one to describe the Korean situation. However, the country started to pick up on energy diplomacy, and economic diplomacy to a broader extent to be involved in the relationship with Qatar. Both governments have gone a step forward to integrate into a strategic relationship in which energy diplomacy does play a role. This will be discussed further in the following section. For the third terminology, that is energy statecraft, neither Korea nor Qatar is using energy resources as political tools to get the other do what they would otherwise not do. Korea doesn't possess energy resources to start with. So energy security was needed to be fulfilled by the Korean side, while Qatar provided a reliable and sustainable

supply of natural gas.

Among the terms of the SPA signed in 1995 was the accession of KOGAS of 5% of interest in the Ras Laffan Liquefied Natural Gas Company Limited (RL), which was one of the previous state of the current RasGas. In 2005, RL signed an equity participation agreement with KORAS, a Korean consortium, granting KORAS a minority share in the RL joint venture (RasGas, n.d.). With the growing relationship, RasGas opened a liaison office in Seoul, the capital city of Korea in 2010 to further facilitate and strengthen the growing and expanding relationship (Yonhap News Agency, 2010). As LNG tankers for Qatari shipment is built and exported from Korea, the mutual interdependence of the two countries in the field of energy is inevitable and inseparable. Based on such strong interdependent relationship, the two countries have sought to expand the field of their cooperation resulting into a more strategic affiliation.

Diplomatic Efforts and Strategic Relationship

According to the Embassy of the Republic of Korea to the State of Qatar, Qatar and Korea established their diplomatic relationship in 1974, which is almost right after the independence of Qatar in 1971. There has not been much progress in the diplomatic engagement between the two countries in the beginning and the relationship was primarily focused on the energy sector. Looking at such development, indeed energy played its prime role in maintaining the Qatar-Korea relationship. Apart from the energy dependence of Korea to Qatar, robust involvement of Korea in the construction market of the region has also allowed the interaction between the two countries (Lee, 2016). However, Lee contends further that such traditional relationship is of an old story, and that Korea is keen to expand the scope and boost the value of such relationship to reach a

strategic level.

There is an apparent upward trend in the cooperation and human exchanges between the two countries in the non-energy sectors such as finance, healthcare, ICT and defense, and the bases of such development of a close cooperative relations stems from the high-level state visits; the first official visit of HH the Father Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani (when he was the Emir) to Korea in 1999 and the first ever Korean presidential visit to Qatar in 2007 by HE the President ROH Moo-hyun (Embassy of the Republic of Korea to the State of Qatar, 2009). This first visit of the Korean President to Qatar marked a new gateway for partnership as it was during that visit the additional SPA in 2007 was signed, after Qatar has proved itself to be a safe and reliable supplier of LNG for almost a decade.

The recent visit between the heads of states of both countries also boosted further cooperation. During the last visit of HE the Korean President PARK Geun-hye to Qatar in 2015, Korea and Qatar expanded their cooperation to the field of R&D in energy technology (Lee, 2016a), reflecting the increased mutual interests and expanding cooperation. This is considered mutual in a sense that it meets the diversification policies and plans of the Korean side and also the fulfillment of the new growth areas that is identified by the Qatar National Vision 2030.

All in all, attempts of further development in the energy field was achieved every time a high-level visit was conducted. Such efforts by the governments to achieve energy-related cooperation and partnership to a strategic level just explains the increased act of energy diplomacy recently, which attracts mutual benefits, not only in the economic sector but also in political issues as well.

Economic Relationship

Trade Activities and Trade Volumes. Trade between Qatar and Korea is an important factor that binds them together. Main Qatari imports from Korea includes machinery, electronic equipment and vehicles, while its exports were mainly consisted of hydrocarbon fuel and its derivatives (World's Richest Countries, 2016). In order to see the trade relationship, empirical data available for the years 2000-2015 was extracted from UNcomtrade (2016).

Table 3

Total Trade Value between Qatar and Korea in USD

Year	Qatar Export to Korea	Qatar Import from Korea	Total	Percentage change of total trade (%)
2000	1,952,282,112	174,148,192	2,126,430,304	
2001	2,143,847,424	165,399,376	2,309,246,800	8.60
2002	1,737,072,256	145,091,584	1,882,163,840	-18.49
2003	2,477,743,562	242,604,320	2,720,347,882	44.53
2004	2,933,299,798	112,293,371	3,045,593,169	11.96
2005	4,058,120,408	455,437,671	4,513,558,079	48.20
2006	4,724,921,240	900,680,414	5,625,601,654	24.64
2007	7,334,651,361	1,423,848,321	8,758,499,682	55.69
2008	13,609,398,465	1,532,221,840	15,141,620,305	72.88
2009	6,891,858,284	NA	6,891,858,284	-54.48
2010	12,030,275,037	725,866,325	12,756,141,362	85.09
2011	20,135,825,985	NA	20,135,825,985	57.85
2012	24,675,804,306	749,758,034	25,425,562,340	26.27
2013	24,550,643,112	1,080,290,963	25,630,934,075	0.81
2014	24,722,646,897	1,031,065,662	25,753,712,559	0.48
2015	13,488,836,066	888,592,530	14,377,428,596	-44.17

The data above is displayed on figure 9, showing that the trade relationship between Qatar and Korea also shows a huge surplus in favor of Qatar, due to the amount of oil and gas exported to Korea, in return for machinery and vehicles. However, this trade imbalance is mitigated a bit due to the exports of the Korean LNG tankers. In 2010, Qatar received the delivery of the last 54 LNG tankers and 4 LPG ships built by Korea shipyards, that valued at over \$13.5bn (LNG World News, 2012). While Korea comes in the second place for Qatari export of hydrocarbon fuel and its derivatives, it comes in the 11th rank for Qatari imports, in which most of it comprise of machinery and vehicles (World's Richest Countries, 2016), but shows greater diversification in trading items than that of China or Japan (Davidson, 2010). The recent decline can be seen due to the impact of low oil prices that affected overall trade (Gulf Times, 2016). All in all, the total trade showed an increase of an average of around 21% from 2000-2015.

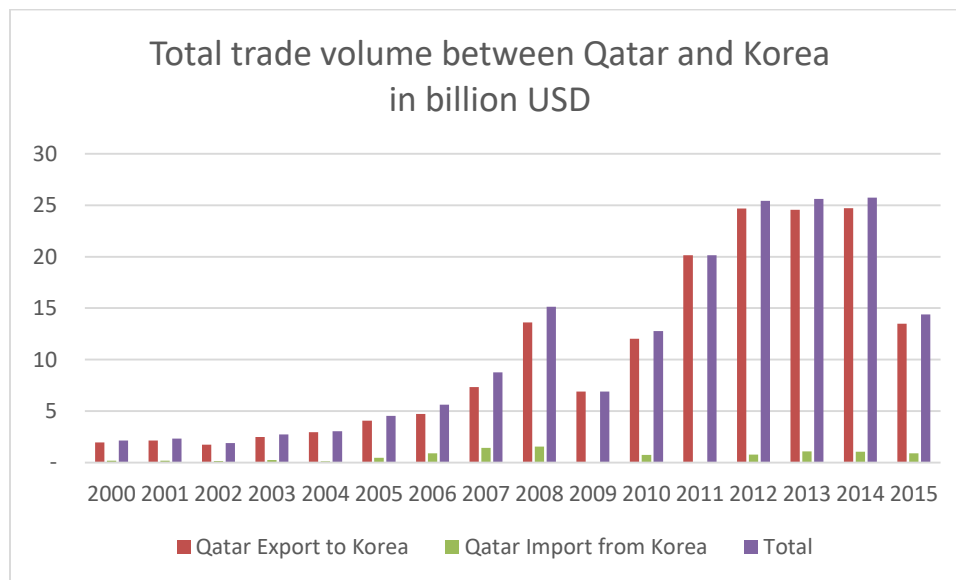


Figure 9. Total trade volume between Qatar and Korea in billion USD.

When we look at the LNG export figures compared to the total export volume in the graph below in figure 10, according to data from UN comtrade (2016), we can see that Qatari export to Korea is mainly LNG, which takes up to 62.30% on average of the total Qatari export volume to Korea. This also translates to the fact that Korea has a high dependency on Qatari LNG in their trade relationship. Speaking of LNG, energy resources is an important factor that links Korea to Qatar, which has expanded greatly since the beginning of establishment into various fields.

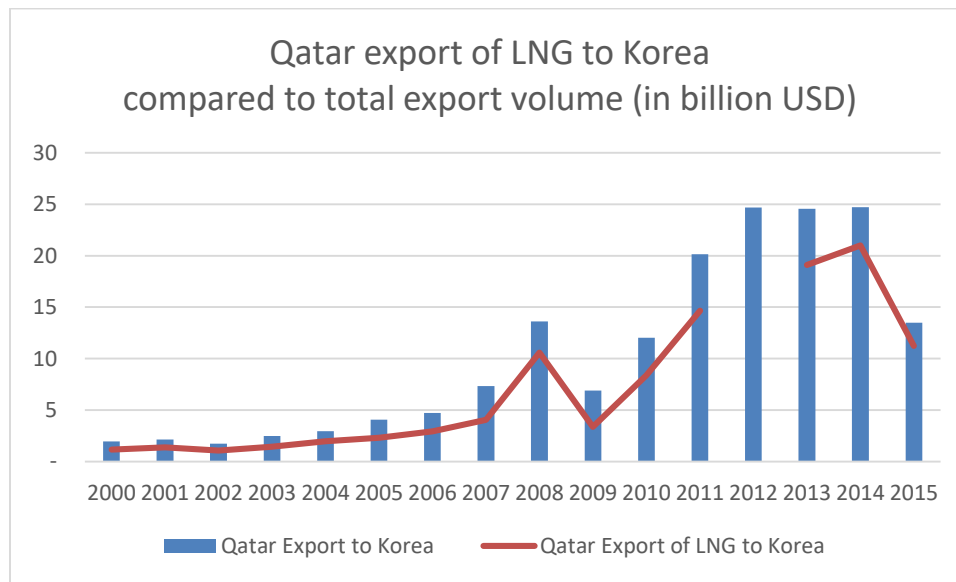


Figure 10. Qatar export of LNG to Korea compared to total export volume (in billion USD).

Investment Activities between Qatar and Korea. The first agreement on Protection of Investment was signed in 1994 and activated in 1995, and the Convention on the Avoidance of Double Taxation was signed in 2007, which entered into force in

2009 (Embassy of the Republic of Korea to the State of Qatar, 2009). However, although the bilateral relationship was somehow productive in the energy trade part, cooperation in other fields including investment was passive. Nevertheless, this has been changing recently as mentioned above. As it seems like Qatar is following the GCC and is adopting a 'Look East' policy to expand its energy export market in Asia (Al-Tamimi, 2013), Korea is also being more engaged in various projects in Qatar, ranging from construction to financial services, creating a mutual rim for their relationship.

During the visit of Mr. CHUNG, the former prime minister, to Qatar in 2013, an MoU on cooperation in infrastructure and urban planning leading up to the 2022 FIFA World Cup was signed between the Ministry of Municipality and Urban Planning of Qatar and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport of Korea (Oxford Business Group, 2014). In his interview in the same report, Mr. CHUNG mentioned that Qatar is going through a similar phase as that of Korea, as both of them have experienced rapid development and rapid urban expansion that led them to face some challenges, and thus allowing both countries to exchange experience and information about relative situation.

As Qatar is undergoing major renovation all around its cities, '*many of the Korean companies are actively taking part in major construction, engineering and infrastructural projects in the rapidly developing Qatar,*' says Amr, the energy advisor of the Korean Embassy, in his interview. One of the prominent examples include the participation of Korean companies in the Doha metro project. Banking collaboration is also witnessed as Qatar Islamic Bank (QIB) signed an MoU with Woori Bank, one of the well-known banks of Korea aiming to enhance business opportunities and further cooperation (QIB, 2015). Qatar and Korea have been looking into investment in Korea's new Islamic *sukuk*

bonds, which was revised specifically in 2009 and was planned to be launched in 2010 (Davidson, 2010). There hasn't been any progress on the issue since then, but the fact that Korea is considering Qatar as one of its first subscribers to *sukuk* bonds illustrates how it considers Qatar as a close partner in investment.

Korea and Qatar also enjoy joint investment in global markets and in third countries. This is evident during the visit of HE the President PARK Geun-hye to Qatar in 2015, as QIA and Korea Investment Corporation planned to jointly establish a fund worth \$2bn for this purpose (Business Korea, 2015). These active investment plans by both sides just indicate how the Qatar-Korea relationship has stepped forward to construct a more strategic one. As they are not only involved in domestic issues but further onto a global level, the complexity of the relationship is increased and the border that separates each country's domestic and international issues is blurred, bringing them closer to each other.

Other Factors Enhancing Qatar-Korea Relations

Culture is an important factor that strengthens further the Qatar-Korea relationship. Recently, with the increased attention to Korean dramas and music, there have been considerable increase in the mutual interest between the two people, and a Korea-Qatar Friendship Club was launched in 2013 in an effort to boost the Qatar-Korea cultural ties (Varghese, 2013). In 2014, Qatar and Korea celebrated the 40th Anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations, and the Korean Embassy organized and hosted various cultural events that would introduce the Korean culture to Qataris and thus mitigating the gap between the two different cultures.

Education cooperation cannot be missed in the Qatar-Korea relationship as well.

Qatar's Education Above All (EAA) and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) signed an agreement to have a joint investment after the World Education Forum in 2015 to enroll thousands of children, particularly refugee children, to quality basic education in developing countries (Lee, 2016b). Not only internationally, but also education cooperation was conceded on a domestic level as well. Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF) signed an MoU with National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF) during the Qatar Foundation Annual Research Conference 2016, to cover the entire spectrum of academic research (The Peninsula, 2016). Qatar University signed an MoU with Korea Foundation to offer and develop Korean language programs at Qatar University (Qatar Tribune, 2014). Through these cultural affiliations, both countries can expand their mutual bilateral relations by using these tools of soft power, increasing their influence towards each other.

When it comes to big sporting events, Korea has an experience to host many of them such as the Olympics, the Asian Games and the FIFA World Cup (Oxford Business Group, 2014). Qatar is ambitious in winning the bid to host sporting events and has succeeded in hosting the 2006 Doha Asian Games and is preparing for the 2022 FIFA World Cup. The interest of both countries in sports creates more opportunities for both to exchange expertise and participate together in sports related events.

Conclusion

Qatar-Korea relationship seems to show greater similarity to that of Qatar-Japan relationship. The energy dependency of Korea to Qatar resulted due to energy security issues, pertaining to the rapid growth of Korean economy in the 1980s, coupled with government policies that encourage the usage of natural gas as fuel sources. From the

analysis of data collected, it could be denoted that energy dynamics shifted in favor of LNG export from Qatar to Korea, increasing energy dependency. In this case, energy is again the prime factor that links the two countries together from the early stages of their engagement.

However, greater economic reciprocity was observed between the two countries, as many reputable Korean companies participated in the infrastructure development of Qatar. Further joint investment that makes use of Qatari funds with Korean technologies, allowed the two countries to emerge into a further strategic partnership, apart from the hydrocarbon trade. Further soft power instruments such as culture, education and sports create greater affiliation between the two countries, not only between the governments but also among their people.

Looking at the development of the Qatar-Korea relationship, one can say that it certainly emerged as a complex interdependent one. The involvement of the different actors creates transnational trends. Emerging interests in diversified fields of cooperation in face of domestic as well as international agendas deletes the hierarchy of issues in concern. Finally, although military cooperation is under close examination, it still does not play the driving role in the Qatar-Korea relationship.

Chapter 6: Comparative Analysis

The relationship between Qatar and the three Northeast Asian countries, namely China, Japan and Korea has been enhancing continually over the years, growing into a more complex interdependent and a strategic relationship. The research aimed to assess the role of energy in the three bilateral relationships, and how it is an important factor that links Qatar to the three countries. As discussed in the previous chapters, it can be said that energy does play the driving role, with other factors such as economic and cultural activities adding meaning to the existing energy relationship and being peripheral in developing it further. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 assessed each of the bilateral relationships respectively, looking into how the relationship developed from being merely based on energy trading to using soft power tools such as culture, education and sports to build the relationship to being complex. Thus energy forms the pillars of the three relationships, with energy agreements of LNG supply placed at the core of the long-term relationship. Further interpretation of the role of energy within the theoretical framework will be discussed.

This chapter will attempt to compare each of the elements that formed the three bilateral relationships by placing them in a parallel manner to see the similarities and differences in one picture by displaying a cross-case synthesis and an inter-site comparison as an analytic technique in order to conceptualize a general form that will help explain the nature of Qatar's foreign relations with the three Northeast Asian countries (Creswell, 2013). Numerical data that was calculated will be supported by the interviews, with the purpose of operating mixed methods research design. In this way,

results from both qualitative and quantitative methods will act to triangulate the data sources for a more valid understanding. Furthermore, domestic, regional and international factors that contributed in shaping this relationship will also be elaborated to discuss the theoretical framework of the emergence of complex interdependence relations for the countries covered in this research.

Energy Relationships

Qatar is an energy resource-rich country, especially for gas deposits that is third largest in the world after Russia and Iran (QNB, 2015). With increased demands for LNG, Qatar and the three Northeast Asian countries enjoy a stable long-term energy relationship that has been continually growing until recently. The below graph of figure 11 shows the trend of Qatar’s LNG export to China, Japan and Korea from the beginning of their energy deals that started delivery from 2009, 1997 and 1999 respectively.

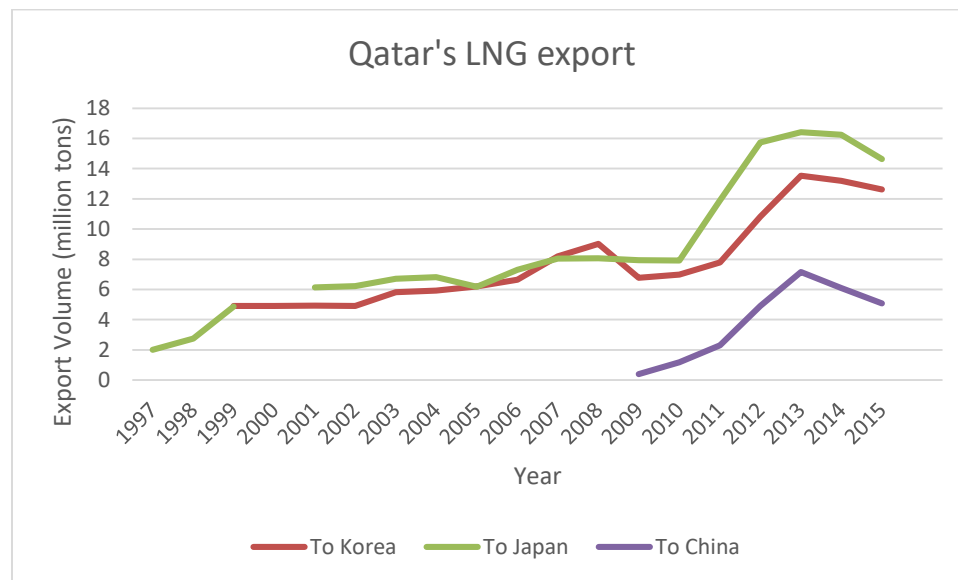


Figure 11. Qatar LNG exports to Japan, Korea and China.

As can be seen from the graph, Japan held the largest share of Qatari LNG in general. Korea followed the Japanese trend, while China, which has started to adopt the usage of natural gas recently shows less import amounts from Qatar. Such imports follow the energy import diversification policies of each of the Northeast Asian countries. It can be implied further that based on the history of LNG traded, the depth and the nature of the relationship also differs. When asked about the driver and the pillar of the bilateral relations, all the interviewees agreed that energy is the primary element, with slight differences in interpretations. Some mentioned that energy security forms the bases, while others advocated that it is used to promote mutual self-interest economically. Overall, the interviews concluded that energy forms the backbone of the three relationships.

Japan enjoys the longest history of LNG trade relationship with Qatar as it started from 1997, followed by Korea in 1999. China has started to import LNG from Qatar relatively recently in 2009. This matches with the years the bilateral diplomatic relationships were established in 1972, 1974 and 1988 as well. This is understandable if we look at the domestic energy dynamics. To begin with, Qatar has only started to deliver its LNG exports by 1997, and Japan is the first customer to receive Qatari LNG. According to IGU *World LNG report 2015*, the pacific basin, led by Japan, remained the largest source of demand, while Qatar maintained its position as the largest LNG supplier.

Looking further deeper into the Qatar-Japan relationship, Izon (1994) explains that after the establishment of Qatargas in 1984, several projects were undertaken to develop the gas-rich North Field to produce and facilitate LNG products for export,

encouraging foreign investments to enter into joint ventures with the Qatari partners. Japan was one of the first to hold hands with the gas development projects of Qatar and Chubu of Japan was able to sign the first contract in 1992 for a supply of 4mtpa starting from 1997 (Izon, 1994). As for Korea, although it had gone through an economic crisis that overwhelmed the region, the construction of LNG related infrastructure was achieved on time (Oil & Gas Journal, 1998), and the delivery was successfully conducted on the scheduled time in 1999. When we look at China in particular, although it had its own sources of natural gas, its economy was predominantly run by coal as fuel, and the demand for natural gas was underrepresented. However, China's gas consumption surpassed that of production in 2007, after which it started to increase exponentially until it reached 5.7Tcf in 2013, and of which 1.8Tcf-that is almost 32% comprised of imported gas in the form of LNG (EIA, 2015). Based on such assumptions, it is reasonable that China only started to import gas from Qatar fairly recently. Furthermore, the outlook on Chinese natural gas production and consumption shows that the huge disparity between gas production and consumption will lead China to continue to drive up its gas imports (Tang, 2014). Table 4 summarizes the years and the amount of gas supplied from the first agreement and some percentage of trade, that was mentioned in the previous chapters.

Table 4

History of Bilateral Relationships

	Diplomatic Relationship	First Energy (LNG) Agreement	First LNG Delivery	Amount of First LNG Delivery (million tons)	Average Percentage of LNG Trade from 2000- 2015 (%)	Average Percentage of Total Trade increase from 2000- 2015 (%)
China	1988	1994/2008	2009	2	53	43
Japan	1972	1992	1997	4	43	24
Korea	1974	1995	1999	4.9	62	21

From the table above, it can be seen that although Japan was the first to get LNG deals from Qatar, China showed the highest growth rate in terms of total trade. While Korea had the highest dependency on Qatar's LNG, Japan showed the least, reflecting its active implementation of energy imports diversification policy. Korea also had the biggest amount of LNG deal to start with.

Referring back to the research question which asks about the nature of the existing interdependence of China, Japan and Korea with Qatar and what energy implies in this relationship, one can say that energy plays the driving role in developing the three relationships. Apart from some trade activities of manufactured goods, there were no significant activities highlighted between Qatar and China, Japan and Korea before the start of the LNG export from Qatar to those countries. Since trade data is not available

before the year 2000, it is difficult to confirm the validity of this fact for Japan and Korea as their LNG export started before that, and trade volumes showed a continual increase since 2000. However, for the case of China, the exponential growth in trade volumes after the year 2009, in which LNG export from Qatar started, is highly visible, complementing this. Through an interview, Niblock seconded this and mentioned that, *‘Qatar-China relationship has seen improvement in their bilateral relationship from the long-term agreements of gas supply to China’*. In fact, not only the trade volumes, but also diplomatic exchanges, investment opportunities and cultural and social activities have emerged over time, after the accomplishment of successful energy deals and with increasing amount of the LNG traded.

Not only so, but the statistics that show the portion of which Qatari LNG import forms a majority within the natural gas total import dynamics of each country puts more weight on the importance of the Qatari LNG to these countries. For instance, LNG imports from Qatar reaches up to 34% in China, 18% in Japan, and 35% in Korea in 2014 (BP, 2015). The same idea applies the other way around as shown in the article in the New York Times by Reed (2015) citing IHS Energy, as Japan (36.6%), Korea (15.6%) and China (8.2%) topped the export destinations of Qatar in 2014, meaning that more than half its LNG exports is directed to these three countries, making them an important partner in sustaining its financial status that allows it to support its economic development. This makes them enjoy mutual benefits through stronger interdependence and reciprocity in the various fields. In addition, Japan and Korea imports oil from Qatar. Such relationship allows them to have a relatively *‘smooth relationship that is like cutting a soft cake’* as Amr describes through his interview. Such huge amounts of economic

resources make their role increasingly important while reducing the hierarchy of the different issues that shape the bilateral relationship in concern. Moreover, all the actors involved behave in a rational way in order to fulfill their own interests by responding to incentives.

There were opinions that mention that Sino-Qatar relationship shows a different trend during the interview. As part of the interview with an academic scholar, who wished to stay anonymous, the interviewee contended that, *'there are trading, HR development request from the Qatari side, success of large Chinese firms such Huawei, agreements with QU etc. However, the Qataris are reluctant to proceed further with this relationship; they don't understand the urgency or the necessity of enhancing further the bilateral relationship, although they lack those things.'* This shows that there is an evident interest from the Chinese side towards this region with increasing Chinese activities in this region in recent years, compared to the other way around. This could be the general idea with lack of data that reveals both countries transactions, because the public statistics until recently shows the lack of extensive economic interdependence between them, as the academic scholar mentioned. In fact, another scholar from the same institution, Andressen says that, *'where they are sitting in the GCC, [selling energy to China makes energy a main driver for Qatar], but for those sitting in China, [energy] remains only part of the whole picture for China ... as they want political support and build kind of a consensus that they can balance off the United States ... They are very aware that they need to have an influence on global economy, in order to keep their economy going.'* Yet another scholar, Horinuki contends that China is different in that, *'China can take the risk ... especially security risks... and thus can send their energy*

companies to ... unstable countries' revealing the straightforward and risk-taking actions taken by the Chinese side to expand ambitiously, which contrasts that of the much thoughtful Japanese moves. Nevertheless, all scholars agree that energy demand, particularly the rise in the need of natural gas is an important factor that links China to Qatar.

This brings us back to the discussion of complex interdependence approach, which states that no longer is the traditional foreign policy understanding of using military hard power dominant in international relations, and that states behave in a rational manner that brings them mutual benefit, creating a balance in the understanding of the international relations theories. It was purely for economic reasons that both countries engaged with each other, with energy trading flourishing its beginnings. Thus, based on the above analysis, this fulfills the second and the third characteristics of the complex interdependent bilateral relationship, which states that there is no hierarchy of issues and that military force is not used by the governments towards each other (Keohane & Nye, 1987). Instead, energy relationship between Qatar-China, Japan and Korea was given greater attention and military force was not the main factor taken into consideration when establishing such relationship. Furthermore, building on the energy relationship, the importance of the economic (that includes trade and investment) and cultural exchanges continued to develop and reached to a level that it cannot be separable or ignored. This produces a balance between the different aspects forming the bilateral relationships, as the importance of each issue becomes leveled out.

Speaking about complex interdependency, it seems that there is more focus on energy and economic activities, excluding cooperation in military at all. However,

although the theoretical framework aims to prove that military power is not the main factor that establishes the nature of the bilateral relationships under study, it does not mean that military cooperation is of no essence within those relationships. In fact, there are some direct and indirect military activities going on between Qatar and the three Northeast Asian countries. Qatar's armed forces signed contracts of \$23.89bn worth of military hardware including tanks, helicopters, warships and artillery from China Precision Machinery Import-Export Corp. (CPMIEC), a Chinese company, apart from the high-level visits between the two countries, and participation of Chinese delegates in defense related training and academic exchanges (Doha News, 2014). On the other hand, Qatar has lent funds from Japanese banks to pay for the down payments of \$6.8bn in purchasing arms (Miotto & Cafiero, 2016). Qatar and Korea are also looking forward for close cooperation in defense relations (Gulf Times, 2016).

Looking at security issues from an international perspective, mentioning about the American presence in the Gulf, and particularly in Qatar, and its complications with Northeast Asia is worth mentioning. Qatar accommodates the largest US base in the Middle East at the "Al Udeid" Air Base, which was constructed in 1996 (South Front, 2016). It acts as a logistics, basing and communication hub for operations in Afghanistan and for facing ISIS. By forming a US base in Qatar, the Qatar-US military ties and cooperation is deep and inseparable. On the other hand, the US military dominance is also found in Japan and Korea, as the United States has been the primary guarantor of their security since the end of World War II (Murphy, 2016). The author continues by advocating that Japan has been the traditional enemy of both Korea and China and predicts that Korea may abandon Japan and the United States to join hands with China.

United States and China have seen some friction and tension in their military actions, particularly in the Asia-Pacific regions. Despite such conflicts, the US-China military relations are trying to get closer cooperation (Tiezzi, 2014), which creates further complication, and might have an effect on Qatar's stability and thus its energy relations in the future.

Of course the American presence in the Gulf region has been the tradition and the above mentioned engagements are minimal compared to the Americans. Davidson (2010) points out three points for the Gulf monarchies' lack of enthusiasm to diverse away from its traditional allies; First, the Pacific Asian states themselves see no credible alternative given the thousands of miles of shipping lanes between them that is so difficult and expensive to protect, second, the Gulf monarchies do not yet see reliable and proven alternatives to the West, and finally, simply there is still some lingering distrust between the two regions. Japan's involvement is indirect, and Korea's involvement has not been practically applied. In case of China, Xu Guangyu, a retired major general in the People's Liberation Army and director of the China Arms Control and Disarmament Association, mentioned that the Chinese companies do not demand nor interfere in other governments' status and internal policies (Doha News, 2014) and this is also applied in the Sino-Qatar arms relationship, maintaining a fruitful but a low-stance presence, with growing interactions of such kind might lead to create greater opportunities in this field.

Looking at the different actors within this relationship, apart from the governments of Qatar, China, Japan and Korea, there are state-owned corporations, international organizations, private businesses etc. which are all involved in shaping and developing the relationships. Each of the organizations mentioned pursue their own

purposes and objectives, which does not necessarily have to be same, but achieve the same target. This creates a blur in the distinction between domestic and foreign issues. A prominent example of such issue is the climate change control. Governments participate in international meetings such as COP21 in order to seek common agendas of preserving dramatic climate changes by reducing the emission of greenhouse gases. This has led China to review its energy policies to reduce the usage of coal, while searching for alternative methods to attain international standards such as investment in renewables (The Climate Group, 2015). Coupled with various structural reforms in the energy industry (Lam, 2005), the state-owned energy companies as well as private companies had to adapt to the new government policies, affecting its business agreements with countries such as Qatar. Increasing the usage of natural gas in its energy dynamics, that is importing more of the hydrocarbon fuel, should work as the most effective short-term solution for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and thus reducing pollution levels. The same applies to the communication mechanism in Japan and Korea. In such a way, international organizations help to shape and bring different officials together in order to achieve world politics (Williams, 1989).

However, one thing to be pointed out is that in the case of China, it is still highly dominated by government policies and actions, and thus the government plays the biggest role. China adopted a market economy in 1979 (King & Zhang, 2014), and has joined World Trade Organization only by 2001 and started to follow the international rules of competition and trade, allowing its energy industry be exposed to world global market standards and thus expand considerably, keeping up the pace of the rising Chinese economy (Mathews & Tan, 2013). Andressen adds through his interview, '*China has*

been adopting a 'look west' policy for ten years now [as] part of their regional development plan,' and this has allowed it to enhance relationship with countries like Qatar. Ma (2015) contends that although market incentives and decentralization policies are underway, the problem arises as the Chinese government intervenes in the power generation, that is electricity prices. Such interventions create hindrance in attaining a liberal energy market in which private and foreign investment is encouraged. However, the authoritarian political system, in another point of view, is seen as an advantage as it allows quick decision making, thus increasing China's attractiveness as a business partner for the Gulf monarchies like Qatar (Davidson, 2010). Japan is quite different where domestic opinion affects the decisions of the government, just as in the case of nuclear power generation.

Nevertheless, these chains of influence are seen in the transnational channel of communication between the state and public and private sector businesses, showing greater multiplicity in the channels of contact. This is where the first characteristics of the complex interdependent approach applies, which advocates the presence of multiple channels of contact pertaining to transnationalism. National firms, multinational corporations, private business and banks affect the interstate relations as they act as "transmission belts," expanding government policies in various countries and also making decisions on their own that transcends national boundaries (Williams, 1989). If we look at the different actors within the energy relationship mentioned, this can be understood better. The energy deals between Qatar-China and Qatar-Korea were agreed among state-owned public enterprises. Although each might have pursued individual financial benefits, they also contributed in supporting their national policies and visions

such as the Qatar National Vision 2030 for Qatar, provide cleaner energy sources for environmental policies for China and energy import source diversification policy for Korea. As for Japan, it is quite interesting to see the myriads of private Japanese companies, apart from the national companies, engaged in the hydrocarbon trade, and further upstream and downstream projects in Qatar. As mentioned in chapter 4, Japanese private firms work closely with government entities in order to achieve national and private interests. Thus, the companies or buyers of each country is different, with Japan having the most number of companies in purchasing Qatar LNG.

Of course, there are consequences due to the presence of different actors, each following their own means or goals and establishing multiple channels of communication. As their motives and objectives are different, there could be some misunderstanding or oppression towards those who are of minority in position. For example, in China, the three state-owned oil companies dominate China's LNG import rights and infrastructure. This is a hindrance for non-state capital to enter the LNG import market. In such a case reducing the government regulatory barriers for non-state capital to enter the LNG import market is needed that will further enhance investment and involvement of non-state actors, and thus increasing competition for sourcing cheaper gas overseas and make more efficient investments and greater price efficiency in the LNG sector (Tang, 2014). In light of such conditions, favorable regulatory reforms subjected by the government can be an option. Some might argue that this goes against the terms of the complex interdependency approach that contend governments do not impose control over the different transactions. It is true that governments tend to play a leading role in achieving such environment, but it is ultimately for a more liberalized condition where

various actors can participate equally.

Going back to energy, it was the increase in energy demands that led to the increased amount of LNG to be imported to the country. In particular, China has witnessed a great leap in consumer demand in the industrial sectors, as well as the rest of the world's demand for Chinese manufactured goods (Jiang & Sinton, 2011). Recently, the slowdown in the Chinese economy has affected the overall economies of neighboring countries through negative spillover effects, as all the countries involved are integrated in a close manner through global value chain and heavy exposure to its investment activities, to countries such as Korea (IMF, 2016). Of course, China is not the reason behind the decline in LNG imports of Japan and Korea, but rather it is their mature economy and aging population. In fact, according to the US Energy Information Administration (2016) while Japanese and Korea LNG demand decreased, it is expected to see a growth of LNG demand for China in the future. In any case, decrease in economic activities lead to an overall decrease in energy consumption and demand across the region. These effects are considered geopolitical and geo-economic interdependency, which links even those countries together apart from the bilateral relationship with Qatar, not to mention their relationship with Qatar as they start to reduce the amount of LNG needed to be imported.

In defining energy in the Qatar-China, Japan and Korea relationship, it can be said that such energy trade agreements started off due to energy security issues, but has developed over time and incorporated energy diplomacy as well. Particularly when it comes to Japan and Korea, energy security is of crucial issues as they lack their own natural resources. Attaining the four elements of energy security pointed out by Dalgaard

(2012), that is availability, reliability, affordability, and sustainability was important to those countries. In their relationship with Qatar, it was achieved through bilateral energy trade agreements that is mainly on long-term basis. Qatar proved itself to be a reliable and sustainable provider of oil and LNG to Japan and Korea over the decade. Availability was visible in the statistics showing Qatar's position as the third largest holder of natural gas resources, and the pricing, although expensive due to the transportation of the fuel, was pegged to global oil prices. As for China, the portion which energy security plays is relatively less than that with Japan and Korea. This is because China already has some natural gas production activities going on in the country, but needed extra support from abroad as the gap between production and consumption appeared. Likewise, the relatively less amount of LNG imported from Qatar shows less focus on energy security. One of the interviewee, who wished to stay anonymous, backed this idea further saying that gas demand is not the main issue for China, but '*expansion of its influence through its networking initiatives, OBOR, ... [that] results in the increase of Chinese investment.*' On the other hand, energy diplomacy is more highlighted and focused in the three countries engagement with Qatar lately, leading to the development of strategic linkages between them. Energy statecraft does not apply in the relationship being studied as energy sources are not used by the governments, especially Qatar as it is the energy-rich country, to have the others do what it wants.

Diplomatic, Economic and Cultural Association:

Diplomatic establishments can be used to link the relationship between Qatar and the three Northeast Asian countries. The nascent relationship of Qatar and China reveals China's position to be after Japan and Korea. This does not mean that China is of less

importance, however, the year for establishing diplomatic ties, the year of energy trade agreement and the amount of first LNG volume imported from Qatar, that is summarized in Table 4 reflects that. As the research tackled on the history of the Qatar-China relationship, it can be said that this relationship is more of a '*strategic partnership*' as Niblock puts it in his interview. The development of this strategic relationship started from bilateral energy trade in 2009, yet other diplomatic activities and exchanges proved to generate greater cooperation from the frequency of visits and the increase in the seniority of the visitors, including the heads of states. As for Japan and Korea, they have shown a steady growth over the years, with energy import from Qatar and export of manufactured goods of machinery and automobiles to Qatar dominated it. Only by the start of the new decade did they enhance the bilateral ties diplomatically and strategically. In general, Goldthau (2010) states that energy diplomacy reveals an assumed strong issue linkage between energy and development policy, bilateral trade, military aid and foreign policy in general. Looking at it in such a way, energy and energy deals truly play a driving role in the Qatar-China, Qatar-Japan, and Qatar-Korea relationship.

When it comes to economic relationship between Qatar and the three Northeast Asian countries, trade and investment activities have greatly strengthened the ties. Especially when it comes to trade, it is dominated by long-term contracts of LNG with Qatar. Actually, natural gas, among other fuels, has shown the biggest increase in trade and is expected to further grow from 17% in 2012 to 22% in 2040 in inter-regional trade, and LNG trade accounts for almost 60% of the total natural gas trade when compared to pipeline trade (IEA, 2014). The report by IEA elaborates further that the Chinese import is expected to expand the most in volumetric terms, overtaking Japan before 2020. As for

Korea, the overall trade volume remains more modest, given the smaller size of economy and population, but it has also an expanding trend with greater diversity than China or Japan (Davidson, 2010). Looking at the trade growth and its outlook, and the analysis conducted on trade values in chapters 3,4 and 5 for each of the countries, energy trade comprises and influences total trade between the countries.

As for investment, it is being conducted in both directions. There is a huge presence of Chinese, Japanese and Korean construction companies in Doha, taking part in infrastructure development projects across the city. This comes at a time when Doha is preparing to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup. China has seen greater cooperation in the financial banking sector, such as establishing an RMB Clearing Center in Qatar, and Qatar being allowed to invest in China's interbank bond market for greater investment opportunities. Japanese reputable banks have found their way into the Qatari financial sector, providing favorable environment for the Japanese companies to further indulge in the on-going development project of Qatar. As for Korea, apart from the huge presence in the construction, engineering and procurement projects, it has created joint investment with Qatar into third countries. Qatar's investment, although not clear of its flow, is predominantly being administered by its Sovereign Wealth Funds through QIA. Such investment activities of these countries reveal how each of them is keen to further develop the bilateral relationship into a higher strategic level.

Cultural activities, that including human exchanges, cultural exchanges, education cooperation, sports affiliation and friendly gestures etc. all add meaning to the existing strong relationship based on energy. In fact, Horinuki says in his interview that before the Fukushima disaster, Qatar was not very well known to Japan, but the Fukushima incident

acted as a turning point as Qatar showed great affiliation and support to the Japanese people, creating stronger bonds. These factors are used as soft power tools in order to enhance and expand the scope of cooperation between the countries, and thus generating greater cooperation and stronger relationships.

Summary Conclusion and Identification of Challenges

All in all, the research focused more on the positive aspects of the three bilateral relationship. In terms of application of the mixed methods research design, results obtained from quantitative data through statistical analysis was joined with the qualitative data obtained through interviews and official statements, to reach the same conclusion.

Referring back to the research question of what does energy imply in the bilateral relationship, it can be concluded that it acts as a driver in all of the three relationships studied. The degree to which energy forms the basis of the relationship differs according to the timing and amount of energy cooperation. While Japan has the longest history with Qatar, China has been catching up with greater speed and diversification in cooperation. Energy security issues were of greater concern for Japan and Korea as they lack their own energy production capacities, and it gradually incorporated the practice of energy diplomacy. As Qatar continued to supply energy sources to those countries of high energy demand, it proved itself as a sustainable and reliable energy partner. With continued increase in the LNG trade from Qatar to China, Japan and Korea, they established deeper mutual interactions between them.

Notable cooperation was observed in diplomatic, trade, investment and cultural issues. As the Japanese and Korean economies are becoming more mature, while the Chinese have yet more space for gas consumption and thus demand rates to grow, it is

likely that Qatar-China relationship will show further enhancement in the future. In addition, the three bilateral relationships showed complex mutual interdependence that has developed over the years, getting further complex by expansion from domestic to regional and international levels, in which the three Northeast Asian countries are affected by each other and by other international factors.

It is worthy to mention about the domestic, regional and international challenges that exist, which puts greater complexity on the issue. On a domestic level, all three Northeast Asian countries are investing much in developing renewables and nuclear energy as alternative energy sources. Abdullah & Al-Tamimi (2015) mention how Japan is seeking new energy policies in developing energy efficiency technology, and in the case of Japan, there is always the possibility for the return of nuclear energy to ease on government spending. Mirrione backs this by mentioning about the continuous development of sustainable energy and says in his interview, *'the world is moving into a further fossil-fuel free world, so fossil fuels are not attractive anymore.'* Furthermore, Seo adds that, *'there is a big unbalance in the economic level between Qatar and the Asian countries that makes it difficult to diversify further into a deeper economic diversification.'* As for Qatar, its own domestic consumption rate is also increasing (Oxford Business Group, 2016).

On a regional and international level, the increased geopolitical and geo-economical competition that rise from the development of unconventional gas sources from the US and LNG provision from Australia poses a threat to the gas exporting Qatar. Particularly when it comes to China, the progress of the Russia-China gas pipeline will affect and intensify the competition in the Chinese market among gas exporters (Tang,

2014). The \$400bn gas deal, when starts, would then be providing a fifth of China's gas supply needs by the end of the decade (Paton & Guo, 2014), and China would be able to diversify away from Qatar. The return of Iranian oil and gas into the energy market, due to the recent lift of Iranian sanctions can possibly have an impact on global energy trade. Seo mentions in his interview about the geopolitical risks that is in the Middle Eastern region, and sees that *'it might act as a challenge in its cooperation due to the instability of the neighboring countries.'* Mirrione advocates in his interview that the challenge not only lie in the energy relationship, but also in other cultural and social fields. He argues that, *'If freedom is a concept that has been strained through orthodoxy, then the outgrowth of that condition is limited,'* referring to the conservative policy of Qatar, which makes it difficult to allow and accept foreigners as they are. Furthermore, he adds that there is yet a lack of promotion of Qatar, making it relatively unknown compared to other GCC countries and cities such as Dubai.

In face of such challenges, it would create greater efficiency and leverage for the Asian countries if they would collaborate with each other, and having more interdependency among them. Indeed, the development of a more diverse, flexible and integrated system, among the countries concerned, would provide a more robust way to mitigate the impact of shortfalls of disruptions for supply (IEA, 2014). However, Horinuki reveals his concerns during the interview that, *'[although] the competition makes us more strong ... the challenge is the competition with [Japan], Korea and China.'* There is a fierce competition between China, Japan and Korea, and the changes in trade pattern reflect the shifts in global economic power (Abdullah & Al-Tamimi, 2015). According to the authors, this translates to the emergence of China as becoming

the most important trading partner to GCC, including Qatar, by 2020. Andressen supports this and says that *‘Japan and Korea are actually showing a downward trend as they have hit their economic limits and their populations are declining, while China has a growth potential and has a political agenda,’* that allows both sides to approach each other in a pragmatic way, mobilizing soft power tools where necessary. He contends that trade partners do not necessarily like each other, but *‘they stay together for financial reasons ... they cannot be separated as they need each other [economically],’* keeping them in place without any further disputes. When asked, the interviewees agreed that integration between China, Japan and Korea as a regional bloc would definitely provide better terms. In any case, in the end, it remains a complicated picture.

Chapter 7: Summary and Conclusion

Energy is an important factor in international relations and recently the global energy paradigm has been seen to be shifting towards the East. The research adopted two sides, that is Qatar on one hand as a major energy supplier, with China, Japan and Korea on the other hand representing the biggest energy consumers in Asia. As the literature suggests, there are not much academic research focused on the particular relationships of Qatar with China, Japan and Korea solely. The research aimed to assess each of the bilateral relationship in terms of their origin and development in the energy sector generating an interpretation of their growing interdependence, taking into consideration the various domestic, regional and international influencing factors. At this level, LNG development and trade was adopted to see the extent of energy cooperation.

During the course of analysis, results showed that Japan had the longest history, being Qatar's first LNG customer with greater amount of LNG imported from Qatar that started from 1997. Furthermore, Japanese firms dominated the development of the Qatari energy sector. China started to pick-up speed in collaboration with Qatar by the turn of the decade, when it first signed its long-term energy deals in 2008 and received its first delivery of LNG cargo from Qatar in 2009. Korea was somewhere in the middle where mutual economic reciprocity allowed the two sides in further cooperation. In general, energy cooperation played the leading role in the three relationships, but to different degrees. Energy security was the main reason for Japan and Korea to pursue its connections with Qatar, and Qatar successfully proved itself to be a sustainable and reliable partner throughout the years, increasing its trust. This in turn, allowed further

LNG trade between them that expanded to other sectors as well. As for China, it needed to import gas from abroad due to the increased consumption rate that surpassed that of production. Natural gas was not a commodity of interest to China until recently, and diplomatic efforts pertaining to energy diplomacy and thus energy security played a significant role in establishing the Qatar-China energy relationship.

When assessing each of the bilateral relationships, it was concluded that they are well applied in the complex interdependence approach that was introduced by Keohane & Nye (1987), as it complied with the three main characteristics of the theory. First, the different actors that are involved in the relationship from government to private firms, and even international organizations, and which have different objectives, created multiple channels of communications pertaining to transnationalism. Transnational feature was further addressed by looking onto the empirical data available, showing the transactions that took place between the different actors involved, under different domestic and international conditions. Second, level of importance of the different issues were leveling out. Although energy constitutes the main stream, it doesn't reduce the importance of cooperation in other aspects including diplomatic, economic (trade and investment) and cultural spheres. Furthermore, as contended earlier, domestic and international factors influence the course of cooperation interchangeably making their distinction blur and resulting in greater interdependency. Finally, military force is not the main factor of foreign policy among the four countries. Nevertheless, military cooperation is yet considered to be important in enhancing the relationships. Soft power is accompanied with the growing transnational interdependence that adds to the complexity of the relationship. In doing so, this research successfully examined the

theories of International Relations of the complex interdependent approach along with the energy component within and inter-relatedly among the bilateral relations under study, adding to the previous researches done on the interconnectedness of both the Middle East and Asia.

Limitations

Access to primary data was often limited, and the research made use of the publicly available data instead. However, due to the paucity of peer reviewed material, many of the news articles were referred to for empirical data. Due to the enormous numbers of deals that involved private sector made it difficult to follow up on each one of them, and only the main ones were addressed. Furthermore, primary data that could be obtained through government officials was faced with difficulty, as it was not easy to meet those interviewees in the first place. Especially, the missing of interviews from officials representing the Qatari stance adds to the limitation of this research. For the same reason, lack of interviews of private businesses is also considered a limitation.

Future Contribution

This research focused on the nature and the development of energy relationships of Qatar and China, Japan and Korea individually. However, a further expanded study on the impact of integration among the three Northeast Asian countries would provide opportunities for greater interaction with more efficiency.

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Appendix: Interview Questions

Interview Questions (open ended):

- How is Qatar's relation with China/Japan/Korea?
- What is the nature of the relation?
- What are the pillars of this relation?
- What makes Qatar-China/Japan/Korea special (over the others)?
- Why make relations with Qatar among the other GCC countries?
- What is the current status of the Chinese/Japanese/Korean companies in Qatar?
- What do you think is the future of this relation going to be?
- What are the opportunities available?
- What are the challenges that lie ahead?
- Given the research topic that we've been talking, is there any other question that I didn't ask you? Or is there any person that you recommend me to meet?