

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

International sporting events like Formula 1 (F1) have emerged as powerful platforms that go beyond mere entertainment. These events serve as conduits for cultural exchange, economic interaction, and the projection of national identity. Formula 1, with its global audience and high-profile nature, plays a significant role in how nations are perceived on the international stage. The symbols, narratives, and values associated with F1 events contribute to shaping the identities of the host countries and influencing international perceptions. This chapter introduces the foundational elements of this research, beginning with the background of the study and the formulation of the research problem. It outlines the theoretical framework grounded in Constructivism, which will be used to analyse the impact of hosting F1 events on the United States. The chapter also presents the hypotheses that guide the research, details the methodology employed for data collection and analysis, and provides an overview of the systematic structure of the thesis. By examining the interplay between Formula 1, national identity, and international relations through a Constructivist lens, this research aims to uncover how hosting F1 events can shape the national identity of the United States, influence global perceptions, and drive economic and diplomatic outcomes.

1.1 Background

Formula 1, founded in 1950, is widely regarded as the highest level of motorsports, characterized by fast-paced races, state-of-the-art equipment, and a worldwide reach (Hamilton, 2016). The sport epitomizes technological innovation, since teams make substantial investments in research and development, resulting in innovations that frequently extend to consumer automobiles (Biro & George, 2019). Formula 1, with its global racing calendar that includes renowned courses such as Monza and Silverstone, draws in talented drivers from around the world, creating a diverse and fiercely competitive field. The sport operates within a team-based framework, incorporating dynamic connections among teams, drivers, and sponsors (Priestley, 2018). Commercial agreements and sponsorships play a crucial role in generating substantial cash for Formula 1, establishing it as not just a sporting event but also a big worldwide commercial endeavour (Mourão, 2017). Regulated by the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), the sport places emphasis on regulations, safety protocols, and environmental responsibility (Næss, 2018). Formula 1 is a complex and captivating event that combines technology, competition, and entertainment on a global scale.

With a large and engaged fan base, Formula 1 reaches audiences through various channels, including live broadcasts and social media. This spectacle serves as a platform to examine its influence on specific regions like the United States and its wider implications for international relations.

The popularity of Formula 1 in the United States has experienced significant changes over the years. During the 1950s, when Formula 1 was first introduced, it had a moderate level of popularity. This was evident via its limited media exposure and the gradual development of a racing culture. In the 1960s, there was a noticeable increase in enthusiasm, particularly due to renowned races such as the United States Grand Prix at Watkins Glen and Phil Hill's victory in the championship (Britannica, 2024). The 1970s witnessed a surge in popularity, exemplified by the prestigious Long Beach Grand Prix and the rising fame of American drivers such as Mario Andretti. Nevertheless, the 1980s presented difficulties in sustaining a steady presence, resulting in a rather moderate degree of popularity. During the 1990s, Formula 1 experienced a fall in its reputation and popularity in the United States, primarily due to limited achievements within the country and difficulties in engaging with American viewers. The 2000s were characterized by a significant decline, particularly following the contentious 2005 United States Grand Prix held in Indianapolis. The sport experienced a decrease in its level of appeal, necessitating the restoration of trust. During the 2010s, Formula 1 had a resurgence and expansion, primarily due to the establishment of the Circuit of the Americas in 2012. The sport's popularity was revitalized, and a diverse audience was attracted by endeavours to improve the whole fan experience and strategically selecting race locations. The standing of Formula 1 in the United States was influenced by a complicated interplay of circumstances during each decade (Naira, 2023).

The International Motor Sports Association (IMSA) has firmly established itself as a renowned and long-lasting entity in the realm of American racing (IMSA, 2022). Established in 1969 by John Bishop, IMSA was created with the purpose of advancing sports car racing in North America. IMSA has significantly influenced the endurance racing landscape throughout the years, placing great importance on innovation, diversity, and competitive performance. The initial years of IMSA witnessed the execution of a distinctive concept, emphasizing racing based on production vehicles that exhibited a diverse range of cars that were accessible to both manufacturers and independent teams. This method distinguished IMSA by offering a platform for several car models to participate in the same race, promoting a diversified and fiercely competitive field. The series garnered acclaim for its pioneering approach to sports car racing, attracting attention from both enthusiasts and participants. During the 1980s, IMSA had a surge

in popularity, especially during the GTP (Grand Touring Prototype) era. During this era, there were impressive and cutting-edge prototypes that captivated fans with exciting confrontations on the racetrack. The prestigious endurance racing series IMSA established its position as a major competition with its iconic races such as the 24 Hours of Daytona and the 12 Hours of Sebring. IMSA shown its ability to adjust and conform as the motorsports industry progressed. The series underwent structural and class modifications, prioritizing the preservation of competitiveness and relevance. The consolidation of the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) and GRAND-AM Road Racing in 2014 was a momentous event, resulting in the creation of the contemporary IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. The purpose of this consolidation was to optimize resources, foster competition, and integrate the most favourable elements from both series. A noteworthy inclusion in the contemporary period of IMSA is the introduction of the Daytona Prototype international (DPi) class, aimed at infusing a heightened level of thrill and manufacturer participation. The presence of prominent automotive companies in this class has significantly enhanced the championship's reputation and level of competition. IMSA has consistently served as a fertile environment for nurturing talent, effectively demonstrating the exceptional abilities of renowned drivers and the remarkable engineering expertise of leading manufacturers. The series continues to enthrall enthusiasts with a calendar showcasing renowned races, a varied lineup of vehicles, and a dedication to providing exhilarating endurance racing. IMSA continues to be a significant presence in American motorsports, playing a crucial role in the international tradition of sports car racing and upholding its position as a dynamic and important entity in the motorsports industry (IMSA, 2022).

IMSA, the International Motor Sports Association, has successfully adapted to changing trends in popularity over its extensive history in the United States. During the 1970s, IMSA's popularity consistently increased due to its establishment in 1969, which focused on racing with production-based vehicles and organizing renowned events such as the 24 Hours of Daytona. The 1980s represented a pinnacle for IMSA, characterized by intense racing, extensive involvement from several manufacturers, and the introduction of formidable GTP cars, which propelled the series to gain international acclaim. The 1990s maintained a significant level of popularity due to notable occurrences in endurance racing and the prevailing influence of prototypes. During the 2000s, the series experienced a period of modest to decreasing popularity due to several problems. These challenges included the discontinuation of the GTP class and heightened competition from other racing series. In the 2010s, IMSA underwent a period of reconstruction, as the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) and GRAND-

AM Road Racing merged in 2014 to create the current IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship. The purpose of this strategic manoeuvre was to centralize resources, intensify competitiveness, and rejuvenate the series, particularly with the incorporation of the Daytona Prototype international (DPi) class. IMSA's enduring appeal stems from its adeptness in adapting, presenting fierce racing competitions, and providing a platform for a wide range of manufacturers, thereby ensuring its ongoing importance in the American motorsport's scene (IMSA, 2022).

The catalyst for Formula 1's increased fascination in the United States may be attributed to several events, most notably the creation of the Circuit of the Americas (COTA) in Austin, Texas. Since its first race in 2012, COTA has offered a cutting-edge venue that has been the main attraction for the United States Grand Prix. The global expansion strategy of Formula 1, together with the increased ownership by American company Liberty Media in 2017, were also significant factors. The rise of American drivers, exemplified by Logan Sargent, and the addition of Haas F1 Team to the competition, intensified the level of interest. Formula 1's efforts in media and television, along with the distinctive allure of the Austin Grand Prix, concurrently led to the sport's increased popularity with a wider American audience. This confluence of variables represented a pivotal moment, reshaping Formula 1's influence in the United States and cementing its position as a significant element in American racing culture (Quinn, 2022).

The holding of Formula 1 races in the United States, as demonstrated by events like the U.S. Grand Prix, acts as a catalyst for economic diplomacy. It helps to shape foreign ties, promote commercial collaborations, and contribute to global economic growth. The objective of this research is to examine the various economic aspects of Formula 1 in the United States. It will analyse the effects on local economies, the promotion of foreign commercial partnerships, and the wider implications for economic diplomacy. This study aims to analyse economic indicators, case studies, and international partnerships to gain a deep understanding of how Formula 1, as a worldwide sporting event, impacts and mirrors the economic dynamics of international relations in the United States (Mehta, 2023).

1.2 Research Questions

How does hosting Formula 1 events in the United States shape influence international perceptions of the U.S?

1.3 Theoretical Framework

In this paper, the writer used a framework of thinking to make it simpler to convey the research analysis of the examples to be presented so that the writing stays consistent. In this paper, the writer employs:

1.3.1 International Perception

International perception refers to the collective viewpoints, attitudes, and opinions held by the global community about a particular country. This perception is shaped by various factors including media representations, cultural diplomacy, diplomatic relations, economic influence, and national branding. The media's portrayal has a profound impact on how countries are perceived worldwide, thereby shaping international opinion. The media can shape events and countries in particular manners, which can have an influence on public opinion and attitudes. An illustration of this is research conducted on the portrayal of European integration and Brexit in Chinese media, which underscores the influential role of media in moulding national depictions and perspectives (Daniel & Musgrave, 2017). Furthermore, a study conducted by "International Studies Quarterly" examines the impact of popular culture and media on shaping perceptions of international relations, highlighting the significant role of media in generating global narratives (Mocarski, et al., 2019).

Cultural diplomacy, which encompasses the facilitation of cultural exchanges, arts, education, and sports, plays a vital role in bolstering a nation's international reputation. Utilizing events such as Formula 1 races for national branding aids in projecting a favourable international image. An article in "Communication, Culture & Critique" explores the impact of cultural diplomacy on shaping perceptions and promoting mutual understanding, hence enhancing national branding endeavours (Duncombe, 2017).

The establishment of diplomatic connections and the implementation of economic policies have a pivotal role in influencing how countries are perceived on the international stage. Engaging in positive diplomatic interactions and making significant economic contributions improve a country's international reputation. The 2023 Asia Power Index by the Lowy Institute assesses diplomatic power by considering factors like as diplomatic networks, participation in multilateral initiatives, and foreign policy ambition. The research highlights how countries such as China and the U.S. utilize their large diplomatic networks and strategic engagements to strengthen their international reputation. It emphasizes the importance of diplomacy and economic strategy in shaping global perceptions (Patton, Sato, & Lemahieu, 2023).

The historical backdrop and political stability of a nation play a crucial role in shaping how it is perceived on the global stage. Ambitious political stability and optimistic historical narratives contribute to a favourable worldwide perception. On the other hand, past conflicts and political instability can damage the reputation of a country. Academic discourse in political science literature examines the ways in which these factors contribute to the wider framework of international relations and the control of public opinion (Jervis, 2023).

Within the framework of this thesis examining the effects of holding Formula 1 (F1) events in the United States, the concept of international perception holds significant importance. Hosting Formula 1 races can provide an opportunity for the United States to demonstrate its ingenuity, promote its cultural principles, improve its international reputation, and cultivate diplomatic ties. By examining the international view, this thesis aims to investigate how F1 events impact the global perception of the U.S., contribute to economic growth, and improve diplomatic ties using the perspective of Social Constructivism. This analysis offers a thorough comprehension of the symbolic influence of global sporting events in shaping and displaying national identity on the global platform.

1.3.2 Multitrack Diplomacy

The notion of multitrack diplomacy, as proposed by Louise Diamond and John W. McDonald (Diamond, 1996), broadens the concept of diplomacy beyond conventional government-to-government exchanges (Track 1) to encompass a variety of additional participants and procedures. The entities involved in this process are non-governmental organizations (Track 2), business sectors (Track 3), private citizens (Track 4), academic and research institutions (Track 5), activism (Track 6), religious institutions (Track 7), funding from philanthropic organizations (Track 8), and public opinion and communication (Track 9). Utilizing this idea in your thesis regarding the influence of Formula 1 on global perceptions of the USA enables a comprehensive examination. I can analyze the utilization of Formula 1 events by the U.S. government to advance national interests (Track 1), the impact of Formula 1-associated businesses on shaping international perceptions of the USA (Track 3), and the influence of American citizens' participation in the sport on foreign perspectives (Track 4). Furthermore, it is possible to analyze the involvement of American academic institutions in researching and advocating for Formula 1 (Track 5), as well as the influence of media coverage on public perception (Track 9). This method provides a thorough comprehension of how Formula 1 impacts global perceptions of the USA by considering the contributions of many players beyond conventional diplomacy (Diamond, 1996).

1.4 Hypothesis

Hosting Formula 1 events in the United States positively enhances international perceptions of the U.S., leading to increased economic growth and improved international relations through the promotion of cultural exchange, economic collaboration, and the projection of soft power.

1.5 Methodology

The writer will employ a qualitative methodology to perform this study, wherein they will focus on gathering factual and realistic information, as well as analysing the collected data. The writer collected his data from credible sources and secondary sources, including books, periodicals, journals, newspapers, and other primary materials. In addition, it can be obtained via online media platforms such as official websites, news sites, and other reputable sources related to the subject of study. These sources can provide valuable assistance to the writer during the research process. To obtain the data needed in making this study, the author looks for reading sources that are in accordance to discuss this article. The search of data ranges from journal article that has been done regarding Formula 1 in a country where they research the impact of hosting the race in terms of the economy and international relations of the US.

A. Literature Review

In this writing, the author has previously conducted a study on several pieces of literature that are relevant to the topic that the author determined. From the studies conducted, there has been no research that discusses Formula 1 impact on the economy and the international relations of the US.

This study analysed the revenue generated from Formula One Grand Prix (F1) and the economic effects of this revenue on the host economy using input-output analysis. We observe that the influence of the additional funds contributed by non-local or international guests is more significant in comparison to that of local attendees. Additionally, the F1 event has a significant impact on the sports-related industry, as well as other sectors like manufacturing. Our research indicates that the towns hosting sporting events should prioritise efforts to attract more non-local and international participants. This will help maximise the economic benefits generated by the event (Kim, et al., 2016).

In another study, this journal article examines the role of international sporting events in promoting cultural diplomacy and enhancing diplomatic relations between nations. The text offers an intricate examination of many case studies, such as the Olympics, FIFA World Cup,

and Formula 1 races, to illustrate how sports may function as a means of exerting soft power and fostering international involvement (Goytom, 2024).

Formula 1 has achieved global acclaim, but the benefits of its success are not necessarily distributed to the towns that host its events. This study aims to utilise the A-B-C-D paradigm of global consumer behaviour in the context of sport marketing. It also seeks to identify variations in fans' opinion of marketing strategies and their intention to revisit three distinct host cities, namely Korea, China, and the US. The findings and discussion will assist scholars and practitioners in gaining a deeper understanding of and improving their geocentric marketing strategies (Kwon, Kim, & Lee, 2018).

A study conducted by Carolin Plewa and Bettina Cornwell in 2016 and published in the journal "Tourism Management" investigated the financial effects of Formula 1 on nearby economies (Roult, Auger, & Lafond, 2020). The study revealed that Formula 1 events have a positive impact on local economies by stimulating tourism, fostering greater commercial activities, and generating media exposure. These occurrences frequently result in the construction of infrastructure and bolster the global reputation of the towns that host them.

A publication called "After Abu Dhabi: Restoring Integrity and Accountability in Formula 1" examines the 2021 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix's controversial actions that affected the championship. This article examines how these incidents affect sports governance, integrity, and public perception. This article also covers how to restore confidence and accountability in Formula 1 (Zheng, 2024).

1.6 Systematic Writing

To ensure consistent and methodical research outcomes, the writer will partition this work into three distinct chapters as outlined below:

In Chapter 1, the author presents an overview of the problem's background, problem formulation, theoretical framework, methodology, hypotheses, research outreach, and concludes with the writing system.

In Chapter 2, The discussion section of the study proposal involves a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the results. It enables us to go deeper into the data and evaluate their significance and repercussions.

In Chapter 3, This chapter utilizes a qualitative methodology, specifically emphasizing the collection of verifiable material from reputable sources such as books, journals, newspapers, and internet media platforms. The researcher examines the gathered data to reveal

insights into the influence of Formula 1 on economic growth and foreign relations in the United States.

In Chapter 4, The conclusion will succinctly outline the key findings, analyse their implications, and propose recommendations for future research and commercial strategies. It will reiterate the significance of the study and its contributions to the field of international racing.