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Influence of the Tour Du Rwanda Cycling Competition on Rwanda's Diplomatic Relations

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Abstract

Purpose: The objective of this study was to assess the influence of the Tour du Rwanda cycling competition on Rwanda's diplomatic relations.

Methodology: The study used the descriptive and explanatory survey design in which the quantitative method was applied. The target population was 60 people including 25 FERWACY staff and 35 people of 5 clubs of 7 staff per each club. The census sampling method was used to determine the sample size where all target population was considered as sample size. This study had 60 respondents in its sample size. The data gathering tools that were employed are the questionnaire and interview guide. The study employed a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to assess the study instruments' reliability and validity. The statistical package for social science (SPSS) software version 26.0 was applied for data analysis. To calculate the correlation between the variables, inferential statistics was used. In tables, the results were presented in form of frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations.

Findings: The results on the influence of the Tour du Rwanda cycling competition on Rwanda's diplomatic relations, the overall mean score was 4.212, which is in the range of strongly agree (5) to agree (4), indicating that the Tour du Rwanda cycling competition has a significant influence in Rwanda's diplomatic relations. According to the statistical study, the connection between Tour du Rwanda cycling competition and Rwanda's diplomatic relations was .954**. The results showed that there was a statistically significant correlation between Tour du Rwanda cycling competition and Rwanda's diplomatic relations.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice, and Policy: This study provided valuable knowledge for role of Tour du Rwanda cycling competition on Rwanda diplomatic relations. The findings apply to countries, and to sports to advance their diplomatic relations. The study was timely, offering guidance on how cycling competition can be used to advance the diplomacy of countries. It also enriches academic knowledge and is of significance to students, scholars, and researchers in international relations and diplomacy.

Keywords: Cycling Competition, Diplomacy, Diplomatic Relations

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INTRODUCTION

International relations, including bilateral ties, foreign policy, development aid, and state and political objectives, are significantly shaped by diplomacy. Sports diplomacy is a tactic used to influence the dissemination of a state's values, identity, and culture by relating to other nations through the power of attraction. It is a method of building interpersonal relationships through communication, integration, unification, and community-based initiatives. Establishing political, social, and economic relations through sports, state, and non-state entities is known as sports diplomacy (Mutisya, 2019).

European Union acknowledged sport as a crucial diplomatic weapon. Sport diplomacy may serve as a catalyst for the expansion of external connections and the advancement of European ideals, according to an agreement reached by EU sport ministers in May 2021. A brand-new program named Towards a European Union Sport Diplomacy (TES-D) was introduced in January 2021. TES-D was established to facilitate discussions among EU stakeholders regarding the potential role of sport in European policy. By December 2022, it also hopes to develop policy proposals on how to establish a unified sport diplomacy within the EU. Every one of the 27 member states' sports policy was considered. Even though TES-D is a relatively new project, it is encouraging to see that the EU, a powerful institution, has brought sport diplomacy and its significance back into the spotlight (Alexandra, 2022).

Furthermore, Mutisya (2019) contends that after being neglected for centuries, sports diplomacy was brought back into the political spotlight with the establishment and expansion of official governing bodies, such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), which were established in 1894 and 1904, respectively. The IOC oversees and manages the modern Olympic Games, while FIFA oversees international football competitions. The governing bodies were established to plan, run, and promote international sports. As a result, these athletic events developed into platforms for national competitiveness and political clout, where nations would demonstrate their worldwide presence and win respect from other nations. Since its resuscitation, sports diplomacy has expanded, adding new facets and using athletic events to convey messages around the world (Mutisya, 2019).

The importance of sports and culture has been minimized for far too long. The government is eager to find and take advantage of their potential since, in recent years, they have shown an increasing ability to support national economic growth and development, which strengthen national efforts toward unity and reconciliation. Because of this, the Rwandan government has chosen to incorporate the sports and culture sector within its National Strategy for Transformation strategic planning cycle (MINISPOC, 2017).

In recent years, the ideas of diplomacy and athletics have coincidentally coexisted. On position of different state, one-on-one, and group players, sports-diplomacy has been used to promote diplomatic-exercises as well as social, economic, and political activities. It is now clear, common, and occasionally cliched that states and governments employ sports as a soft power. This is demonstrated by the crucial significance of growing international attention to the problems influencing the pace of sports diplomacy. However, in many nations around the world, utilizing of sport as a useful tool for public-diplomacy is still in its infancy. To create actual and long-lasting relationships between these factors, it is crucial to spark more conversation from the sports and sports diplomacy fields (Bolçay, 2018).

In order to further the concept of sport diplomacy, international sports organizations (ISOs) are essential. Such organizations are necessary because they can act as links between individuals, advance globalization, uphold universal principles, and foster international cooperation in the pursuit of shared objectives. The future of sport diplomacy seems bright. Public diplomacy and sport diplomacy are interwoven in today's globe. Sport evolved into a tool for governments, political agendas, diplomatic strategies, and economic growth. Unquestionably, sports may be utilized as a weapon for policy to address problems including poverty, racial prejudice, gender inequity, and disability. Sport began to become a key component of each nation-state's foreign policy (Alexandra, 2022).

Sports have a big impact on a country's economy through sponsorships and fan bases, as well as the broadcast and tourist sectors. Community development is greatly aided by sport, which unites individuals to play, socialize, and have discussions that promote social peace. Athletics have a good effect on social-development and economic sustainability because they empower individuals and instill qualities like courage, respect, teamwork, leadership, and civic engagement while encouraging collaboration toward common objectives.

When international sports organizations choose who will host events under their jurisdiction, choose whether or not to associate with national sports federations, or engage in negotiations with other international entities like nations, they are engaging in diplomatic activity. Another way to define sports diplomacy is as how international sports groups influence their interactions with governments. International sport facilitates diplomatic representation, communication, and negotiations with non-state actors. Sports diplomacy is the use of sport by states for diplomatic objectives (Kobierecki, 2019).

The government's investment in sports-infrastructure has improved Rwanda's performance in sports, especially cycling, but much more has to be done to guarantee that established sports programs provide significant outcomes. Stakeholders must work together to progress the sports industry. The nation's sports development policy seeks to create a culture of athletics that will greatly enhance people's health, foster social cohesion, and provide financial advantages to both participants and the nation as a whole (Niyonsenga et al., 2021).

In addition to increasing tourism, demonstrating organizational capability, and creating non-political avenues for international interaction, the Tour du Rwanda serves as a visible instrument of Rwanda's sports diplomacy and nation-branding. It also communicates security and stability to foreign investors and publics. The extent to which high-profile cycling events function as soft power versus "sportswashing" in times of geopolitical tension (particularly around Rwanda's regional controversies and its hosting of major cycling events), the domestic versus international perceptions of such sporting diplomacy, and rigorous, empirical links between the race and tangible diplomatic outcomes (e.g., changes in bilateral ties, voting patterns in international fora, or measurable investor behavior) are all still unexplored (Xavier, 2025).

The European Union (EU) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) both serve as examples of the institutionalization of sports diplomacy. By supporting East Germany's early recognition and fostering a bridge between China and Taiwan through the Olympic charter, the IOC has aggressively used major athletic events to promote international recognition and political reconciliation. With its Ministers of Sport acknowledging the necessity for a specific EU sport diplomacy strategy and integrating sport into foreign-policy discourse, capacity-

building, and value-promotion efforts, the EU has formally positioned sport within its external relations toolset (European Commission, 2018).

The Rwanda's Second National Strategy for Transformation (NST2) and Vision 2050 are directly aligned with the integration of the sports industry, as demonstrated by significant events like the Tour du Rwanda, into national strategic planning, hence enhancing policy relevance: In line with NST2's priority of "creating decent and productive employment opportunities" and Vision 2050's objective of attaining upper-middle-income status and a high standard of living for all Rwandans, Rwanda's Ministry of Sports recognizes sport as a growth sector that contributes to job creation, tourism, and national branding (MINISPORTS, 2025).

Research Objective

To examine the influence of the Tour du Rwanda cycling competition on Rwanda's diplomatic relations.

Research Question

What is the influence of the Tour du Rwanda cycling competition on Rwanda's diplomatic relations?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cycling competitions like Tour du Rwanda need talent and physical effort as teams or individuals compete against one another for enjoyment. Sports related physical activity offers several advantages to people, enabling them to enhance their social, mental, emotional, psychological, and physical health. What makes sports special is their ability to unite individuals from all walks of life, regardless of national or international borders. As a result, cycling competition events are becoming a more widespread global social trend that draws more participants, organizers, and spectators. Sports' capacity to bring people together makes them an effective means of addressing fundamental issues in international relations (Kinyili & Shazia, 2021).

In recent years, the ideas of diplomacy and sports have coincidentally coexisted. Sports diplomacy has been utilized by a variety of public, private, and collective entities to influence diplomatic initiatives in the political, social, and economic domains. It is now clear, common, and occasionally Cliched that states and governments employ sports as a soft power. The growing international interest in the factors influencing the rate of sports diplomacy demonstrates this (Bolçay, 2018). However, utilizing sport as a practical weapon for public diplomacy is still relatively new in many countries. To create a realistic and long-lasting relationship between these factors, it is crucial to spark more conversation from the sports and sports diplomacy fields (Nye, 2021).

The new structure of sports diplomacy refers to the past practice: the particular ability of sport to unite individuals, groups, and nations via a mutual enjoyment of athletic endeavors. Due to a lack of a strong theoretical foundation, this power to unite strangers, further foreign policy objectives, or enhance sport for development projects is still elusive. However, four other theoretical frameworks sport as diplomacy, contemporary sports diplomacy, and classic sports diplomacy are starting to take shape (Murray, 2020).

Although there has been discussion of the connection between politics and sport, little research has been done on a theory or model for it. Combining diplomacy with athletics out of pure optimism won't always result in the outcomes a country wants. Rather, it is essential to promote

greater communication between explanation and professional persons from both sport and diplomacy in order to act more practical and beneficial connecting the two fields.

International public diplomacy and sports professionals were adequately in agreement, as evidenced by the fact that all of the sports diplomacy conversion instruments (skillful techniques) scored higher than the 0.7 agreement level. There was a significant degree of agreement with certain ideas and plans. For example, the most strongly agreed-upon proposition (defuzzified mean of 0.80) was Best Management Practices, which covered control such as best safety/security, best preparation, arrangement, and leadership, the most assistance from local citizenry, and the most gratification of foreign people. This result demonstrates how important the aforementioned managerial concerns are, particularly when national officials are deciding whether or not to host important athletic events (Abdi *et al.*, 2018).

Sports have long been utilized as a diplomatic instrument by nations all over the world. For instance, the Ping Pong Diplomacy between the US and China in the early 1970s helped mend fences and create direct lines of communication through a straightforward table tennis match (Martynenko *et al.*, 2019). In the meantime, Qatar's hosting of the 2022 FIFA World Cup has been deliberately presented as a soft-power tool and a means of enhancing its reputation abroad, diversifying its economy, and expanding its influence in international affairs (James, 2021). Additionally, Kenya's international image has been strengthened by the supremacy of Kenyan distance runners, like as Eliud Kipchoge, who was named a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador. This has given Kenya a platform to present a good national identity abroad (UNESCO, 2024).

No previous empirical study has particularly looked at the Tour du Rwanda as a venue for sports diplomacy within the East African region, despite the rising body of research on sports diplomacy throughout Africa. There is a big void in the literature about how regular, medium-sized events like the Tour du Rwanda support regional cooperation, image-building, and soft-power projection because most study focuses on mega-events like the FIFA World Cup in South Africa or continental tournaments. This unexplored area offers a chance to look into how Rwanda uses the Tour du Rwanda as a strategic diplomatic tool to increase its influence and partnerships within the East African Community (EAC) and beyond, in addition to using it for sports development and tourism promotion (Xavier, 2025).

Incorporating events like the Tour du Rwanda into the Sports and Culture Sector Strategic Plan and the National Sports Development Policy as contributors to employment, tourism, and international visibility, Rwanda's own policy documents position sport not only as a development and tourism sector but also as a tool for national branding and regional engagement. Sporting interchange is framed as part of the EAC's integration plan at the regional level by the East African Community's culture and sports materials. This facilitates talent exchange, cross-border people-to-people contact, and a shared sporting identity that may be used for soft power in the area. Lastly, an institutional justification for examining how the Tour du Rwanda might function as a purposeful diplomacy platform within both EAC and AU frameworks is provided by continental instruments and the African Union's policy on sustainable sports development, which calls on Member States to align national strategies with AU objectives (Agenda 2063) and to use sport for diplomacy, inclusion, and capacity building (MINISPORTS, 2025).

Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework provides the foundation for understanding and analyzing a research problem by linking it to established theories and concepts. It outlines key variables, constructs, and the relationships between them, guiding the study's design and interpretation (Creswell, 2018). The following theories were used:

Sport Diplomacy Theory

By utilizing the influence of sporting events like the Tour du Rwanda, sports diplomacy has become a vital instrument in modern international relations. International sporting events continue to reduce tensions between citizens and their governments by promoting intercultural dialogue and cooperation. Using the games to improve a country's standing overseas or to improve international relations has been a diplomatic strategy from the time of the Ancient Greek Olympics. Because of their shared passion for sports, viewers (people) and their governments (elite politicians) can both benefit from sporting events (Mirzayeva, 2024).

Consequently, international athletic events like Tour du Rwanda have the potential to enhance isobilateral and many-sided cooperation. A third-party civil-organization can operate as an impartial host and intercessor between parties in sport diplomacy, which is made possible by the fact that international societies are the first federal agencies of events. In other words, international athletic events have the potential to resolve disputes between countries, but only if they are planned and executed well. Scholars studying international relations and sport diplomacy have observed that international organizations can act as platforms for the exchange of norms between countries, which can promote collaboration but also lead to conflict (Pamment, 2019).

Since international sporting events are becoming a very profitable worldwide industry, their position has recently gotten even more complex. Through sponsors, government and corporate contracts, and tourism, these events have the potential to bring in a sizable sum of money for both the government and private businesses. Sport provides a casual context and rationale for world leaders to meet and engage in dialogue. There are several possible diplomatic advantages to international athletic competitions. They can be used to improve ties between particular nations or as a broad outreach to the global population (Mirzayeva, 2024).

Soft Power Theory

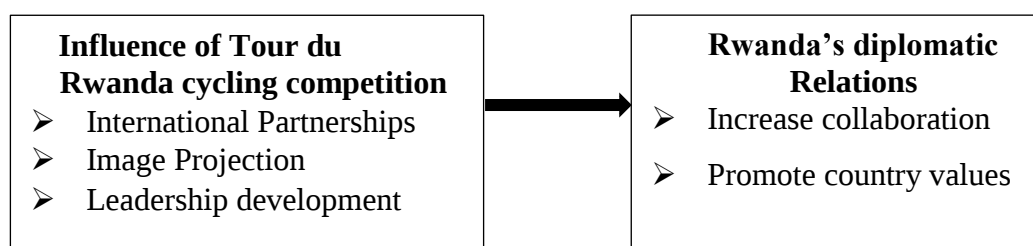
In order to achieve its goal, this study used the theory of soft power. At the end of the Cold War in the 1990s, a man named Joseph Nye first proposed the idea of soft power. This theory focuses on the state's capacity to use persuasion rather than force to entice, encourage, and foster collaboration (Bukhala, 2020).

This notion is relevant since a state uses sport as a persuasion technique to make itself seem good to others in order to draw in reciprocal and fruitful relationships. It should be recognized that, for example, international athletes and negotiators are both elite persons who travel abroad on behalf of their countries, speaking to local audiences and demonstrating great worth and capacity among different states. Sports stars are frequently regarded as ambassadors for different states when they perform in stadiums, and when they win medals, they may appear to convince other countries of a state's positive aspects, which could lead to a more favorable opinion of the state (Bukhala, 2020).

When used to Rwanda, sports diplomacy can be a means of luring other nations to the nation and boosting trade and foreign direct investment, all of which significantly advance national interests. Therefore, sport diplomacy can provide a state with a constructive means to communicate its story that will get a lot of favorable attention that can be used to hasten national progress. Thus, Rwandans can use athletics to break down all borders and unite individuals, governments, organizations, multinational corporations, and even cooperative efforts. Additionally, sports engagement fosters other excellent values among a state's population, which can be effectively utilized to the advancement of national objectives (Nye, 2021).

The Tour du Rwanda was examined as a platform for international involvement using the complementing frameworks of Sports Diplomacy Theory and Soft Power Theory. A conceptual framework for comprehending how sport events are strategically used as diplomatic instruments to promote bilateral ties, regional collaboration, and national prestige is provided by sports diplomacy theory. In turn, Soft Power Theory provides an analytical framework that explains why, rather than using force, such sport events create influence through attraction, culture, and a favorable national image. By placing the Tour du Rwanda within larger discussions on sports, diplomacy, and soft power in the East African context, these theories collectively shed light on the mechanisms (sports as a diplomatic tool) and results (enhanced international reputation and influence) of Rwanda's cycling event.

Conceptual Diagram



METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive and explanatory survey design with a quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Target Population

The target population consists of all participants who satisfy the study's assimilation requirements (Hamed, 2016). The study's target population was 60 people including 25 FERWACY staff and 35 people of 5 clubs of 7 staff per each club.

Sample Size

The representative elements chosen from the target population to be investigated for the research is referred to as the sample size (Hamed, 2016). The census sampling technique was applied in this study to calculate the size of the study. All entire population of 60 persons was considered as sample size.

Table 1: Sample Size

Respondents	Target Population	Sample Size	Sampling Techniques
FERWACY Staff	25	25	Census
Clubs' Staff	35	35	Census
Total	60	60	

Source: FERWACY, (2025)

Questionnaire

To make it simple to get data from participants, this study employed a standardized questionnaire that is phrased in simple terms. Then, it is a collection of interconnected questions meant to be set based on study objective to gather information from the study's sample size.

Interview Guide

The interview guide was conducted to 10 cyclists in a consistent and focused manner. It included the questions aligned with the study's objective. The guide ensured that all relevant areas are covered while allowing flexibility for probing and follow-up questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 2 presents the data of demographic characteristics of respondents such as gender, marital status, age distribution, educational level, and working experience of respondents. Out of 60 participants, on gender distribution, the researcher was intrigued by the respondents' gender distribution, 23.3% were women and 76.7% were men. On marital status, the researcher was intrigued by the respondents' dispersion of marital status. 81.7% of the 60 respondents were married, and 18.3% were single.

On age group distribution, 11.7% were between the ages of 18 and 30, 60.0% were between the ages of 31 and 45, 25.0% were between the ages of 46 and 60, and 3.3% were above 60 years. On educational level, 53.3% had a bachelor's degree, 15.0% had a master's degree, 20.0% had a diploma, and 11.7% had a certificate. To the working experience of the respondents, 8.3% had less than two years of work experience, 41.7% had two to five years, 41.7% had five to 10 years, and 8.3% had more than 10 years of working experience.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variables	Items	Frequencies	Percentages
Gender	Female	14	23.3
	Male	46	76.7
Marital Status	Single	11	18.3
	Married	49	81.7
Age Distribution	18-30 years	7	11.7
	31-45 years	36	60.0
	46-60 years	15	25.0
	Above 60 years	2	3.3
Educational Level	Certificate	7	11.7
	Diploma (A1)	12	20.0
	Bachelor's	32	53.3
	Master's	9	15.0
Working Experience	Below 2 years	5	8.3
	2-5 years	25	41.7
	5-10 years	25	41.7
	Above 10 years	5	8.3

Source: Primary Data, (2025)

Presentation of Findings

This section presents the findings of the data analysis. The study examined the influence of the Tour du Rwanda cycling competition on Rwanda's diplomatic relations. The following is a presentation and discussion of the findings.

Table 3 presents the results of the second objective of this investigation to examine the influence of the Tour du Rwanda cycling competition on Rwanda's diplomatic relations. The data was analyzed, out of 60 participants, to the Tour du Rwanda creates economic opportunity and affect the host country diplomacy, 56.7% agreed and 43.3% strongly agreed that Tour du Rwanda creates economic opportunity and affect the host country diplomacy. Of those surveyed, 36.7% agreed and 63.3% strongly agreed that cycling competition like Tour du Rwanda advance leadership & values promotion of country members of competition. 16.7% of respondents disagreed, 10.0% were not sure, and 73.3% agreed that cycling competitions create platform for countries cooperation.

To the Cycling competition (Tour du Rwanda) is main factor of advancing Rwanda's diplomacy in tourism, leadership and economic development, 13.3% were not sure, 60.0% agreed and 26.7% strongly agreed. The 70.0% agreed and 30.0% strongly agreed that Tour du Rwanda enables and facilitates the communication and cooperation between Rwanda citizens and foreigners in the international system. The overall mean score was 4.212, which is in the range of strongly agree (5) to agree (4), indicating that the Tour du Rwanda cycling competition has a significant influence on Rwanda's diplomatic relations.

Table 3: Tour du Rwanda Cycling Competition and Rwanda's Diplomatic Relations

Statement	S D		D		Not Sure		A		SA		Total		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	Mean	Sd
Tour du Rwanda creates economic opportunity and affect the host country diplomacy	0	0	0	0	0	0	34	56.7	26	43.3	60	4.43	.500
The cycling competition like Tour du Rwanda advance leadership & values promotion of country members of competition	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	36.7	38	63.3	60	4.63	.486
The cycling competitions create platform for countries cooperation	0	0	10	16.7	6	10.0	44	73.3	0	0	60	3.57	.767
Cycling competition (Tour du Rwanda) is main factor of advancing Rwanda's diplomacy in tourism, leadership and economic development.	0	0	0	0	8	13.3	36	60.0	16	26.7	60	4.13	.623
Tour du Rwanda enables and facilitates the communication and cooperation between Rwanda citizens and foreigners in the international system	0	0	0	0	0	0	42	70.0	18	30.0	60	4.30	.462
Overall Mean												4.212	

Source: Primary Data, (2025)

The interview guide was conducted to the 10 cyclists; the data was analyzed using thematic analysis. The data was analyzed in great details; the text and interview tape were turned into content. The interview guide on the influence of the Tour du Rwanda cycling competition on Rwanda's diplomatic relations. Interviewees responded that the Tour du Rwanda has significantly improved Rwanda's visibility. By attracting international cyclists, teams, and media coverage, it showcases Rwanda as a stable, organized, and modern country. International organizations and foreign governments see Rwanda not only as a safe destination but also as a country capable of hosting global events, which enhances its reputation in the international

community. The race has opened informal channels for dialogue with other countries and regional partners. For instance, it has facilitated exchanges with East African Community members and European cycling federations. These interactions sometimes lead to agreements on tourism promotion, sports collaborations, and cultural exchanges, which indirectly strengthen Rwanda's diplomatic relations.

They agreed that hosting the Tour du Rwanda allows Rwanda to project soft power by showcasing its organizational capacity, culture, and infrastructure. It supports foreign policy by improving the country's image, attracting goodwill, and fostering positive perceptions internationally. Through sports diplomacy, Rwanda can influence opinions and build partnerships without formal negotiations, which complements traditional diplomatic efforts. They agreed that The Race attracts international tourists, which benefits hotels, restaurants, and local businesses. Sponsors and foreign corporations see Rwanda as a reliable partner, which encourages investment. Additionally, media coverage and international participation create opportunities for cultural, educational, and commercial partnerships, enhancing Rwanda's international standing.

They indicated that one challenge is limited global media coverage compared to larger international races. Budget constraints and competition with bigger events can also limit impact. To enhance its diplomatic influence, Rwanda could expand international broadcasting, involve more foreign teams, integrate tourism and cultural packages, and strengthen partnerships with multinational sponsors and cycling federations to increase global visibility and engagement.

Table 4 presents the findings of the overall model of influence of Tour du Rwanda Cycling Competition on Rwanda's diplomatic relations. The data showed that the R Square was .864. It was clear that 86.4% of Rwanda's diplomatic relations variables could be explained by one of the factors of Tour du Rwanda Cycling Competition. The results of the investigation were not considerably impacted by the tiny standard error of the coefficients of .458.

Table 4 Model Summary of Influence of Tour du Rwanda Cycling Competition on Rwanda's Diplomatic Relations

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.929 ^a	.864	.863	.458

a. Predictors: (Constant), Influence of Tour du Rwanda cycling competition

Source: Primary Data, (2025)

Table 5 presents the outcomes of the dependent variables for Rwanda's diplomatic relations. The findings were examined, out of 60 participants, to the Tour du Rwanda cycling competition promotes employability in the Rwandan community, 48.3% agreed and 51.7% strongly agreed that Tour du Rwanda cycling competition promotes employability in the Rwandan community. Of those surveyed, 36.7% agreed and 63.3% agreed that Tour du Rwanda cycling competition is a factor advancing the economic development of Rwanda. 13.3% of respondents disagreed, 8.3% were not sure, 53.4% agreed, and 25.0% strongly agreed that Tour du Rwanda cycling competition boosts the Rwandan tourism investment.

To the Tour du Rwanda cycling competition develop the Rwandan culture interests in regional and international community, 16.7% strongly disagreed, 10.0 disagreed, 10.0% were not sure,

and 63.3% agreed. The 45.0% agreed and 55.0% strongly agreed that Tour du Rwanda cycling competition provides a platform for fostering partnerships between governments, non-governmental organizations, businesses, and communities. The average score was 4.16, falling between strongly agree (5) and agree (4), indicating that there was a significant aspect of diplomatic relations in the Tour du Rwanda Cycling as a sporting competition.

Table 5: Rwanda's Diplomatic Relations

Statement	S		D		Not Sure		A		S		N	Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		Mean	Sd
Tour du Rwanda cycling competition promotes employability in the Rwandan community.	0	0	0	0	0	0	29	48.3	31	51.7	60	4.52	.504
Tour du Rwanda cycling competition is a factor advancing the economic development of Rwanda	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	36.7	38	63.3	60	4.63	.486
Tour du Rwanda cycling competition boosts the Rwandan tourism investment	0	0	8	13.3	5	8.3	32	53.4	15	25.0	60	3.90	.933
Tour du Rwanda cycling competition develop the Rwandan culture interests in regional and international community	10	16.7	6	10.0	6	10.0	38	63.3	0	0	60	3.20	1.176
Tour du Rwanda cycling competition provides a platform for fostering partnerships between governments, non-governmental organizations, businesses, and communities.	0	0	0	0	0	0	27	45.0	33	55.0	60	4.55	.502
Overall Mean												4.16	

Source: Primary Data, (2025)

The connection between Rwanda's diplomatic relations and the influence of Tour du Rwanda cycling competition is seen in Table 6. The Pearson coefficients were computed using the

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software, version 26.0. A Pearson's correlation coefficient between 0 and 1 indicates a positive association, whereas a coefficient between -1 and 0 indicates a negative correlation. -1 and -0.5 exhibit strong negative correlation, -0.5 and 0 exhibit low negative correlation, 0 and 0.5 exhibit low positive correlation, while 0.5 and 1 exhibit high positive correlation. According to the statistical study, the connection between influence of Tour du Rwanda cycling competition and Rwanda's diplomatic relations was .954**. The findings showed that there was a statistically significant relationship between Tour du Rwanda cycling competition and Rwanda's diplomatic relations.

Table 6: Correlation between Sporting Competitions and Rwanda's Diplomatic Relations

		Influence of Tour du Rwanda Cycling Competition	Rwanda's Diplomatic Relations
Influence of Tour du Rwanda cycling competition	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	60	
Rwanda's diplomatic relations	Pearson Correlation	.954**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	60	60

Source: Primary Data, (2025)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study assessed the influence of the Tour du Rwanda cycling competition on Rwanda's diplomatic relations. Conclusion was made in light of the data analysis results for objective. The study concluded that the Tour du Rwanda cycling competition has a significant influence on Rwanda's diplomatic relations.

Recommendations

The researcher made the following recommendations in light of the study's findings:

- The Rwanda Cycling Federation and the Government of Rwanda should continue to invest and strengthen Tour du Rwanda cycling competition and use it to promote Rwanda's international sports diplomacy and countries' cooperation.
- FERWACY should inspire youth participation in sports, promote cycling culture and act as a global promotion tool especially via media coverage, attracting international visitors, and enhance visibility of Rwanda's natural landscapes and culture.
- Government of Rwanda should focus on transparently addressing cost concerns to ensure broader participation from European nations, continue engaging with African federations to boost continental cycling.

Suggestions for Further Research

The objective of this study was to examine how sporting competitions influence Rwanda's diplomatic relations focusing on Tour du Rwanda Cycling Race. Researcher suggested for further studies as follow:

- To assess how sporting competitions affect Rwanda's diplomacy, more researches should be done in government organizations involved in competitions.
- To examine the economic benefits and broader ripple effects of hosting international sports events in Rwanda.
- To analyze the impact of hosting international sports events on Rwanda global image.
- To analyze the impact of sporting competitions on regional integration
- To examine the Youth Perceptions of Sports Diplomacy and National Identity: Evidence from the Tour du Rwanda Cycling Race.

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