Comparative Analysis of Turkey's Visual Image Destination

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EXTENSIVE SUMMARY

1. Aim and Scope

The purpose of this study is to determine the represented characteristics of photos shared by the official website of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey and by users of Pinterest and then to analyze the differences between them. In this context, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1- Which themes are the photos shared by Culture and Tourism Ministry of Turkey official website and by users on Pinterest grouped under?

2- What are the most shared photos by Culture and Tourism Ministry of Turkey official website and by users on Pinterest and in which theme are they located?

3- What are the differences between the photos shared on Pinterest website and photos by Turkey's official tourism organization, the Culture and Tourism Ministry?

2. Methods

The data obtained from the Culture and Tourism Ministry and the Pinterest site has been categorized to select destinations representative of Turkey. Photos were collected from the Ministry's website and Pinterest, and then appropriate categories were created to separate the photos according to previous research. Then frequency and percentage ratios were determined and compared. The data source used in this study consists of photographs shared by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and photographs shared on the Pinterest website. Content analysis, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the study. “Content analysis has a privileged position as a method of analyzing photographic media in the field of social sciences” (Albers and James, 1988: 145). When symbolic content needs to be systematically evaluated, it should be used in a reliable, objective, systematic and general way (Donaire et al., 2014).

In previous studies (StepchenkovaveZhan, 2013; Song and Kim, 2016), photographs were examined in different categories. However, when classifying visual data, the categories need to
be reviewed for more accurate coding. Having regard to this, the photographs are of Michaelidou et al. (2013). These categories are: (1) Natural and geographical landscapes, (2) Cities, Towns like areas (3) Religion, Tradition and Cultural Heritage (4) Art and Art Galleries, (5) Modern and Contemporary Turkey, (6) Festivals, (7) Local Kitchen and Food, (8) Recreational Activities, (9) tourism Facilities and Infrastructure, (10) Ecotourism, Eco-parks (11) Other (shopping, old Turkey pictures, winter tourism). In the other text in the original text Health Tourism vs.. factors. revised according to the research data in this category due to lack of shopping, old photos Turkey is replaced by the winter tourism elements.

When classifying pictorial data, categories need to be reviewed to encode the data more accurately. Weber (1990) argues that each content unit should be divided into a category. Lombard, Snyder - Duch and Bracken (2002) state that intercoder reliability is an important factor in content analysis and that interpretation of data may not be valid in case of intercoder reliability. They defined the reliability of the encoder as the term commonly used to the extent that independent encoders evaluate a property of a message or artifact and reach the same level. Since content analysis is used in the study, inter-code reliability is considered a critical component. The data were evaluated using ReCal2 (http://dfreelon.org/utils/recalfront/recal2), an online program that calculates the reliability of the encoder.

3. Findings

A total of 1,010 photographs of this study were analyzed. Photographs were compared and classified according to 11 categories by Michaelidou et al. (2013). Nature and Geographic Landscape pictures (135 images) are the most shared by users on Pinterest. The second place is Religion, Tradition and Cultural Heritage (85). In the third place, pictures (49) of areas such as City and Town take place.

With regard to Turkey when we look at the official website of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism most shared photos are in Religion, Tradition and Cultural Heritage (318) categories. In the second place, there are 247 photographs and pictures of Nature and Geographic Landscape. The third place is followed by Local Cuisine and Dishes (106).

The result of the separation of the theme of the photos has been determined that there are some differences between the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Pinterest. The most shared photos by users on Pinterest are Nature and Geographic Landscape pictures, while the most shared photos on the official website of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism are Religion, Tradition and Cultural Heritage. Accordingly, it can be said that the photos which are in the theme of religion, tradition and cultural heritage are the most shared photos of the ministry for Turkey’s promotion. On Pinterest, users mostly share pictures of Nature and Geographic Scenery that they take during their holidays.

In Pinterest, the second most shared photo category is the Religion, Tradition and Cultural Heritage category, while the official website of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism includes Nature and Geographic Landscape pictures. The ancient city density and geographical landscape after nature for tourists were shared on Turkey's cultural heritage values. The second row gives the Ministry of Turkey's natural charm.
In Pinterest, the third category of the photos shared by the users is the category of pictures of areas such as City and Town, while the official website of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism includes pictures of Local Cuisine and Food. Tourists are busy sharing their views of the city as their destination for the Ministry emphasizes the unique flavor of Turkey. The most shared photos by users on Pinterest are Nature and Geographic Landscape images. In Turkey, especially in terms of sea-sand-sun triple take place among the most preferred destinations when these photos were shared extensively. Except for the photographs that include the unique sea on the coastline, nature landscapes are concentrated. Especially waterfalls, lakes, canyons and valleys are the most frequently used landscapes in these photographs.

4. Conclusion

In the research, the differences between Pinterest users and the photographs on the official website of the Ministry were categorized. According to the findings, the most shared photos on the Pinterest site are Nature and Geographic Landscape pictures, while on the Ministry's website this is the theme of Religion, Tradition and Cultural Heritage. Here, it can be said that there are differences in the perspective of tourism between tourists and tourism authorities. While the tourists frequently share the theme of the sea, one of the elements of mass tourism, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism gives more place to the elements of cultural tourism. Michaelidou et al. (2013) found that there are differences between the photos of online visitors and the photos shared by internet marketing websites in Taiwan. Again, Song and Kim (2016) found that there were differences between images shared by both target marketing organizations (DMOs) on websites and by users (ie, Pinterest.com) that focus on the three major cities in Japan. The results of these two studies support the results of the study.

Photos shared by users on both the Ministry of Culture and Tourism website and Pinterest constitute an important element of destination marketing. Depending on the promotion and visual materials such as photographs and create images for use in marketing terms this process, Turkey is very important for the branding process for the destinations.