

# Analysis of Turkish Government Cultural Portal for Supporting Gastronomy Tourism

Hilmi Rafet Yüncü

**Abstract**—Today Internet has very important role to promote products and services all over the world. Companies and destinations in tourism industry use Internet to sell and to promote their core products to directly potential tourists. Internet technologies have redefined the relationships between tourists, tourism companies, and travel agents. The new relationship allows for accessing and tapping tourism information and services. Internet technologies ensure new opportunities to available for the tourism industry, including travel accommodation, and tourist destination organizations. Websites are important devices to the marketing of a destination. Most people make a research about the destination before arriving via internet. Governments have a considerable role in the process of marketing tourism destinations. Governments make policies and regulations; furthermore, they help to market destinations to potential tourists. Governments have a comprehensive overview of the sector to see changes in tourism market and design better policies, programs and marketing plans. At the same time, governments support developing of alternative tourism in the country with regulations and marketing tools. The aim of this study is to analyse of an Internet website of governmental tourism portal in Turkey to determine effectiveness about gastronomy tourism. The Turkish government has established a culture portal for foreign and local tourists. The Portal provides local and general information about tourism attractions of cities and Turkey. There are 81 official cities in Turkey and all these cities are conducted to analyse to determine how effective marketing is done by Turkish Government in the manner of gastronomy tourism. A content analysis will be conducted to Internet website of the portal with food content, recipes and gastronomic feature of cities.

**Keywords**—Content analysis, culture portal, gastronomy tourism, Turkey.

## I. INTRODUCTION

OVER the past decade, the ever-increasing competition between tourism destinations has led to the development of more appealing attractions to catch the attention of potential tourists. Many destinations have used food as a source of attraction in strengthening their tourism marketing [1]. For instance, the “Cultural Portal” of Turkey has aimed to promote local food and food culture and other tourism attractiveness. Gastronomy tourism as “travel in order to search and enjoy prepared food and drink and unique and memorable gastronomic experiences” [1]. Food service has been shown to affect vacation choice and gastronomy to be a powerful travel motivator. Hall and Sharples present a spectrum of food tourism types related to the intensity of food as a motivating factor and it seems likely that those who travel for reasons of food alone are comparatively few in number [5].

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The purpose of this paper is to determine the content of a website relating to gastronomy tourism based on an analysis of Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey website of cultural portal. Portal to describe the items of tourism attractiveness and food item that have been about cities and which have contributed the marketing of cities as a destination. The data are derived from the Portal by a content analysis and classified within food items.

## II. LITERATURE

There is a growing recognition of the relationships between tourism and gastronomy [2]. Many destinations have used food as a source of attraction in strengthening their tourism marketing [1]. There is a closely linkage between the success of a tourist destination and its gastronomic identity [3]. Mak et al. mentioned about dimensions of food in tourism. There are four dimensions of food experience in tourism. These are “food as a tourist product/attraction”, “tourists’ food consumption behavior/pattern”, “tourists’ dining experiences”, and “tourists’ special interests in various food and beverages and related events/activities in destinations” [5]. Mostly gastronomy tourism appears on the fourth aim of tourists. Hall and Mitchell define food tourism as ‘visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of specialist food production region are the motivating factor for travel’ [5]. Distinguishing food consumption in tourism as the primary or ‘peak’ and secondary or ‘supporting’ tourist purpose [5].

While traveling, tourists either (i) purchase or consume local food or (ii) observe and research the process of food production (from agriculture to cooking schools), and view this as an important motivation for traveling or an important travel activity. However, culinary tourism also enhances self-awareness and self-consciousness through experiencing the travel destination via food, which is very different from simply consuming food as in ordinary travels. Culinary tourism implies that local cultures have interesting stories about their cuisines, and it also indicates that local or special knowledge and information that represent local culture and identities are being transferred [6]. People travel in search of new gastronomic experiences; for that reason, gastronomy tourism become an increasingly important part of “destination marketing”. The mass media regarding lifestyles and tourist information, such as magazines, booklets, TV or the Internet, are powerful marketing tools for advertising food [6]. With the dramatic growth in the online travel market, the Web sites of

destinations have been considered as an important resource to gain information for consumers and as an effective marketing tool for suppliers [12]. The web is the most widely used tool for searching for relevant tourist information, such as potential tourist destinations, activities, and services. The government tourism websites run by tourism bureaus, in particular, are most often used as a research tool by consumers seeking out information (including images) concerning potential destinations, activities and services for those who are planning their trips/tours. Therefore, the adequate design of government tourism websites, enabling the efficient and eye-catching presentation of crucial information, is now a key to the marketing of culinary tourism [6]. In other words, websites and online materials are a step forward from traditional broadcast media, as they allow consumers to interact with the website content, while the website captures information about the consumer's preferences and intentions [14]. The role of the Internet in the promotion of all aspects of international tourism has also expanded rapidly in recent years [8]. Many nations and destination are now designing government-sponsored tourism websites, with aim to reach potential tourists who can access information about their potential destinations by browsing them. Although the official tourism websites of some countries need to be improved in terms of information provision, updating, web interfaces, and hyperlinks, the government tourism website has also become a significant means of advertising the local cultures and cuisines of culinary tourist destinations. Therefore, constructing effective government tourism websites is the first step in the marketing of these destinations [8].

Give governments and policy makers a more comprehensive overview of the performance of the tourism sector, thus enabling them to design better policies and programs, to play a leadership role in the management of the tourism value chain, and to support more effective and efficient public spending [13]. Government support and tourism as a priority, regulations, a whole of government approach, a tourism strategy, safety and security, public/private partnerships, vertical cooperation, statistics and data, multilateral cooperation, institutions (e.g. national tourism board), budget allocated to tourism support [13]. World wide web sites produced by official government bodies to promote their respective nations and communities as appropriate locals for tourists [7].

There are fewer studies about the effectiveness of websites on gastronomy tourism. Horng and Tsai conducted their study with gastronomy tourism aspects of government websites in Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand [7]. Kim et al. investigated of West Texas website according to gastronomy tourism [12].

### III.METHODOLOGY

This exploratory study was designed to investigate the content of Website regarding gastronomy tourism of Government in Turkey. The specific objectives of this study were to (a) investigate type of foods in website; (b) examine

the effectiveness of Website to introduce local food on Web marketing on gastronomy tourism. A content analysis is hired for handle these objectives. A content analysis is a way of asking a fixed set of questions about data in such a way as to produce countable results or quantitative descriptions. It is a means by which to produce solid descriptive information or to cross-validate other research findings [11]. Content analysis is 'any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages'. More simply, the content analysis allows researchers to systematically analyze some dimension that appears in written form [9]. The systematic objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics. Content analysis is, therefore, an observational research method that used to systematically evaluate the actual and symbolic content of all forms of recorded communication [10].

Turkish Cultural Portal has established by Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey. There is some tourism information about all cities in Turkey. Most of them are about the cultural aspect of the Cities. Culinary culture information is one of this information.

### IV. FINDINGS

Website for tourism plays an important role in the promotion and marketing of the destination's culinary culture. In this study Cultural Portal of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism was examined. Information about tourism and culture attractiveness of 81 cities in Turkey.

In examining all 81 cities together, 72 of them have more than one receipt. Muğla, Çanakkale (Aegean Region), Tunceli, Ardahan, Erzincan, Erzurum, (East Anatolia Region), Giresun, Gümüşhane (The Black Sea Region) Isparta (Mediterranean Region) (9 cities) have not any receipt about their culinary culture in the Portal. Totally 1259 food items and receipts are introduced in Portal. And 5 videos about culinary culture of cities of Turkey and 1 e-book and 4 ceremony food culture are given in the Portal.

A number of type of food emerged from the receipts identified for the study (see Table I). The nine of food types emerged in Portal (Main Dishes-with meat and vegetable, Soup, Pastry, Salad-Mezes, Drinks, Eggs, Dessert, Pasta-Pilaf-Manti).

The types of food that were most frequently used, included: (1) Main dishes (with meat) (n=272; 21,6%), (2) Pastry (n=233; 18,5%), (3) Dessert (n=213; 16,9%), (4) Main dishes (with vegetables) (n=174; 13,8%), (5) Soup (n= 144; 11,4%), (6) Pastry-pilaf-manti (n=101; 8%), (7) Salad-mezes (n=75; 5,9%) and (8) Both drinks and eggs (n=25; 1,9%).

Ankara (capital city-The Central Anatolia Region) and Denizli (Aegean Region) have 83 recipes in Portal. Edirne (The Marmara Region) (Main dishes with meat) and Hakkari (South-East Anatolia Region) (Soup) have 1 receipts in the Portal.

Elazığ province (East Anatolia Region) is given the most drink recipes (n=6). Soup and Pasta-pilaf-manti recipes are introduced in Ankara province part (The Central Anatolia

Region-n=10, n=9). Amasya (The Black Sea Region) province Dessert part (n=14, n=26, n=13).  
is most introduced in Salad-mezes and Meal with meat and

TABLE I  
FOOD ITEMS IN CULTURE PORTAL

Cities	No of food item	Drinks	Soup	Salad/mezes	Meal		Pastry	Pasta-pilaf-manti	Egg	Dessert
					M	V				
Ankara	83	3	10	2	15	14	18	9		12
Denizli	83		7	14	26	15	14	5	1	1
Amasya	77	2	7	2	9	14	18	9	3	13
Kütahya	53	1	9	1	13	5	11	4		9
Tokat	52		9	1	4	20	4	4	3	7
Burdur	51		1		15	1	19	3		12
Artvin	47		6	3	2	6	14	5	4	5
Ordu	46	1	5	5	8	10	6	1	2	8
Niğde	36		7	1	13	8		1		6
Bursa	32		5		8	2	7	1	1	8
Elazığ	32	6	4	3	7	1	3	4		2
Aksaray	29		5	-	4		11	6		3
Sakarya	28		1	1	3	4	3	4		12
Eskişehir	27	1	8		3	4	7	3		1
Sivas	27		6	1	4	5	6	1	1	3
Afyonkarahisar	26		3	1	7		9	1		5
Bartın	23		1	1	2	4	2	1	1	11
Kars	21		4		5		5	4		3
Kahramanmaraş	20	1	3	1	3	2	2	2		6
Osmaniye	19	4	5	2	2		5			1
Adana	16	2	2	1	6		1	-		4
Kilis	16		2		3	1	3	2		5
Mersin	15	1	1	3	2	2	1	1		4
Çankırı	14		1		2	2	4	1		4
İzmir	14			3	3	4	3			1
Kayseri	14		1		1	2	7			3
Kocaeli	14		4		5	1		3		1
Yozgat	14		1	1	4	3		1	2	2
Aydın	13			3	2	3	1	1		2
Bingöl	13		1		1	1	5	2		3
Gaziantep	13		3	1	5	1	1	1		1
Karaman	13				8	3		1		1
Kastamonu	13		2		2	1	2	2		4
Zonguldak	13				1	5	3			4
Antalya	12			4	4		2		1	1
Balıkesir	12			1	3			3		5
Rize	12		1	1		1	4	1		4
Van	12		1	2	4	1		2	2	
Çorum	10		1		2	1	2	1		3
Konya	10		3		3		2			2
Şanlıurfa	10			2	1		2			5
Şırnak	10			1	2	4			2	1
Kırşehir	9		1		2	1	2			3
Hatay	8			3	1		2			2
İstanbul	8	1		3	1		2	1		
Kırklareli	8	1			1	1	5			
Mardin	8			2	3		2			1
Ağrı	7	-	-	-	5		-	2		1
Bayburt	7		1			4				2
Malatya	7		2		3	2				
Bolu	6		2		1		1	1		1
Diyarbakır	6			1	4					1
Düzce	6			2		1	2			1
İğdır	6		1		2	1		1		1

Cities	No of food item	Drinks	Soup	Salad/mezes	Meal		Pastry	Pasta-pilaf-manti	Egg	Dessert
					M	V				
Kırıkkale	6				2		2	1		1
Muş	6				3	3				
Nevşehir	6		1		1	1		1		2
Samsun	6				1		3		1	1
Sinop	6		1		1		1	2		1
Yalova	6				2	1	1			2
Adıyaman	5	-	-	1	4		1	-		-
Batman	5		1	1	1	2				
Bitlis	5				4	1				
Manisa	5		1		2	1				1
Bilecik	4				1		1	1		1
Karabük	4		1			1	2			1
Tekirdağ	4	1							1	2
Trabzon	4				2	1	2			
Siirt	2				1			1		
Uşak	2		1				1			
Edirne	1				1					
Hakkari	1		1							
<b>Total</b>	<b>1259</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>213</b>

Most pastry recipes are given in Burdur province (The Mediterranean Region-n=19). As seen in Table I, Artvin province (The Black Sea) has most Meal recipe with Egg (n=4). At the end, the meal with the vegetable recipe is given in Tokat province (n=20).

#### V.CONCLUSION

Governmental strategies have an important role in the marketing of a destination. Recently many marketing tools especially social media and the Internet can be used introducing destination culture to potential tourists. The aim of this study was to analyze the "Cultural Portal" government tourism websites of Turkey present their cuisines and food cultures and thereby attract tourists. It was found that introducing food culture is providing information for prospective tourists on all aspects of gastronomy tourism experience in Turkish cities except 9 cities.

Introducing on website is a critical and efficient tool for governments to market their destination and reduce their marketing costs. Although some of the Websites as Culture Portal provide information about food types, special recipes of local and traditional food from the destinations, and food-related traditions.

It is an important initiative for Government to market Turkish traditions to potential market but website is published in Turkish language and it just work for local tourist. For foreign tourist many language is needed.

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