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**AN ANALYSIS ON THE TOURISM PROMOTION OF TURKEY IN
SOCIAL MEDIA**

FINAL MASTER PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

Turkey is one of the countries that has made many efforts to develop its tourism industry. After the pandemic, this country has focused more on social media to promote this industry. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism of this country, as one of the most important DMOs, promotes its destinations by launching the "*Go Turkey*" website and related social networks. In this regard, the portion of Instagram is greater than the other networks and most of the provinces of this country have the official account since 2022 on this network. Despite these efforts, academic studies on Turkish tourism promotional innovations are very limited. Hence, the aim of this thesis is to analyze Turkish tourism industry promotion on social media through focusing on tourism destinations. to achieve the aim, Instagram posts of 2023 (January 1st to May 15th) seven of Turkey destinations that are more active than other destinations were collected and then analyzed through content analysis method. Finally, it was found that the themes of the posts fall into seven categories. It was also found that the percentage of sharing these themes depends on the local conditions and features of each destination that it is a strategy for creating the image of each destination on this network.

Keywords: Promotion, social media, theme, Instagram, destination image

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

Turkey is a country that has a growing economic development process and the tourism industry has made a big contribution to this growth. This industry is the center of attention due to the variety of historical sites, and seaside resorts along its Aegean and Mediterranean coasts (Mousavi & Talebi, 2022). Turkey has also become a popular destination for culture, spa, and healthcare tourism and offers a wide range of traditional and local festivals (Aslan, 2016). Despite facing problems such as economic crises and the devaluation of the national currency, terrorist events, and the pandemic crisis (Estrada & Khan, 2018; Çakmaklı et al, 2021), this country attempts to improve, develop and promote tourism industry, as far as it has risen to the fourth rank on the world tourism list after hosting some 29.9 million tourists in 2021 (UNWTO).

After the Covid-19 crisis, the country has increasingly used social media to advertise and market tourism, so that this country became as a country with the most influential advertisements in 2021 (reported by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism) (Aslan, 2021). From 2021, the country has started using the latest technology and communication models, as well as focusing on advanced public relations that has brought 81 provinces under one roof and increase Turkey's tourism performance as a new strategy to promote tourism industry with the "Go *Turkey*" website (Aslan, 2021).

Furthermore, Deggin (2019), according to the Minister of Culture and Tourism of Turkey, states that Turkey also aims to use new strategies on social media that will be implemented to increase tourism revenues in the country and claim a bigger share of the global sector in the future. The promotional campaign is set to target high spending tourists from selected countries, drawing attention to Turkey's cultural heritage, art, beaches, and seas, fascinating history, and gastronomy as major attractions to visit. In this regard, the ministry plans to use the help of bloggers and

Instagram users to promote photos and films showcasing tourism in Turkey, rebranding the country with a new logo and slogan. The country also now plans a multi-million dollars boost to its global promotional activities (Davies, 2023).

1.1 Research questions and objectives

Despite Turkey's efforts to develop and promote its tourism industry, especially with the implementation of new strategies and advertisements through social media, at the academic level, researches to introduce and recognize these efforts and innovations are very limited. Accordingly, the aim of this study is to analyze Turkish tourism industry promotion on social media through focusing on tourism destinations. Hence, the research's main question is “*How do Turkey DMOs promote the tourism destinations through social media recently?*”. In this regard, sub questions and objectives also arise, which are as follows;

- What themes do Turkish DMOs share on social media to promote the tourism destinations?
- How do the themes of social media posts promote Turkish destinations?

Additionally, the research objectives are;

- To explore the promotional themes in Instagram posts of Turkish destinations accounts.
- To identify how to promote Turkish destinations through the themes of posts on social media.

1.2 Significance of the study

In recent years Turkey has focused on social media for more advertising and, according with Aslan (2021), the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism has employed a new strategy for the tourism sector based on technology and up-to-date initiatives to promote Turkey as a destination and increase the number of tourists, the current research on the use social media as a tool for promotion is still scarce. Çevik in 2016 conducted a study on how and at what level Cittaslow in Turkey uses social media in destination marketing. In accordance with the purpose, he used Facebook as a source of data collection and used content analysis technique to analyze this data. The findings of his study show that, these destinations use social media more effectively in terms of content and post frequency but interactivity which is one of the most important features of social media is not adequately heeded by all Cittaslow destinations in Turkey. Furthermore, in 2021 Altin and Pirnar in their study determined to what extent municipalities of three destinations in Izmir in Turkey effectively utilize social media in their destination marketing activities. At the end they found out that municipalities market their destinations insufficiently on social media.

The difference between the present research and the previous studies is that the previous Turkish researchers have made efforts to discover to what extent Turkish DMOs use social media in the marketing of destinations, while the current research analyzes social media's posts to find how Turkish DMOs is promoting the tourism destinations on social media recently. Hence, this study can create a reference to fill the gap in the literature, both published and unpublished and gives information to future researchers. Furthermore, the strategies obtained in this study on how Turkish DMOs use social media to promote the tourism industry could give some recommendations for emerging destinations.

1.3 Organization of the study

The present study is organized into five chapters that the summary of each chapter is presented as follows (Figure 1):

Chapter One gives a brief outline and draws a perspective of the study by introducing important topics such as the research background and the research gap, research question and objective, significance of the study as well as the organization of the thesis.

Chapter Two discusses relevant literature about development of Turkish tourism industry, social media usage in tourism industry as well as Turkey tourism promotion on social media.

Chapter Three outlines the research method used to meet the research objective and question. It also briefly discusses the research design, data collection process, and data analysis process, including the procedures that are required to perform all the tasks.

Chapter Four presents the results of the analysis of data from social media discussions to answer the research questions.

Chapter Five also presents conclusions of study which include summary of study, significant findings and also recommendations for the future studies.

Meanwhile, the list of references is added at the end of the study.

| | | |
|-------------------------|--|------------------|
| BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background on the topic and research gap • Research questions & objectives • Significance of the study • Organization of the study | Chapter 1 |
| LITERATURE REVIEW | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant literature on; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development of Turkish tourism industry ○ Social media usage in tourism industry ○ Turkey tourism promotion on social media | Chapter 2 |
| RESEARCH METHODOLOGY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research design • Data collection process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Secondary data ○ Primary data • Unit of analysis • Data analysis process | Chapter 3 |
| RESULTS AND DISCUSSION | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis the data and discussions • Research findings • Answering research questions | Chapter 4 |
| CONCLUSION | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of the study • Significant findings • Recommendations for future studies | Chapter 5 |

Figure 1: Organization of the study

Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This section discusses a background on the topic in three parts as following;

2.1 Development of Turkish tourism industry

Turkey is one of the countries, has been emerged in the tourism market in a short period of time with its geographical location, convenient tourism resources and multidimensional support of the government. The economic, social, cultural and environmental impact of tourism on the country has been noticed since the 1940s, showing a tendency to develop between 1963 and 1980, and an average growth rate of 12.1% between 1984 and 1990" (Çiçek et al., 2017). In the 1990s the number of international tourists was 5.3 million and this number exceeded 10 million in the 2000s (Asgary & Ozdemir, 2019). In 2011, Turkey ranked as the sixth most popular tourist destination in the world and also fourth in Europe, according to the UNWTO World Tourism barometer (Aslan, 2016). Meanwhile, the country became the 6th most popular tourist destination in the world again, attracting around 40 million tourists in 2014 (Bilgin et al, 2016). In 2018, the growth of Turkey's gross domestic product in terms of the travel and tourism industry of this country was 15%, which is very high and significant (Mousavi & Talebi, 2022).

Despite this growth, the Covid-19 pandemic has been devastating for countries that rely on tourism and travel for economic stability, resulting in \$12 billion in lost revenue and a 75% drop in the tourism rates in the first half of 2020 compared to last year for Turkey. However, the implementation of increased safety measures has given hope to the country's tourism industry (Maddie Youngblood, 2021).

2.2 Social media usage in tourism industry

Social media play a significant role both on the demand and on the supply side of tourism. It is also increasingly used as a tool for managing the image of a tourist destination (Királ'ová & Pavlíčka, 2015; Zajadacz & Minkwitz, 2020) and constitutes a substantial part of the online tourism domain. Çevik, 2016 and Leung et al., 2013 also stated that social media plays an important role within the context of trip planning using a search engine. Consumers benefit by receiving what they perceive as more authentic information based on the experience of other travelers and can design their trips to reflect more closely what they are looking for by interacting with both experienced travelers and residents of a destination.

On the other hand, destination marketing organizations can collaborate and streamline their information, adding value for consumers, while building their brand through direct interaction with the consumer and immediate response to consumers (Rathore et al., 2017; Çevik, 2016).

Online social networking sites like Facebook, Google Plus, YouTube, and Trip Advisor have been some of the most popular ones among travelers and travel-related businesses (Abou-Shouk & Hewedi, 2016; Sarkar et al., 2018). Regarding visitors, Facebook has made it especially easy to share and discuss trip plans, travel knowledge, and travel experiences. From a business perspective, Twitter's social media network also makes it possible to track and direct the customer's attention to travel-related products and services (Sarkar et al., 2018).

Furthermore, the more recent platform - Instagram has enabled tourists with the multiple functionalities of sharing visual and audio-visual images of trip experiences, opinions, reviews and comments online, in a diverse platform involving access to a range of social networking sites concurrently. Such social media platforms have provided an innovative means to handle marketing

information for tourism businesses strategically (Roult et al., 2016; Sarkar et al., 2018). Shuqair & Cragg, 2017 also mention that Instagram is a quite effective social media application in “changing the viewers’ perceptions and it can influence viewers’ behavioral intentions” during the pre-visitation stage.

2.3 Turkey tourism promotion on social media

In recent years, Turkey tourism has focused more on social media for promotion, marketing and advertising purposes. After the pandemic Turkey showed a good performance thanks to the Turkey Tourism Promotion and Development Agency (TGA), which actively began its operations in 2020 and is made up of sector representatives as well as professional promotion experts with good knowledge of new-generation communication models and technologies (Aslan, 2021). Before this, Turkey focused on offline promotions, but today Turkey not only keeps a certain level of offline presentation but also carry out promotion campaigns with focus on digital and social media (TURKEYHOMES, 2019).

The country adopted a new tourism promotion strategy in 2021 with its "Go Turkey" platform, using the latest technology and communication models, as well as focusing on advanced public relations that has brought 81 provinces under one roof and boosted (reported by Turkey ministry Culture and Tourism. Aslan, 2021). The system also follows more than 100 media outlets that have the possibility of making news about Turkey while it also follows news about the world's biggest tour operation. It analyzes positive or negative content on Turkey and accordingly determines a promotion priority (Ibid).

The topic of the role of social media in the tourism industry of Türkiye in the academic level fall into two categories. The first category is the studies that study the impact of social media on choosing a destination, and the second category is the research that deals with the use of social media in destination marketing activities.

Gulbahar & Yildirim in 2015 have tried to describe the framework of social media and electronic communication usage for the marketing purpose of the tourism sector in Turkey and to achieve the aim hotels have been selected from Istanbul Hotels. In 2016 Gumus determined the use of social media by metropolitan municipalities as part of city marketing. In accordance with this purpose, official social media accounts of 30 metropolitan municipalities have been investigated between the dates of 01.09.2016 and 30.09.2016, then their shares in social media channels have been investigated in the context of city marketing. In the end he got the result that metropolitan municipalities do not benefit from social media effectively for city marketing activities. Çevik (2016) in his paper determines how and at what level Cittaslow in Turkey uses social media in destination marketing. In accordance with this purpose, a content analysis technique was used and Facebook was chosen as a social media channel. The findings of his study show that, one of the selected municipalities uses social media more effectively in terms of content and post frequency but they also reveal that interactivity which is one of the most important features of social media is not adequately heeded by all Cittaslow destinations in Turkey. In 2021 Altin and Pirnar in their study determined to what extent municipalities of three destinations in Izmir in Turkey effectively utilize social media in their destination marketing activities. They focused on Instagram municipalities accounts of these destinations to examine some posts through a quantitative research method. They found out that "municipalities market their destinations insufficiently on

social media". In accordance with this, "findings also revealed that social media is not being exploited and utilized effectively by the municipalities on their destination marketing efforts".

By reviewing the literature, it is clear that there has been limited research on the promotion of the tourism industry in Turkey in recent years, while as mentioned before, the country has recently focused heavily on social media to promote the industry. The existence of this lack requires more studies to better understand the role of social media in the development of the Turkish tourism industry. In this regard, the present research with the aim of analyzing how to promote the Turkish tourism industry in one of the social networks can be a reference to fill the gap in the literature.

Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methods implemented for the study. It is divided into four sections, which are research design, data collection process, the unit of analysis, and data analysis process.

3.1 Research design

This is a qualitative research based on secondary and primary data. In the first step, it reviews research literature to identify the tourism development background of Turkey and the social media role in tourism promotion as well as studies conducted on the subject. Furthermore, the study focuses on social media as a source to collect the primary data. The method of data collection and analysis is as follows.

3.2 Data collection process

The data of this research has been obtained in two ways, which will be explained below;

3.2.1 Secondary data

This study focuses on previous studies in journal papers, books, reports, websites etc. to firstly identify a background on the topic in chapter 2. Then, in the fourth chapter, it uses the opinions of previous studies to validate the research findings.

3.2.2 Primary data

To answer the research question of "*How do Turkey DMOs promote the tourism destinations through social media recently?*" the present study focuses on case study as the strategy of collecting data. Yin (2003) states that in case study a "how" or "why" question is being asked regarding a contemporary set of events which the investigator has little or no control at all.

In this research, seven tourist destinations in Turkey were selected for analysis. The selection process was such that at first the author focused on the official website of “Go Türkiye” (<https://goturkiye.com/>), which was explained in the previous chapter. This website, which belongs to the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, has separate pages for its tourism destinations. It is also linked to some social media accounts. By checking destinations on the official social networks connected to this website, it was discovered that the accounts of Turkish destinations (except Istanbul) on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube either are not active in this year or recent months. Moreover, some destinations do not have even an official account on the networks. However, there is the official account named “Go Türkiye” on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, which introduces Turkish tourism destinations and activities in its posts. Also, the destinations that have been hashtagged in this account are only well-known destinations such as #Istanbul, #Antalya, #Cappadocia and #Izmir.

Unlike, most of Turkish destinations have active official accounts on Instagram that have been followed by the official account of “Go Türkiye”, and they have also followed this account. The important point here is that the profile picture of all of them is the word “GO” in English. Moreover, all of the username accounts also start with @go..., which is a sign that they are all related to the website of “Go Türkiye”.

By checking the accounts of all these destinations on Instagram, seven destinations were selected that have the most followers and posts and are more active (one post every day) than others. Interestingly, these destinations are even more active with a high number of followers and posts compared with the international and well-known destinations such as Istanbul, Ankara, Antalya. This is probably an indication that the intention is to highlight and draw more attention of users to these local and less noticed destinations. Accordingly, this thesis has chosen these seven

destinations to examine how Turkey DMOs promote such destinations in social media. The destinations' general information on the Instagram accounts are in table 1. The number of followers and posts in three right rows are as of the date 15th May 2023;

| Destination | Instagram official link | Username | Follower | Total no. of post | No. of Post in 2023 |
|-------------|---|---------------|----------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Balikesir | https://instagram.com/gobalikesir | @gobalikesir | 15k | 299 | 54 |
| Bolu | https://instagram.com/go_bolu | @go_Bolu | 24.2k | 289 | 53 |
| Çanakkale | https://instagram.com/go_canakkale | @go_canakkale | 21.3k | 331 | 54 |
| Erzurum | https://instagram.com/goerzurum | @goerzurum | 14.6k | 271 | 46 |
| Konya | https://instagram.com/go_konya | @go_Konya | 18.4k | 301 | 54 |
| Ordu | https://instagram.com/go_ordu | @go_Ordu | 16.8k | 283 | 53 |
| Thrace | https://instagram.com/go_thrace | @go_thrace | 14.9k | 285 | 49 |

Table 1: The information of case studies in the official Instagram accounts (source: author, 2023)

3.3 Unit of analysis

A unit of analysis is an object of study within a research project. It is the smallest unit a researcher can use to identify and describe a phenomenon—the 'what' or 'who' the researcher wants to study (Heath, 2023). In this research, the unit type is geographical unit. More precisely, the posts shared of seven Turkish tourist destinations on their official Instagram accounts are analyzed. In addition, the posts that are in the period of 01.01.2023 to 15.05.2023 are considered for analysis.

3.4 Data analysis process

Nature of this study is exploratory; the author's aim is to analyze how Turkish tourism industry promotion on social media through focusing on destinations. Throughout this study, a total of 363 posts on seven official Instagram accounts of the local destinations were selected during 2023.

The analysis of Instagram posts using interpretive content analysis, which focuses on identifying features of destination in photos, short videos or captions has been done. As Drisko & Maschi

(2016) mention that content analysis is commonly utilized and applied research method in social sciences and Elo & Kyngäs (2008) state that "content analysis is a method of analyzing written, verbal or visual communication messages".

For the analysis process the content of each post includes visual part and textual part including the caption and hashtag were described and then coded to find what themes are shared by the posts. Coding is a way of doing this, of essentially indexing or mapping data, to provide an overview of disparate data that allows the researcher to make sense of them in relation to their research questions. Most simply, it can be a way of tagging data that are relevant to a particular point (Elliott, 2018). In this research, coding was done manually and finally a coding framework with seven themes categories was provided. By the way, the findings were validated by secondary data.

In the next step, the content analysis method was again used to answer the second question of the thesis. In this way, the percentage of seven theme categories found in the posts of Turkish destinations was checked. Then the reason for the low or high percentage of each of these themes in the literature was found. Meanwhile, the results obtained by previous researchers (in literature) were validated. The results and discussion of the analysis are explained in detail in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the result of analysis from shared posts of the seven Turkish destinations Instagram accounts in 2023. In order to find out how to promote tourism destinations by Turkey's DMOs, data analysis was done in two parts to answer the first and second sub-questions of the research; "*What themes do Turkish DMOs share on social media to promote the tourism destinations?*" and "*How do the themes of social media posts promote Turkish destinations?*". Discussion and findings of the study are following in detail;

4.1 Promotional themes in Instagram posts of the Turkish destinations

The studies on promoting tourism destinations in social media by DMOs is limited in number, both at the global and national (Turkey) level, however still some researchers have addressed the marketing of tourist destinations on social media in some part of their researches. The researchers analyzed posts and categorized them based on the theme that explained as follows (see the summary in table 2).

Kumar et al., in 2022 have explored how Indian DMOs strategically employ Facebook to promote their destinations. To achieve their research aim, they were collected posts that had shared in six months from the official Facebook pages of 32 DMOs. Meanwhile, they employed content analysis method as their data analysis. At the end, it concluded that "DMOs benefit from the contents of scenic beauty, culture, and cuisine which appeal more to engage users on Facebook pages".

In 2020, McCreary et al., investigated the Instagram posts of the case study of Lake Superior in Minnesota, USA, during the summer tourism season of 2015 to investigate the destination image

of visitors. In their study, they stated that the topics of the posts are categorized into six groups: natural resources, built infrastructure, human subjects, outdoor recreation, emotion, and culture.

Sugar in her study in 2017 has examined the promotional videos on the YouTube platform of eight case studies in Canada from a content perspective. Content analysis and coding was employed to analyze the collected data. For methodology she referenced Stepchenkova and Zhan's (2013) content analysis framework (which is mentioned below). At the end, she categorized the content of the videos in the eight groups include way of life, nature & landscape, food, tourism facilities, promotional standard, promotional extended, events, outdoor/adventure and wildlife.

Stepchenkova and Zhan in 2013 compared images of Peru collected from a DMO's site (www.peru.travel) and from Flickr. They developed a classification system based on visual attributes. Stepchenkova and Zhan coded the following categories: nature & landscape, people, archaeological sites, way of life, traditional clothing, architecture/buildings, outdoor/adventure, wildlife, art object and tourism facilities.

Limited studies on the topic of Turkish destination marketing have also classified the posts on social networks for study based on content.

Altan and Pirnar (2021) analyzed content of the official Instagram posts of three municipalities in Izmir between 1.2.2021 and 28.02.2021. They categorized posts into sub-categories of destination marketing content and non-destination marketing according to their content. In this case, they grouped destination marketing posts in historical posts, nature-related posts, touristic attraction posts, artistic event posts, sporting event posts, general promotional posts.

Gumus (2016) also investigated social media accounts of 30 metropolitan municipalities in Turkey as institutions which take or required to take active duty in the process of publicity and marketing

of the cities. The contents shared by the municipalities on Facebook, Instagram, twitter and YouTube were examined in between 01/09/2016 and 30/09/2016. Meanwhile, content analysis method has been applied in the research. He found out "the contents relevant to natural, touristic, cultural and historical etc. elements of the city and the contents of artistic, cultural and sportive events realized in the city as content within the scope of publicity".

| Scholar - studied social network | Findings |
|---|--|
| Kumar et al., 2022- Facebook | scenic beauty, culture, cuisine |
| Altan & Pirnar, 2021- Instagram | historical, nature-related, touristic attraction, artistic event, sporting event, general promotional posts |
| McCreary et al., 2020- Instagram | natural resources, built infrastructure, human subjects, outdoor recreation, emotion, culture |
| Sugar, 2017- YouTube | way of life, nature & landscape, food, tourism facilities, promotional standard, promotional extended, events, outdoor/adventure, wildlife |
| Gumus, 2016- Facebook, Instagram, twitter, YouTube | natural, touristic, cultural, historical, artistic, cultural, sportive |
| Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2013- Website, Flickr | nature & landscape, people, archaeological sites, way of life, traditional cloths, architecture, outdoor/adventure, wildlife, art object, tourism facilities |

Table 2: Themes found from social media posts in previous studies (source: author, 2023)

By a review on the previous studies, it can be concluded that posts shared by DMOs of other destination on social media are common in the themes such as nature-related, history, architecture, tourist activities, artistic and cultural events, and gastronomy. Hence, in light of the findings of previous researchers, the current research has also examined seven examples of Turkish destinations on the Instagram to find out what are the promotional themes shared in the Instagram posts of Turkish tourist destinations recently. For this purpose, the visual and textual parts of the posts are described and analyzed.

a. *Gastronomy related themes*

Gastronomy, which has a non-negligible position for tourism attractiveness, plays a significant role in destination preferences (Pamukçu et al., 2021). The analysis of the visual and textual parts of this feature in Turkish destinations posts is as follows.;

- *The visual part of the posts:*

These posts include pictures of gastronomy-related (see figure 2) themes such as local and traditional meals, seafood, sweets, desserts, drinks, olive oil preparation, breads, fruits and nuts. In the visual parts of these posts, it can be also seen how to serve food in traditional and new dishes, as well as their arrangement on the table.



Figure 2: Instagram posts of Turkish destinations with gastronomy theme
(Source: Instagram accounts, 2023)

- *The textual part of the posts:*

This part contains captions, which is a brief description of the destinations' gastronomy background.

Bolu has assigned to one of its famous foods named Leaf Roll that is the heritage of Ottoman cuisine (posts. No 22, 37). Also, in post 41 presents a recipe of one of the region's foods. Balikesir has also shared posts about serving local breakfast in posts 4, 24, 45, 49 and dedicated posts 7, 10

and 43 to seafood to show the cuisine of the North Aegean regions. Meanwhile, this destination has introduced one of its meals that is registered in the UNESCO World Heritage list at post 52. Konya has also shared the names and information of the famous dishes of the region, which are different types of traditional Soup (Posts. No 12 and 29), Kebab with bread (Posts. No 32 and 40) and Syrup (sherbet) (Post. No 18). In addition, the hashtags of these posts include #food, #dessert, #drink, #taste, #recipe and also the local name of food - and the name of destination.

By analysis the visual and textual parts of posts, it can be concluded that these posts generally intend to convey the following information about the destinations' gastronomy or it is better to be said that they promote food related information on social media in this way;

- The pictures, name and history of foods, beverages, desserts
- Introducing the famous dishes of the region
- Type of foods and drinks and desserts (international/traditional/local)
- The process of preparing and serving them

b. History and architecture related themes

They are posts that share pictures and information of the history and architecture of a destination as following;

- *The visual part of the posts:*

This part shows the visual features of indicators of the history and architecture of a destination in the form of pictures and short videos (see also figure 3). These are included both interior and exterior structures of the monuments in urban and rural areas such as archaeological sites, mosque, bazaars, castles, churches, baths, historical statute, structures, houses and complexes, towers, traditional/historical villages, historical districts, rural design, historical school, temples,

mausoleums, ancient paths, windmills, historical towns, beacons, thermal tourism centers-and architectural details. This is supported by researchers Stepchenkova and Zhan, who in their paper (2013) have analyzed and coded Peru's visual destination images on Facebook and Flickr and put churches, monasteries, palaces, public buildings, etc. close-up images of building elements such as doors, windows, or ornaments in a group named architecture/building. They also have categorized tombs and burial places, pyramids, temples, ceremonial centers, forts, etc., the elements/patterns of these structures or their decorative elements and their architectural structures in the group of archaeology. Nevertheless, the present research has categorized these type posts in the same group since in their captions mentioned words of history and architecture together.



Figure 3: Instagram posts of Turkish destinations with history & architecture theme
(Source: Instagram accounts, 2023)

- *The textual part of the posts:*

This part contains captions, which is a brief description about the post along with hashtags including #architecture, #interior, #archaeology, #history, the name of a place and its function.

This section also highlights the architectural masterpieces of the destinations such as post. No 4 of Konya which shows the school Ince Minareli Medrese from the Seljuk period, or post. No 26 of Thrace which is the ancient town of Troy that has been recorded by UNESCO and also the magnificent Ottoman mosques in this city.

By analysis of the visual and textual parts of this posts category, it can also be concluded that DMOs introduce historical and architectural indicators of destination by expressing information as follows;

- The pictures and names of the places and also the purpose of building them
- The historical period
- The architectural style
- The more detailed physical features of the places

c. Cultural and artistic related themes

This category includes posts with artistic and cultural themes that is explained below;

- *The visual part of the posts:*

It includes posts which depict cultural and artistic works (see figure 4). McCreary et al, (2020) state that culture is conceptualized through themes of art. Accordingly, the posts from street photographs, handicraft, cultural centers and exhibition, museums, library, souvenirs, stone and wooden works, tile making, handicraft bazaar, picture gallery, cultural symbols, and memorial of Turkish elders, art gallery, carpet, local products and rituals are in the list of this category.

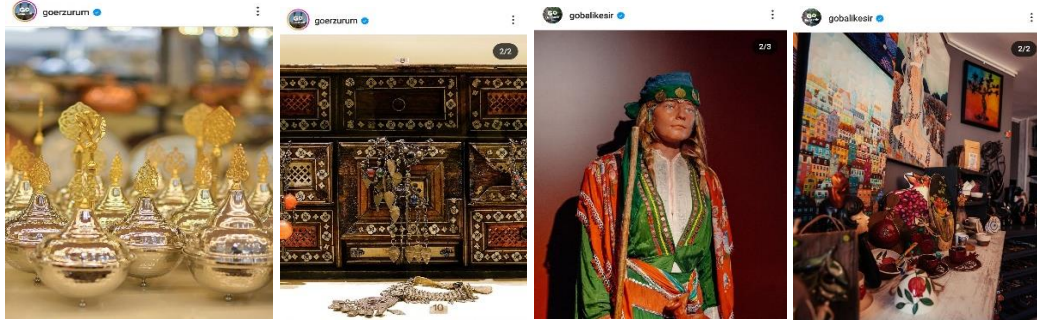


Figure 4: Instagram posts of Turkish destinations with art & culture theme
(Source: Instagram accounts, 2023)

- *The textual part of the posts:*

The text part of these posts gives information about the cultural and artistic objects and works displayed in museums and galleries, as well as handicrafts and local souvenirs along with their names and the location of the centers where these works are offered. Additionally, hashtags are #handicraft, #museum, #gift, #souvenir, #handmade as well as the name of destination have been hashtagged in caption. Through the captions of the Instagram posts of this destination, it can be understood that the art and culture of the destinations are shown in;

Museums of artistic, cultural and antiquities items (in post number 5, 10, 20, 26 and 31 of Konya; Museum named after the poet Mevlana in posts number 5 and 22 Konya; museums of culture and history and art galleries with pictures of historical monuments in posts number 11 and 13 Balikesir);

Artistic ornaments related to architecture (in posts number 22, 39, 42, 48, 49 and 54 of Konya and cultural and artistic venues in post number 33 of Konya);

Souvenirs and handicrafts any area presented in historical places (in post number 30 of Konya; handicrafts with historical designs in post number 45 of Çanakkale).

By checking the visual and textual parts of the posts related to cultural and artistic this indicator is showcased as follows on the Instagram of these destinations;

- Showing the pictures and name cultural-artistic centers with their works along with their locations.
- Introduction of handicrafts and souvenirs of each region and their offering centers.

d. Nature and landscape related themes

The theme related nature and landscape is the most dominant category present in the posts that is explained as follows;

- *The visual part of the posts:*

This category includes posts with pictures and short videos of nature (see figure 5). McCreary et al., (2020) in their article have categorized Instagram posts of Lake Superior USA with themes of wildlife, weather, waterfalls, rocks, plants, rivers, lakes, inland lakes, insects, forests, coastline, water, weather and landscape in the group of natural resources.

Accordingly,, the posts with the photos and videos from natural life, waterfalls, lake, natural park, recreational area, seasons, winter snow, scenery, animals, greenery, Black Sea, plateau, Island, natural wonders, serene, water, outdoor, ski center, forest, snowy landscape, sunset, nature view, bungalow in forest, flowing water, orchard and flowers, dance of flamingos, natural pothole, tropical butterfly valley, cave, Island, beach, picturesque villages full of natural beauties, highlands, plateau, shores, flora and fauna in destinations are also in the category of natural and landscape indicators in the present research. Also, most of the posts with this theme have been

photographed with the bird's eye view photography technique to show the landscape of the area in a more charming way.



Figure 5: Instagram posts of Turkish destinations with nature & landscape theme
(Source: Instagram accounts, 2023)

- *The textual part of the posts:*

In addition to information about nature and landscape through the visual part of the posts, caption texts give more information about the names and location of beaches and Islands, villages, adventure activities in nature, information about wildlife and also bungalows in forest for visitors' accommodation (in Posts. No 44 and 50 of Ordu), the conditions of destinations in the seasons, especially winter season (like posts from Erzurum). In addition, hashtags of these posts often are words #nature, #seasons, #view and the name of destination and areas.

By analysis the visual and textual parts of posts related to nature, it can be concluded that Turkey promotes destinations with natural, coastal, and landscape indicators by expressing information as follows;

- Pictures of scenic natural areas of the destinations along with their names and descriptions of the areas and their landscapes
- The geographical location of the destination
- Adventure tourism activities in nature

- Climate of areas

e. Adventure activities and tourist entertainment related themes

This category contains posts with themes that refer to tourist adventure and entertainment in destinations.

- *The visual part of the posts:*

They include photos and videos from tourism entertainment related and unrelated to nature (see figure 6). Most of the posts of the first type show sports and activities in nature. Stepchenkova and Zhan (2013) and also Sugar (2017) have considered this kind of entertainment in destinations social media posts as outdoor/adventure activity. These include paragliding over the scenic land, surfing, skiing, canoeing in nature, kitesurfing, hiking, swimming, picnicking and skydiving, paddling, mountaineering, and winter sports. Additionally, fishing, cable car, camping, boat tours are other entertainment related to nature. Non-nature related activities are another type of tourist fun activities that include festivals (such as post number 6 of Thrace).

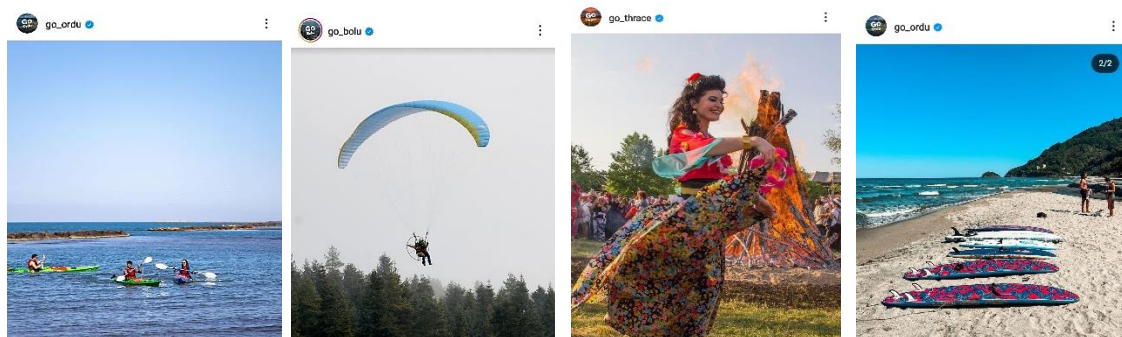


Figure 6: Instagram posts of Turkish destinations with adventure & entertainment theme
(Source: Instagram accounts, 2023)

- *The textual part of the posts:*

More information about the names of the activities and the places as well as the best seasons which tourists can go for these entertainments have been mentioned in captions of posts. In the caption of these posts, the names of places and fun activities for tourists, which include sports in nature, are written (Post number 8, 12, 16, 22, 24, 25, 28... oof Ordu; 8 of Thrace; 25 of Konya; 13, 20, 24 and... of Erzurum; 3, 8 and... of Blue)

Also, tourist entertainment such as cable work (Post number 39 Ordu), camping experience in nature (Post number 13 Erzurum). The name of the destination and the type of these entertainments are also hashtagged in this part.

By examining the posts related to the entertainment and adventurous tourist activities of the destinations, it can be concluded that tourist entertainments in the destinations are introduced in the following posts;

- The pictures, name and types of tourism related activities
- Places and centers of these activities
- The best time to go for these activities

f. Destinations' directions related themes

These posts are the least number posts because this theme is shown in combination with other themes in multi-content posts.

- *The visual part of the posts:*

In the visual part of these posts, there are pictures of the routes-included car roads and walking paths to the region (see figure 7).

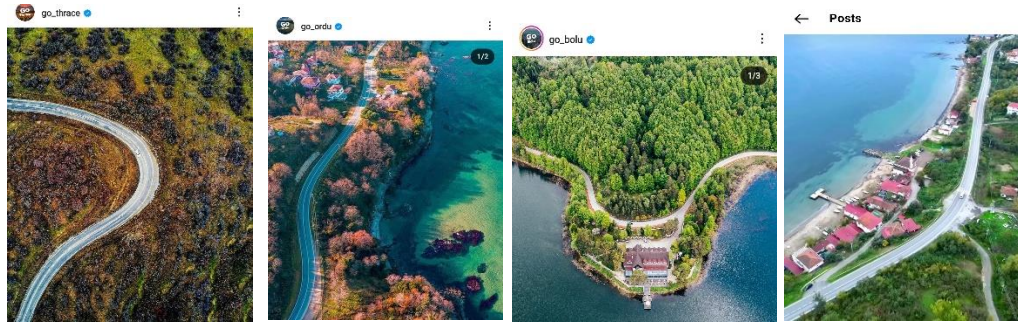


Figure 7: Instagram posts of Turkish destinations with directions theme
(Source: Instagram accounts, 2023)

- *The textual part of the posts:*

In the caption of these posts, there are texts about the routes and trail mentioned, as well as in one of the posts about means of transportation (post. No 27 Çanakkale) such as small ships for passengers, and the name of the region where the route ends. Furthermore # roads and # explore are hashtagged in the posts.

As a result, the posts have given information about how to access the tourist areas, which, of course, are very few.

- *The multi-content posts*

These types of posts show several features of a destination, including nature, art, architecture and beauty etc. at once.

- *The visual part of the posts:*

The visual part of these posts includes images of features of a destination in the form of photos or short videos (see figure 8). Altar and Pirnar (2021) in the category of social media posts has considered the posts with several themes as general promotional posts.

In the Instagram posts of Turkish destinations in this study these posts include two types;

1. Posts that show two themes (double), such as the posts number 30 and 35 Ordu; 12 and 42 of Balıkesir and 20;44 of Bolu; 13, 20, 24 of Erzurum; post number 25 of Konya and post number 8 of Thrace that are highlighted in annex 1 to 7 at the end of the thesis.
2. Posts that display several themes. Among the shared posts of Turkish destinations post number 8 Çanakkale, there is a short video of the nature, architecture, and sights of this destination. Similarly, posts number 11, 13 and 17 in Konya and also post number 14 in Ordu. While, post number 4 and 16 of Çanakkale, have depicted the different attractions of a destination through few photos. Additionally, some posts such as post number 17, 19, 21 and 28 Çanakkale depict only one theme in the visual section, but in the written section, they talk about other features of this area.



Figure 8: Instagram multi-content posts of Turkish destinations
(Source: Instagram accounts, 2023)

- *The textual part of the posts:*

In the text part of these posts, it is written briefly about the characteristics of the destination. In addition, in this part, the feeling that tourists will experience from visiting these places has also been mentioned. For instance, post. No 4 Çanakkale mentions charming streets, pristine beaches, delicious cuisine and post. No 17 to peace in nature. Post. No 13 Konya mentions peaceful natural attractions and the historical places inherited from ancient civilization of this destination.

These posts stimulate the viewer's emotions and encourage him/her to visit this destination. For example, Post. No 14 Bolu mentions making unforgettable experiences and beautiful memories though visiting the destination. The posts have also used sentences such as "... *will you have an unforgettable experience in this destination*" or "*have you planned your trip?*" (e.g., post number 14 Ordu) "*Be prepared to be enchanted by the wonders of..* " (e.g., post numbers 4 and 8 of Çanakkale) "*Do you want to add this destination to your travel list?*" (e.g., post 17 of Çanakkale) "*Do not miss seeing this city*" (e.g., post number 17 Konya) and hashtags including #vacation, #travel, #trip and #journey.

To sum up, one of the ways to promote Turkish destinations on Instagram is to share multi-themed posts that actually express different features of a destination in one post. Such posts are either in the form of several photos or a short video of the features, or only a photo with multi-content information in the caption. Such posts attempt to encourage the viewer to visit a destination with a variety of attractions.

According to the above discussions, it was concluded that the posts of Turkish destinations on Instagram are placed in seven categories based on their themes as follows. Meanwhile, the description of these categories is summarized in table 3.

- Gastronomy
- History and architecture
- Art and culture
- Nature and landscape
- Adventurous activities and entertainment
- Directions
- Multi-content

| Theme category | Description of themes | |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| | Visual character | Explanation |
| Gastronomy | Food and drink, dessert, recipe, local taste, fruits and fresh nuts, organic food, olive oil, traditional dish, salad, city-special dish, bread, breakfast, seafood in coastal restaurant, cuisine | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The name and history of foods, beverages, desserts • Introducing the famous dishes of the region • Type of foods and drinks and desserts • The process of preparing and serving them |
| History & architecture | Mosque, bazaar, castle, church, bath, historical statue, structures, house and complex, monuments, tomb, tower, traditional/historical village, historical district, rural architecture, historical school, temple, mausoleum, ancient paths, windmills, historical town, architectural detail and indicator, beacon, thermal tourism centers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The names and function of the places • The historical period • The architectural style • The more detailed physical features of the places |
| Art & culture | Street photography, handicraft, cultural centers and exhibition, museums, souvenir, stone and wooden works, tile making, handicraft bazaar, picture gallery, cultural symbols, art gallery, carpet, local products, library, rituals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing cultural-artistic centers and their locations • Introduction of handicrafts and souvenirs of each region and their offering centers |
| Nature & landscape | Seasons, natural life, waterfalls, lake, natural park, recreational area, winter snow, scenery, animals, greenery, sea, plateau, Island, natural wonders, serene, water, outdoor, ski center, forest, snowy landscape, sunset, nature view, bungalow in forest, flowing water, orchard and flowers, dance of flamingos, natural pothole, tropical butterfly valley, cave, Island, beach, picturesque villages full of natural beauties, highlands, plateau, shores, flora and fauna | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographical location of the destination • Scenic natural areas of the destinations along with their names and descriptions of the areas and their landscapes • Adventure tourism activities in nature • Climate of areas |
| Adventure & entertainments | Festivals, fishing, sport-related in nature included natural sports such as paragliding over the scenic land, surfing, skiing, canoeing in nature, kitesurfing, hiking, swimming, picnicking and skydiving, paddling, mountaineering place, winter sports, cable car, camping, boat tour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The name and types of tourism related activities • Places and centers of these activities • The best time to go for these activities |
| Directions | Roads, routs, trails and means of transportation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access routes to the region |
| Multi-content | Multiple features of a destination in one post | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the form of double themes and several themes • Encourage and stimulates tourists to visit the destination |

Table 3: Category of Instagram posts of seven Turkish destinations based on theme; coding framework (source: author, 2023)

4.2 Creating the image of a tourist destination

One of the promoting strategies used by Turkish destinations' DMO in the posts is to represent the image of the destination. "Destination image has been used as a strategy by destination marketers to differentiate their brand from other competitors" (Tsaour et al, 2016; De las Heras-Pedrosa, et al, 2020). Considering the intangible nature of destination experience, Pike (2007) stated that an image is one way to compete with other destinations. Previous studies argued that destination image plays a crucial role in the configuration of tourist preferences and opinions regarding visiting tourist destinations (Baloğlu & McCleary, 1999; Lin et al, 2007; De las Heras-Pedrosa, et al, 2020). Destination image is believed to be a multi-dimensional construct. Baloglu and McCleary (1999) proposed two important dimensions: Cognitive and affective. The cognitive dimension refers to the rational evaluation of the characteristics or attributes of the destination. While the affective dimension refers to the feeling response to various attributes and characteristics of the destination (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Nixon, 2017; Molinillo et al, 2017; Sun et al, 2021).

Becken (2005) and De las Heras-Pedrosa, et al (2020) have discussed iconic elements and attributes and the relationship between it with the image of the destination. They believe that iconic elements and attributes can be considered tools for the economic and sustainable development of a tourism destination. These elements of authenticity and mental insight build the image of iconic attractions and serve as recognized symbols or represent their locations, culture, and natural heritage, promoting a positive image between visitors and local residents. L'Etang et al (2007) also emphasis on the promotion of a destination by means of a mega-event or iconic attributes. Anton et al (2017) also mention that tourist promotion usually focuses on the major tourist attractions at a destination. Additionally, De las Heras-Pedrosa, et al (2020) say "destinations that include iconic

elements in their promotions such as culture, heritage, gastronomy, or buildings and attractions provide a memorable image that potential visitors will associate with them".

Based on the discussion on the image of a destination, it can be claimed that Turkish destinations are also attempting to create the image of destinations on Instagram accounts, which is explained and discussed below.

a. *Balikesir*

From all the posts that Balikesir Instagram account has shared (54) in the period of time, 16 posts (30%) have been assigned to nature; 14 posts (26%) to the gastronomic theme and 12 posts (22%) with history and architectural themes. Whereas, 8 posts (15%) with the theme of art and culture and 4 posts (7%) multi-content posts. Additionally, there are no posts on adventure activities and directions (see chart 1) (refer to Annex 1).

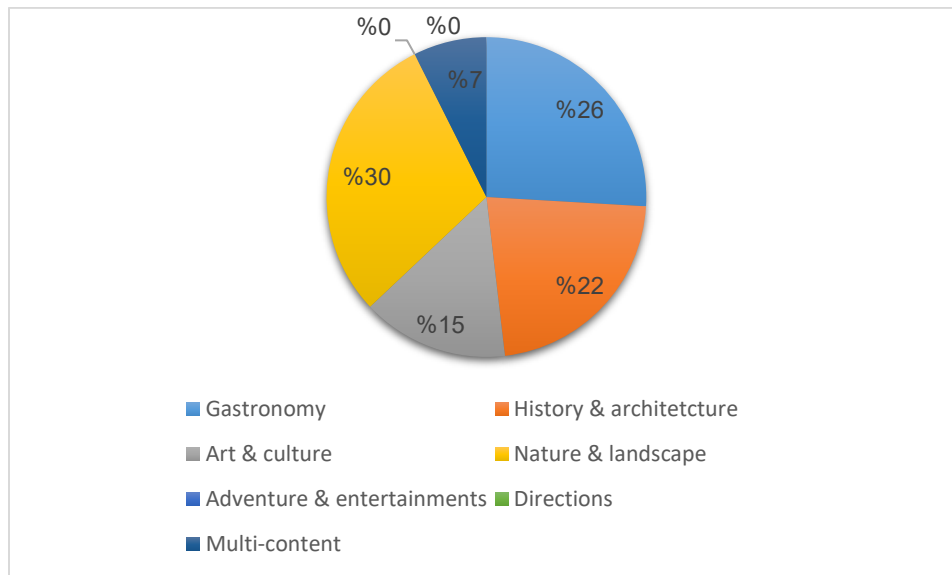


Chart 1: Percentage of posts themes in Instagram account of Balikesir (source: author, 2023)

Chart 1 shows that the highest percentage (30%) of themes are related to nature and landscape, which is related to the geographical situation of this destination, although the theme of gastronomy also has a high percentage. Balıkesir province, located in the northwest of Turkey, is a region that has different climatic characteristics due to its vastness. This country has beaches on the Sea of Marmara and the Aegean Sea. This forms the basis of the climatic characteristics of the province, so it has a high climate diversity (Efe et al., 2018). The posts of this destination include names and pictures of beaches, flora and fauna, islands, seas and waterfalls. In addition, in the caption parts, it has been tried to attract the viewer to the beauty of the nature of this destination with effective words and sentences.

Additionally, regarding to gastronomy, Ibis (2020) states that this city has had many efforts in the field of gastronomic tourism in recent years. He also mentions this city received the first prize in the world cookbook contest of 2019 that it was an important step in the emergence of city's gastronomic values".

According to the above, Balıkesir is introduced on Instagram as a destination with natural attractions as well as gastronomy.

b. Bolu

Bolu has shared 53 posts that 16 posts (30%) with gastronomic theme, 12 posts (23%) focused on nature and landscape along with 12 posts (22%) related to history and architecture. However, only 9 posts (17%) focused on multi-content; 3 posts (6%) on art and culture; 1 post (2%) adventure activities and tourist entertainment; and there are not any posts for directions (see chart 2) (refer to Annex 2).

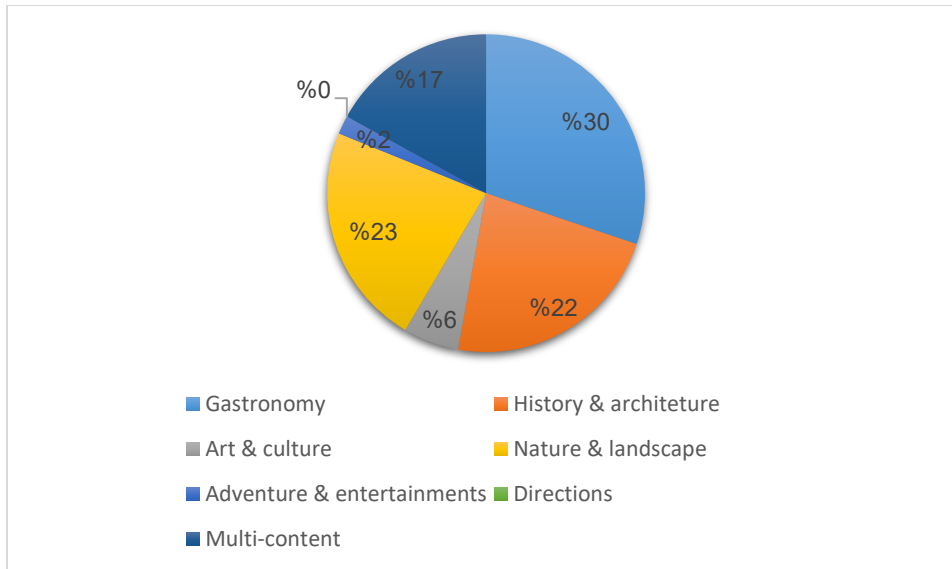


Chart 2: Percentage of posts themes in Instagram account of Bolu (source: author, 2023)

The quantity of posts related to gastronomy is 30%, which is not only higher than the other themes of this destination but also higher than the other destinations as it is one of the gastronomic capitals of Turkey (Güncelleme Tarihi, 2022). Pamukçu, et al., (2021) have mentioned that Bolu chefs have an important reputation throughout Turkey. The posts with the gastronomy theme of this destination include the famous food of the region, traditional drinks and sweets, and how to prepare and serve food in the traditional dishes. Also, in the posts related to gastronomy, they have tried to encourage tourists to try the delicious dishes of this destination.

In addition, Bolu is another destination with a high number of posts with themes related to nature and landscape. Bolu province is located in the western Black Sea Region and has continental climate in the south and Black Sea climate in the north. Approximately 56% of the province of Bolu is covered with mountains reaching up to 2500 m and 12% with plains (Kirazli, 2017). This geographical situation has made this destination allocate also many posts to this feature. Pictures of wildlife, landscape of some scenic spots such as mountains, plateaus, lakes, waterfalls, other

natural tourist attractions and seasons of the year can be seen. Also, in some posts, this theme is combined with other themes of this destination.

Based on the above discussion, Bolu is promoted as one of Turkey's tourist destinations with two features of gastronomy and beautiful nature on Instagram.

c. Çanakkale

Çanakkale has shared 54 posts in the period of time, so history and architecture with 17 posts (31%). It has also shared 14 posts of multi-content (26%). However, the least posts are related to themes of nature and landscape with 8 posts (15%); gastronomy and art & culture with posts 7 (13%); 1 post (2%) with adventure activities theme but there is no post from directions (see chart 3) (refer to Annex 3).

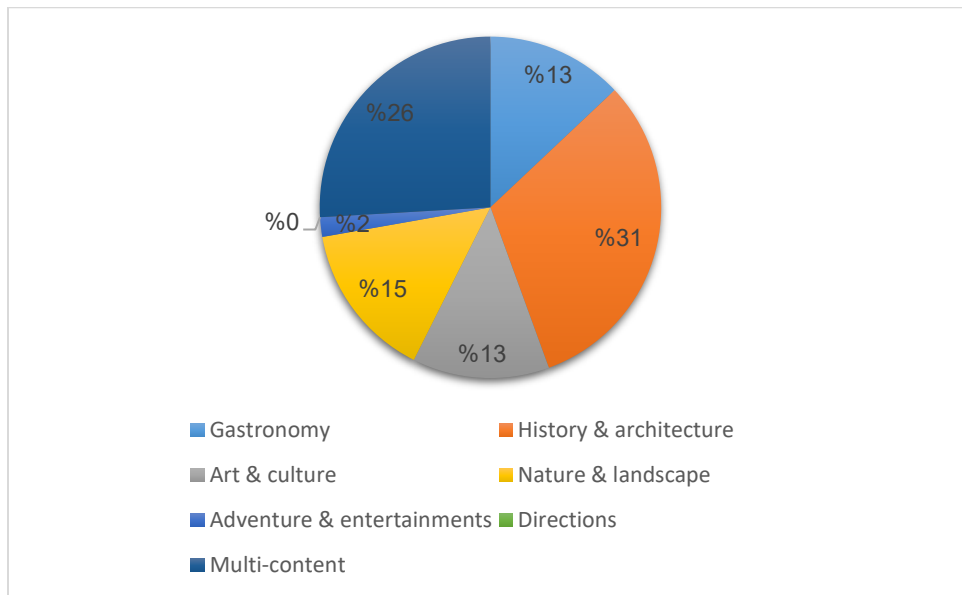


Chart 3: Percentage of posts themes in Instagram account of Çanakkale (source: author, 2023)

Çanakkale is known as an important historic destination for Turkish tourism. "Trojan Wars, World War I and notable events that had affected the results of these wars had taken place within the

borders of Çanakkale" (Kose, 2022). Posts related to the history and architecture of this destination include photos and captions about the names of the landmarks and also their functions, the historical period, design style and more detailed physical features of the places of ancient temples, mosques, castles, historical port cities, historical villages and also memorial statues.

Moreover, this destination enjoys natural beauties, beaches, thermal centers and coastal areas (Ibid). By the way, the multi-content posts of this destination are more than others and are related to the landscape and nature of the destination. Also, many posts in this area encourage and stimulate tourists to come to this destination on vacation and see its various attractions (e.g., posts. No 8 and 16).

Accordingly, the number of posts dedicated to these two features as well as the combination of the nature theme with other themes in the multi-content posts of this destination all indicate that Çanakkale is recognized as a destination for those interested in history, architecture and nature.

d. Erzurum

Erzurum has shared 46 posts in the period of time that 12 posts (26%) focused on nature; 11 posts (24%) on history and architecture and 11 posts (24%) on gastronomy. While 6 posts (13%) are multi-content; 4 posts (9%) have focused on art and culture and 2 posts (4%) about adventure activities and. However, there is no post about directions (see chart 4) (refer to Annex 4).

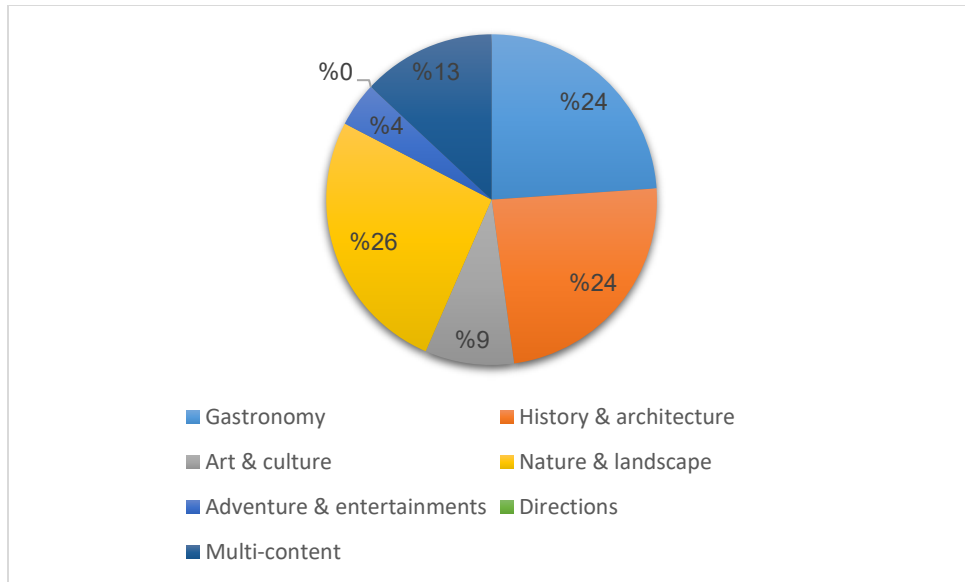


Chart 4: Percentage of posts themes in Instagram account of Erzurum (source: author, 2023)

From the chart 4, it can be seen that most themes belong to nature. Gokmenoglu & Aydogdu (2010) state that Erzurum has snow tourism opportunities it is famous for being one of the coldest locations of Turkey. Meanwhile, in the multi-content posts, the touristic recreation activities in this area are winter sports (such as post number 24). Or the architecture of this region has discussed, such as posts 12 and 32. The official website GO TURKEY (2020) also mentioned that the features that have made this destination famous are natural beauties and its historical artifacts that remain intact for thousands of years.

By the way, about the cuisine of this region, which has dedicated many posts to itself, it should be said that one of the popular, famous and traditional dishes of Turkey, which many tourists come to try, belongs to this region (Zaman & Kayserili, 2015). The photo of this dish can be seen in many posts related to gastronomy of this destination.

Promoting this destination through highlighting these features can also be seen in the Instagram posts of this destination.

e. *Konya*

Konya has shared 54 posts in the period of time, so 14 posts (26%) focused on gastronomy; 12 posts (22%) on history and architecture; 12 posts (22%) multi-content posts; 11 posts (21%) on nature and landscape. However, 5 posts (9%) on art and culture that are more than the other posts. Also, there is no post on adventure activities nor directions (see chart 5) (refer to Annex 5).

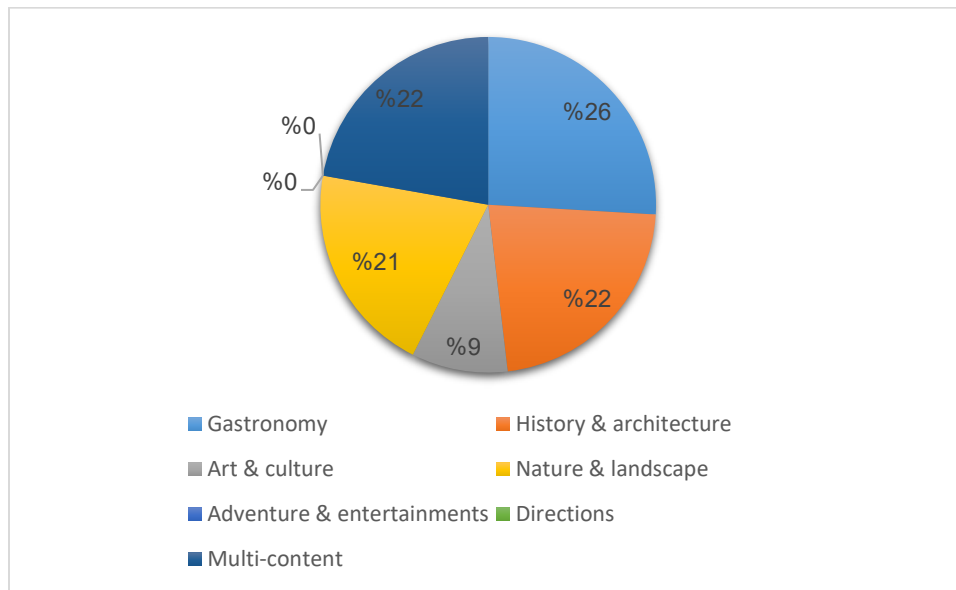


Chart 5: Percentage of posts themes in Instagram account of Konya (source: author, 2023)

Themes related to gastronomy and then the history and architecture of this destination show the highest percentage of themes. At the same time, it is also noted that most of the multi-content posts of this destination combine the theme of art and culture with other themes such as posts no. number 5, 22, 30, 33, 39, 42 and 54. This destination also mentions famous places in its posts, including cultural-art museums and encourages tourists to visit these centers. The percentage of sharing these themes is related to the background of this region. Konya is a destination that has witnessed various civilizations since ancient times (Temizel & Attar, 2015). Batu (2018) also states that Konya's cuisine has been very famous from the past and is even now today. He also mentions that many

behavior patterns regarding beverage and food, food names, and culinary in Turkish kitchen that had started after the arrival of Seljuk Turks to Anatolia in the 12th century have been retained even today with no change. Therefore, Konya is promoted as a destination with its famous gastronomic, of historic & architectural and artistic& cultural attractions.

f. Ordu

Ordu has shared 53 posts, so 26 posts focused on nature-related (49%) themes and 12 posts (22%) on multi-content posts. However, 7 posts (13%) with gastronomic themes; 3 posts (6%) with history and architecture; 3 posts (6%) with art and culture themes and 2 post (4%) multi-content posts as well. However, there is no post about directions (see chart 6) (refer to Annex 6).

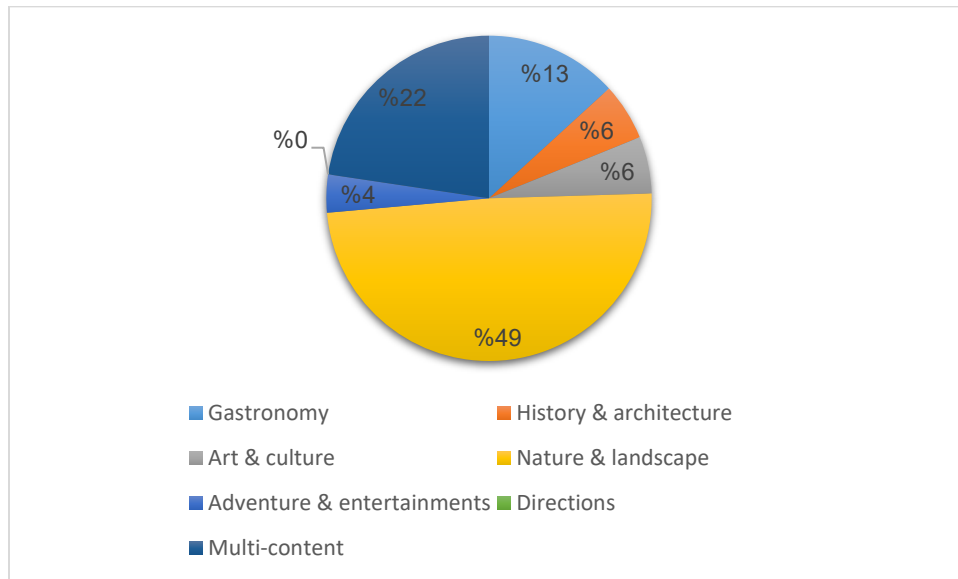


Chart 6: Percentage of posts themes in Instagram account of Ordu (source: author, 2023)

Ordu is one of the coastal destinations in Turkey that has a beautiful nature and landscape due to its geographical location on the coast of the Black Sea. This province is a mountainous region, but it has a medium height. There are also some plateaus between the mountains. The climate of the province is oceanic and is rainy during all four seasons (Kabaktepe & Bahçecioglu, 2006). This

special feature could be seen properly on the Instagram shared posts of this destination official account as well which includes more than half of the posts. Compared to the other selected destinations of this research, the number of posts dedicated to this feature is more than the others, and this indicates that this destination is recognized for this feature. These posts give information about the geographical location, climate with the four seasons, and the tourist entertainment in nature. Additionally, the posts show the sightseeing of Ordu such as the sea, mountains and plateaus, waterfalls, forest, beaches, villages with beautiful nature, lakes, Islands, lands and snowy winters with a bird's eye view photography technique to make the viewers more attracted to this unique privilege. Meanwhile, that the posts number 8, 12, 18, 22, 24, 25, 28, 31 and 39 combine the theme of nature & landscape of the destinations along with the sports in nature as entertainment and adventure activities for tourists. Hence, Ordu is promoted as a destination with nature-related attractions.

g. Thrace

Thrace has shared 49 posts in the period of time, so 18 posts (37%) focused on history and architecture; 14 posts (29%) on nature and landscape. However, only 7 posts (14%) are assigned to gastronomy; 4 posts (8%) to art and culture; 3 multi-content posts (6%); 2 posts (4%) have focused on adventure activities and tourist entertainment and 1 post (2 %) to directions (see chart 7) (refer to Annex 7).

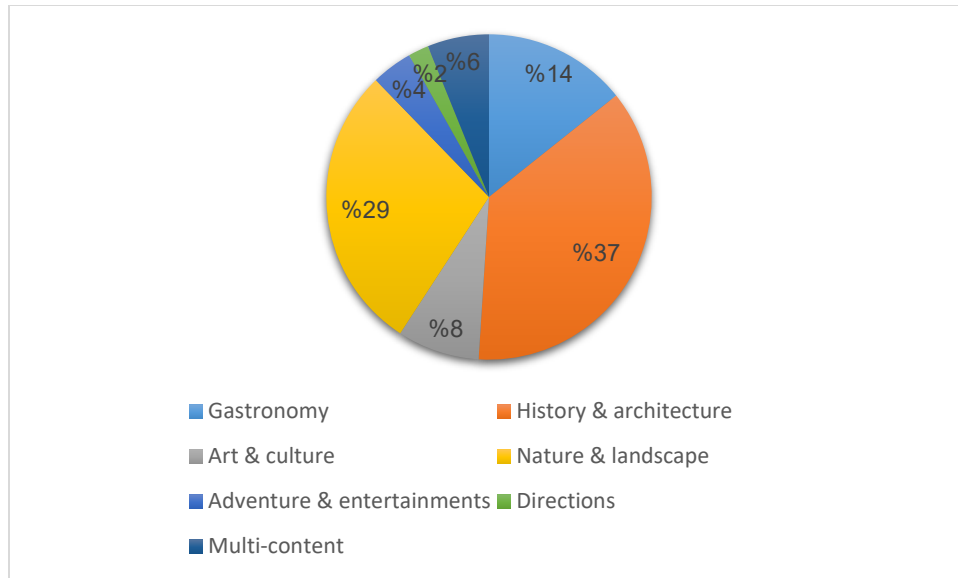


Chart 7: Percentage of posts themes in Instagram account of Thrace (source: author, 2023)

The chart 7 shows a high percentage of posts with the theme of history and architecture from this destination. Also, this destination has a higher number of posts with this theme compared to other destinations. The reason for this privilege goes back to its background. Separating the Black and Aegean Seas, this region has been home to great Greek gods and goddesses and been witness to the rise and fall of powerful civilizations, including tribal Thracians, Romans, Germanic tribes and Ottoman Turks, creating a culture and history spanning more than two thousand years (Umandap, 2022). In addition, Thrace is famous for its pristine and beautiful landscapes (Andriopoulos, 2020). Unlike the drier regions of Turkey to the East, Thrace is a green land, with gently undulating hills, fertile agricultural land, thick forests and boutique vineyards (Umandap, 2022).

Through Instagram posts, it can be realized that this area has been highlighted as a destination with historical and natural attractions.

4.3 Summary of the findings

According to the analysis done on the Instagram posts of seven Turkish destinations in the current research, it was found that one of the strategies of Turkish DMO in promoting destinations on this network is to highlight one or two special features of a destination. Based on discussions in the literature, DMs highlight the popular feature(s) of the destination to create an image of a destination for tourists. Hence, it can be said that the Turkish DMO intends to create the images of the destinations in the official accounts.

Therefore, the following insights were obtained through the analysis of Türkiye's tourist destinations on Instagram;

- The Instagram posts of Turkish destinations have shown the character of each destination, through photos, names and information in the form of themes such as gastronomy, history and architecture, art and culture, tourist activities, nature and directions to the areas. In addition, some posts have shown these themes together.
- The percentage themes of each Turkish destination are shared in the posts based on local conditions of each destination. In the other word, forming the image of a destination on Instagram is directly related to the local context of destination. This statement is supported by Govers and Kumar who presented a model for destination image in their 2007 study. They stated that "any destination image or tourism promotion projected by the local tourism industry should be anchored to some extent on a true destination identity". Also, these researchers defined identity to history, culture, natural environment, etc. of the destination
- The main attribute of each destination has been highlighted and specified by the percentage of themes. The relationship between the quantity of themes and bolding the main feature

of each destination is supported by De las Heras-Pedrosa et al., (2020) who examined the image of some Spanish destinations in social media posts. One of their findings was that despite the fact that "museums are one of the important tourist attractions in many cities, they are less visible in social media posts". Then they stated about the relationship between the symbol of the region (the main feature) of the region and its relationship with the number of posts that "the tourism industry should continue to promote its tourist destinations using the icon".

- Turkish destinations have attempted to stimulate the tourist's emotions to visit the destination through using the effective words, sentences as well as multi-content posts. Molinillo et al., (2017) believe that the affective items such as pleasure, leisure, excitement, sense of adventure and such things the overall form the image of the destination. As the affective dimension is one of the important dimensions of destination image structure (Balglu and McCleary, 1999; Nixon, 2017; Molinello et al., 2017; Sun et al., 2021).
- Nature (with 99 posts in total) as well as history and architecture (with 85 posts in total), are the important themes that have the highest percentage (see the table 4). This is because, firstly, Turkey is proud of this two wealth, and secondly, these two features are more attractive for tourists. As Kumar et al., (2022) and De las Heras-Pedrosa et al., (2020) note that this two wealth are more attractive for tourists and two important subjects for promoting a destination.

| | Gastronomy | History & architecture | Art & culture | Nature & landscape | Adventure & entertainment | Directions | Multi-content |
|-----------|------------|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| Balikesir | 14 | 12 | 8 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Bolu | 16 | 12 | 3 | 12 | 1 | 0 | 9 |
| Çanakkale | 7 | 17 | 7 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 14 |
| Erzurum | 11 | 11 | 4 | 12 | 2 | 0 | 6 |
| Konya | 14 | 12 | 5 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 12 |
| Ordu | 7 | 3 | 3 | 26 | 2 | 0 | 12 |
| Thrace | 7 | 18 | 4 | 14 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Total | 76 | 85 | 34 | 99 | 8 | 1 | 60 |

Table 4: The quantity of Instagram posts of Turkish destinations (source: author, 2023)

From the analysis of the Turkish destinations, the following findings were also obtained;

- Destinations with gastronomic indicators promote this feature through sharing posts on names and types of foods, drinks, sweets, etc. the famous food of the region, and how to prepare and serve the foods.
- Destinations with history and architecture indicators promote this feature through posts The names of the landmarks and also the purpose of building them, the historical period, design style and more detailed physical features of ancient temples, mosques, castles, historical port cities, historical villages and also memorial statues.
- Destinations with art and culture indicators promote this feature through artistic, cultural museums, galleries and centers along with the inside items; artistic ornaments related to architecture; and display of souvenirs and handicrafts.
- Destinations with nature indicators promote this feature through sharing posts that give information about the geographical location, climate with the four seasons, and the tourism

activities in nature. Additionally, they show sightseeing and landscapes such as the sea, mountains and plateaus, waterfalls, forest, beaches, villages with beautiful nature, lakes, Islands, lands and snowy winters, using bird's eye view photography technique in the form of photo and short videos to show landscape of areas.

- Destinations with tourism entertainment activities promote this feature on the official accounts through dedicating posts to kinds of sports in nature.
- The destinations that have given information about the directions have often combine this theme with the other themes in posts.
- Destinations that have shared multi-content posts have tried to show the image of the destination in a multi-dimensional way (showing features of the destination and stimulation of the audience to visit this destination) in one post. This opinion is supported by Baloglu and McCleary (1999) that proposed cognitive and affective important as dimensions of a destination image.

The Instagram accounts of Turkey's tourist destinations were launched last year (2022), which is the attempt of Turkey's DMOs to promote the tourism industry more. This is while researchers in last years had pointed out the lack of social media attention to the promotion of destinations in Turkey. Altin and Pirnar (2021) in their study, examined the Instagram posts of the municipality of three regions in Izmir and came to the conclusion that the percentage of marketing posts in these destinations is very low than non-marketing posts. These researchers stated that the municipalities promote and market their destinations insufficiently on their Instagram accounts and social media is not being exploited and utilized effectively by the municipalities on their destination marketing efforts. Meanwhile, Çevik (2016) has a study on Cittaslow destinations in Turkey and concluded

that "interactivity which is one of the most important features of social media is not adequately heeded by all Cittaslow destinations in Turkey". Gumuz also conducted a search on use statuses of social media by Turkish metropolitan municipalities as part of city marketing in 2016 and finally found that "the metropolitan municipalities do not benefit from social media effectively for city marketing activities".

Therefore, it can be stated that Turkey will have a successful future in the path of sustainable development and effective promotion of its destinations in social media that the lessons learned from it can be a model for emerging purposes.

However, there are criticisms from the present study author's point of view here. Some of the information about destinations shared in Instagram posts, such as how to get there, is scant. In addition, the interaction with users is very poor. Although these accounts have mentioned in their bio that you can share your experiences through tags, you can still see this weakness from the low number of tags, likes, comments and shares. Nixon et al. (2017) point out that interacting more with users on social media to find out their opinions and motivations can create a better image of the destination. Nixon et al. also suggest that "a well-managed Instagram channel, achieving good reach through appropriate use of hashtags and reposting user-submitted media, can actually have a positive impact on a destination's image". There is an example in the Instagram accounts of one of the world's most successful destinations, Barcelona (@visitbarcelona) that supports this opinion. One of the strategies of this account is tagging digital creators, photographers and their studio page, restaurant bar, sports team page, famous personalities, entrepreneurs, etc. in the caption of the post. Hence, Turkish DMOs should pay more attention to these issues in promoting their destinations on social media.

Chapter 5: CONCLUSION

This chapter includes three sections; summary of the study, significant findings and recommendations for future studies.

5.1 Summary of the study

After the Covid-19 pandemic, Turkey has made more efforts to promote its tourism industry through social media. The Ministry of Tourism and Culture of this country has started promoting its tourist destinations by launching an official website and social networks. One of the strategies of this country in promoting its destinations is to launch official accounts of tourist destinations on Instagram from 2022. However, recently the official pages of these destinations are inactive in other popular social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, and the promotional posts of these destinations is only shared in an account with the name " *Go Türkiye*" in these social networks. In addition, the lesser-known destinations have the highest number of posts and followers on Instagram compared to international and well-known destinations such as Istanbul, Antalya and Ankara, and are also more active than these destinations.

Contrary to the fact that this country has been successful in developing the tourism industry, in the academic field, not much research has been done on the activity of this country in the development of the tourism industry through social media. Therefore, this research aimed to analyze how Turkish destinations are promoted by DMOs. In order to achieve the aim, the shared posts of the official Instagram account of seven Turkish destinations in 2023 (from January 1st to May 15th) was investigated that a total of 363 posts were collected as primary data.

To make the task clearer, two questions were designed as sub-questions which are " *What themes do Turkish DMOs share on social media to promote the tourism destinations?*" and also " *How do*

the themes of social media posts promote Turkish destinations?". To answer these two questions, a literature review was first conducted to determine the background of the Turkish tourist industry and its status in the use of social media. After that, the visual and textual parts of 363 Instagram posts were examined and analyzed by content analysis and coding methods, and finally the themes of the posts came out in seven categories, including gastronomy, history and architecture, art and culture, nature and landscape, adventure activities and tourist entertainment, directions and multi-content posts were placed. Meanwhile, the findings of previous studies and also the hashtags of these posts supported the result of this section.

In the next step and to answer the second question of the research, these seven Turkish destinations were examined separately in order to find out how many percent of these themes, which actually refer to the features of these destinations, were exhibited by each destination and why. For this reason, the content analysis method was used again. Finally, the graphs showed the percentage of each theme, the results of which were related to the creation of the image of the destinations on Instagram. By the way, the research findings were supported by secondary data.

5.2 Significant findings of the study

The most important findings, which is the answer to the main question of the thesis, are as follows;

1. Promotional themes of Turkish destinations posts fall into seven categories gastronomy, history & architecture, art & culture, nature & landscape, adventure activities & tourist entertainment, directions and multi-content.
2. The themes of the posts, which actually refer to the features of each destination, are shared according to the local conditions of the destination.
3. The high percentage of a theme(s) in the destinations' posts is related to the main feature(s) of that destination, which is how the image of the destination is known.

4. One of Turkish strategies in promoting the destinations is to encourage and stimulate the tourist's emotions to visit the destination through using words, sentences and multi-content posts. This strategy is one of the dimensions in the process of forming the destination image.
5. Nature & landscape and history & architecture are the themes with the most promotional posts, as they are the best tourism attractions for tourists.
6. Destinations with gastronomic indicators promote this feature through sharing posts on names and types of foods, drinks, sweets, etc. the famous food of the region, and how to prepare and serve the foods.
7. Destinations with history and architecture indicators promote this feature through posts with the names of the landmarks, the purpose of building them, the historical period, design style and more detailed physical features of ancient temples, mosques, castles, historical port cities, historical villages and also memorial statues.
8. Destinations with art and culture indicators promote this feature through artistic, cultural museums, galleries and centers along with the inside items; artistic ornaments related to architecture; and displaying of souvenirs and handicrafts.
9. Destinations with nature indicators promote this feature through sharing posts that give information about the geographical location, climate with the four seasons, and the tourism activities in nature. Additionally, they show sightseeing and landscapes such as the sea, mountains and plateaus, waterfalls, forest, beaches, villages with beautiful nature, lakes, Islands, lands and snowy winters, using bird's eye view photography technique in the form of photo and short videos to show landscape of areas.

10. Destinations with tourism entertainment activities promote this feature on the official accounts through dedicating posts to different kinds of sports in nature.
11. The destinations that have given information about the directions have often combine this theme with the other themes in posts.
12. Destinations that have shared multi-content posts have tried to show the image of the destination in a multi-dimensional way in one post.

Additionally, among other findings that were obtained during this review and analysis of these purposes, the following can be mentioned.

- One of the strategies of DMO Turkey in promoting the destinations on Instagram is to activate lesser-known destinations through the high number of followers and destination posts.
- Another strategy of DMO Turkey in promoting the destinations is to ask followers (in the bio section) to tag their experiences and pictures about destinations to interact with public.
- Turkish DMO's are attempting to focus on Instagram in a more specialized way, while in other social networks there is only one account (*Go Turkey*) that promotes destinations.

5.3 Recommendations for the future studies

This study was about the performance of DMOs in the promotion of destinations on Instagram. Future studies can work on tourists' perspective to social media networks posts. It can be quantitative research by collecting data from comments, likes and shares.

This study was on the Instagram posts of seven active destinations on Instagram. Further studies can be conducted qualitative or quantitative research on the account posts of the other destinations

in Turkey. They can also check how to promote destinations on "*Go Turkey*" account in Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

In addition, further study can examine the promotion of other destinations, whether Turkish or global, in social networks through a comparative study.

THE END

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Annex

1. Balikesir

| Post no. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Gastronomy | * | | | * | | | * | | | * | | | | | * | | | | | | * | | * | | | | | | * | |
| History & architecture | | * | | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | * | * | | | | * | * | | | | |
| Art & culture | | | | | | | | | | | * | | * | | | | | * | * | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Nature & landscape | | | * | | * | | | * | * | | | | | * | | | * | | | | | | * | | | | * | * | * | |
| Adventure & entertainment | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Direction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Multi-content promotional post | | | | | | * | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Post no. | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 |
|--------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Gastronomy | * | | | | | | * | | | | | | * | | * | | | | * | | | * | | |
| History & architecture | | * | * | * | | | | | * | * | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | |
| Art & culture | | | | | * | * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | * | | | |
| Nature & landscape | | | | | | | | * | | | * | | | | | | * | * | | | | * | * | |
| Adventure & entertainment | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Direction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Multi-content promotional post | | | | | | | | | | | | * | | * | | | | | | | | | | |

2. Bolu

| Post no. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Gastronomy | * | | | * | | | * | | | * | | | * | | | * | | | * | | | * | | | | | * | | | * |
| History & architecture | | | | | * | | | | | | * | | | * | | | * | | | | | | | | | * | | * | | |
| Art & culture | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | |
| Nature & landscape | | * | | | | * | | | | | | * | | | * | | | | | | | | * | | * | | | | | |
| Adventure & entertainment | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Direction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Multi-content promotional post | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | | * | * | | | * | | | | | | |

| Post no. | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 |
|--------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Gastronomy | | | * | | * | | * | | | | * | | * | | * | | | | | | | | |
| History & architecture | | | | | | | | * | * | * | | * | | | | * | | | | | * | | |
| Art & culture | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | |
| Nature & landscape | * | * | | * | | * | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | * | |
| Adventure & entertainment | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Direction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Multi-content promotional post | | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | * | * | | | | * |

3. Çanakkale

| Post no. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Gastronomy | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | |
| History & architecture | * | | | | * | | | | * | | * | | * | * | | | | | | | | | | * | | * | | | * | * |
| Art & culture | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | * | | | | | | | |
| Nature & landscape | | * | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | |
| Adventure & entertainment | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | |
| Direction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Multi-content promotional post | | | * | * | | | * | * | | | | * | | | * | * | * | | * | | * | | | | | * | * | | | |

| Post no. | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 |
|--------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Gastronomy | | | * | | | | | | | | * | | | * | | | * | | | | | | * | |
| History & architecture | * | | | * | * | | | * | | | | * | | | | | | | * | | | | | * |
| Art & culture | | * | | | | * | | | | | | * | | * | | | | | | | * | | | |
| Nature & landscape | | | | | | | * | | | * | | | | | * | | | * | | | | * | | |
| Adventure & entertainment | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Direction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Multi-content promotional post | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | |

4. Erzurum

| Post no. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Gastronomy | * | | | * | | | * | | * | | | | | * | | | * | | | | | * | | | | | * | | | |
| History & architecture | | | * | | * | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | * | | * | | * | | | | | | | * |
| Art & culture | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | |
| Nature & landscape | | * | | | | * | | * | | * | | | | | | * | | * | | | | | | | | * | * | | * | |
| Adventure & entertainment | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Direction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Multi-content promotional post | | | | | | | | | | | | * | * | | | | | | | | * | | | * | | | | | | |

| Post no. | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 |
|--------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Gastronomy | | | | | | * | | | | | | * | | | | * |
| History & architecture | | | | * | | | | | | * | * | | | | * | |
| Art & culture | | | | | | | | * | | | | | * | | | |
| Nature & landscape | * | | | | | | | | * | | | | | * | | |
| Adventure & entertainment | | | * | | * | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Direction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Multi-content promotional post | | * | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | |

5. Konya

| Post no. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Gastronomy | | * | | | | * | | | | | | * | | | | | | * | | | * | | | * | | | * | | * | |
| History & architecture | * | | | * | | | | | * | | | | | * | * | | | | * | | | | * | | | | | * | | |
| Art & culture | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | * | | | | |
| Nature & landscape | | | * | | | | * | * | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Adventure & entertainment | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Direction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Multi-content promotional post | | | | | * | | | | | | * | | * | | | | * | | | | | * | | | * | | | | | * |

| Post no. | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 |
|--------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Gastronomy | | * | | * | | * | | | | * | | | | | | * | | | | | * | | | |
| History & architecture | | | | | | | | * | | | | * | | | * | | * | | | * | | | | |
| Art & culture | * | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | * | | | | | | |
| Nature & landscape | | | | | * | | * | | | * | | * | * | | | | | | | | * | * | | |
| Adventure & entertainment | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Direction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Multi-content promotional post | | | * | | | | | | * | | | * | | | | | | | * | | | | | * |

6. Ordu

| Post no. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Gastronomy | * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | |
| History & architecture | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | * | | | * | | | | | | | | | | |
| Art & culture | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | | |
| Nature & landscape | | * | * | * | * | * | * | | * | * | * | | | | * | | | | | | * | | * | | | * | * | | | |
| Adventure & entertainment | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Direction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Multi-content promotional post | | | | | | | | * | | | | * | | * | | | | * | | | | * | | * | * | | | * | | * |

| Post no. | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 |
|--------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Gastronomy | | * | | * | | | * | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | * | |
| History & architecture | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Art & culture | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | |
| Nature & landscape | | | * | | | | | | | * | * | | * | * | * | * | * | * | | * | * | | * |
| Adventure & entertainment | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Direction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Multi-content promotional post | * | | | | * | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

7. Thrace

| Post no. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Gastronomy | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | * | | * | |
| History & architecture | * | | | | | | | | * | | * | | * | | | * | | | | | * | | | | | | * | | | |
| Art & culture | | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | | * |
| Nature & landscape | | * | * | * | * | | | | | | | * | | | * | | * | | | | * | | * | * | * | | | * | | |
| Adventure & entertainment | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Direction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | |
| Multi-content promotional post | | | | | | | * | * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Post no. | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 |
|--------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Gastronomy | | | | | | * | | | | | | | * | | | | | * | |
| History & architecture | | * | * | | * | | | | * | * | * | * | | * | | * | * | | * |
| Art & culture | | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Nature & landscape | * | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Adventure & entertainment | | | | | | | | | | | | | | * | | | | | |
| Direction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Multi-content promotional post | | | | | | | * | | | | | | | | | | | | |

