Chapter 8

Evaluation of Websites as Digital Diplomacy Tools in Terms of Design Criteria:
In the Case of Sports Ministry of Turkey and Kyrgyzstan

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ABSTRACT

The importance of digital diplomacy, which we encounter as public diplomacy activities on digital platforms, has been recognized more and more, and it has been actively used by many countries through applications such as social media accounts and websites. In the light of this information, the aim of the study is to reveal the ways in which the ministry of sports, which is responsible for sports and athletes, which increases the awareness and prestige of countries in national and international platforms, uses websites as a digital diplomacy tool. The official websites of the Ministries of Sports of Turkey and Kyrgyzstan, which were determined as the sample of the study, were analyzed with the categorical content analysis method, and the similarities and differences between the use of the websites of the ministries were determined.

INTRODUCTION

Digitization, which is an output of the information age, has increased both individual and public interaction with the digital world it has created. Of course, this communication medium, whose conductivity

and accessibility has increased, is not only used for communication purposes. In terms of foreign policy, digitalization has taken place and public diplomacy activities carried out with traditional media tools have also been carried out on digital platforms. These activities, which are specific to the digital field, have given birth to the concept of digital diplomacy. In particular, instant access and interactive communication offered by social media tools have been important in the emergence of digital diplomacy activities. Digital diplomacy is increasingly being applied in international politics and strategies are being developed for this purpose. Institutions exist in the digital world with their social media accounts and official websites. In this way, they gained a new field, a new tool to carry out their diplomatic activities; digital diplomacy.

Like many countries in the world, Turkey also wanted to adapt to the global digitalization process. For this purpose, it has done many studies and started an e-transformation project. One of the e-transformation projects was the attainment of a certain standard on the websites of public institutions. For this purpose, the criteria that should be on the web pages of public institutions have been specified by the public institutions transactions system. In these criteria, which are listed as 17 items, it is aimed that the sites reach a wider audience with the most appropriate content, and thus, benefit more efficiently from the opportunities provided by the digital world.

Based on this information on the literature, it is aimed to analyze the digital diplomacy activities of the ministries of sports, which are responsible for sports and athletes, which make a significant contribution to the promotion of countries in both national and international platforms. For this purpose, the sports ministries of Turkey and Kyrgyzstan were chosen as the sample of the study. The sports ministries of Turkey and Kyrgyzstan, which were selected as samples in the research, were named differently in the two countries. Names of the Ministry in Turkey; Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Turkey, in Kyrgyzstan; It is the Ministry of Culture, Information, Sports and Youth Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic. In the study, the ways in which the selected ministries use official websites as a digital diplomacy tool were evaluated. The websites were analyzed by categorical content analysis method within the framework of the design criteria determined by the public institutions transactions system. As a result of the analysis, the points provided and not provided by the design criteria of the sports ministries were determined and the similarities and differences between the web site usage of the two ministries were revealed.

WEBSITES AS A DIGITAL DIPLOMACY TOOL AND DESIGN CRITERIA FOR WEBSITES

When we look at the word diplomacy etymologically, it is seen that it comes from the Greek word "diploma". It got this name due to the fact that the documents belonging to the state during the Ancient Greek and Roman Empires were folded like diplomas. Over time, it has begun to be used in the sense of the science of examining documents. It gained the meaning of "conducting international affairs" today, when it was used by British Statesman Edmund Burke in 1796 (Baştan and Karagül, 2021:779). Since then, many definitions of diplomacy have been made. These definitions, which are the product of different perspectives, were actually made over two periods; old diplomacy and new diplomacy. The period defined as old diplomacy covers the period until the end of World War I. The process until the end of the Cold War in World War I was defined as new diplomacy (Acar, 2006:417). Over time, this foreign policy tool has given birth to the concept of public diplomacy as an activity to communicate not only with political representatives but also with citizens of the country. Public diplomacy, whose

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