



## **Journal of Recreation and Tourism Research**

Journal home page: [www.jrtr.org](http://www.jrtr.org)

ISSN:2148-5321

### **A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS TO DETERMINE THE EFFECT OF TOURISM ON EXPORTS AND IMPORTS: THE CASE OF TURKEY**

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#### **EXTENSIVE SUMMARY**

It is known that the developing countries encounter periodic or constant foreign exchange problems and they have difficulties in purchasing goods and services they need for the economic growth. In the face of these difficulties, even though foreign exchange savings are tried to be made through the protection of the national industry or import substitution policies; the economic crisis, technological problems and infrastructure problems in the internal market cause countries to face difficulties. However, the rapid increase of tourism movements throughout the world and this tourism sector's creating a commercial cycle in appropriate conditions of the tourism sector can provide a high volume of foreign exchange inflow into the country's economy (Cleverdon and Edwards, 1982:143).

In this study, the effects of the tourism sector, which has a great importance for closing the gap between the tourism revenues and expenditures, in other words, the deficit in the balance of payments, were investigated, starting from the importance of the external balance of payments of Turkey, which is one of the developing countries. As the touristic products are fostered by the natural sources, they require less investment than other sectors. In addition, tourism is of great importance, especially for developing countries, as the return on investment is at a shorter period of time and it has a positive impact on increasing the foreign exchange revenues. Thus, in this study, which aims to identify the situation, the effects of the tourism revenues and tourism expenditures on Turkey's economy were tried to be examined.

Within this context, the purpose of the study was identified as revealing the importance of the foreign travel balance inside the balance of payments and explaining the data regarding the current tourism revenues and expenditures within the scope of the revised statistical data. From this point of view, the impacts of Turkey's tourism revenues on the exports and the impacts of Turkey's tourism expenditures on the imports between 2003 and 2016 have been analysed and interpreted through tables and graphics as a trend analysis. Finally, the suggestions for solutions were presented according to the findings that were obtained as the result of the research.

Within the scope of this research, the secondary data collected from national statistical institutions were examined and interpreted through time series components. According to the graphs, although the number of tourists and tourism revenues experienced a decline in 2016, the tourism sector is still a key item in Turkey's export revenues. On the other hand, the decline in the average spending of tourists that prefer Turkey as a tourism destination suggests that those tourists have lower income levels. It is estimated that the studies to be done in the following years will reveal this situation in a better way.

When Turkey's tourism sector's, which still attracts a significant number of tourists, contribution to the balance of payments is considered, the tourism can become a sustainable sector in the long term, with investments in infrastructure and superstructure. Increasing the amount of spending per tourist should be included in the high priority issues. As we also mentioned in our study, foreign exchange losses experienced in increasing the supply sources should not be overlooked. However, in the trend analyses, dollar-based data have shown a downward trend, while the other data have shown an upward trend.