

## **Added Value Provided by Tourism Marketing to the Turkish Economy: A Conceptual Evaluation in Terms of Cultural Tourism**

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**ABSTRACT:** *The concept of tourism marketing includes all activities of the tourism sector related to marketing. All activities applied to ensure participation to the tourism activity and the satisfaction for the customer who called tourist, in tourism marketing are the basic elements of this concept. The rapid development of tourism, as a result of the diversification in itself, has also revealed the culture tourism as a different alternative. Travel and accommodation made by tourists to see and recognize different cultures of societies are called cultural tourism. It is possible to make the best use of all cultural richness and to provide tourism mobility in all months of the year and in every region with cultural tourism. In addition, cultural tourism increases the life standard of the local people by increasing the awareness of cultural heritage and develops the economy by increasing the employment opportunities. In this study, the importance of cultural tourism and its added value to the national economy will be examined at a conceptual level.*

**KEY WORD:** *Tourism, Tourism Marketing, Culture, Cultural Tourism*

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Tourism organizations are labor intensive enterprises where human factor is the most important input. Tourism marketing requires more meticulous and careful efforts than any goods marketing. Tourism is one of the most important activities in the service sector that invigorate the economy. The geographical location of Turkey, which have natural, cultural and historical texture makes it very advantageous for the country's tourism. The fact that the three sides of the country are surrounded by seas makes the coastal regions attractive for tourists. In recent years cultural, ecological and natural tourism has shown a significant increase in interest at tourism market (Gök and Tuna;2013: 2).

World Tourism Organization defines tourism that traveling to and staying in places for leisure, business and other purposes, outside people's usual environment for not more that one consecutive year (Yüksel and Merinos, 2004:3).

In tourism marketing, the customer is generally called as tourist. It is seen that most enterprises use guest expression instead of tourist word. The main subject of tourism marketing is all efforts for participation of the customer, which we call as tourist, in the tourism activity to ensure of their satisfaction. On the other hand, the attitudes and behaviors of the customer before, during and after the holidays, their relations and the macro-scale orientations they produce are the study areas of tourism marketing (Karagöz, 2013:9).

Marketing mix elements are decision variables of a marketing manager. Traditional 4P which contains product, price, promotion and placement factors was insufficient by time. Eventually 7P is reached with addition people, physical facilities and process management (Van Waterschoot and Von den Bulte, 1992).

Tourist arrivals in 2017 and 2018, Turkey's tourism -called smokeless industry- has increased dramatically. In parallel, tourism revenues also increased. The following table presents the comparative figures for 2017 and 2018.

As seen in Graphic 1, Turkey's tourism revenues increased by 18.9 percent as compared to the previous year was 26 billion 283 million 656 thousand dollars. 77.4 percent of the tourism income (excluding mobile telephone and marina service expenditures) was obtained from foreign visitors and 22.6 percent of the citizens were residing abroad. On an annual basis; the average expenditure per capita is \$ 681, the average expenditure of foreigners is 630 dollars, while the average expenditure of citizens residing abroad is \$ 903.



Graphic 1: Tourism Revenues for year 2017 and 2018

Source : <http://yigm.kulturturizm.gov.tr/TR-201116/turizm-gelirleri-ve-giderleri.html>

During the tourism marketing activities, the 7P mix should be taken into account as in other marketing activities. In tourism marketing, the focus on the marketing of sea-sand-sun, which is the product of traditional mass tourism, reduces tourism to a short period such as 2-3 months and this limits the income from tourism. On the other hand, adherence to a single product/service brings about many problems such as the depletion of natural resources in the long term, being behind the competitors and not using the available resources optimally. This situation emphasizes the necessity of developing alternative tourism types. In this way, it will be possible to make the best use of all possessions, and to ensure the mobility of tourism in all months of the year and in every region. As can be seen from the table below, in terms of the number of tourists entering our country, cultural tourism is the most prominent type among alternative tourism types.

Table 1: The Distribution of the Number of Tourists Coming to Turkey

Month	Years			% Change	
	2016	2017	2018*	2017/2016	2018/2017
January	1 170 333	1 055 474	1 461 570	-9,81	38,48
February	1 240 633	1 159 833	1 527 070	-6,51	31,66
March	1 652 511	1 587 007	2 139 766	-3,96	34,83
April	1 753 045	2 070 322	2 655 561	18,10	28,27
May	2 485 411	2 889 873	3 678 440	16,27	27,29
June	2 438 293	3 486 940	4 505 594	43,01	29,21
July	3 468 202	5 075 961	5 671 801	46,36	11,74
August	3 183 003	4 658 463	5 383 332	46,35	15,56
September	2 855 397	4 076 630		42,77	
October	2 449 948	2 992 947		22,16	
November	1 353 280	1 652 795		22,13	
December	1 302 157	1 703 789		30,84	
<b>Total</b>	<b>25 352 213</b>	<b>32 410 034</b>		<b>27,84</b>	
<b>8 Months Total</b>	<b>17 391 431</b>	<b>21 983 873</b>	<b>27 023 134</b>	<b>26,41</b>	<b>22,92</b>

Source: <http://sgb.kulturturizm.gov.tr/TR-50930/istatistikler.html>

In August 2018, the number of tourists visiting our country increased by 15.56% compared to the same month of the previous year. As of 2016 - 2018, the five countries that tourists are coming from are shown in the table below.

Table 2: Distribution of Tourists by Country in August 2016-2018 - The First 5 Countries

Countries	2018	%	2017	%	2016	%
<b>Russian Fed.</b>	910 466	16,91	805 848	17,30	104 549	3,28
<b>Germany</b>	654 737	12,16	572 837	12,30	551 380	17,32
<b>U.K.</b>	363 433	6,75	272 596	5,85	275 552	8,66
<b>Bulgaria</b>	235 364	4,37	162 565	3,49	146 502	4,60
<b>Georgia</b>	204 092	3,79	258 525	5,55	218 516	6,87
<b>Others</b>	3 015 240	56,01	2 586 092	55,51	1 886 504	59,27
<b>Total</b>	<b>5 383 332</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>4 658 463</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>3 183 003</b>	<b>100,00</b>

Source: <http://sgb.kulturturizm.gov.tr/TR-50930/istatistikler.html>

Cultural tourism may include many activities such as visiting historic buildings, sites and museums, participating in festivals or special events, observing or experiencing behavior of local people. People participate in cultural tourism to learn about the cultures of the places they visit and to experience folklore, traditions, natural beauties and historical sites. Also they can join other activities such as nature, adventure, sports events, festivals and handicrafts (MacDonald and Joliffe, 2003: 308).

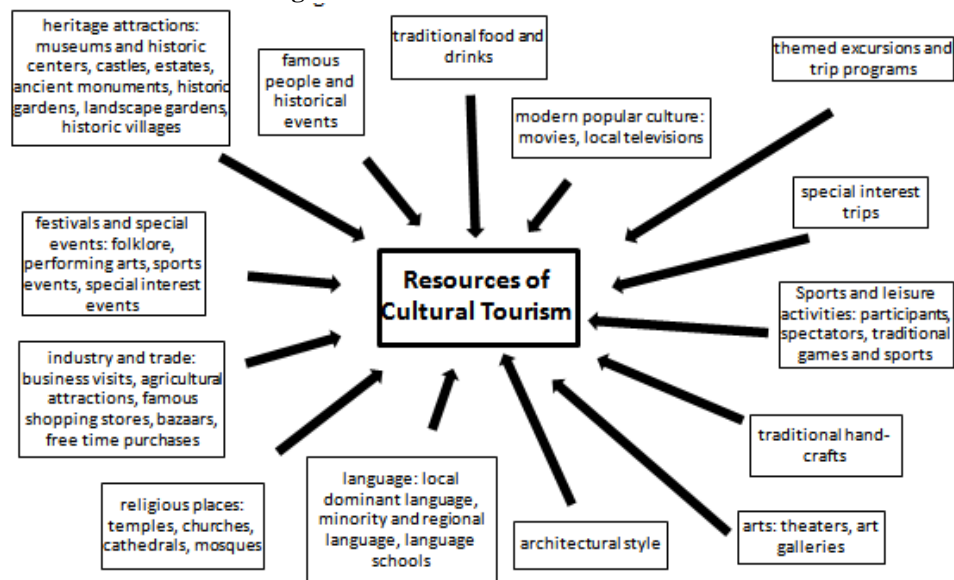
Cultural tourism is divided into 3 terms by content (Fagence, 2003:57);

- 1- **High, Institutionalized Culture:** Museums, exhibitions, visual arts, historical places, theater, literature, science and technology centers.
- 2- **Folk, Popular Culture:** Film, entertainment, sports, mass media, shopping, events, food, products, crafts, traditions, customs.
- 3- **Ethnic Symbols:** Language, education, transportation, religion, clothing, ornament, polish.

According to this classification, visits to museums, exhibitions, historical places, theater and visual arts, literature, science and technology centers, as a high cultural element; as well as films, events, traditions and customs as a folk culture, and finally language, religion, education, clothing are expressed as distinct cultural elements belonging to a community. (Fagence, 2003:57).

Cultural tourism resources are seen with all the details as follows.

**Figure 1: Resources of Cultural Tourism**



Source: Uygur and Baykan (2007)

Cultural tourism is a sub-type of tourism and one of the alternative tourism types. Rather than mass tourism, tourists are now traveling to get to know the culture of many foreign countries. Thus, tourists have the opportunity to know and recognize the cultural values that belong to different nations. The desire of tourists to visit because of the region's cultural richness, in other words, the combination of cultural and tourism resources can provide significant added value to the countries, especially to the national economy.

Cultural tourism is expanding its market on a global scale as one of the most preferred tourism types. It is an intellectual and qualified activity that gives importance to local culture and values.

It is stated in the development plans of cultural tourism that one of the aims is to create an opportunity for the region and the local people. For example, in the cultural tourism project developed in Mexico, the main objective is to create benefits from different forms of cultural expression to social and economic development in the targeted regions (Cano and Mysyk, 2004: 882).

An important issue in the concept of cultural tourism is that people will travel according to different elements of culture and will be called cultural tourists in this process. For example, visitors to Vienna to listen to classical music, Belgium to visit museums, Topkapı Palace to see historical value are cultural tourists.

Another issue to be considered is the cultural tourism is a form of tourism that aims to improve the quality of life the local population and to preserve traditional lifestyles, as a reminder of the awareness of history and cultural heritage in individuals (Cave, Ryan and Penakara, 2001:372).

The characteristics of cultural tourism are summarized below (Pekin, 2011:152-153);

-Cultural tourism is a rare product. Therefore, cultural tourism has comparative advantages property in the economy.

- The social status of the participants in the cultural tourism is higher than the average mass tourism customers.
- Travellers who participate in culture trips are more educated, more curious, more concerned, more free, more generous spend time and money, are sensitive to cultural and artistic activities, more respectful to the culture and traditions of the region, are willing to recognize the local people, are able to travel in groups.
- Culture tourism is much less affected from the developing virtual environment and global capital movements compared to sea-sand-sun tourism.
- Culture tourism is aimed at expanding the wider share of tourism revenues across the country and increasing the cultural levels of the regions.
- Culture tourism has the potential to spread touristic activity to 12 months.
- Culture tourism is more sensitive to the environment, historical and cultural heritage.
- If it is managed well, cultural tourism has no weakness about to be consumed away.

Although cultural tourism is mostly recommended for rural areas, it is also important for big cities. Cultural tourism is important in terms of the restoration of cultural places in rural areas and big cities, thus emphasizing the importance of these places, increasing employment and adding value to the country's economy. It is possible to say that cultural tourism can be used by visualizing the cultural elements of a big city like Istanbul and using it for tourism purposes.

Perhaps the most important of the positive effects of cultural tourism is the economic impact of creating new jobs by raising the life standard of the local population. The awareness of the local community will increase investments in protection.

By courtesy of cultural tourism, millions of tourists visit museums, art galleries and historical sites every year. In this way, thousands of people are employed, the occupancy rates of the hospitality enterprises are increased and it is possible to spread the tourism movements throughout the year with the positive effect of many sectors besides the other tourism enterprises (Kızılırmak and Kurtuldu, 2005:103).

Developing and implementing the concept of cultural tourism is a very difficult and complex process. The biggest problem is the authenticity. While the products and services offered around cultural tourism environment should be unique, products and services that do not have many cultural specificities or newly produced products can be presented as culture-based products. However, cultural tourists are seeking authenticity and real experience (Bahçe, 2009: 4). Another problem is that if a controlled development within the scope of tourism activity cannot be achieved, cultural resources can be harmed when the corrosive effect of tourism as a result of unconscious use is taken into consideration. Undoubtedly, the culture and cultural assets of each nation are very valuable. But, this value is sustainable when it is well protected and well managed.

When we examine the concept of cultural tourism in terms of Turkey, we see that Turkey is extremely rich with cultural values. As a result of the promotion and advertising efforts made during the tourism marketing activities, obliging the Turkey to the sea, sand and sun triangle depending on the type of mass tourism would be wrong. Turkey has both natural beauty and cultural wealth due to hosted many civilizations. All public and private sector organizations that direct tourism industry, especially the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, try to implement policies related to the diversification of tourism. In recent years, actions towards creating appropriate promotion and marketing policies about the expectations and preferences of the tourists traveling for cultural purposes are seen to be increased since giving importance for cultural tourism as well as other alternative tourism types. The reflections of this are seen in the five-year development plans and tourism forum decisions (Kızılırmak and Kurtuldu, 2005:105).

## **II. CONCLUSION**

Considering the world economy, the importance of services is increasing. Within the service sectors, tourism has a special place. The tourism industry manages the cross-border mobility of millions of people around the world. The increase in the number of people participating in tourism activity shows importance of marketing for success in tourism. As the volume of customers in tourism enterprises is increased, income also increases. From this point of view, it is necessary to give importance to tourism marketing in order to follow the markets and consumer behaviours closely. Tourism marketing is a branch of marketing within the service sector which requires a more diligent effort than the marketing of any goods. Since tourism companies offer many services such as other businesses in the service sector, they have to create a marketing mix in order to be superior in competitive markets and to be successful. The elements of marketing mix, known as 7Ps, are concepts of product, promotion, price, distribution, people, physical facilities and process management. When the tourism business selects the target market in competitive market conditions and makes sufficient efforts to position and promote its products, it can achieve success with a marketing mix strategy that includes an appropriate pricing and distribution channel. One of the issues to be considered in tourism marketing is the existence of alternative tourism types. Necessary attention should be paid to alternative tourism types that spread tourism activity to all months of the year and all regions instead of mass tourism which reduces tourism

to limited time. One of the factors that drive people to travel among alternative tourism types is the cultural tourism that results from the desire to see different cultures and lifestyles.

Cultural tourism has been an important value in recent years. Cultural tourism is an important factor in ensuring the competitiveness of a country in economy and tourism, developing to local and regional economies, and sustaining natural, historical and cultural values. In other words; cultural tourism contributes to economic development, regional diversity, cross-cultural interaction, and sustainable development. An important point to note is that cultural tourism is important today not only for economic gain but also because sustainability. However, in order to achieve these positive developments, it should not be forgotten that the corrosive effect of tourism may harm cultural values. A controlled development should be provided within the scope of tourism activity. Indeed, every nation's culture and cultural assets are very valuable. The prerequisite for the sustainability of tourism activities is undoubtedly made possible by protection and management of these values. In addition, the culture must be related to the region to which it belongs.

It is seen that cultural tourism is important in rural areas besides big cities. Thus, it provides support for economic development by providing new job opportunities by raising the level of living of local people. However, if managed well, there is no weakness about consume away. The concept of cultural tourism is also important for our country. Considering the rich cultural values of our country, it will be wrong to oblige tourism to mass tourism just like sea-sand-sun. Because of the advantages of cultural tourism might be used in tourism marketing activities. In accordance with this purpose, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and many institutions that direct tourism, are trying to implement policies related to the diversification of tourism. Given the importance of cultural tourism, studies are carried out in order to create marketing policies appropriate to the expectations of the tourists traveling for this purpose.

As a result, it is important to divide items as Turkey's tourism revenues mass tourism sun-sea-sand like income, health tourism income, cultural tourism income, congresses, fairs and festival-like events income for determination of which sub-section brings higher revenues (strong side) and rehabilitation of which sub-section has weakness (weak side). On the other hand, strengthening our strengths is important in terms of sustainability of our competitive advantage and efforts for market leadership. It is evident that the increase in total tourism revenue in terms of the value added to the general economy will be in line with the interests of our country.

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