

DESCRIBING TURKEY- ISRAEL RELATIONSHIPS WITH ITS TRADE DIMENSION

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Abstract

Although diplomatic relations with Israel which were established in 1948 and recognized by Turkey one year later have occasionally contained crises, they have continued until today in a bumpy way. The trade between the two countries has also been affected depending on the cooperation or crisis environments experienced in the process in question. However, our study aiming to reveal how bilateral trade relations developed indicated that trade between Turkey and Israel has not been negatively affected over the past decade despite the political crisis environments experienced. On the contrary, according to trade intensity index values, the bilateral trade within the period further increased compared to the share of the two countries in the world trade. Within the 1995-2015 period, Turkey's export to Israel increased by 10.38-fold, its import from Israel increased by 9.28-fold, and trade volume of the two countries increased by 9.93-fold. When Turkey-Israel trade intensity index values in the 1995-2015 are examined, it is seen that both countries realized bilateral trade at a greater percentage than their share in the world trade. In this period, Turkey's export to Israel was averagely 4.26 times of its share in the world export. In this period, Israel's export to Turkey was averagely 2.16 times of its share in the world export.

Keywords: IPCC21, Turkey, Israel, trade intensity index, bilateral trade

INTRODUCTION

Turkey-Israel relations have continued from the beginning until today despite in a bumpy way because of both regional reasons such as the question of Palestine and global reasons such as the intervention of Western powers in the Middle East. Two important crises, the first of which is the Suez Canal War that emerged in 1956 and the second of which is the Mavi Marmara incident in 2010, resulted in Turkey's withdrawal of ambassador from Israel. The fluctuations in political relations experienced since 1949, in which Turkey was recognized Israel, have also reflected on bilateral trade from time to time. However, although the most important political crisis has emerged between the two countries in the last decade, this has not reflected negatively on bilateral trade.

The trade between Israel and Turkey showed a significant increase in the period of 1995-2015. Turkish foreign trade volume which was 44 million dollars with Israel in 1995 gained momentum after the free trade agreement which was signed with Israel and entered into force on May 1, 1997, and it reached 5.83 billion dollars by the end of 2015. According to data of the end of 2015, Turkey made exportations of 2.70 billion dollars to Israel and made importations of 1.67 billion dollars from Israel. While Israel makes 5.2% of its exportations to Turkey, it makes 4.3% of its importations from Turkey.

Although some problems have begun to be solved, the crises experienced between Turkey and Israel in recent years have raised concerns about the development of bilateral trade. Accordingly, this study aiming to reduce the concerns about the future makes inferences for the future by examining the development of bilateral trade between Turkey and Israel in the 1995-2015 period. Whether the political crises experienced in the last decade have negatively affected the bilateral trade will be revealed by comparing the trade realized between Turkey and Israel in the relevant period with their trade with the world by calculating the trade intensity index. In other words, the relations between the two countries will be described through the development of bilateral trade.

Study analyses Turkey-Israel relationship with investigates improvements on bilateral trade between Turkey and Israel for the period 1995-2015. The trade intensity index is used in the study for measuring both countries' trade weights in each other and world trade. Study also aims to find if there is consistency between two countries' political relationships and trade relationships.

DEVELOPMENT OF TURKEY-ISRAEL RELATIONS

Turkey-Israel relations, from beginning until today, have been shaped within the frame of the developments in the international environment including the Palestinian problem, regional threat

perceptions of the two countries, economic and military interests and Middle East policies of the Western powers including the United States. (Uçarol, 2010:888-899).

Development of Turkey-Israel Political Relations

Although Turkey adopted an attitude of taking the part of Arab countries on Israel in the 1945-47 period and adopted a neutral attitude during the 1948-49 Arab-Israeli war, it recognized the state of Israel which was founded on May 5, 1948 after about a year. The reason for recognition was "Israel has been a member of the United Nations (UN), therefore Turkey has recognized this newly established state within the framework of the universality of the UN". Also according to Turkey; "Now that the UN accepts the use of self-determination by one of the two societies, we would also recognize this newly established state. However, it should not be forgotten that Turkey would also recognize the independence of the Palestinians when they announce that they would establish their own state based on the same principle (Yilmaz, 2001: 7)."

Turkey-Israel relations were stressed due to the Baghdad Pact between Turkey and Iraq in 1955 which was initially envisaged as a security zone surrounding the Arab countries and later expanded with the participation of Iran, Britain and Pakistan.

Second Arab-Israeli War erupted as a result of the Suez crisis that emerged in 1956, the members of the Baghdad Pact outside of England came together in Tehran and condemned Israel, and also they asked England and France to withdraw their soldiers from Egypt. Turkey withdrew its Israeli Ambassador on November 23, 1956 and reduced the relations at the level of an ambassador's deputy, Israel recalled its Ankara Ambassador on December 22, 1956.

Turkey has adopted a policy which is balanced about the Arab-Israeli conflict but favours the Arabs since the 1960s along with the effect of the Cyprus problem. Turkey supported the Palestine Liberation Organization in the international arena and condemned Israel in the 1967 Arab-Israel war. However, Turkey did not deny the fact of Israel. It showed its clear attitude in favor of the Arabs in the fourth Arab-Israeli war that erupted in 1973 by opening Turkish airspace to Soviet aircrafts delivering fuel to Egypt and voting in parallel with the Arabs in the United Nations voting. In 1975, Turkey supported United Nations' decision regarding the fact that Zionism is racism.

Turkey-Israel relations regressed due to the Jerusalem policy pursued by the Israel in the 1980s, and Turkey closed its Consulate General of Jerusalem on November 26, 1980 and reduced its relations to the second clerkship level. Turkey-Israel relations began to be moderated since the mid-1980s, and Turkey began to adopt policies in the region without offending Israel and also in favor of the US and Israel.

The European Union's influence began to appear in Turkish foreign policy as of 1985, an attempt to benefit from the influence of the Jewish lobby was made in relations with the United States. In 1986, Turkey assigned diplomat to Tel Aviv representation at the second clerkship level, and this was responded in the eye of Israel, and a new period began in relations. It also recognized the Palestinian state which was declared in Algeria meeting in 1988. On the other hand, it voted for Israel in 1989 in the voting against Israel which was performed around every year in the United Nations although it was abstainer in previous years.

Turkey-Israel relations developed in line with a close cooperation along with the influence of the Arab-Israeli peace talks that began as of the 1990s. Turkey that increased its diplomatic relations with Israel to the ambassadorial level on December 31, 1991 re-opened the Jerusalem Consulate General, which was closed by it in 1980, in 1992. Towards the end of 1990s, recession began in relations with Israel in contrast to the relations developing between Turkey and Arab countries as in the case of 1998 Adana agreement reached with Syria. Since the 2000s, Second Intifada (Al-Aqsa Intifada) began as a result of Israel's policies towards Jerusalem, and then the peace process came to a deadlock. However, the relations in the military and economic fields were not initially affected by these negativities. Turkey-Israel relations also entered into the period of regression depending on the domestic and foreign developments such as the government change in Turkey in 2002 and the Iraq war in 2003. Turkish foreign policy based on the stability of the countries in the region and Israel's foreign policy aimed at the disunity and instability in the Arab countries were in conflict at the most in this period. The crises experienced until Blue Marmara incident in 2010 especially in Davos Economic Forum left their mark on this period. Hamas political bureau chief Khaled Mashal's visit to Turkey in 2006, "Operation Cast Lead" initiated by Israel against Gaza on December 27, 2008, the cancellation of the international dimension of the Anatolian Eagle Exercise by Turkey, and "Low Chair Crisis" including Turkey's Tel Aviv ambassador are some of them. After Blue Marmara crisis, Turkey imposed three conditions including apology from Turkey, compensation for the families of the Turks killed in the incident and the removal of the embargo on Gaza to Israel for the normalization of relations.

Development of Turkey-Israel trade relations

Turkey that signed mail communications agreement with Israel in 1948 officially recognized this country in 1949. Turkey adopted an attitude in favor of the development of trade relations with Israel and had an important place in the imports of foodstuffs of Israel which had no self-sufficiency during the years it was founded. Israeli companies took over some of the construction tenders in the early 1950s, but trade activities between the two countries were

adversely affected by the political relations stressed with the Suez Canal crisis in 1956. In the 1970s during which two important oil crises were experienced, Turkey adopted a policy in favor of the Arabs, and the negativity experienced in bilateral trade hit the top. In 1981, while the share of Middle East countries in Turkey's exports was 40.3%, Israel's share was 0.4%.

Turkey-Israel trade relations began to improve as of the second half of the 1980s depending on the development of political relations between the two countries. Turkey was assigned to the presidency of the standing committee for economic and commercial cooperation of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in 1984, Turkey assigned an ambassador's deputy to Tel Aviv in 1986, the first official visit to Israel was performed twenty years later in 1992, and the President of Israel visited Turkey. The trade relations developing in the 1990s was also seen as a means of developing the regional cooperation.

In the 1995- 2015 period, the bilateral trade volume of Turkey and Israel increased from 0.44 billion dollars to 4.37 billion dollars. In other words, two country's foreign trade volume increased by 9.93-fold. The development of Turkey's foreign trade with Israel in the 1995- 2015 period is presented in Table 1.

The trade volume between the two countries increased significantly along with the entry into force of the free trade agreement signed in 1996 between Turkey and Israel in 1997. The share of metal, textile, chemicals and transport products of Turkey's export for Israel market was increased. The trade relations and investments were not affected negatively by the political crisis despite the stressing of the diplomatic relations after Mavi Marmara crisis experienced in 2010. The joint investment projects and foreign trade between the two countries maintained their normal course as a result of the free trade agreement which was made previously, the economy of both countries had a growth trend, the fact that large investment projects were carried out mostly by the private sector, the fact that boycott was prohibited between the member states by OECD.

Table 1. Turkey's Total Foreign Trade with Israel (Billion US \$)

Years	Export	Import	Balance of Foreign Trade	Foreign Trade Volume
1995	0.26	0.18	0.07	0.44
1996	0.25	0.20	0.05	0.44
1997	0.36	0.26	0.10	0.61
1998	0.44	0.29	0.16	0.73
1999	0.56	0.34	0.22	0.90
2000	0.62	0.50	0.12	1.13
2001	0.81	0.53	0.28	1.33

2002	0.85	0.54	0.31	1.39
2003	1.08	0.46	0.62	1.54
2004	1.31	0.71	0.60	2.03
2005	1.47	0.80	0.66	2.27
2006	1.53	0.78	0.75	2.31
2007	1.66	1.08	0.58	2.74
2008	1.94	1.45	0.49	3.38
2009	1.53	1.07	0.46	2.60
2010	2.08	1.36	0.72	3.44
2011	2.39	2.06	0.33	4.45
2012	2.33	1.71	0.62	4.04
2013	2.65	2.42	0.23	5.07
2014	2.95	2.88	0.07	5.83
2015	2.70	1.67	1.03	4.37

Table 1...

Source: UN Comtrade/International Trade Statistics Database, comtrade.un.org, Access: 07.10.2016

As of 2014, Israel was ranked 16th with 2.95 billion dollars among top 20 countries with which Turkey is engaged in exportation in foreign trade in the world. While Turkey's export to Israel was 0.26 billion dollars in 1995, it increased to 2.70 billion dollars as of the year 2015. While Turkey's import from Israel was 0.18 billion dollars at the beginning of the period, it was 1.67 billion dollars at the end of the period. In other words, Turkey's export to Israel was increased by 10.38-fold, and its import from Israel was increased by 9.28-fold at the end of the period of 1995-2015. During the period, Turkey had foreign trade surplus in trade with Israel every year.

The Place of Turkey and Israel in World Trade

Turkey and Israel are two countries located in the Middle East Region but turned towards Western civilization, and they meet in the common interest and conflict areas by this aspect. Turkey was ranked 17th and Israel was ranked 28th in terms of place in the world economy in 2014. The foreign trade volume of both countries in the 1995- 2015 period, which is the subject of our study, expanded. In the 1995-2015 period, Turkey's foreign trade volume increased by 6.11-fold. At the end of the period, its total export to the world increased by 6.66-fold, its total import from the world increased by 5.80-fold.

As it is seen in the table, while Turkey's total export to the world was 21.6 billion dollars at the beginning of the period, it was 143.85 billion dollars at the end of the period; while Turkey's total import from the world was 35.71 billion dollars at the beginning of the period, it was 207.21 billion dollars at the end of the period. Turkey's foreign trade volume increased from

57.31 billion dollars to 351.06 billion dollars. During the period, Turkey had a foreign trade deficit every year.

Israel is among the developed countries that have GDP per capita of over 36000 dollars and have transformed their economy into an outward-oriented model. It has been OECD member since 2010, its foreign trade consists of products from the sectors such as electronics, biotechnology and aviation as well as traditional sectors such as plastics and chemistry. It ranks first among the countries in terms of the share allocated for R&D activities from GDP by the ratio of 4.5%. Israel's foreign trade volume increased significantly in the 1995- 2015 period, and it increased by 2.66-fold within the period in question. While its total export to the world increased by 3.36-fold, its total import from the world increased by 2.19-fold.

Table 2.Total Foreign Trade of Turkey and Israel with the World (Billion US \$)

Years	TURKEY			ISRAEL		
	Export	Import	Balance of Foreign Trade	Export	Import	Balance of Foreign Trade
1995	21.60	35.71	-14.11	19.05	28.34	-9.29
1996	23.05	42.93	-19.88	20.51	29.95	-9.44
1997	26.24	48.59	-22.34	22.5	29.02	-6.52
1998	26.88	45.91	-19.03	23.3	27.47	-4.17
1999	26.59	40.69	-14.10	25.84	31.09	-5.25
2000	27.49	54.15	-26.66	31.41	35.74	-4.33
2001	31.33	41.4	-10.07	29.06	33.3	-4.24
2002	35.76	51.27	-15.51	29.51	33.11	-3.59
2003	47.25	69.34	-22.09	31.78	34.21	-2.43
2004	63.12	97.54	-34.42	38.62	40.97	-2.35
2005	73.48	116.77	-43.3	42.77	45.03	-2.26
2006	85.53	139.58	-54.04	46.79	47.83	-1.04
2007	107.27	170.06	-62.79	54.09	56.62	-2.53
2008	132	201.96	-69.96	61.34	65.17	-3.83
2009	102.14	140.87	-38.73	47.93	47.36	0.57
2010	113.98	185.54	-71.56	58.41	59.19	-0.78
2011	134.92	240.84	-105.92	67.8	73.53	-5.73
2012	152.54	236.54	-84.01	63.14	73.11	-9.97
2013	151.8	251.66	-99.86	66.78	72	-5.21
2014	157.71	242.22	-84.51	68.97	72.33	-3.37
2015	143.85	207.21	-63.36	64.06	62.07	-1.99

Source: UN Comtrade/International Trade Statistics Database, comtrade.un.org, Access: 07.10.2016

As it is seen in Table 2, while Israel's total export to the world was 19.05 billion dollars at the beginning of the period, it increased to 64.06 billion dollars at the end of the period. While Israel's total import from the world was 28.34 billion dollars at the beginning of the period, it increased to 62.07 billion dollars at the end of the period. Israel's foreign trade volume increased from 47.39 billion dollars to 126.13 billion dollars. During the period, Israel had a foreign trade deficit every year except for 2009.

TURKEY - ISRAEL BILATERAL TRADE IN THE CONTEXT OF TRADE INTENSITY

Trade intensity index is an index indicating whether two countries' trade with each other is less or more than their weight in world trade. There are many international studies measuring trade intensity index and bilateral trade.

Current Literature

When the examples of current studies are examined, Indonesia-Chile bilateral trade was measured by trade intensity index for the 1989-2012 period (Sabaruddin and Nugrahaningsi, 2013:49). The trade intensity index between Saudi Arabia and India was calculated for the 2001-2013 period (Alam and Ahmed, 2015:336). India's trade intensity index with ASEAN (South Eastern Asian Countries) countries was calculated for the 1990-2012 period (Alam, 2015:86). The intensities of trade between CARICOM (Caribbean Communities) countries and China and Canada were investigated for the 2004-2013 period (Colley, 2015: 109). In another study, the trade intensity of Japan and India was investigated for the 1990-2009 period (Bhattacharyay and Mukhopadhyay, 2015:97). In another study, the trade intensity was investigated between New Zealand and the selected East Asian countries for the 1990-2000 period (Bano, 2002:12). South Korea and ASEAN trade intensities were calculated for the 2003-2008 period (Kim, 2012:68). In another study, the trade intensity between Egypt and COMESA (Eastern and Southern Africa Common Market countries) countries was investigated for the 2005-2011 period (Elmorsy, 2015:8).

Studies which have empirically investigated Turkey's bilateral trade with Israel are limited. In a study in which Turkey's trade with the selected Middle Eastern countries was investigated, Turkey-Israel trade was examined, the trade concentration index was calculated for the 1999-2009 period, the average trade intensity index of the period was found as 4.33 for Turkey, and the index showed little fluctuation within the period. In the same study, the average trade intensity index of the period was found 0.44 for Israel, besides it was found much higher than its course within the period especially in 2008 and 2009 (Cestepe, 2012:31). Other studies carried out are mainly aimed to measure the intra-industry trade between Turkey and Israel on

sectoral basis. In another study, the development of Turkey's intra-industry trade level with Israel in the high technology product group was examined for the 2000-2012 period, and it was concluded that the intra-industry trade in this product group was not negatively affected (Can and Mercan, 2014:42). In a study in which the trade between Middle East countries and Turkey was examined for the 1990-2002 period, the revealed comparative advantages and the level of intra-industry trade in trade between Turkey and Israel were measured (Erlat, G. and Erlat, H., 2004:35-56).

Trade Intensity Between Turkey and Israel

The trade intensity index used in the analysis was defined as (Yamazawa, 1970:62):

$$TYE = (x_{ij} / X_{it}) / (x_{wj} / X_{wt})$$

Where,

x_{ij} and x_{wj} represent the export of i country to j country and the total export of j country to the world; and X_{it} and X_{wt} represent the total export of i country and the total export of it to the world respectively. If the value of the trade intensity index is greater than unity, this country exports more to the relevant trade partner compared to its share in the world trade. If the value of the trade intensity index is less than unity, this country exports less to the relevant trade partner compared to its share in the world trade.

Foreign trade data used in the calculations were taken from the trade statistics database of the World Bank (WITS) with the HS 1988/92 classification. Turkey's trade intensity with Israel which was calculated by trade intensity index formula and the results of Israel's trade intensity index with Turkey are presented in Table 3.

In terms of Turkey, it is seen that Turkey's intensity of trade with Israel is high. The fact that this index is greater than unity indicates that the share of Turkey's export to Israel in the 1995-2015 period is higher than its share in total world exports. During this period, trade intensity index fluctuated in the 2.17- 5.57 band range in terms of Turkey. The average trade intensity index with Israel for Turkey was 4.26. The value of this trade intensity index was 4.55 by the end of 2015.

When it is considered in terms of Israel, it is seen that Israel's trade intensity with Turkey is high. The fact that this index is greater than unity indicates that the share of Israel's export to Turkey in the 1995-2015 period is higher than its share in total world exports. The average trade intensity index with Turkey in terms of Israel was 2.16. The value of the index was 3.42 by the end of 2015.

Turkey's trade intensity with Israel gained momentum during the period following the free trade agreement and hit the top by increasing until 2003. In the period from 2003 until 2009, the trade intensity for Turkey decreased and was reduced to 3.61 level. In the period from 2009 until the end of 2015, it realized at the value of 4.55 at the end of 2015 with a fluctuating course in the 3.93- 4.82 band range.

Israel's trade intensity with Turkey showed increase and reached to the value of 2.10 from the period following the free trade agreement until 1999. The index following a horizontal course between 1999-2003 fluctuated in the 1.91- 2.47 band range until 2013. It gained momentum again as of 2013 and realized at the value of 2.42 at the end of 2015.

Table 3. Turkey-Israel Trade Intensity Index Data

Years	Trade Intensity Index in terms of Turkey	Trade Intensity Index in terms of Israel
1995	2.22	1.73
1996	2.17	1.37
1997	3.10	1.47
1998	3.67	1.63
1999	4.20	2.10
2000	4.38	1.84
2001	5.24	1.95
2002	5.23	1.99
2003	5.57	1.91
2004	4.92	2.35
2005	4.87	2.19
2006	4.69	1.79
2007	3.93	2.22
2008	3.61	2.47
2009	4.08	2.33
2010	4.83	2.18
2011	4.60	2.49
2012	4.01	2.11
2013	4.71	3.34
2014	4.82	3.60
2015	4.55	2.42
Average	4.26	2.16

Source: WITS (World Bank, World Integrated Trade Solutions (<http://wits.worldbank.org>))

Access: 07.10.2016, and the calculations of authors. (Values are divided to 100 for simplification)

CONCLUSION

The fact that Turkey is the first Muslim country that has recognized the state of Israel and also has looked out for the question of Palestine has affected bilateral trade relations from the beginning until today. However, especially when the developments over the past decade are taken into account, it is seen that the trade relations between Turkey and Israel are separated from political relations. The fact that Turkey's foreign trade with Israel was further increased compared to the increase in total trade with the world is one of the indicators of this.

Within the 1995-2015 period, Turkey's export to Israel increased by 10.38-fold, its import from Israel increased by 9.28-fold, and the foreign trade volume of the two countries increased by 9.93-fold. When Turkey-Israel trade intensity index values in the 1995-2015 are examined, it is seen that both countries realized bilateral trade at a greater percentage than their share in the world trade. In this period, Turkey's export to Israel was averagely 4.26 times of its share in the world export. In this period, Israel's export to Turkey was averagely 2.16 times of its share in the world export.

Israel market offers important services to Turkish investors although its share in Turkish foreign trade volume is small. Israel is one of the rare countries that have free trade agreement both with the USA and the EU. Turkish companies that can use 35% Israel input in their products have the opportunity to perform tax-exempt export to the USA.

Turkish companies that want to establish partnership in Israel which is on the first rank in the world by 4.5% in terms of the share allocated from GDP to research and development activities have the opportunity to benefit from a wide range of developments such as computer software, irrigation development, information technologies, food products, pharmaceuticals and medical supplies. There is an opportunity that Israeli companies can alleviate the difficulties that they had in trade with Arab countries through Turkish companies and make contribution to the solution of the political instability in the region by trade relations to be developed in this way.

Although the fact that the economical dimension of Turkey-Israel relations has been dissociated from politics has revealed the reliability of the institutional factors that support the relations, it is clear that it is necessary to make an effort for the establishment of stability in economic relations in politics.

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