

## **AIR TRAVEL, STILL A DREAM FOR MAJORITY OF POPULATION IN RAJASTHAN: REASONS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The purpose of this study is to identify the reasons for why air travel is still a dream for majority of population in Rajasthan and why still people of the state are not ready to choose airline as a mode of transport over other modes. Survey method of data collection was used for this study. This data has been collected from 700 respondents and 12 districts were surveyed across Rajasthan. Frequently changeable high fare and poor connectivity are the paramount reasons for majority of the population. Increment in the number of flights and connectivity between major towns provides opportunities as well as challenges for the airline companies. Studies have been conducted on sample sizes of people who can afford air travel but are not willing to choose it. For the first time, this study has made an attempt to explore the growing airline market, the varying interests of frequent travelers towards air travel and the root causes which are keeping them away from it.*

*Keywords: Air Travel, Reasons, population*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Human being's need for food and shelter and their curious nature for things surrounding him are responsible for the birth of 'travel'.<sup>1</sup> As people's interest towards travel increased the modes of travel also started increasing like travel by road, travel by water, travel by rail and travel by air and even improvements were being made in these streams. By looking and understanding the present status of India among all these modes, travel by air is the most modern and even the quickest. Because of the extreme speed with which airplanes can fly, and the time saving nature, air travel is becoming increasingly popular. It is an innovative, growing and challenging industry that drives the economic and social progress. It connects countries, cultures and people; provide access to global markets and generates trade and tourism. It also forges links between developed and developing countries. It enhances its economic and social benefits.

All of us are aware that India's economy has captured world imagination and along with this Indian aviation has grown as a significant compliment. In fact, the aviation

market is all poised for some huge and troubled growth in the future, huge because of the tremendous opportunities and troubled because of the intense competition.

Air links made travel across the world fast, easy and convenient. Although it was expensive in the early stage but in today, the scenario has changed drastically, because of an increase in the number of passengers traveling by air. After the induction of new private air carriers which led to cheap air fares, better awareness, sense of competitiveness, attractive employment and easy connectivity.

Despite this, the airline industry has proceeded along the path towards globalization and consolidation, characteristics associated with the normal development of many other industries which is the need of Rajasthan & various other growing & developing states of Indian Peninsula.

### **AVIATION MARKET**

The Indian Civil Aviation market grew at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 18 per cent, and was worth US\$ 5.6 billion in 2008. Airlines recorded a double-digit growth in air traffic in August 2009, according to data released by the industry regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). Domestic airlines flew 3.67 million passengers in August 2009, as against 2.92 million in the corresponding period last year—an increase of 26 per cent.<sup>2</sup> Air transport is indispensable for tourism, which is a major engine of economic growth, particularly in developing economies. Over 40% of international tourists now travel by air. It improves productivity, by encouraging investment and innovation; improving business operations and efficiency; and allowing companies to attract high quality employees.

- The air transport industry generates a total of 32 million jobs globally, through direct, indirect, induced and catalytic impacts.
- Aviation's global economic impact (direct, indirect, induced and catalytic) is estimated at USD 3,560 billion, equivalent to 7.5% of world Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
- Some 2,000 airlines around the world operate a total fleet of 23,000 aircraft. They serve some 3,750 airports through a route network of several million kilometers managed by around 160 air navigation service providers.<sup>3</sup>

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Mohd. A. Hattini (1993) has mentioned the causes of irritation to foreign tourists (Inadequate Transport System) & Suggested remedial measures regarding (like it should be little cheaper, less delay in flight etc.) in Air Transport .<sup>4</sup>

Kumar V.V. Ravi (2006), focuses on the challenges facing the Indian Aviation industry. In view of India being identified as a key driver of aviation growth across the entire globe, the days ahead seem to indicate an explosive growth both in terms of aircraft fleet and the number of flying passengers. While modernization seems to be happening in a phased manner, the urgent need of the hour seems to be a quick thrust to the

modernization process. Also radical steps on a priority basis are needed to improve the infrastructure of at least the major airports and their runways to begin with. Another key challenge would be to overcome the shortage of pilots, cabin crew and maintenance personnel. If these weak areas are remedied, Indian aviation could soar to great heights in the near future. There is also an urgent need to rationalize and thereby reduce the airport charges and taxes on Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) to bring them on par with global standards in order to make airline operations more viable in the country. India has one of the highest airport charges in the world and the high rate of taxes levied on the ATF implies that fuel costs alone contribute to as much as 35% of the operating cost of the airline.<sup>5</sup>

Ganesh Sabari(2006), says that the most crucial factor in securing an advantageous position in harnessing the potential of the airline industry is adapting to the changing user demographics and hence their preferences. Some of the major challenges could be the call for enhanced safety of the passengers, reasonable taxation of the government, and cost efficiency at every stage by way of effective use of technology. Ultimately reducing hassles to the customers and simplification of the procedural formalities would also contribute in a big way towards exploiting the untapped market potential.<sup>6</sup>

Anjali Bhargava (2006), focuses on the risks involved in flying in the Indian aviation sector. It analyzes the implication for air traffic control which is simply not geared to handle the rapidly increasing traffic. It discusses the human resource shortage and its implications on whether air traffic control can function as an autonomous operation. It describes the two major problems faced in the Indian airports namely poor infrastructure and underutilization of available equipment and ground infrastructure. It discusses the possible maintenance failures and also provides a few solutions to mitigate the risks involved in air traffic control.<sup>7</sup>

## **OBJECTIVE AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research objective is to search the causes as to why most of the travelers are not choosing airline as a mode of travel. The collection of data shows that the growth in airline sector has not been up to the mark. It is still a dream for majority of the Indian households. Applied research design is used. Random sampling method was adopted and data analysis is done through Microsoft excel programme.

On the basis of the responses given by 700 respondents randomly selected from 12 districts of Rajasthan. The districts selected for the study were selected in the manner that the sample represents the complete Rajasthan. The reasons for not travelling from airline were asked through a questionnaire which is made with the help of various academicians, airport authorities and management experts. The respondents were contacted at their home and work place with their ease of time the data was collected.

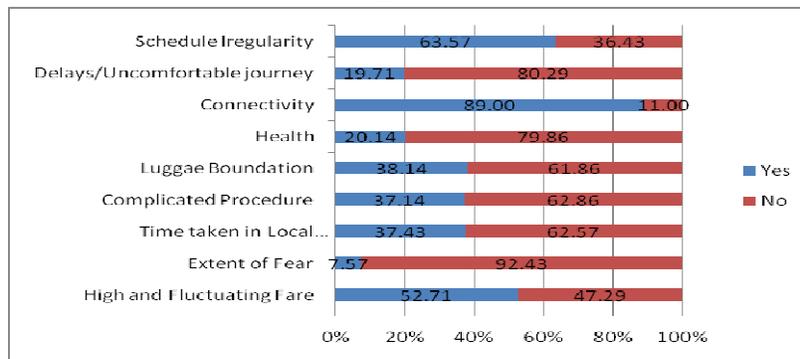
**FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

Table 1 shows the respondents opinion regarding the reasons for not choosing the airline as a mode of travel in terms of frequency and percentages.

**Table 1**

Reasons	Yes	No	Total
High and Fluctuating Fare	369	331	700
	52.71	47.29	100
Extent of Fear	53	647	700
	7.57	92.43	100
Time taken in Local Transportation	262	438	700
	37.43	62.57	100
Complicated Procedure	260	440	700
	37.14	62.86	100
Luggage Boundation	267	433	700
	38.14	61.86	100
Health	141	559	700
	20.14	79.86	100
Connectivity	623	77	700
	89.00	11.00	100
Delays/Uncomfortable journey	138	562	700
	19.71	80.29	100
Schedule Irregularity	445	255	700
	63.57	36.43	100

**Figure - 1**



Further on the basis of the percentages the responses were ranked, the highest percentage was ranked 1st and so on. The ranks obtained are presented here in table 2.

**Table 2**

Ranks over the responses on the reasons:

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Ranks</b>
High & Fluctuating Fare	3
Extent of Fear	9
Time taken in Local Transportation	5
Complicated Procedure	6
Luggage Boundation	4
Health	7
Connectivity	1
Delays/ uncomfortable journey	8
Schedule Irregularity	2

Table 1 & Table 2 represent that **connectivity** is the main reason for not selecting the air mode as a mode of travel as it was ranked first by the respondents. The scheduled flights from different airports of the Rajasthan are limited. They are not connected even with the major cities of the country. So the connectivity evolves as the most prominent reason for not selecting the air travel as a mode of transport.

The second prominent reason is the schedule irregularity. The third reason found from the analysis is the high fare. There is very less number of low cost carriers. The most of population of Rajasthan are either middle class or lower middle class. So the high fare evolves as the reason for not selecting the air travel as the mode of the transport.

The fourth response obtained is luggage boundation. The people are used to carry a lot of luggage in travelling. So the luggage restriction evolves as one of the prominent reason. The fifth reason found was time taken in local transportation. The airports in Rajasthan are situated in the outskirts of the city. Due to poor transportation facility and long distance become the reason for not selecting the air travel as a mode of transport.

The other reasons are complicated procedure, health, delays, Cancellation of flight and extent of fear.

### **INTERPRETATION OF THE ANALYSIS**

The study is a sincere attempt to look into the factors responsible for the rejection of air travel by most of the travelers, and getting their opinion for the increment of air traffic in numbers. The preferences and tastes of the travelers have definitely improved

towards air travel and people are getting charmed by this mode of transport and accept that, this is the best way for a comfortable, convenient and a luxurious journey with speed and excellent assistance to the travelers. Although there are so many reasons for air travel still remaining to be a dream for the people of Rajasthan in spite of being an affordable one for most of them. An aviation industry in Rajasthan is going through a pleasant time. Although today it is not up to a level that would please the airline operator's even travelers, but slowly and gradually things are changing in the favor of air travel and the travelers are getting more conscious about his journey. They are ready to pay for the comfort and the time. Still there are so many reasons restricting the travelers for air travel like: high and frequently changing air fares, connectivity problems, delays and cancellations of flights.

In future if these major mentioned causes are rectified by the aviation industry, the future will be promising for both, the industry and the people of Rajasthan. A Frequent traveler for long journey and business often tries to choose most convenient, speedy and comfortable way of journey which satisfies him psychologically and entertains and relaxes him during and from journey.

Mode of travel is also known to reflect the traveler's social life, aspirations, fantasies and affiliations. Travelers are aware of their own self-concepts and have the ability to evaluate the performance as well as the drawbacks of the aviation industry. It is thus important for airline operators to be informed about the obstacles which hinder the progress of airlines and restrict them for choosing air as their mode of travel.

If these reasons are rectified then the day is not far when the dream of air travel transforms into reality for majority of the population in Rajasthan.

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