

# Navigating Turbulence: Unraveling Air Transportation Glitches in Nigeria and the Imperative for an Air Passengers' Bill of Rights

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## Abstract

In spite of being essential to both economic growth and connectivity, air travel in Nigeria is plagued by recurring issues, most notably flight delays. The present research integrates case studies and statistical data to elucidate the complex issues confronting the aviation sector in Nigeria. The utmost significance of resolving these issues is highlighted by a thorough analysis of airline-specific delay records, economic impacts, delay causes, and regulatory responses. Strong interventions are required due to the estimated \$52.7 million annual revenue implications and the concerning frequency of delays. The report, which makes use of current legal frameworks and global standards, promotes the creation of an Air Passengers' Bill of Rights. In the end, the proposed bill seeks to promote a more dependable and resilient aviation industry in Nigeria by improving consumer protection, accountability, and overall service quality.

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## **Background to the Study**

Transportation is associated with the movement of men and material from one destination to the other and it remains an important human activity that is the basis of socio-economic interactions. In developed economies, a robust transportation framework promotes economic development, mobility and low trade costs. It promotes market integration, reduces price volatility and engenders better management of resources. Adeoye, Musa, and Afolabi (2018), opines that dynamic transportation creates an economically viable society and is an essential factor in the movement of goods, people and services. Rodrigue (2013) argues that transport is the bedrock of the economic life of the people, and ensures that information, raw materials and finished products can be moved from place to place.

Although there are many forms of transportation - by road, air or sea; the focus of this article is air transportation, recognized as the fastest of all the modes of transportation. It has spurred development in several countries and is associated with the geometric growth witnessed in many developed countries of the world. Air transportation contributes to socio-economic development as it provides a better means of conveyance of persons, goods and services over all other modes of transportation - speed, time and distance are major considerations. According to Adeoye, et al (2018), air transportation is of high value in weight and accessibility, especially in riverine or mountainous regions where navigating through other modes remains a problem.

Air transport is an innovative, environmentally responsive sector that drives economic growth, and social progress and promotes world trade and tourism. In Nigeria, aviation creates jobs opens up markets and attracts businesses to underserved locations. It is instrumental in the quick and easy movement of products and services over long distances and enables economic and social participation by hard-to-reach communities (Hassan & Olabosinde, 2017). In Nigeria, the demand for air transportation in the last three decades has been characterized by growth in passengers, aircraft and freight traffic, resulting in the physical and economic development of many cities all over the country. According to Anfofum, Zakaree, and Iluno (2015), the aviation industry as an integral part of the transportation sector must be well-developed, for meaningful economic progress to be achieved in any country. In Nigeria, the full potential of the air transportation industry is still unfolding with the need for improved quality of services, comfort, competitive pricing and better airport infrastructure.

These germane issues plague the aviation industry in Nigeria, thereby crippling and stagnating sectoral and economic growth. Odunayo (2022) reports that flight delays have become a norm in Nigeria and air travelers endure several hours of delay, lose their temper and create scenes at airports before getting a refund or even boarding flights to their destinations. Flight delays followed by spontaneous protests by frustrated air travelers have become a regular occurrence at airports across Nigeria; unfortunately, the Airlines and the Aviation sector authorities appear helpless and nonchalant about this worrisome trend.

Some active players in the aviation industry attribute glitches to many of the issues affecting air transportation in Nigeria. The term *glitches* refer to sudden, usually temporary malfunction or fault of equipment. In this context, it refers to a small problem or fault that prevents aircraft from flying efficiently. In the past decade, the Air transportation sector in Nigeria is plagued by glitches that negatively impact air travelers, businesses and general socio-economic activities in the country. Some of the air transportation glitches are associated with difficulty in airline financing, poor facilities, insecurity, high cost of aviation fuel, high forex values, depreciation of naira, etc. Glitches remain the source of infringement of consumer rights in the aviation sector; as many airlines do not offer a cogent reason for the flight delays and offer no reasonable compensation to the travelers who are subjected to delayed or cancelled flights. It is on this background that, this paper examines air transportation glitches in Nigeria and the need for stricter enforcement of consumer protection laws.

The study employed a qualitative research methodology, integrating historical analysis, case studies, and literature review to examine the problems associated with Nigerian air travel disruptions and the requirement for more stringent enforcement of consumer protection laws. The remaining part of this paper is therefore structured as follows: section 2 provides a review of related literature on air transportation glitches; section 3 examines the historical analysis; section 4 examines case studies and statistics; section 5 examines causes of air transportation glitches; section 6 examines the enforcement of consumer protection laws; section 7 examines the Proposal for Air Passengers' Bill of Rights; and finally section 8 concludes the study by laying out the conclusions.

### **Literature Review**

An essential element of social integration, economic growth, and worldwide connectivity is air travel. Like in many other nations, Nigeria depends heavily on the aviation sector to facilitate the flow of people and goods. Nevertheless, despite its importance, the Nigerian aviation industry has long been beset by issues, most notably with regard to flight cancellations or delays. This review of the literature looks at academic publications and current research to shed light on the issues facing the Nigerian aviation sector and the suggested remedy of enacting an Air Passengers' Bill of Rights.

#### **a. Challenges Confronting the Nigerian Aviation Industry**

Based on research by Odunayo (2022), flight delays are a major problem in Nigeria. Long wait times are a common occurrence for passengers, which can be frustrating and unsatisfactory. According to the study, a number of reasons contribute to these delays, such as currency depreciation, inadequate infrastructure, insecurity, high aviation fuel costs, and financial difficulties faced by the airlines. Similarly, to this, Ayo-Agunbiade and Stephens (2019) stress that one of the main causes of passenger discontent in Nigeria's civil aviation sector is airline delays. The authors of the paper present statistical data on delays experienced by various airlines, suggesting that there is a widespread problem in the sector.

**b. Flight delays and their Economic Effects**

As reported by Anfofum, et al., (2015), flight delays cost Nigeria's economy more than \$52.7 million a year. Beyond just the airlines, businesses, travelers, and governmental aviation agencies are all impacted economically. According to Aliyu (2023), Nigerian domestic airlines operated 80,328 flights between January and December 2022, with 47,144 of those flights experiencing delays.

**c. The Legal Structure and Protection of Consumers**

El-Yakub (2022) investigates Nigeria's current air transportation regulatory framework, which includes the Nigerian Civil Aviation Regulations (2015) and the Civil Aviation Act (2006). The report highlights the necessity of tighter enforcement of consumer protection laws because current ones only serve ineffective deterrence for airlines that continue to cause delays and other problems.

**d. Proposal for Air Passengers' Bill of Rights**

Keyamo (2023) proposes the creation of an Air Passengers' Bill of Rights in Nigeria as a solution to these issues. In order to give travelers and airlines a legal foundation for pursuing compensation in instances of flight disruptions, retractions, and or other unforeseen circumstances, the proposed bill seeks to precisely outline the rights and obligations of both parties.

**e. Global Views on Passenger Rights**

The study, which is based on global norms, makes reference to the Montreal Convention, a significant international aviation agreement that regulates the liability of airlines. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2015) highlights the advantages of adhering to established norms in order to safeguard the rights of passengers, as evidenced by the integration of international standards into the country's regulatory framework.

In conclusion, the literature review emphasizes how critical it is to resolve Nigerian air transportation issues, especially those involving flight delays and cancellations. These difficulties have significant economic ramifications that touch many different stakeholders. An Air Passengers' Bill of Rights is the suggested remedy, and it seems like a good way to improve consumer protection and make airlines responsible for offering dependable and prompt services. The review of previous studies emphasizes how the Nigerian aviation sector's regulatory structures, financial factors, and traveler experiences are all intertwined. In addition to helping to address current issues, the establishment of an Air Passengers' Bill of Rights could support Nigeria's aviation industry's long-term expansion and viability.

**Historical Analysis**

The history of airline services in Nigeria can be traced to 1925 when Imperial Airways (now British Airways) landed in Kano. The British Royal Air Force (RAF) also established airfields and infrastructure in Nigeria for military purposes during World War II. This contributed to the development of aviation infrastructure in the country. Nigeria established its own national carrier, Nigerian Airways, in 1958 and became fully

operational in 1959 by the 1970s had expanded its fleet of aircraft, to include the Boeing 707 and Fokker F27. Incidentally, by the 1980s, Nigerian Airways was be-devilled with financial liquidity and operational challenges and eventually ceased operations as a national carrier by 2003.

The demise of a national carrier paved the way for the deregulation of the aviation industry which started in 1984 when private airlines like Arik Air were licensed to commence charter services before expanding into scheduled commercial flights. The 21st century witnessed significant growth in Nigeria's aviation industry, with the emergence of several private airlines such as Arik Air, Air Peace, Dana Air, and Med-View Airlines. These private airlines expanded domestic and international routes, contributing to increased connectivity within and outside Nigeria. After the deregulation of airline services, Nigeria witnessed a new era of growth and advancement in the sector because it paved the way for increased investment in the hitherto dormant aviation industry. More players entered the airline services market, (Ethiopian Airlines, Turkish Airlines, Air France, British Airways, Egypt Air, Kenyan Airlines, etc.), generating investor's confidence and ushering investment in modern fleets to replace the old ones (Faajir & Zizi, 2016). As a result of these, market-driven innovations were introduced to attract more passengers and variety in the services was provided to suit all categories of air travelers. Odunayo (2022) reports that while deregulation opened new markets, it also brought new challenges such as infrastructure limitations, safety concerns, regulatory compliance and flight delays. In recent times rescheduling or outright cancellation of flights have become habitual among local airlines resulting in loss of economic opportunities by many Nigeria consumers.

Today, in Nigeria, consumers waste several manhours in their attempt to catch air flights while business opportunities are lost as a result of cancelled flights. The Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) the government agency in charge of the regulation of air transportation noted that the incidence of delayed flights was prevalent across all local airlines. NCAA reported that in the first quarter of 2021, the phenomenon had reached an epidemic level as out of a total of 23,619 local flights in the first quarter of 2022, delays were reported in 14,121 instances (59.7%); this is troubling for a sector that wishes to be globally competitive. NCAA (2022), Ayo-Agunbiade and Stephens (2019) noted that undue delay by airlines is a major cause of passenger dissatisfaction in the civil aviation industry in Nigeria. A 2018 case study carried out at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport Lagos revealed that: 1,478 flights operated on international routes while 5,168 flights operated on domestic routes. 587 (40%) flights out of 1478 International flights were delayed and 3244 (62%) out of 5168 flights were delayed on domestic routes (Ayo-Agunbiade and Stephens, 2019)

NCAA (2022), in the breakdown of the statistics on air transportation in Nigeria for the month of January 2022, showed that Aero Contractors Airline made 675 air trips and 409 (61%) were delayed in the month. Arik Air made 1,239 trips and recorded 807 or 65% delays. Azman Air made 403 air trips and 269 (66%) trips were delayed. Dana Air had 684



trips and recorded 509 (74%) delays. Overland Airlines undertook 245 trips with 214 (87%) delays. Air Peace had 2,183 trips and recorded 1,351 (62%) delays. Max Air had 868 trips and recorded 516 (59%) delays. United Airlines made a total of 736 trips with 460 (63%) delays. Green Africa made 306 trips with 175 (57%) delays. Ibom Air flew 1,010 times with the least of 285 (28%) delayed flights.

The statistics for February 2022 were more disconcerting. NCAA (2023) reported that: Aero Contractor flew 601 times and 359 (60%) were delayed; Arik Air flew 918 flights and 606 (66%) were delayed; Azman Air, reported that out of 396 flights, 312 (79%) resulted in delays. This pattern of delays is constant for the rest of the airlines. Odunayo (2022) reports that in 2021, local airlines flew a total of 74, 537 times, recording 41,333 (55%) delays. Aliyu (2023) noted that undue delays and cancellations of flights over the years have pushed passengers to wit's end; degenerating into fistcuffs and willful damage of equipment. One attack worthy of mention took place in April 2022 when some passengers of Max Air went berserk at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja, over the delay of a flight; they vented anger at airline staff and destroyed airline facilities. This pattern was repeated at the Murtala Muhammed Airport, Lagos when some Lagos-Kano bound passengers also manhandled the airline's staff for delaying their flight (Aliyu, 2023). Anfofum et al (2015) estimated that over \$52.7 million is lost annually to flight delays in Nigeria. Aliyu (2023) reported that between January and December 2022, eleven domestic airlines in Nigeria operated 80,328 flights and 47,144 of them were delayed.

### **Case Studies and Statistics**

Together, these case studies and data demonstrate how prevalent air travel issues are in Nigeria and underscore the need for all-encompassing solutions to deal with the issues and improve the industry's general reliability as well as effectiveness. The current cases and available statistics are grouped under the following headings:

i. **Incidents of Flight Delays:** Odunayo (2022) provides a case study that demonstrates how frequently flights in Nigeria experience delays. According to the author, flight delays have become the norm, with irate passengers having to wait for hours on end. This frequently leads to scenes at airports before passengers can get refunds or board other flights.

Statistics: In the first quarter of 2022, out of 23,619 local flights, delays were reported in 14,121 cases, or 59.7% of all flights, according to the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) (2022).

ii. **Statistics on Airline-Specific Delays:**

Case Study: Ayo-Agunbiade and Stephens' 2019 study focuses on particular airlines and their history of delays. The study reveals that a number of airlines, such as Aero Contractors, Arik Air, and Dana Air, have a history of maintaining high percentages of delayed flights.

Statistics: NCAA (2023) offers comprehensive data for February 2022, stating that delays ranged from 60% to 79% for airlines like Aero Contractor, Arik Air, and Azman Air.

### **iii. The Effect of Flight Delays on the Economy**

Case Study: Anfofum et al. (2015) calculate the cost of flight delays to Nigeria's economy. According to the report, delays cost the economy more than \$52.7 million a year and have an impact on many stakeholders and sectors.

Statistics show that eleven local carriers in Nigeria completed 80,328 flights between January and December 2022, with 55% of those flights experiencing delays, according to Aliyu (2023).

### **iv. Reasons for Flight Delays**

Case Study: Eze (2023) investigates the reasons behind flight delays, focusing on technical difficulties, weather, limited supply of aviation fuel, shortages of foreign exchange, and inadequate skills of local staff.

Statistics: According to the NCAA (2022) breakdown for January 2022, delays ranged from 57% to 87% for a number of airlines, including Air Peace, Dana Air, and Overland Airlines.

### **v. Effect on Safety and Passenger Contentment**

Case Study: Aliyu (2023) details instances in which irate travelers resorted to drastic measures—like physically assaulting airline employees and causing damage to airline property—in response to flight delays.

Statistics: According to the study, more than 47,000 out of 80,328 flights had delays in 2022, which increased passenger dissatisfaction and occasionally raised safety concerns.

### **vi. Regulatory Reaction and Enforcement Issues**

Case Study: El-Yakub (2022) examines Nigeria's current regulatory environment, highlighting difficulties in upholding consumer protection legislation and holding airlines responsible for errors.

Statistics: According to NCAA (2022) data, delays affected almost 60% of all flights in the first quarter of 2022, reaching an alarming rate.

### **Causes of Air Transportation Glitches**

Air transportation glitches are the result of a combination of several factors, including technical, operational, regulatory, and infrastructural issues and can manifest in unexpected aircraft technical faults, force majeure, inefficiency and poor service delivery.

1. Infrastructure challenges - Nigeria's aviation infrastructure is outdated and inadequate to meet a growing demand in the aviation industry and these include poorly maintained airports, outdated air traffic control systems, and limited terminal and runway capacity. One attributable factor is caused by sudden aircraft malfunctioning or bird strike and this jeopardizes all assigned flights resulting in undue delays. It may render the Aircraft to Aircraft on Ground (AOG) and the airline may lack the capacity to quickly deploy another aircraft to cover the operations; this invariably becomes a challenge that will cause more delay (Eze, 2023).
2. Technical issues - Insufficient maintenance and upkeep of aircraft, runways, and facilities can lead to technical glitches, delays, and safety concerns. Ageing

Aircraft Fleet Many airlines in Nigeria operate older aircraft, which are more prone to technical issues and breakdowns. The lack of modern and fuel-efficient aircraft is a huge contributory factor to inefficiencies. Inadequate maintenance routine and upkeep of aircraft, runways, and facilities can lead to technical glitches, delays, and even safety concerns.

3. Weather - Flight disruptions are caused by severe weather and many Airlines delay or cancel flights due to the resultant poor visibility and safety reasons. In Nigeria, weather is a very common cause of flight delay because airlines have average landing systems and hardly factor weather disruptions into their flight timing. The Nigeria Meteorological Agency (NIMET) always issues prior weather predictions and warnings to enable airlines to prepare adequately in the event of disruptions, however, many Airlines overlook these NIMET warnings.
4. Aviation fuel scarcity - The availability of aviation fuel determines the fortunes of airlines. Flight operations are grounded many times due to the scarcity and high cost of aviation fuel. Eze (2023) cited Meggison's reports that aviation fuel is not a stand-alone issue in Nigeria, petrol is an issue, and kerosene is an issue. The scarcity of petroleum products is killing the aviation industry which is one of the pivots for Nigeria's economy.
5. Forex scarcity - A major challenge of the Nigerian airlines is their inability to source foreign exchange for aircraft maintenance, training of personnel and buying spares at reasonable rates. Air transport in Nigeria is dollar-denominated and the non-availability of foreign exchange frustrates routine maintenance and repair of aircraft which are carried out overseas.
6. Weak capacities of local personnel: Nigerian airlines rely heavily on foreign manpower especially engineers and sourcing expatriates is a huge burden due to exorbitant charges. Expatriate charges are three times what is paid to Nigerians and some demand payment in foreign currencies which is difficult to get. Furthermore, the mandatory training of pilots is usually very expensive and unaffordable for individuals to pursue so airlines intervene but many due to forex insolvency do not train their pilots.
7. Shrinking ramp - The ramp provided at the airside of the General Aviation Terminal, is small for the number of aircraft that park therein and pilots have to manoeuvre carefully so as not to clip the wing of their aircraft. Eze (2023) reports that Air Traffic Controllers allow a flight to take off about five minutes before the signal starts up to another. This means that an aircraft could wait at the holding point of the runway for five minutes or more for another aircraft that has taken off to reach a cruise level, especially in busy airports, like Lagos. By implication, an aircraft can wait at the holding point for 15 to 20 minutes before taking off. These delays build up and would affect the services in operation for that day.
8. Loss of Rotation - - A rotation occurs when an aircraft is planned to fly, for example, Lagos-Abuja-Kano, and is designed to run six rotations per day, but the aircraft loses one hour in flight rotation and is now only able to fly five rotations. Any flight delay beyond one hour is disastrous as the airline loses huge revenue per loss of flight rotation. The regularity of disruptions in Nigeria's aviation business suggests that airlines lose more than ten billion naira annually along



with aviation agencies like the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) and the Nigeria Airspace Management Agency (NAMA), which do not earn revenue when a flight does not operate.

9. Poor Utilization of Aircraft - Akpan (2023) opined that flight delays and cancellations result in poor aircraft utilization. A Boeing B737 is expected to run 16 hours a day to keep healthy, but flight time in Nigeria is limited to daytime as many airports do not have facilities for night operations so the airlines struggle to meet adequate utilization. So, for any flight delay beyond one hour, the airline loses a lot of money on fixed costs like aircraft insurance, operational costs, refunds to passengers and brand image.
10. System Failure by Regulatory Authorities - Many of the Regulatory Agencies in the Aviation sector lack resources and expertise for adequate regulatory oversight and oftentimes are victims of enforcement compromise in safety standards and practices.
11. Safety and security issues - Inadequate safety procedures and training, poor compliance with international safety standards, security challenges, incidents of piracy and terrorism, which disrupt air transportation operations, lead to route changes or cancellations or result in glitches.
12. Poor Customer Service - poor customer service, such as long check-in lines, inadequate terminal facilities, and inadequate passenger amenities, results in passenger dissatisfaction and operational disruptions and glitches.

Keyamo (2023) posited the need for collaborative effort and commitment of all stakeholders in the aviation industry to reduce the current rate of flight delays and glitches affecting service delivery. The frequency of air glitches in Nigeria impacts airline passengers negatively and requires urgent intervention to protect their consumer rights. These developments infringe upon the right of air passengers to be properly served. Undoubtedly, there is a need for stricter enforcement of consumer protection laws in the aviation sector of Nigeria.

#### **Enforcement of Consumer Protection Laws**

In Nigeria, breach of air passengers' rights; ranging from flight delays, denied boarding, loss of baggage, and cancelled flights despite the bureaucratic and legal frameworks regulating the Aviation Industry remains a source of concern. These problems can be mitigated by stricter enforcement of laws, proper education of the public on their rights and redress mechanisms to assist victims in challenging the status quo.

The Nigerian Civil Aviation Regulation (2015) and the Civil Aviation Act (2006) were adopted to regulate air service and airline carriers, with the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority serving as the primary regulating authority. Nigeria is also one of the signatories to the Montreal Convention, a key international aviation treaty that governs air carriers' liability for damages caused to passengers, including death, and is incorporated into Section 48 of the Civil Aviation Act of 2006. As a result, anybody who sustains pain or harm as a result of an air carrier's activity or inaction has the right to seek redress (El-Yakub, 2022).

The Nigerian Civil Aviation Regulations support the Montreal Convention and the Civil Aviation Act which states that liabilities of an air carrier to its passengers could arise from; injury sustained on board, death of a passenger during the course of a journey, loss or damage of goods/baggage or delay, denial and cancellation of a flight (El-Yakub, 2022). The remedies and rights are presented under Part 19 of the Nigerian Civil Aviation Regulation, titled “Consumer Protection Regulation” (NCARs), which can be mainly categorized into the right to reimbursement and rerouting, right to accommodation and care, and financial compensation to air passengers (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2015).

According to Part 19 of the Nigeria Civil Aviation Regulations on Consumer Protection Regulation (2015), with regards to reimbursement and rerouting and in the event of flight cancellation or denial, the cost of the air ticket should be refunded to the passenger if due to the fault of the carrier, the passenger could not be transported in the way and manner as agreed. Following NCAR section 19 (1) I, the passenger is given the right to instant compensation for domestic flights and 14-day settlements for international flights of the entire cost of the unused ticket at the price at which it was acquired.

By virtue of NCAR 19.8.2, when passengers are offered rerouting to their final destination on an alternative flight pursuant to 19. 10, the arrival time which does not exceed the scheduled arrival time of the flight, originally booked, (i) by one hour in respect of all domestic flights and by 3 hours in respect of all international flights, the international airline may reduce the compensation provided for in section 19.8.1 by 50%. The essence of 19.6 is that, while redirecting is one of the cancellation remedies, the rights that are available in the case of a domestic or international flight delay include care, reimbursement, or compensation but not rerouting (El-Yakub, 2022).

Nigeria Civil Aviation Regulations on Consumer Protection Regulation (2015) also provide for the right to accommodation and care and in the event of a delay, cancellation, denied boarding or downgrading, section 19(10) NCAR 2015 provides for the right to be cared for by the air carrier at the expense of the operating carrier. Care under this provision includes free lodging, transportation between lodging and airport, refreshments, meals, and free phone calls, SMS, emails, or fax messages. Section 19.6 states that if the delay is between 2 and 3 hours, passengers are entitled to complimentary refreshments such as water, soft drinks, confectioneries, and snacks. Furthermore, travelers will be provided with two complimentary phone calls, SMS messages, or emails. Where the delay exceeds 3 hours, between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m., or when the airport at the point of departure or ultimate destination is closed, the passengers have a right to be accommodated free of charge in addition to being transported to and from the airport as specified in sections 19.10.1 (iii) and 19.10.1 (iv). NCARs also provide financial compensation to air passengers in the event of delay of carriage or breach of carriage. Although there is no monetary compensation in the event of a domestic flight delay, however, for international flights, if the delay is within 2-4 hours, the passenger is entitled to monetary compensation to the value of 30% of the cost of the ticket.

### **Proposal for Air Passengers' Bill of Rights**

Although consumer rights are stated in the Nigeria Civil Aviation Regulations, prescribed deterrents are meagre, the document itself is not widely circulated, implementation by Airlines is weak and enforcement by regulators has been lackadaisical; undoubtedly, the likely reasons for the uptick in the constant cancellation and delays in the aviation transportation sector. For example, air passengers on a domestic flight in Nigeria are only eligible for a refund if they have been delayed for more than three hours; whereas a 30-minute flight delay may jeopardize the reason for the trip in the first instance.

As a deterrent to Airlines that perpetually delay flights, there is a need to introduce an Air Passengers' Bill of Rights in Nigeria to include the rights and responsibilities of passengers and airlines to be enforced by appropriate regulatory authorities, and failure to which the passenger may seek legal redress in the courts. A strict enforcement of these provisions will hold Airlines accountable and reduce the incidence of glitches that often lead to delays and cancellations associated with flight operations in Nigeria. The Air Passengers' Bill of Rights which must be well circulated, will correctly define boundaries and confer on the passenger certain rights and responsibilities; including:

1. The right to be fully informed about the flight status.
2. The right to the full value for an air passenger's fare when a delay exceeds 60 minutes.
3. The right to book and confirm tickets with an airline of a passenger's choice
4. The right to the provision of a conducive airport environment before, during, and after flights.
5. The right to seek redress for all irregularities during a passenger's flight.
6. The right to timely feedback in respect of matters/complaints lodged with Airline service providers.
7. The right to be treated with respect and dignity irrespective of race, creed, social status, or physical condition.
8. The entitlement to a refund for flight cancellations, delays, damaged/lost luggage, and refused boarding for plausible explanations that do not involve technical, weather, air traffic control limits, security threats, and labor conflicts that may impair the airline's operation.

### **Conclusion**

The study concludes by highlighting the critical need for Nigeria to enact an Air Passengers' Bill of Rights and enforce consumer protection laws more strictly. The problems with air travel that have been found have wide-ranging effects, so fixing them with strict regulations is essential to the aviation industry's long-term viability. The suggested framework fosters a more effective, transparent, and passenger-focused aviation sector in Nigeria while simultaneously safeguarding the rights of passengers and acting as a driving force for positive change. In the end, the implementation of an Air Passengers' Bill of Rights and the implementation of consumer protection laws are key steps toward creating a more dependable and user-friendly air transportation system in the entirety of Nigeria.

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