



## MASTER'S DISSERTATION

# UNDERSTANDING HOW FEAR OF FLYING AFFECTS THE CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOR OF COMMERCIAL AIRLINE PASSENGERS

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UNDERSTANDING HOW FEAR OF FLYING AFFECTS  
THE CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOR OF COMMERCIAL  
AIRLINE PASSENGERS

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## **ABSTRACT**

It is estimated that fear of flying affects more than one-third of all people and it is related to a high perception of risk. This fear affects people negatively on a personal and professional level. It also impacts airline costs because it reduces demand and might compromise flights' on-time performance among other disruptions. Most of the studies on perceptions and behaviors of consumers with this fear have specific contexts and are quantitative. Therefore, this research had a qualitative approach to understand how fear of flying affects the consumption behavior of commercial airline passengers. The triangulation method was applied by collecting 44 web testimonials from fear of flying passengers and by conducting semi-structured interviews, 11 with fear of flying passengers and 3 with clinical psychologists involved with the treatment of this fear. Following the content analysis of the collected data, the main result of this research is that the consumption behavior of fear of flying passengers is affected not just by their air travel perceived risks but also by how they cope with the stress associated with it. The outcome can be positive or negative for both, FoF passengers and airlines. It is recommended that airlines consider this target segment in their marketing strategy to potentialize the market dimension, starting by reinforcing the brand reputation and endorsing support for these consumers.

**Keywords:** Consumer behavior; Fear of flying; Air travel perceived risk; Coping responses.



## RESUMO

Estima-se que o medo de voar afeta mais de um terço da população e que está relacionado com uma alta percepção de risco. Este medo afeta as pessoas negativamente, tanto a nível pessoal como profissional. Além disso, impacta os custos das companhias aéreas porque reduz a procura e pode comprometer a pontualidade dos voos entre outras perturbações. A maior parte dos estudos sobre as percepções e comportamentos dos consumidores com este medo, têm contextos específicos e são quantitativos. Por esse motivo, este estudo teve uma abordagem qualitativa com o objetivo de compreender como o medo de voar afeta o comportamento de consumo dos passageiros das companhias aéreas comerciais. Na recolha de dados foi utilizado o método da triangulação, que consistiu na recolha de 44 testemunhos disponíveis online, de passageiros com medo de voar e na realização de entrevistas semiestruturadas, 11 a passageiros com medo de voar, e 3 a psicólogas clínicas dedicadas ao tratamento deste medo. Tendo em conta a análise do conteúdo recolhido, o principal resultado desta pesquisa é que o comportamento de consumo de pessoas que têm medo de voar é afetado não só pelas suas percepções de risco de viagens aéreas, mas também como respondem ao stress associado. O resultado pode ser positivo ou negativo para ambos, passageiros com medo de voar e companhias aéreas. É recomendado que as companhias aéreas considerem este segmento-alvo na sua estratégia de marketing para potencializar a dimensão do mercado, começando por reforçar a reputação da marca e apoiando estes consumidores.

**Palavras-chave:** Comportamento do Consumidor; Medo de Voar; Percepção de Risco das Viagens Aéreas; Respostas de Coping.

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## INTRODUCTION

Aviation has safety as its highest priority and never stops improving on this matter (Airlines.IATA, 2022), therefore the airplane has become the long-distance fastest and safest means of transportation (IHLG, 2017). Nevertheless, it is estimated that more than a third of all people find flying difficult and distressing (Busscher & Gildeprint, 2017). 35 of every 100 people develop a fear of flying (from now on FoF) during their lives (Foreman & van Gerwen, 2018). It is related to a high estimation of risk and risk perception (Depla et al., 2008; Kunst & Zwirs, 2014). According to Busscher (2017, p.15), FoF (aviophobia) “is a persistent marked fear during or in anticipation of flying and disproportional to the actual danger. It is a heterogeneous phenomenon and often includes, or is a combination of, acrophobia, claustrophobia, fear of relinquishing control, fear of losing control over oneself, fear of a crash, panic, and social phobias”.

The FoF limits leisure, not only individually but also affects relatives, which brings consequent problems to relationships, hence, business opportunities can be missed or become a challenge when involving air travel (Foreman & van Gerwen, 2018), while for commercial airlines, flight disruptions and delays can be caused by passengers with a FoF. It affects costs because it reduces demand (Fleischer et al., 2012). Also, it negatively influences on-time performance as some people fail to board, requiring last-

minute luggage searches that delay departure, and even while on board, in extreme circumstances, FoF passengers may need to be taken back to the departure gate (Busscher, 2017; Oakes & Bor, 2010a). Moreover, some of them may become aggressive in anxiety-uncontrolled situations, have binge drinking conduct, or have panic attacks, consequently affecting airline employees (Oakes & Bor, 2010a; Saadat et al., 2014).

In the airline commercial industry, it became more common the hybridization of business models between Full Service and Low-Cost Carriers, as well as airline companies' alliances (OECD, 2014). Due to these changes, airlines are highly competitive, therefore convenient strategies should be adopted by them to improve continuously and sustainably (Fedosova, 2016), and in this matter, Marketing plays a leading role.

The most important attributes affecting travelers' decision-making regarding air travel are price, comfort, schedule, and service, however with FoF passengers' other attributes should be considered (Fleischer et al., 2012). Although perceived safety is one of the dictators of customer satisfaction, especially for those who travel for leisure, and is recommended by Ringle et al. (2014) to airlines emphasize safety in their advertisements, information on flight risk is not easily obtained, and airlines usually do not advertise safety (Savage, 2012), which makes marketing strategies more challenging.

In 2012, it was stated that empirical research in risk/price trade-off behavior is needed (Savage, 2012), and later in 2017, there was still a lack of publishing regarding travelers affected by the FoF actual booking behavior considering risk perceptions and price trade-offs (Busscher, 2017). According to even more recent articles, there is an absence of literature on perceived risk and its different components impacting travelers' intentions to air travel. Instead, the focus has been mainly on impacting the flights' online bookings (Cho et al., 2018) and responsible sustainable air travel (Hesse & Rünz, 2020). Furthermore, most of the studies found in the literature review related to FoF booking perceptions and behaviors have specific contexts, such as geographic location, airline company, or route (Fleischer et al., 2012; Fleischer et al., 2015; Shiwakoti et al., 2022). In addition, the approach is mainly quantitative, which results also in a paucity of in-depth understanding. For this matter, this study intends to fulfill the gap regarding the underlying reasons and feelings behind consumer behavior.

The general objective of this thesis is to understand how FoF affects the consumption behavior of commercial airline passengers. To accomplish this main objective, a deconstruction was made resulting in two specific objectives:

1. To understand the reasons and feelings underlying the perceived risk of FoF passengers toward air travel.
2. To explore FoF passengers' consumption coping responses when facing air travel decision-making.

The structure of the thesis is divided into the following chapters:

Chapter 1 encompasses the literature review, a state-of-the-art collection of the most important findings on the phenomena. From general consumer behavior to specific air travel individuals with FoF, focused on two main themes: perceived risk in consumption occasions and consumption coping responses. Chapter 2 contains the methodology, where the most adequate approach and methods are selected for systematic research to be followed aiming to pursue the objectives. Chapter 3 presents the results and findings of the collecting and web collection technique and interviews, through data analysis. Chapter 4, entails a discussion, where the findings are compared with the collected thoughts brought in the literature review. Chapter 5 consists of the study conclusions, which include the answers to the objectives, the study contributions, as well as the limitations and recommendations for future research.

Overall, the elaboration of this thesis was challenging due to the lack of recent studies considering FoF passengers as the target audience in a marketing context. At the same time comprised an extraordinary opportunity to bring the subject back to life complementing the existing studies and contributing to the literature while benefiting commercial airlines' marketing strategies to be more adequate for FoF passengers.

## **1. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature review is the foundation of this thesis. Several authors enriched the literature with theoretical contributions, which will be of extreme importance to understanding the research problem. Furthermore, previous findings and theories related to the phenomena can be discussed and compared with the final results.

The chapter is subdivided into two sub-themes, starting with perceived risk in consumption occasions and finishing with consumption coping responses, establishing the connection to the field of commercial airlines.

An airline is an organization that operates aircraft for commercial reasons. It is licensed by the state's civil aviation authority to carry people, mail, and/or cargo, and provides scheduled or non-scheduled air transport services, or both, that are available to the general public (IATA, 2018). In the present study, mail and/or cargo will be excluded when referring to commercial airlines and air travel.

## **1.1. PERCEIVED RISK IN CONSUMPTION OCCASIONS**

The definition of risk is being exposed to the possibility of harm or loss, a hazard or dangerous chance, or the possibility of losing something valuable. In general, according to Reisinger and Mavondo (2016), three types of risk are acknowledged:

1. Real risk;
2. Absolute risk (considered by commercial providers who implement safety procedures to minimize the real risk);
3. Perceived risk.

In consuming behavior, the term perceived risk was first approached by Bauer (1960, p.390), contending that it “involves risk in the sense that any action of a consumer will produce consequences which he cannot anticipate with anything approaching certainty, and some of which at least are likely to be unpleasant”. When comparing the purchase of services and products, it was identified that services are considered riskier due to their uncertainty (Mitchell & Groatorex, 1993).

The researchers dedicated to studying perceived risk started to consider a standard multidimensional construct. Five perceived risk dimensions were more often identified regarding consuming behavior (Jacoby & Kaplan, 1972;

Kaplan et al., 1974) while other researchers introduced a sixth dimension (Roselius, 1971; Stone & Grønhaug, 1993):

1. Financial risk means a monetary loss for the consumer consequence of service producer selection (Garner & Garner, 1985)
2. Performance risk refers to products not performing as desired (Jacoby & Kaplan, 1972; Kaplan et al., 1974; Peter & Ryan, 1976).
3. Psychological risk is self-disappointment if not making a good product choice or not adequate to one's self-image (Jacoby & Kaplan, 1972; Roselius, 1971).
4. Social risk relates to others' negative perception of the consumer purchase choice (Garner & Garner, 1985).
5. Physical risk consists of potential safety hazards while using the product (Derbaix, 1983).
6. Temporal is the amount of time required to purchase the products and the time lost due to product failure (Peter & Ryan, 1976).

Individuals formulate their decisions based on perceived rather than objective risk (Boksberger et al., 2007) which consequently affects their consuming decision (Bulchand-Gidumal & Melián-González, 2021). "Perceived risk affects people's attitudes, which in turn determines their behavioral intentions toward the risk" (Carvalho et al., 2008, p.319). When associated with uncomfortable consequences or emotions, humans tend to avoid fearer objects or contexts (Glotzbach et al., 2012). Additionally, risk-avoidant decision-

making is often related to anxiety in various behavioral contexts. The higher the levels of anxiety, the less willingness to engage in risky decision-making (Maner & Schmidt, 2006).

In the consumer context, brand trust, brand credibility, brand loyalty, and brand overload feel are affected by risk avoidance. For this reason, it is important to create a strong brand-consumer trust relationship, because consumers believe that this relationship can help them avoid the risks inherent in buying the product, particularly consumers who have more tendency to avoid risk (Lee et al., 2016). This study result was based on a scale that was developed and verified by Raju, P. (1980) to measure risk-taking preference, meaning the opposite of risk-avoidance, relying on measurement items such as “I’m cautious in trying new or different products” and “I would rather stick with a brand I usually buy than trying something I’m not very sure of” (Lee et al., 2016, p.8).

The primary motivator influencing the travel preferences of many tourists is the requirement for safe travel (Zou & Meng, 2019), and when it comes to the choice of airline and route is partially based on the perceived risks of flying (Boksberger et al., 2007).

However, according to a study the risk dimension relevance, considering the standardized multidimensional construct mentioned previously (financial

risk, performance, psychological, social, physical, and temporal), differs according to gender, age, cultural background, income, previous experience, and travel purpose (Boksberger et al., 2007). In general, perceived financial risk had the highest importance score as a dimension. In terms of age, the older respondents are those who care less about financial perceived risk, while the young to middle age respondents care more about temporal risk, meaning convenience and punctuality. In particular comparison between gender, males consider more financial and functional risk. On the other hand, physical, social, and temporal had higher scores from the females, with particular emphasis on physical risk. When related to income, those with lower income, reveal a higher perceived financial risk. When in leisure, financial perceived risk is also on top of the respondents' consideration, while for business travel it is temporal perceived risk.

It is important to enhance that for respondents without previous flight experience the order of the dimensions is unique, according to the mean score. Possibly, the concerns are more related to emotional issues (safety, security, comfort, among others) to the detriment of quality, punctuality, and scheduling convenience (Boksberger et al., 2007). No significant difference was registered considering the different cultural backgrounds of the respondents.

Even though in this particular study, respondents, in general, considered air travel relatively safe, it is crucial to allude that the possibility of fatality is

marginalized by passengers after leaving the aircraft. In addition, physical risk together with psychological and social can be complex and travelers can be unable or unwilling to admit having these risk perceptions even to themselves (Boksberger et al., 2007).

Another method to access information is to consider the opposite approach, meaning perceived safety instead of perceived risk. On a route from Vietnam to Australia, it was studied that the level of service quality, overall satisfaction, and loyalty among airline passengers are all significantly correlated with how safe passengers believed their flight to be, suggesting that safety and security should be prioritized, improving service quality indicators (Shiwakoti et al., 2022). The specific results, of the Shiwakoti et al. (2022) research, are also relevant to be mentioned. Only 53.4% of respondents feel 'safe' while traveling on that specific airline and flight, while 28.9% feel 'neutral safe' and 17.7% feel 'unsafe'. The sense of safety by passengers is impacted by demographic disparities, which contradicts the previous study mentioned. Additionally, compared to travelers with lower educational backgrounds, travelers with higher educational backgrounds are more likely to regard flying as being safer. Frequent passengers felt flying was safer than those who flew less frequently. Passengers who were members of the Frequent Flyer Program felt safer than those who were not. It is relevant to enhance that frequent flyers are more likely to use superior ticket class; in addition, when in

a superior class, respondents' perceptions of safety were higher than those in lower classes.

Travelers' airlines and route choices are based on their perceived risks, affected by past incidents such as the Gulf War, the terrorist attack of September 11<sup>th</sup>, and the SARS epidemic (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2016). More recent impacting events were the Germanwings crash (He et al., 2018) and the Malaysian airline's airplane disappearance (Yang et al., 2018).

Whenever an airplane accident occurs, it attracts significant attention from the government and public, and generally, the result is a severe decrease in the airline's reputation and international prestige (Liao, 2015). The media (newspapers, television, and the Internet) does extensive coverage when it happens and consequently, travelers' awareness of such events is high (Ringle et al., 2014), especially for the individuals with FoF, that are the most influenced by what they see, hear, or read (Schindler et al., 2016). Mostly, information available in media is about crashes and the pictures shown are catastrophic and terrifying. This information learned from negative media coverage is likely one of the fuels of the growth of a flying phobia (Schindler et al., 2016). Moreover, according to Savage (2012, p.297), "not even airlines allude to their safety record vis-à-vis rivals in their advertising and press statements".

Regarding the information available about flight safety, which does not come directly from airlines, for travelers, if the airlines have a low or medium rate of safety it has worse repercussions than if it has no information at all. In the first case, flying avoidance is higher and other ways of transfer can be chosen instead. This affects the FoF passengers more than those who do not suffer from the phobia. When the airlines are ranked highly safe the difference is not as significant between FoF travelers and others when choosing a flight carrier (Fleischer et al., 2015). Although when the attributes they consider to feel safe have a different weight, also company identity and price among others are considered when deciding to fly or not with a specific airline, which also reflects in willingness to pay for a perceived higher safety level.

When a pictorial nature of a graphic risk is exhibited, might rise risk avoidance. This image-based heightened sense of risk is based on two types of mechanisms: cognitive (rational) and affective (emotional). Cognitively, pictorial presentations impose weaker upper limits on people's internal representations of the probabilities that riskier options will cause real harm. Affectively, the images trigger stronger negative and aversive associations with riskier alternatives and their outcomes (Chua et al., 2006). In this case, the intention was to show that alternatives products could be riskier, however, it is clear that if individuals have access to pictorial graphics related to risk (even if it is as a first alternative) it affects their risk perception, which enhances what was mentioned in the previous paragraphs regarding the impact of negative

media coverage on individuals with FoF and safety rankings when choosing the mean of travel.

Concluding, this topic of perceived risk on consumption occasions studies show evidence that individuals' perceived risk plays an important role in consumption behavior, and when it is related to commercial airline flights, it is not the exception, especially for individuals with a FoF. Furthermore, it is possible to verify that these individuals perceived risk differently due to their reasons and feelings and that anxiety weights on the consumer decisions. Therefore, it is crucial to explore how FoF passengers cope with air travel consumption decision-making.

## **1.2. CONSUMPTION COPING RESPONSES**

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) stated that even though stress is an unavoidable component of being human, how one copes with it has a significant impact on how well adaptation works to conquer a favorable outcome instead of unfavorable, or unresolved. According to their transactional theory, coping is a constantly evolving process of cognitive (thoughts) and behavioral (actions) efforts to manage particular external and/or internal pressures that are considered to be demanding or exceeding the person's resources. It is the complex transaction between the individual and the

environment that produces stress and the subsequent distress initiates coping strategies to manage emotions or attempt to directly deal with the stressor, which means involving conscious, purposeful actions. “The importance placed on appraisal in the transactional theory of stress and coping emphasizes that it is the perception that the event is stressful, rather than the event itself, that determines whether coping strategies are initiated and whether the stressor is ultimately resolved” (Biggs et al., 2017, pag.352).

The term coping strategy was originally associated with the transactional stress-coping theory and evolved into coping responses when researchers started to adapt or develop new theories, hence even in the literature is possible to find both terms easily confoundable and interchangeable. The original transactional stress and coping theory that defined the concept of coping strategies was exclusively dedicated to reactive coping responses and other researchers started also to consider preventive and proactive coping responses (Biggs et al., 2017).

The two main conceptual approaches to categorizing coping responses individuals have according to the situation are (1) the focus of coping and (2) the methods of coping (Moos & Holahan, 2003) as can be seen in Table 1.

Conceptual Approaches	Coping Responses
1. The focus of coping	Problem-focused
	Emotion-focused
	Dysfunctional
2. The method of coping	Cognitive method
	Behavioral method

**Table 1** – Scheme of conceptual approaches.

Source: Author’s elaboration based on Moos and Holahan (2003).

1. The focus of coping: a person’s orientation and action in response to a stressor. An individual can approach the problem and make active efforts to find a solution, try to avoid the problem, or focus on dealing with the emotions related to it (Moos & Holahan, 2003). The coping responses are represented in Table 2:

<b>Problem-focused</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active coping: The process of taking active steps to try to remove or circumvent the stressor or to ameliorate its effects.</li> <li>- Planning: Thinking about how to cope with a stressor. Planning involves coming up with actionable strategies, thinking about what steps to take, and how best to handle the problem.</li> <li>- Suppression of competing activities: Putting other projects aside, trying to avoid becoming distracted by other events, and even letting other things slide, if necessary, in order to deal with the stressor.</li> <li>- Restrain coping: Waiting until an appropriate opportunity to act presents itself, holding oneself back, and not acting prematurely.</li> <li>- Seeking social support such as advice, assistance, or information for instrumental reasons.</li> </ul>	Carver et al. (1989)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It shifts the person's environment relationship and it has been connected to a lesser extent of depression, fewer physical symptoms, a better quality of life, and improved immune function.</li> </ul>	Stowell et al. (2001)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is mainly one's active involvement to reduce stressors effect by searching for other options for the situation and building a strategy to act.</li> </ul>	George (2016)
<b>Emotional-focused</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seeking social support such as moral, sympathy or understanding for emotional reasons.</li> <li>- Positive reinforcement and growth by managing distressed emotions rather than dealing with the stressor and construing a stressful transaction in positive terms should intrinsically lead the person to continue active.</li> <li>- Acceptance of a stressor as real and acceptance of a current absence of active coping strategies. One might expect acceptance to be particularly important in circumstances in which the stressor is something that must be accommodated, as opposed to circumstances in which the stressor can easily be changed.</li> <li>- Turning to religion might serve as a source of emotional support, as a vehicle for positive reinterpretation and growth, or as a tactic of active coping with a stressor</li> <li>- Turning to humor.</li> </ul>	Carver et al. (1989)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trying to control emotional concomitants of stressors or potential stressors.</li> </ul>	George (2016)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It has been associated with anxiety, depression, emotional and physical distress, and poorer quality of life.</li> </ul>	Stowell et al. (2001)
<b>Dysfunctional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Focused on and venting emotions: The tendency to focus on whatever distress or upset one is experiencing and to vent those feelings. Long periods can impede adjustments.</li> <li>- Behavioral disengagement: Reducing one's effort to deal with the stressor, even giving up the attempt to attain goals with which the stressor is interfering.</li> <li>- Mental disengagement: A variety of activities that serve to distract the person from thinking about the behavioral dimension or goal with which the stressor is interfering. Some examples are daydreaming, sleeping, or watching TV.</li> <li>- Alcohol-drug use and denial.</li> </ul>	Carver et al. (1989)

**Table 2** – The focus of coping.  
Source: Author's elaboration.

2. The method of coping is whenever the responses to a stressful situation entail predominantly cognitive or behavioral efforts (Moos & Holahan, 2003) as explained in Table 3.

<b>Cognitive Method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It consists of the maladaptive procession of information and it can be biased by making assumptions without facts; interpreting a specific detail without contextualizing; drawing a conclusion from a single incident, classifying experience in extremes, assuming a self-focus on external events, and exaggerating or minimizing the impact of an experience.</li> </ul>	Leahy et al. (2022)
<b>Behavioral Method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is used as a compensatory response to cope with maladaptive core beliefs, for example, a negative core about the self can make the person please others to gain their favor. Also, the behavior can be seeking opinion, guidance, and reassurance of others to compensate for the belief no self-trust in making the right decision.</li> </ul>	Leahy et al. (2022)

**Table 3** – The method of coping.

Source: Author’s elaboration based on Leahy et al. (2022).

Moos and Holahan (2003) combined the two approaches, the focus of coping and the method of coping, defining four types of coping responses as presented below the explanation and in Table 4 the summary.

- a) Cognitive approach: Comprises logical analysis and positive reappraisal strategies. To be concerned with only one facet of the situation at a time, drawing on previous experiences, considering a potentially different course of action and their likely effects, and accepting the truth of a situation while rearranging it to reach a positive outcome.

- b) Cognitive avoidance: Involve strategies such as denying or minimizing the significance of a situation or its results. Also, to accept the actual situation and that it cannot be changed.
  
- c) Behavioral approach: Includes strategies such as looking for guidance and support and taking actual action to deal with a situation or its outcome straightforwardly.
  
- d) Behavioral avoidance: Consists in the pursuit of different incentives, trying to replace the losses involved in certain crises by becoming involved in new activities and creating alternate sources of satisfaction. A different strategy can be to express feelings of anger and frustration and refugee in impulsive or risky behavior as a way to momentarily reduce one's stress.

Type of coping	Approach coping	Avoidance coping
<b>Cognitive</b>	Logical analysis	Denying or minimizing
	Positive reappraisal	Acceptance/resignation
<b>Behavioral</b>	Seeking guidance and support	Seeking alternative rewards
	Problem solving	Emotion discharge Impulsive or risk behavior

**Table 4** – Underlying dimensions of coping responses.  
Source: Author's elaboration based on Moos & Holahan (2003).

In essence, diverse responses are applied as a response to the utmost stressful events and the stressfulness of these events depends and how individuals cope with it depends on two main factors: (1) the type of event or activity (context) and (2) the characteristics of the person (personality) (George, 2016).

In what concerns consumption decision-making, undesirable consumer decisions lead to more stress than desirable ones. Before and after making a purchase or consuming anything, consumers may experience stress consumption-related stress. This stress might result from differences between desired and real conditions related to different stages of the consumer decision-making process. The greater stress experienced at each stage of the decision-making process, suggests higher levels of consumer involvement with the service or purchase (such as booking a flight), emphasizing the importance of stressful consumption situations over non-stressed ones. These consumption situations can initiate consumption coping responses (Moschis, 2007).

Regarding air travel, in a study of almost 900 travel respondents, 50% assumed suffering anything from slight discomfort or apprehension to a very intense FoF. In the same sample, 10% revealed avoiding flying due to a high degree of fear or anxiety (Boksberger et al., 2007). In 2010 10%-35% of people seem to avoid flying or feel stressed when being exposed to the situation of flying (Oaks & Bor, 2010). More recently an overall estimation mentions more than a third of all people find flying difficult and distressing (Busscher, 2017).

FoF individuals, when exposed to stressful consumption decision-making situations, show (1) physiological, (2) cognitive, and (3) behavioral stress responses (Saadat et al. (2014)). Some examples of these distinct responses are presented in Table 5:

<b>Physiological Responses</b>	Combination of increase in blood pressure and heartbeat, hyperventilation, gastric upset irrespective of the nature of the cognitive response, and possible panic attack.	Foreman & van Gerwen (2018)
<b>Cognitive Responses</b>	FoF individuals frequently feel fear of crashing, death, losing self-control, having anxiety, and are ashamed of their fear and physical consequences and occasionally cannot sleep for days when they know they are going to travel by airplane.	Oakes & Bor (2010a)
	Some substantiate that mothers with young children may be subject to terrible thoughts about the consequences to their children if the mother were to die in an air travel accident.	Oakes & Bor (2010b)
	Separation anxiety, dwelling on recent traumatic or unpleasant events, or media coverage.	Saadat et al. (2014)
<b>Behavioral Responses</b>	There is a preference for traveling accompanied or in a group.	Yamaguchi (1998)
	There is a preference for nonstop flights over connecting flights to have fewer take-offs and landings.	Fleischer et al. (2012)
	Schedule carriers (regular) are preferred rather than nonscheduled carriers (charter).	
	Home carriers are preferred due to the facilitation of communicating with the cabin crew and social proximity.	
	Preferring a specific seat as a fear-alleviating attribute, for example, a seat near the emergency exit, makes them feel safer.	Oakes & Bor (2010b)
	Preferring riding a car or taking the train, even though via airplane would be safer, faster, and cheaper.	
	Questioning about flight conditions: Weather; Technical problems; Pilots' qualifications, and experience.	Foreman, Bor & van Gerven (2012); van Gerwen, L. & Bor (2016)
	Becoming aggressive while in fear situations toward other passengers and cabin crew.	van Gerwen, L. & Bor (2016)
	Self-medication or alcohol.	Foreman et al. (2012)

**Table 5** – Combination FoF responses.  
Source: Author's elaboration.

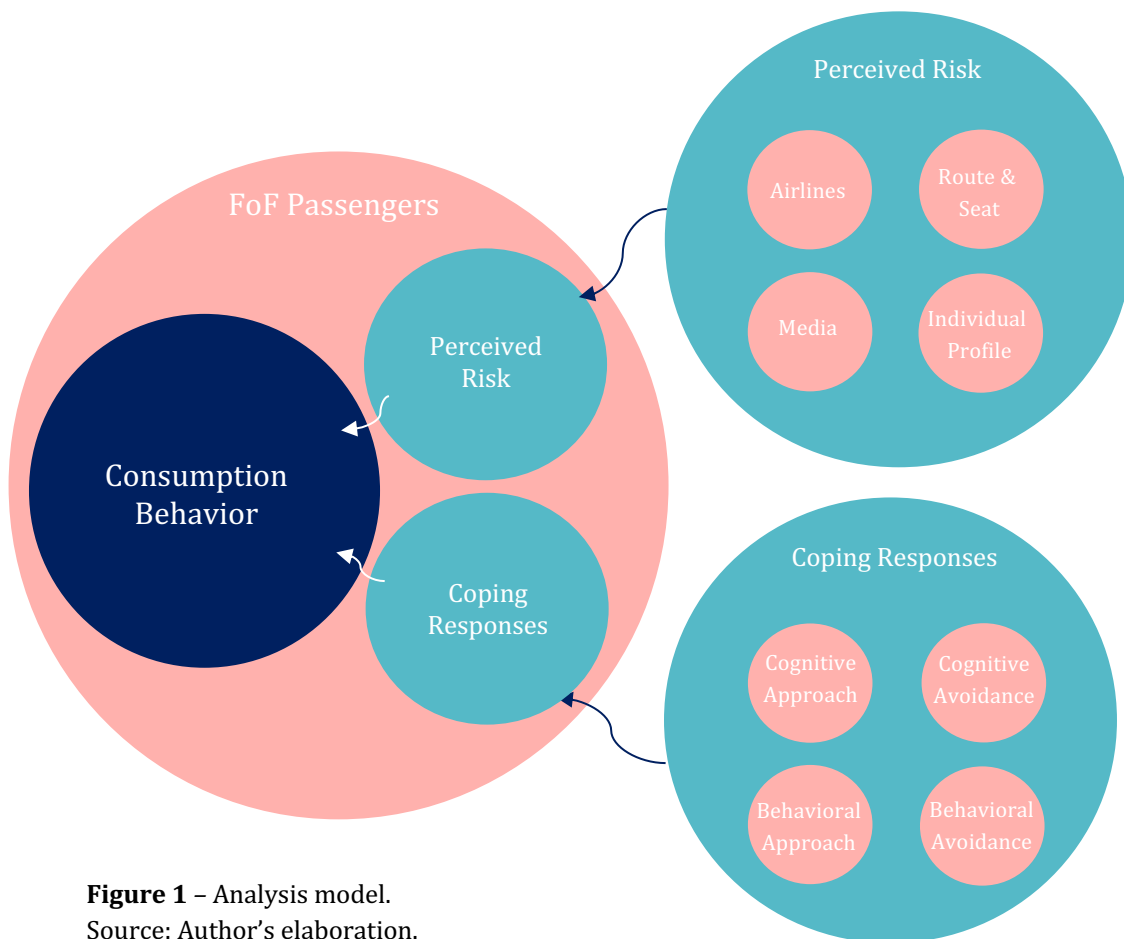
According to Saadat et al. (2014), avoidance is the most recognizable behavior response to FoF. The person will behave differently reflected in three main responses:

- (a) will not fly;
- (b) will fly under an absolutely urgent condition or
- (c) will fly when required but shows anxious reflections when doing so.

Summarizing, according to the previous studies FoF individuals when facing air travel consumption decision-making face stress. In an attempt to reduce stress, they apply coping responses, which are also referred to, by some authors, as coping strategies. When it is consumption-related stress, the coping responses are characterized as consumption-related responses. Together with perceived risk, these coping responses are important to understand FoF's passengers' consumer behavior.

### 1.3. ANALYSIS MODEL

Having the literature review into consideration, an analysis model was created (presented in Figure 1) to guide the steps that will be taken in this study's empirical research.



**Figure 1** – Analysis model.  
Source: Author's elaboration.

According to the literature review, consumers base their decisions on their perceived risk. In the collection of studies regarding air travel perceived risk and a few of them referring to FoF passengers in particular, 4 main categories could be recognized as affecting the perceived risk toward air travel: (1) commercial airline companies (reputation; service quality; customer loyalty; satisfaction); (2) route and seat (flight route; seat allocation); (3) media (negative media coverage; safety information) and (4) individual profile (age; gender; demographics; education; income; flying frequency; previous experiences; travel purpose).

Additionally, it was found that consumption coping responses can be applied by FoF individuals to reduce the stress associated with the FoF and air travel decision-making. According to the examined literature these responses can consist of 4 categories: (1) cognitive approach (logical analysis; positive reappraisal); (2) cognitive avoidance (denying or minimizing; acceptance or resignation); (3) behavioral approach (seeking guidance and support; problem-solving); (4) behavioral avoidance (seeking alternative rewards; emotion discharge; impulsive or risk behavior). Exploring these responses might reveal similarities and differences in FoF passengers' consumption behavior.

Studying how FoF passengers perceived the risk regarding commercial air travel and how they cope when facing the decision-making to fly is crucial for understanding how FoF affects consumption behavior.



## **2. METHODOLOGY**

After the literature review on the perceived risk in consumption occasions, from general air travel to FoF passengers in particular, their coping responses, and the consequent analysis model, it is fundamental to proceed with the clarification of the methodology of this empirical research.

This chapter includes the research objectives defined, the methodology approach for this research according to the general objective, the data collection process and sources, the appropriate data collection instruments used, participants' characterization and how they were selected, and lastly the process of the data analysis.

### **2.1. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

The general objective of the present study is “To understand how FoF affects the consumption behavior of commercial airline passengers”.

In order to accomplish this objective, a deconstruction was made resulting in two specific objectives: (1) “To understand the reasons and feelings underlying the perceived risk of FoF passengers toward air travel” and

(2) “To explore FoF passengers’ consumption coping responses when facing air travel decision-making.

Having into consideration the previous research objectives mentioned, this research benefits from an inductive exploratory qualitative approach. The reason is to provide a deeper understanding of the FoF passengers and to better interpret the data collected, to produce in-depth and illustrative information about their consumer behavior (Queirós et al., 2017). The given problem fits in what Maxwell et al. (2013) consider cannot be reduced to the operationalization of variables such as phenomena encountering meanings, motives, aspirations, beliefs, and attitudes. The incorporation of these psychological factors is related to subjective information such as thoughts and feelings, which intensifies an exploratory approach as more appropriate (Bellenger, Bernhardt & Goldstucker, 2011) to study FoF consumption behavior.

At last, to complement the methodology approach choice, it is important to reinforce that most studies found related to FoF consumption were performed under a quantitative approach (Fleischer et al., 2012; Fleischer et al., 2015; Shiwakoti et al., 2022), there is a lack of in-depth understanding of the underlying reasons for the FoF passenger behavior.

## 2.2. DATA COLLECTION PROCESS AND SOURCES

Understanding FoF consumers is a complex study and fear is a very sensitive topic, some individuals may not want to share or admit their feelings even when they agreed to be interviewed. Thus, this sensitive scenario demands an adequate collection process and diversity in collecting information for the empirical study.

Three different empirical settings were considered to gather information correlated to the research objectives. The first includes web sources by collecting testimonials from FoF programs' websites and YouTube videos about FoF, comprising secondary data for analysis. The second is semi-structured interviews with individuals self-reporting FoF that have flight experience and have flown within the last 5 years, and the third is a semi-structured interview with clinical psychologists and psychotherapists (from now on mentioned only as clinical psychologists) involved in FoF programs, both generating primary data.

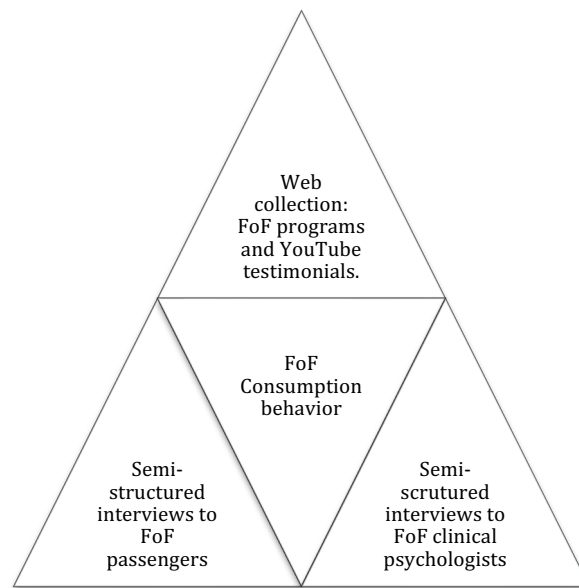
The data collection process was divided into two stages. The first one was the web collection of secondary data, and the second one included semi-structured interviews, collecting primary data.

In Table 6 it is possible to encounter the research design, a summarization of the process that assisted to establish a logical connection between the two collection stages, and how the planning and implementation were defined in order to guarantee a proper selection of data collection techniques and data sources to respond the objectives (Santos & Nogueira, 2023).

<b>General Objective</b>	To understand how FoF affects the consumption behavior of commercial airline passengers.		
<b>Data Collection Stages</b>	Stage 1	Stage 2	
	March 2023	April - May 2023	
	Collection of web testimonials for familiarizing with FoF passengers' expressions.	Semi-Structured Interviews with FoF passengers for an in-depth understanding of their consumption behavior.	Semi-Structured Interviews with clinical psychologists to have a specialist perspective of FoF passengers.
<b>Data Sources</b>	Secondary Data: Testimonials of FoF passengers from FoF programs' websites and YouTube videos.	Primary Data: Individuals that self-reporting FoF, have flight experience and have flown within the last 5 years.	Primary Data: -Clinical psychologists involved in FoF programs.
<b>Specific Objectives</b>	To understand the reasons and feelings underlying the perceived risk of FoF passengers toward air travel.		
	To explore FoF passengers' consumption coping responses when facing air travel decision-making.		

**Table 6** – Research design.  
Sources: Author's elaboration.

As this study comprises three different data sources, the triangulation method was applied to make the evidence stronger by converging key findings and conflicts from different sources as shown in Figure 2 (Yin, 2016).



**Figure 2** – Triangulation method.

Source: Author's elaboration.

### 2.2.1. Web Collection

According to Yin (2016), for most topics covered by qualitative research, the researcher should check for relevant web-based information, due to the useful clues that may be available for the topic. Having this in consideration, the web collection technique was conducted to pursue available data related to the specific objectives to identify key findings for the general objective. Although these data were produced with a purpose that was not for this study, it is relevant because FoF individuals expressed themselves spontaneously and it reveals findings that are not vulnerable to the researcher and participants' influence reflexivity (Yin, 2016). Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that to be

effective implied a methodical procedure that recognizes the difficulties of exploiting existing data (Johnston, 2014).

This web collection corresponded to the first stage of the data collection process for the advantage of the immediate availability of the data and mainly as a strategy for the researcher to be more familiar with FoF passengers' expressions before the semi-structured interviews.

In the present study, the collection was made during March 2023 by examining a total of 44 web testimonials from three websites of organizations with FoF treatment programs (one connected to an airline company and the other two independent), and from two YouTube videos (one made by an airline pilot and the other by an FoF passenger), all identified in Table 7.

Empirical Settings	No.	Program / Video Name	Organization / Channel	Characteristics	Website Reference
Program	1	Fly With Confidence	British Airways	Airline Company	<a href="https://flyingwithconfidence.com/testimonials">https://flyingwithconfidence.com/testimonials</a>
	2	Voar Sem Medo	Voar Sem Medo	FoF Investigation Center	<a href="https://voarsemmedo.com/testemunhos/">https://voarsemmedo.com/testemunhos/</a>
	3	Fear of Flying	Flight Experience & Sydney Investigation Center	Cooperation between two organizations	<a href="https://www.fearofflying.net.au/testimonials">https://www.fearofflying.net.au/testimonials</a>
Video	1	🤔 FEAR OF FLYING 🤔 12 Helpful TIPS by CAPTAIN JOE ✅	Captain Joe	Comercial Airline Pilot	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjV0BiEL3pA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjV0BiEL3pA</a>
	2	Aerophobia- How I CURED My Fear of Flying Instantly!	Mike Not Jerry (FoF Passenger)	FoF Passenger	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VrAw3FYiBY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VrAw3FYiBY</a>

**Table 7** – Web collection empirical settings.  
Source: Author's Elaboration.

## 2.2.2. Semi-structured Interviews

The method of semi-structured interviews enabled the communication between the researcher and participants, to be focused and flexible at the same time. It also allowed the researcher for a deeper understanding of personal narratives (Lekakis, 2014), by exploring thoughts, feelings, and beliefs in sensitive issues such as FoF (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).

The majority of the research data came from listening; hence, strategic questions were asked to collect critical information (Yin, 2016) for the specific research objectives of this study. As mentioned previously, there were two sources for the semi-structured interviews each one with a different setting.

The first empirical setting is individuals with FoF and these semi-structured interviews were considered to reveal insights into how the participants were thinking about and feeling or derived their risk perceptions and their consumption coping responses when deciding to fly (Yin, 2016).

The second empirical setting is the clinical psychologists involved in FoF programs, as recommended by Yin (2016) this source variation represents an interview of a participant whom the researcher suspects might hold different views related to the topic of study. Additionally, it may express information

that sometimes consumers do not recall consciously or feelings that are not willing to share.

The realization of both types of interviews correspond to the second stage of the data collection process and had no particular order apart from the availability of the participants. The two types of interviews aimed to collect data about the same empirical context from different sources and not influence each other's interview guide.

#### **2.2.2.1. Data Collection Instruments**

The conceptual categories recognized in the literature review and presented in the analysis model were associated with the two specific research objectives and assisted the researcher in the elaboration of the data collection instruments as it is shown in Table 8.

General Objective	Specific Objectives	Categories	Subcategories	Coding
To understand how FoF affects the consumption behavior of commercial airline passengers.	1 To understand the reasons and feelings underlying the perceived risk (PR) of FoF passengers toward air travel.	Airlines	Reputation, service quality, customer loyalty, and satisfaction.	PR1
		Route and Seat	Flight route Seat allocation.	PR2
		Media and Safety information	Negative media coverage and safety information.	PR3
		Individual Profile	Age, gender, demographics, education, income, flying frequency Previous experiences and travel purpose.	PR4
	2 To explore FoF passengers' consumption coping responses (CCR) when facing air travel decision-making.	Cognitive Approach	Logical analysis. Positive reappraisal.	CCR1
		Cognitive Avoidance	Denying or minimizing. Acceptance or resignation.	CCR2
		Behavioral Approach	Seeking Guidance and support. Problem-solving.	CCR3
		Behavioral Avoidance	Seeking alternative rewards Emotion discharge. Impulsive or risk behavior.	CCR4

**Table 8** – Research objectives and respective analysis category.  
Source: Author’s elaboration.

Considering that in this study the data collection technique for primary data englobes two types of semi-structured interviews, two different guides were scripted accordingly. The one that corresponds to FoF passengers can be found in Appendix 1 and the other one that corresponds to the psychologist in Appendix 2. The questions of both types of interviews were based on studies of authors mentioned in the literature review and connected to the specific research objective and analysis model categories.

### **2.2.2.2. Participants' Characterization and Selection**

The selection of the participants of the present qualitative study intended to include participants that would contribute rich information within the scope of this study for accomplishing the research objective. There were two groups of interviewees: the psychologist and the FoF individuals.

In the first group, FoF passengers, according to the study that van Gerwen et al. (1999) conducted, the diagnosis of FoF is made through self-reports of physiological discomfort. This statement leads to the proposition of self-diagnosed individuals being adequate for participating in primary research. Although the diagnosis can include claustrophobia, panic disorder with agoraphobia, or general anxiety disorder (Oakes & Bor, 2010a) this thesis does not intend to enter into its clinical aspects, but rather to focus on its consequences in terms of consumption. For that reason, it is also important that each participant had a minimum of one flight experience in the last 5 years. The selection was also purposive to collect the most relevant and plentiful data (Yin, 2016), and the researcher knew some individuals mentioned suffering from this issue. Additionally, the researcher by mentioning the phenomena under study had references to more FoF individuals, which consists of purposive snowballing (Yin, 2016).

A total of 11 interviews were completed. The first was on day 3rd of April, 2023, and the last one was on the 15 May, 2023. The average duration was of approximately 40 minutes.

It is important to mention that these interviews depended highly on the availability of the interviewees, and for some FoF passengers, it was not comfortable to be interviewed on the subject close to flight bookings. One interview was face-to-face and all the others were online (using Microsoft Teams), according to the availability and preference of the interviewees. The interviews were audio recorded with the participant’s permission and later transcribed for data analysis. Table 9 presents the list of the FoF participants and their respective alphanumeric coding identification and information.

Identification Code	Gender	Age	Nationality	Education	Profession
FoF1	Female	34	Portuguese	Bachelor’s Degree	Automobile Sales
FoF2	Male	38	Portuguese	Bachelor’s Degree	Entrepreneur
FoF3	Female	36	Portuguese	Bachelor’s Degree	Chief Financial Officer
FoF4	Female	24	Portuguese	Bachelor’s Degree	Marketing and Creativity
FoF5	Female	40	Portuguese	High School Graduated	Ballerina
FoF6	Female	36	Portuguese	Bachelor’s Degree	Product Owner
FoF7	Female	38	Portuguese	Bachelor’s Degree	Operations Manager
FoF8	Female	35	Portuguese	High School Graduated	Actress
FoF9	Male	70	Portuguese	Master’s Degree	Lawyer
FoF10	Female	50	Portuguese	Master’s Degree	Product Manager
FoF11	Male	36	Portuguese	Bachelor’s Degree	Cinematography

**Table 9** – Participants’ profile: FoF passengers  
Source: Author’s elaboration.

The second group is the clinical psychologists that had as a premise to be actively involved in a program for helping individuals to overcome the FoF. In this case, the selection was purposive due to the professional requirements

The first interview with the clinical psychologists was on the 2nd of April 2023 and the last one on the 27 of May 2023. These interviews were realized according to psychologists' availability. The average duration was approximately 40 minutes. The three interviews were online (using Microsoft Teams and Zoom) and with the psychologist's permission, it was audio recorded and transcribed. The identification code and information of the interviewee are presented in Table 10.

Identification Code	Gender	Nationality	Profession
Psy1	Female	Portuguese	Psychologist
Psy2	Female	Spanish	Psychologist
Psy3	Female	British	Psychotherapist

**Table 10** – Participants' profile: Clinical psychologists  
Source: Author's elaboration.

## 2.3. DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of qualitative data collected through secondary and primary sources, as recommended by Yin, (2016), consisted of five phases:

1. The first phase was compiling secondary data, meaning copying, and pasting sets of web testimonials from FoF program websites and YouTube videos to a framework. Additionally, realizing the interviews with the FoF passengers and the clinical psychologists. The audio records were used to manually transcribe the interviews into Microsoft Word, methodically respecting the original data. Afterward, Portuguese data from all the sources were translated into English. The data was stored in a created electronic file with separate files according to the data source.
2. The second phase consisted in disassembling the data from the three sources and creating a formal coding procedure. At first, there was an identification of subcategory codes (level 1) of data closer to the activity and subsequently related to broader conceptual codes, the category codes (level 2). Appendix 3 presents the web-collected testimonials. The transcripts of the interviews of the FoF passengers are not present in the appendix due to their length, however, the analysis of all the sources followed the same process.

3. The third phase, reassembling, consisted in creating substantive themes, that relied on the researcher's insightfulness in recognizing emerging patterns and reorganizing the data disassembling in different groups and sequences using a tabular form for each data source.

4. The fourth phase, interpreting, was to create a new narrative based on the reassembled data from the three sources. A descriptive inductive analysis was made, based on the conceptual categories from the literature review, however considering the themes and patterns that emerged from reassembling phase, as well as the findings.

5. The fifth and final phase was the conclusions that depended on all previous phases, more specifically on the interpretation phase. These conclusions are the culmination of the entire study.

In this data analysis procedure, there was a common alternating fashion between some phases, such as 2 and 3, and 3 and 4. The 5th phase depended highly on the 4th, interpretation.

In summary, this chapter represents the clarification of all the steps of the methodology undertaken from the objectives to the final data analysis that led to the findings presented in the next chapter.

### **3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

This chapter presents the results and findings of the analysis of the data collected for this research, remembering that includes the triangulation of (1) web collection of testimonials, (2) interviews with FoF passengers, and (3) interviews with clinical psychologists. The presentation will follow the order of the previous analysis model by diving into the two specific objectives and the categories belonging to each one. Each category also has subcategories that will be addressed individually.

#### **3.1. REASONS AND FEELINGS UNDERLYING THE PERCEIVED RISK OF FOF PASSENGERS TOWARD AIR TRAVEL**

##### **3.1.1. Airlines (PR1)**

###### **Reputation**

1. As presented in Table 11, in the web collection data, it was not very present this subcategory, from the 44 testimonials analyzed, only Web38 expressed the surprise of having a panic attack in one flag airline with a reputation as one of the safest in the world.
2. Except for FoF4 and FoF11, which did not mention the reputation of the airline, all interviews associated it with feeling safer or the opposite, making

them more stressed. Airlines' accident track record is remarkably associated with risk perception among almost all FoF interviewees, FoF3, FoF7, and FoF9 even recall an example of an Air France accident. However, it is important to highlight that they do not exclude Air France from their preferences, being above other non-flag airlines that they do not recall having accidents. The majority prefer flag airlines instead of low-cost or other not renowned airlines, FoF8, for example, refers to one alliance of airline brands. Fewer participants shared having a perception that airlines from different geographical areas are riskier. According to FoF7, most of all airlines from South America, Africa, and Asia are associated with not being so good, praising America for better quality control. FoF8 mentions geographically as being outside Europe although under the reason of being an area that she does not master.

3. Psy1 mentions that for FoF passengers, the biggest fear is being involved in an accident or mechanical failure. Also, considering that they chose certain airlines, either because they flew them before or because they search for information, just like FoF8 mentioned she does. Additionally, there is a tendency to avoid low costs because of a distorted perception of being less safe, which according to Psy3 is associated with the flights being cheap. Psy2 refers to the impact of risk perception of unknown airlines, especially when flying outside Europe, while Psy3 refers specifically to Asian airlines.

Subcategory	Patterns	
Reputation	- Accidents track record	
	- Low-cost / Unknown airlines	
	- Geographic location	
Sources	Data	
Web collection	Web:38 "I'm writing this as I sit on a plane, after a bout of quite terrible internal panic. I'm flying Singapore Airlines (supposedly one of the safest airlines in the world)"	
FoF Passengers	FoF1: "It has happened for example for Thailand or for example for Egypt to have companies, imagine 150€ more in account per person and give preference to a Lufthansa or a KLM, undoubtedly companies that have a better track record. Let me feel safer. Companies that are certified by a country that has a good track record.	
	FoF2: "If it didn't have plane crashes."	
	FoF3: "I only fly with certain companies, which are the ones that give me the most safety. I fly low-cost, and I never felt uncomfortable on Ryanair, although there have been one or two incidents, simple things, however, I used to travel more times on Ryanair than I do now. For example, I don't travel on Air Maroc, because I had a colleague who had a problem on Air Morocco. There was an engine that failed to leave Porto and thought, Air Morocco no way. When I was in Ivory Coast there were two possibilities, either TAP or Air Morocco and I got there and said "I only fly with TAP". If you buy me an Air Morocco ticket, I'll buy one to go on TAP, because I don't travel in that one; Then I also think about the accidents they've had; I think of Air France, I don't mind flying with Air France, but I think of the accident they had, the last one to come from Brazil; There are TAP, Air France, Lufthansa and I don't know how many more, the most expensive ticket is the TAP ticket, but that's the one I buy. TAP will come the day when, unfortunately, it will have an accident, because it is very unlikely to happen. I hope not. And since there is no history of recent accidents, I don't know, I don't even know, I can't give you a justification."	
	FoF6: "Price, obviously, and then also the company's reputation. That's basically how it is, I'm imagining it, if I had to go to Asia in those low-cost airlines I wouldn't go."	
	FoF7: "In fact, the number of aviation accidents, without a doubt, because I really investigate and I go after this topic, being flag carriers, is another thing I'm always looking for, being European or American also helps me a little and the geographic zones they are from. I always think Asian companies are not good, either from South America or Africa. Americans have sectors that are superior in my opinion, they have much better-quality control. Americans relax me. European ones, namely British, Lufthansa, even Air France, I don't think I've traveled again yet, but even after what happened it wouldn't shock me."	
	FoF8: "Low-cost airlines tend to make me more nervous. I prefer those that I know are renowned and that are part of the group where Lufthansa is for example (Star Alliance), and also those that I know are more recognized, Emirates, British Airways, and even TAP. I associate this because they are well priced in the market, and supposedly they also have a good track record; I have more difficulty when traveling outside Europe, being in Asia and flying between Asian cities makes me nervous, I don't know the companies, I have no idea of the names. When it is a geographic area that I don't master that much, it makes me more nervous, because they aren't well-known companies here, that I hear so much talk about."	
	FoF9: "Safety, mainly the flag carriers, Lufthansa, Air France, TAP, whatever the flag carriers are. All others do not give me safety and stability. The history of these airlines, in recent years, as far as I am aware, they have practically no air accidents, except for Air France, which a few years ago had that problem on the trip from America to Europe."	
	Clinical Psychologists	Psy1: Some people are above all afraid, which is perhaps the most understandable fear, which is the fear that there will be an accident, that there will be a mechanical failure. So, they choose the company, it can't be just any company and there are several factors and there are those who choose because they've already been there. After all, some people do this for hours, looking at things about the companies, but there you are walking around lost in the mud, because there's a lot of information that, well...but they do this research to see if it's safe or not. There is also a tendency to avoid low-cost airlines because there is a perception, also distorted, that low-cost airlines are less safe.
		Psy2: "They fly with safe companies, because of course if they go to South America, Africa or Asia is not the same as Europe. So, if they go to Africa, it is better to be a company that they recognize; everyone tells me that choose Vueling, Air Nostrum, Air France, Lufthansa, and Turkish Airlines. All of these give more safety."
Psy3: "If somebody is going EasyJet there's a discourse about the cheapness of Ryanair or EasyJet and people worry because it's cheap," Do they cut on health and safety? and quality assurance?" there's a stigma about if it's a cheap airline, "does that mean they are cheap in terms of their manufacturing?" There is that correlation in some people's minds. It's not everybody's minds. I think the most dominant discourse around some of the more Asian airlines is in terms of thinking about different cultural stories around the different airlines."		

**Table 11** – Airline: Reputation

Source: Author's elaboration

## **Service quality**

1. Some of the testimonials, such as Web2, Web3, Web10, and Web36, share how important it is cabin crew's empathy and attention, considering their fear. Also, how the lack of it can be unpleasant such as Web31 complaints. The communication of the flight crew also makes the difference, as stated by Web10 and Web38.
2. Just like the Web testimonials, FoF interviews also refer to the crew as impacting their experiences. FoF2, FoF4, and FoF7 are very attentive to their behavior and FoF3 even shares that talks with them on every flight sharing her fear and as well as Web38 faced a lack of empathy once. FoF7 emphasizes that the dehumanization, the relation between co-workers, and the services such as selling scratch cards do not give her the feeling of calm or confidence. Flight crew communication helps FoF6 and FoF7 on managing their fear due to flight expectations.
3. All clinical psychologists are aligned with the role of the cabin crew being of extreme importance for the FoF passengers. Psy1 refers to the fact of the absence of crew training and Psy2 gives an example of the success of a flight attendant with extra training in psychology. Psy3 believes they are mini counselors, helping manage the anxiety and keeping them safe, in general, she complimented significantly their role. Psy2 reinforces that flight crew communication relaxes these passengers. All the declarations can be read in Table 12.

Subcategory	Patterns
Service Quality	- Cabin crew behavior - Flight crew communication
Sources	Data
Web collection	<p>Web2: "She had a little wobble just before getting on to the plane and the <b>cabin crew</b> were absolutely fantastic, one young man (I didn't get his name unfortunately!) immediately came and took her by the hand, encouraging her and really seeming to care about how she was feeling."</p> <p>Web3: "I must also just mention a member of the <b>cabin crew</b>, Steve, who was particularly kind and supportive"</p> <p>Web10: "The senior <b>cabin crew</b> was very attentive, she called me to say hello the <b>Captain and the Co-pilot</b>. My anxiety levels diminish just from this simple gesture."</p> <p>Web 32: "During the flight, one of the <b>crew</b> came to get me for a drink with all the other crew member in the galley."</p> <p>Web31: "I am scared of flying, big time! Once I was flying (alone) with a German airline to see my family, we hit a big turbulence and I asked a <b>crew member</b> if she can hold my hand just for a sec. (I also have panic attack and at the moment i thought somebody was chocking me) And she just bent her knees and said "awe Im sorry" and stormed off. Thank you."</p> <p>Web38: "If the <b>pilot</b> sounds like he's half asleep... I panic."</p>
FoF Passengers	<p>FoF1: "With a more careful <b>crew</b>, it is the most important part; The crew is super important. In TAP in general, we always had very dear and very sensible people and trying to help us."</p> <p>FoF2: "I'm one of those who observe a lot what the <b>crew</b> does, from closing the door, pressing the buttons, seeing if they are paying attention to what the other colleagues are doing. I feel more comfortable when there is a situation of turbulence and I see that the crew continues to act normally, it is because the situation is normal."</p> <p>FoF3: "I always get on a plane and ask "how will the flight be? They (<b>cabin crew</b>) always tell me "It's going to be calm" and I say "Look I'm scared, so tell me now if there's going to be turbulence so I can manage my expectations to not be even more scared. So, then they say "Yes, there will be more turbulence". I had a situation last year returning from São Tomé and it was a night flight and I even upgraded to come lying down in first class and I asked the lady "Will there be turbulence?" and she said to me "Yes, it will, we will fly around, we will take a longer route to get away from it". And she told me that and I don't know, her face... She told me that and I got very anxious and then to try to alleviate I asked. "But turbulence doesn't crash airplanes, does it?" And she looked at me and said "It depends, there are situations that yes. If it's too strong, that's why we're flying around". I was supposed to sleep the whole trip, forget it. I told her that in order to calm me down but she answered that, forget it."</p> <p>FoF4: "While I still see the <b>cabin crew</b> walking around, I feel calmer, still with fear, but calmer; then I noticed that the flight attendant was a girl who had just completed the training, so, she was kind of nervous, which also didn't awaken the great confidence in me."</p> <p>FoF6: "what makes me more tense it's starting to have real turbulence, more intense, and they don't turn on the flight belts it has already happened on some flights, the <b>pilot</b> says "We are going to go through a turbulence zone, it lasts about 3 minutes and you think "He knows what he is doing" and that conveys calm. It would help me to have more information of this kind during the flight, pilots informing us, because when I am there, my life it's up to them. I'm in the hands of those people."</p> <p>FoF7: "As I'm so attentive to everything that's happening around me, I know it's their job, but if I see people (<b>cabin crew</b>) doing things very seriously and with an alarmed air, I'm always staring, that doesn't make me feel comfortable. This really impacts the experience for a person who is afraid of flying. If I see that they are happily chatting with each other, I automatically feel calmer as I see them excitedly chatting; Another thing that relaxes me a lot and that I also value a lot is <b>Captains</b> who inform the route, who say and do things in advance; In Emirates I know people are very by the book, but I see these airlines a bit the opposite, which is very "dehumanized"; I'm going to get on a plane, I don't know the people who will be there, if they know each other, where are they from, they sell raffle tickets inside, that doesn't make me feel calm either. There are limits, it doesn't give me confidence, it doesn't make any sense for flight attendants to sell raffle tickets. I don't know if they are raffles or scratch cards."</p>

Subcategory	Patterns
Service Quality	- Cabin crew behavior - Flight crew communication
Sources	Data
Clinical Psychologists	<p>Psy1: If there's one important thing for anyone who's afraid of flying, it's finding a person on a plane who understands, who knows how to deal with the passenger, who pays attention to them. These people need a lot of attention, they always have their eyes on the crew during the trip; and sometimes when they say something, they run into other people's lack of understanding "no, everything will be fine", "No, this is the safest means of transport", those things that are said and that the person at that time is even worse, because they already feel ridiculous having all those thoughts and they know it. This is a flaw in the training of the crew, it really is."</p> <p>Psy2: I think it's super important, for example, if the cabin crew knows something about anxiety. I gave classes to a cabin crew member who studied psychology. After that, she could put it into practice and noticed that it was quite effective. All this information about anxiety in flight and how they treat you or not letting you talk to the captain, because if the captain directs them a few words, that will make FoF passengers calm down a lot, because they feel safe, like a certain familiarity, like traveling with someone who will protect them. For example, if they give information about why things happening, they also help; they are dependent on sounds, and during the flight, the captain explains, then they would be much more relaxed.</p> <p>Psy3: "A kind of discourse is like "You are going long haul, you should go with British Airways or Virgin, for example, because they treat you really well and if you do have a FoF they really look after you."; I think the relationship the crew has with their passengers is perhaps what makes a whole difference in that person's experience in feeling supported, understood, and cared for, I think the crew act in so many different roles, not only performing the role of cabin crew but also mini counselors to people in, you know, managing their anxiety, keeping them safe, keeping them calm, attending to the emotional and physical needs, so, I think their job is quite multifaceted in terms in how they respond to different passengers and have to be able to attend to those different types of people. So, their ability to be flexible and adaptable is stunning."</p>

**Table 12** – Airline: Service quality  
Source: Author’s elaboration

## Customer Loyalty

1. In web collection testimonials there is no reference to airline customer loyalty related to perceived risk.
2. All the FoF passengers interviewed are Portuguese, which makes most of them frequent flyers of TAP, the home carrier, but especially for convenience. Although FoF3 and FoF7 always have TAP as their top preference anyways and FoF8 even adds safety reasons. The other companies mentioned are flag carriers from different countries, such as Lufthansa, Emirates, and KLM. FoF4, FoF9, and FoF11 did not mention being part of any frequent flyer program.

- Psy1 considers that Portuguese with FoF has a preference for their only home carrier, TAP. This information can be found in Table 13.

Subcategory	Patterns
Customer Loyalty	- Home carrier - Flag airlines
Sources	Data
Web collection	Not referred.
FoF Passengers	<p>FoF1: "It has already happened for example to Thailand or to Egypt to have companies, imagine 150 € more per person and I gave preference to Lufthansa or KLM; I'm part of TAP for convenience, as my father lives in Brazil and we travel a lot on TAP."</p> <p>FoF2: Yes, I do, from Emirates and TAP. I only do it because I travel a lot with these companies</p> <p>FoF3: "They give me more trust, I always prefer to choose Lufthansa, TAP, and KLM. Now if you tell me that there's TAP, Air France, Lufthansa and I don't know how many more and the most expensive ticket is the TAP ticket, that's the one I buy anyways."</p> <p>FoF5: "Yes, from TAP, Turkish, and Emirates."</p> <p>FoF6: "EasyJet, Ryanair, Vueling, or TAP, are the ones that are most accessible to us, at least here in Porto. They are the ones that have operations here, so they are the ones I fly the most, these 4."</p> <p>FoF7: "I am a TAP member. If I could choose another, it would clearly be Lufthansa. I always go first to TAP, I have the App on my cell phone, and I go there to see, I would only go for a different option, more Lufthansa honestly, if there isn't an option that I like or close to the date."</p> <p>FoF8: "I'm only doing it now, not even a month ago, it was even my sister who did it, because it was a bit ridiculous that I was flying all the time and not earning miles, it was on TAP miles, but I also found the site a bit complicated, I couldn't even recover the pass, I didn't understand any of that, so I'm just part of that (...)It makes me feel safe and there are many flights out of my country."</p> <p>FoF10: I had TAP. I had loads of miles, as I used to travel a lot. It was because it was what the company bought.</p>
Clinical Psychologists	Psy1: "The Portuguese have a preference for TAP, definitely."

**Table 13** – Airline: Customer loyalty  
Source: Author's elaboration

## Satisfaction

- There are no references in the testimonials that can be linked to airline satisfaction and risk perception.
- The overall experiences affect the satisfaction of FoF passengers toward an airline, making, for example, FoF2 doubt booking again on an airline that had a flight with significant turbulence. FoF2, FoF6, and FoF10 refer to

services, conditions, logistics, and performance as affecting their comfort and perception of an airline. The last 2 refer specifically to low-costs.

3. Psy1 confirms that the low-cost flight experience is less calm and can raise stress as is possible to verify in Table 14.

Subcategory	Patterns
Satisfaction	- Overall experience
Sources	Data
Web collection	Not referred.
FoF Passengers	<p>FoF2: "If in <b>comfort it is better than in the others</b> if the system on board is better than the others If the food is better than the others; With Emirates, I know that there probably won't be any delays, I trust that my bag won't be lost and that the flight won't be canceled; There have been flights that I later preferred not to fly with that company because of the <b>state of the plane</b>, because of the <b>turbulence</b>. Certain companies, you don't even know very well, you wonder if it's terrible weather, if it was a serious company would it fly in these weather conditions, would they wait or cancel the flight and pay for accommodation to have that expense of paying for accommodation, meals for all people and booking for the next day? There are certain companies that sometimes you think maybe they don't have the authorization to cancel the flight even when there are no conditions and they're going to fly anyway. I already flew in situations like that and afterward, I was a bit <b>in doubt if I should book again</b> in that company. It made me feel uncomfortable."</p> <p>FoF6: "I like EasyJet more than Ryanair and they are both low-cost, but I think I have <b>more conditions</b> on EasyJet than on Ryanair, so if I have a flight to the same place, I prefer EasyJet over Ryanair. Outside (Europe), obviously, a Turkish, an Emirates, that are exceptional."</p> <p>FoF10: "I usually try to choose the ones that <b>do not delay</b>, that gives me an experience that I don't spend an hour on the plane before take-off. They (work) booked me for Ryanair, but I couldn't go with Ryanair because of <b>luggage management</b>, and <b>logistics</b>."</p>
Clinical Psychologists	<p>Psy1: "It doesn't always just have to do with low-cost airliners not being very safe, sometimes it also has to do with the fact that <b>everything is a little more stressful</b>, more people, the <b>flight experience is not so peaceful, so calm</b>."</p>

**Table 14** – Airline: Satisfaction  
Source: Author's elaboration

## Airplane

1. In the web collection it can be found a Web32 testimonial referring to the small size of the airplane as a propeller of fear, curiously mentioning that does not help not to have screens showing the flight route as in big airplanes. Web38 shares that despite being in an airplane model,

considered one of the modern and best aircraft in the world, had a panic attack.

2. FoF1 and FoF4 agree with Web32, disliking small airplanes. FoF4 explains that it's because the turbulence is felt much more. The state of the airplane, especially if appears old, is also important and decisive in flying or not again on that airline, according to FoF3. Although, FoF1 does not feel safe either on brand-new airplanes that he believes might not have been tested enough. That also leads to the avoidance of certain airplane models by these two FoF passengers.
3. Psy2 mentions that FoF passengers tend to avoid small airplanes, usually found on domestic flights. Psy3 believes that even if the airplane is made of gold, they will still have the fear and did not point out preferences. These statements are presented in Table 15.

Subcategory	Patterns
Airplane	- Size of the airplane
	- State of the airplane
	- Model of the airplane
Sources	Data
Web collection	Web32: "Another thing I noticed is that flying on those big planes feels massively more comfortable than flying on a small plane. The biggest thing that helps on those big planes is that you can track where the plane is at all times. You always know exactly where you are, how fast, altitude, how long it is going to take (helps me feel more in control). You do not have that in the <b>small planes</b> , I only was on a small plane once from Bali to Jakarta. Never in my life I experienced that level of fear constantly for 2 hours."
	Web38: "I'm writing this as I sit on a plane, after a bout of quite terrible internal panic. I'm flying Singapore Airlines (supposedly one of the safest airlines in the world), currently in an <b>A350-900</b> (supposedly one of the most modern and best aircraft)."
FoF Passengers	FoF1: "There have been flights that I later preferred not to take with that company because of the state of the plane; <b>small planes</b> make me wonder, for example, propeller ones, ATRs used to wrap my mind around. In fact, I feel safer if it's an A320 and I feel less comfortable in an ATR, a Fokker or an Embraer. They cause a certain discomfort, but I also have an idea that these planes if there is a problem are easier to land or maneuver than an A320. These are ideas that I have in my mind, but that's it, when I see that the <b>plane is older</b> , I'm more afraid. If it's a <b>brand-new plane</b> , the brand-new ones I don't like very much either, because they haven't tested it much, it can have a problem that they haven't discovered yet. That <b>Boeing</b> model, the <b>Concorde</b> , which also didn't have many trips... I remember that A380 when it came out, there were also some things there that weren't very good because I saw videos of the plane taking off and touching the runway with its tail. When it is new, I think that neither the pilots nor the commander is so used to the plane, nor the plane itself has been tried out or used countless times. I prefer it to be the intermediate one. The size affects me a little but for example when I travel in very small planes, I feel a little uncomfortable. It seems that you are on a bus but with wings."

Subcategory	Patterns
Airplane	- Size of the airplane
	- State of the airplane
	- Model of the airplane
Sources	Data
FoF Passengers	FoF3: "There was a flight that I didn't take to go to Kenya when I was in Côte d'Ivoire, the trip was Ethiopian Airlines and the airplanes they were using were those Boeing that crashed; I don't travel on Tarom, because I traveled once and I didn't feel comfortable. I don't know, looking at the airplane, more because I don't feel confident; TAROM I look at those planes and they are old, they really look old, I look at them and think "These planes are not new anymore", the probability of them breaking down is greater than the new ones."
	FoF4: "Anything that is not Ryanair gives more safety in the sense that they will have, perhaps, bigger airplanes and the bigger the airplane is, tends not to shake as much and in the smaller ones I feel more, that's why I don't really like traveling with Ryanair just because the airplane is smaller, I feel tighter; I also had a bad experience, because the plane was tiny like those TAP planes that are like helicopters that shake a lot. I hated it, I hated it, it looked like it was going to crash at any moment it wasn't even falling, it looked like it was going to melt in the air at any moment because it was shaking a lot."
Clinical Psychologists	Psy2: "Especially avoid short flights, that they fly from city to city in a small airplane."
	Psy3: "I think the fear is so strong and so powerful, that an airplane could be made of gold that they would still have the fear of flying."

**Table 15** – Airline: Airplane  
Source: Author's elaboration

## **Recruitment**

1. This subcategory was not found explicit among web testimonials.
2. FoF1, FoF2, and FoF3 when expressing about airlines interesting revealed the recruitment process as a concern and sign of reliability.
3. In Table 16 is possible to verify that clinical psychologists Psy1 and Psy2 are in syntony regarding the concerns of FoF passengers with flight crew experience.

Subcategory	Patterns
Recruitment	- Crew selection - Flight Crew Experience
Sources	Data
Web collection	Not referred.
FoF Passengers	<p>FoF1: "Airlines that pilots' selection is also more difficult to get into, so supposedly more reliable people.</p> <p>FoF2: "Excellent companies, that only hire employees who are effectively capable of fulfilling their duties correctly. I doubt that Emirates hires an employee who is not attentive, who is not perceptive, and who is not correct in following all procedures. They would certainly be fired soon."</p> <p>FoF3: "The problem will be: are they now more careful hiring people or not?"</p>
Clinical Psychologists	<p>Psy1: "They are afraid that the pilots are not well prepared."</p> <p>Psy2: "Ryanair, we know that the pilots and everyone can give you that safety and security, but not all are the same, some have fewer flight hours and make part of the flight like you are on a bus."</p>

**Table 16** – Airline: Recruitment  
Sources: Author’s elaboration

### 3.1.2. Route and Seat (PR2)

#### Flight Route

1. The flight time affects Web12 and Web43 perceived risk, however, the flight time one can handle varies. Web28 refers to its limitation as the whole journey, including nonstop or connecting flights.
2. All the interviewees prefer direct flights, mainly because the risk perception is associated with take-offs and they want to avoid them as much as possible. Landings are also perceived as a risk, however, are most associated with relief feeling proximity. FoF6 even mentions that the choice of destination is based on direct flight options. FoF5 when a connecting flight cannot be avoided in order to relax, she chooses long connections to be able to leave the airport and walk in the city. The flight time to FoF8

interferes with this preference because if it is a 16h flight she prefers to catch 2 flights instead. In fact, almost all the respondents perceived the long flights as riskier. FoF4 and FoF7 added that night flights augment their fear. Curiously, the thought of flying over the ocean with the thought of being distant to alternative airports is in FoF2 and FoF6’s minds.

- Two clinical psychologists, Psy1 and Psy2, also recognize these patterns of direct flight preference, and the shortest the flights the better. Psy3 did not mention a preference for direct flights, although she recognized that some people are afraid of long-haul flights and those who made the program might be willing to face them, while others might prefer to break the journey into 2 flights, exactly how FoF8 shared. Psy1 and Psy2 also recognized this last case. The references to this information are in Table 17.

Subcategory	Patterns
Route	- Connecting flights
	- Flight time
	- Fly over the ocean
Sources	Data
Web Collection	Web12: “Since the day I was locked in an elevator, little by little I managed to overcome my claustrophobia. The exception was flights lasting <b>more than 4 hours.</b> ”
	Web28: “The most tiring and traumatic flying for me comes when I need to fly <b>over 15 hours</b> either on a break journey or nonstop. Anything around 6 hrs to 8 hrs or below is enjoyable. But long journeys never welcome.”
	Web43: “I just get so nervous and scared only because it’s a <b>6hr flight.</b> I don’t mind traveling inter island cause it’s 30- 45 mins tops but just being in the air for 5-6 hrs is making me very scared.”
FoF Passengers	FoF1: “I’m one of those who pay more <b>not to make stops,</b> because the <b>less time</b> I spend in the air the better, the fewer flights I take, the better.”
	FoF2: “The Captain said that we were going to make two stops and that was not foreseen in the flight, that is, we were going to stop and I immediately started to get a little stressed. I also know that the highest probability of a plane crash is on take-off or in the first 10 minutes, 15 minutes of flight until we reach 10,000 feet. And knowing that you <b>take off once</b> and you’re calm, that’s it. I don’t know if it’s on take-off or landing, although I get more nervous on take-off than on landing. I prefer to fly over <b>land</b> because I know that if there is a problem with the plane, if there is an airport, the plane can land in an emergency.”

Subcategory	Patterns	
Route	- Connecting flights	
	- Flight time	
	- Fly over the ocean	
Sources	Data	
FoF Passengers	FoF3: "I prefer to take <b>direct</b> flights because when I take direct flights, I can take a pill."	
	FoF4: "It's a lot of stress for me when the plane is landing, I really feel it and for me having to get on the next plane, I think <i>"let's start all over again"</i> . So, if it's a <b>direct</b> flight I'll be stressed out, but from the moment it lands, I'm already free. A curiosity is that I get more anxiety on trips during the night than on trips during the <b>day</b> ; the basic justification is that the night is much scarier than the day is since you are a child until you are an adult thing associated with the night are always scary and I don't know in my head it seems that if it's during the day it won't happen no disaster but if it's night it can happen and it's normal."	
	FoF5: "I try to make it as <b>direct</b> as possible, <b>less hours</b> . If it's direct perfect, if it's not direct, I prefer to go outside and then back in the airport. It already happened, I don't remember where I went, but we ended up going outside in Dubai or Toronto to relax and catch another flight. Do you understand? In other words, to relax a little, to go out into the street."	
	FoF6: "I think it also has to do with my level of confidence and where I am in life, I don't know, for example, now I'm at a stage where <b>2 hours</b> by plane is acceptable for me, I think that I can manage, so imagine, two hours around here. <b>Direct</b> for me is important. Stopovers, only if I have to; Our destinations end up being a little influenced in relation to being direct flights because I don't feel like going from here to Lisbon to make a stopover to the destination; I prefer to fly over <b>land</b> than over sea because I imagine a dangerous situation and the land has a thousand airports to try to land, at sea what do you do?"	
	FoF7: " <b>Direct</b> , the least amount of taking off as possible, always. I prefer to fly during the <b>day</b> and on <b>short trips</b> because it gives me safety that they are seeing the sh*ts, they are seeing if the earth is getting too close, that is, the idea that you can see the things that are happening."	
	FoF8: "It's as less stops as possible. It's for comfort and on the other hand, it's take-off. Although the take-off process is funny because it was terrifying and now, I have a mixed feeling, <i>"let's go, let's go"</i> , but still, <b>direct</b> I don't need to take off twice. However, if I am going to a destination where the direct flight is <b>17 hours</b> , I prefer to divide it in two, I just don't want to go in the shortest way, I avoid that. There is an anxiety, I think about the hours of flight."	
	FoF9: "I prefer <b>direct</b> flights; I don't really like flights with stopovers. If it goes directly for me is ideally because going down and up, the problem of fear arises again. When I get on the plane and I know that I am going to my destination and after being inside the plane that fear disappears and to be going down, up, down up, it affects."	
	FoF10: "I try to choose trips that are nonstop, that you don't have to make a stopover because the stress increases; <b>Direct</b> flights are preferred. Now I even prefer that they are direct and <b>short</b> ."	
	FoF11: "The <b>less time</b> I spent in the air the better, but in terms of stopovers, I don't think I've ever made one because I've never traveled that far."	
	Clinical Psychologists	Psy1: " <b>Direct</b> flight and there are people with a phobia of flying directly to a destination and prefer not to go because of the phobia because they think they will <b>not last so many hours</b> inside the plane. This one is more the type 2 ( <i>i.e.: claustrophobia</i> ), the people who think they won't make it. People like this because they are afraid of feeling bad, of not being able to take it, afraid of being there <i>"I want to leave and I can't"</i> , and they prefer to make the trip <b>in two or three parts</b> ."
		Psy2: "FoF passengers choose the most <b>direct</b> flight or if at times they can do one that has a stopover because they go to Europe, the transoceanic one, for example, they can stop a little and then go back is better, but normally they chose the one that goes more directly and the one that lasts <b>fewer hours</b> ."
Psy3: "Some people do have a <b>fear of long-haul flights</b> . You often hear people talk about <i>Well if I stop here in Singapore, for example, and I stay a couple of days, get myself back together again, and then I'll do the next half of my journey or they'll ask Perhaps, if I just do the first hour and see how that goes, if I can cope with that hour, I can get on the next plane to continue to the destination"</i> . Some people <b>will chunk their journey</b> in that way, but other people, for example, if they did the course, they are <b>ready to go for it (direct)</b> they are ready to take it on."		

**Table 17 – Route & Seat: Flight route**  
Source: Author's elaboration

## **Seat allocation**

1. The risk perception regarding seat location for two Web testimonials is because they believe their fear came from those experiences. Web25 from having seated in the emergency exit and Web27 because of the window.
2. Almost all the interviewees perceived the back of the plane as riskier, although due to many different reasons. FoF1 prefers the front due to the fact that she feels more turbulence in the back of the airplane. FoF2 also because of turbulence, but mainly because he heard that in the event of a plane crash, the passengers in the back are more likely to not survive. A documentary about the chances of survival in an airplane crash also made FoF7 prefer the middle of the airplane. She also likes to seat every time in the same area because she is now familiar with the noises and FoF9 cannot point out the reasons. FoF5 always chooses the front to stare at flight attendants' faces, apparently to control expressions of possible risk. FoF9 shares that being seated in the front of the airplane gives him peace of mind but struggles to understand the reason, as well as FoF8. The emergency existence does not even appear as an option to be mentioned, when FoF3 is mentioned close to the wing, the researcher asked if includes emergency exists, as they are also located on the wings, but she immediately refused that option. Some of them avoid the window, FoF1 says it is because it realizes how high she is. FoF3 prefers the window when she takes a pill to sleep. Even having different options both are related to the FoF. The fear of FoF6 has an impact to the point that she has no preference at all because

she does not move the entire flight. Same as FoF3 when flying in business class because she cannot enjoy it at all.

- Psy1 and Psy2, both noticed that there is a tendency to avoid the back of the aircraft, because of turbulence and to avoid the window seat (Psy1) or because of the noise that activates the phobia (Psy2). Psy3 shared the preferences middle and front which ends up excluding the back as well. Psy1 mentioned also the business class preference, which in the case of the interviewees, FoF2 associated more with comfort and FoF3 does not enjoy it. Psy2 had cases of emergency choices which was not clear among this study's interviewees. Psy1 and Psy3 reinforce that it depends on the phobia or individual's perceptions. All testimonies can be consulted in Table 18.

Subcategory	Patterns
Seat allocation	- The back of the airplane
	- Window/ aisle
	- Emergency exit row
Sources	Data
Web collection	Web25: "When you mentioned about the emergency exit, I believe this is what's made me scared of flying. Being told I need to open it in case of an emergency. I now have reoccurring nightmares about flying which has made me a lot worse and now I'm quite phobic ☹"
	Web27: "I've flown many times before, also long flights, and it used to never be a problem for me. Until I flew alone the last two times and sat by the window. The panic just struck and I felt the plane disappearing below my butt."
FoF Passengers	FoF1: "I prefer the front seats, not the business ones, but those to feel less turbulence, the seats from the beginning to the middle of the plane, therefore in an airplane of 50 rows or so, it would be until row 16 or 17. I always go in those seats to not feel so much turbulence; I don't like a window seat, because just looking at it makes me think how high I am."
	FoF2: "I always like to go in the front, because a few years ago I heard that in the event of a plane crash, the passengers in the back are more likely to not survive, which I think is a myth, but I always try to book in the front. I know the turbulence is less felt in the front, but it's also more comfortable because they're the first ones out and you can be the last ones in. I always have that preference, but if it's business even better; I always pay for the seat whether to go to in the front or to go to the window."
	FoF3: "I don't take advantage of traveling in business because I go there full of fear and then it's completely indifferent to me. I think I can die in both classes, so it makes no difference to me; I go in the front and if possible close to the wing; (as she said close to the wing researcher asked about emergency exit) No, because I'm always thinking that the door is going to open and that I'm going to fall out of there. I prefer to go to the window so I can go to sleep, especially when I take a pill; I usually buy the seat."
	FoF5: "It's kind of more in the front to look at the flight attendants. I always look at their faces. Always!

Subcategory	Patterns
Seat allocation	- The back of the airplane
	- Window/ aisle
	- Emergency exit row
Sources	Data
FoF Passengers	FoF6: "It makes no difference to me because I remain motionless inside the plane, so I don't stand up, I don't move."
	FoF7: "Always in the aisle and more in the middle, because I saw a documentary where they crashed an airplane on purpose, to find out and measured several waves, to see where the greatest probability of survival was and that's on the wing; Then there is another thing which is the sounds, the more you are regular in the areas of the plane where you are staying, the better you know the noises. At the front it's much quieter, of course, at the back it's much noisier, so if you're normally in the same places, I don't think there's anything that sounds that much different in terms of judder and noise anymore. I've already paid for places, to go in the aisle, without a doubt, I always pay."
	FoF8: "This is more or less changing. Usually, it was always the front ones, as far ahead as possible, I even pay. I always paid for the place to go as far ahead as possible. I have a tendency not to like going in the back. It's true that I happened to be in the last row, unintentionally, I panicked "Oh my God, I'm going in the last row" and I surprisingly felt the take-off less. But there really is a tendency, I don't know why I to want to go in the front."
	FoF9: "I like to go in the front seats, practically at the front, close to the front, it's my preference, it gives me some peace of mind, I don't know why, I can't explain. I prefer window seat."
	FoF11: "I usually never go to the window or always in the aisle or that middle seat if there are three seats. I need to stay very closed in on myself, especially in the beginning, when taking off, until it stabilizes. Then I start to see people walking around, going to the bathroom and talking and I start looking out the window a bit, I even ask the person next to me "Let me see a little bit, just to see the landscape". Being up there at cruising speed doesn't seem so bad, it feels like I'm in control."
Clinical Psychologists	Psy1: "People afraid of flying are actually concerned about the seat and those who can, if possible, go in business, even on a medium-haul flight; Then it also depends, there are preferences for all types of phobias. There are people who avoid going to the window, so they buy tickets, they already insist on buying aisle tickets so they don't go to the window, this is an avoidance mechanism so they don't face anything outside. There are people who avoid going to the back, because they already know that back there shakes more."
	Psy2: They usually go in the front, in the middle or at the emergency exits, because there is too much noise in the back and that activates their phobia a little more. More aisle.
	Psy3: "I think seat allocation it's a big one. For some people "I need to have an aisle seat because I feel claustrophobic and if I can sit on the aisle that's better for me", but another person might say something completely different, they might say, I need a window seat, so I can remind myself there is an outside and I can sort of switch of from somebody else on the plane, so again it depends on their story about what is scares them in getting into the flight. Some people believe that they might need to seat in the front of the plane and want seats at the front. Some people believe you should sit in the middle of the plane near the wing. they have all these different stories to create this kind of... they construct their own reality in a way that they paint a picture of what's going to help them to feel better at the moment"

**Table 18** – Route & Seat: Seat allocation  
Source: Author's elaboration

### 3.1.3. Media (PR3)

#### Negative media coverage

1. According to web testimonials the impact of negative media, meaning air crash accidents news or investigations, the opinions are divided. While Web26, Web36, and Web43 believe that watching these images influences building up fear, Web20 and Web23 believe the opposite that it makes them less sacred.
2. The same happens for the interviewees, FoF2 and FoF4 do not even like to watch, FoF2 evens says that if something identical happens while he is on the plane, he starts to imagine things and stays more afraid. FoF5 and FoF7 used to watch, however, they assume that was affecting them negatively, to FoF5 especially if she watches them close to a scheduled flight. Also, in an attempt to understand the reasons for air crashes, FoF1 and FoF6 watch this media content believing that it helps them with the fear.
3. All the clinical psychologists agree that media negatively affects passengers with FoF and even unconsciously they will remember these images, exactly as FoF2 shared in her testimonial. Psy1 goes further in the explanation and affirms that this can happen even if the person is not scared. If the person had other life event stressors, if a strange noise happens, that person will more easily make the connection to negative media coverage. Psy3 says that a person with FoF latches on to one negative story instead of rather than hearing all of the positive stories. This information can be confirmed in Table 19.

Subcategory	Patterns
Negative Media Coverage	- Affects negatively - Watch to understand - Remember the images
Sources	Data
Web collection	<p>Web20: "I feel like aircraft investigations made me <b>less scared</b> of flying as it makes you realize just how much detail has been put into the design and maintenance to make sure almost every eventuality has been covered so the aircraft safe and we have learned an applied fixes from things that failed in the past so they can't happen again (or at least are very unlikely to)."</p> <p>Web23: "I watch air crash investigations and follow a few YouTube pilots. With the knowledge gained, and knowing how pilots react in certain circumstances gives me <b>less to worry about</b>."</p> <p>Web29: "I've been watching a lot of air crash investigation videos, actually binge watching them. And I'm going to start touring again, now that I have all that information from all the binge watching I'm honestly kind of <b>scared</b> flying."</p> <p>Web36: "For me it was a sad paradox. I love planes and aviation I know eveeery checklist and how a plane works and know every model of plane. Unfortunately, the air crash investigations got me <b>building up this fear</b> of flying bit by bit."</p> <p>Web41: "My aerophobia comes from being afraid of freefalling in a crashing plane and dying (Also having no control of the situation). <b>Maybe media has a lot of influence</b> but just imagining that 1 in a million scenario will happen is terrifying."</p>
FoF Passengers	<p>FoF1: "<b>I need to understand</b> what the reason was. If I don't know what the reason was, then it's going to be terrible, because I'm going to get on the plane and I'm going to think that this is normal. For example, when I was in Samaná, in Dominican Republic, it was when happen Marília Mendonça plane crashed. I panicked. Anyway, I wanted to see the news to understand what had happened. For me it's important to understand what happened so I don't have those things in my head. I do not look for them, but when they come to me, I see them."</p> <p>FoF2: "<b>I don't like to watch it</b>, I get more scared, because then you start imagining things because you saw a plane crash in those programs and then you're on the flight and the events are becoming identical, it can make you more afraid and you start to imagine things. OK, this is happening, it happened to the other one too, he's going to fall, I'm going to die too; News of plane crashes I don't like to see either, I'll skip ahead because otherwise, I think it's <b>engraved in the subconscious</b> because people are more likely to remember an accident. I think, at least in my case, remembering an accident rather than the 20 million flights that took place that year and there was no accident."</p> <p>FoF3: "<b>I look to try to understand</b> what happened; It has helped me so far, because I need to understand things, they can't say to me "Look, this is white" and I'm like "It's white", I have to understand why it's white and if I understand and if I understand what is the logic behind something being white, I will accept that it is white and for me to accept how safe the plane is, I have to understand why they are safe and what has already happened and what steps were taken next to solve problems that already existed."</p> <p>FoF4: "I can't even get into it because I feel like I'm going to discover a whole world that's going to <b>make me worse</b>."</p> <p>FoF5: "It's horrible, but <b>yes, I see</b>. Sometimes it happens before traveling and I think, "Stupid, why are you watching this?" But when I know I'm going to get on a plane, then <b>I pull it forward</b> so that it doesn't affect me".</p> <p>FoF7: "One of the ones that confused me the most, because it was an airline that I would choose, and on which I have already traveled and that crashed, was the Air France between São Paulo and Paris, so I went to see this event and <b>understand why</b> it crashed. Try to relativize and understand why this happened. Imagine, now the thing about Malaysian Airlines is out on Netflix, the one that disappeared, I'll see. What have I also learned? There were those SOS, about air disasters, I saw them and then I realized that <b>I couldn't keep on watching</b> them because they were too intense, they were a bit intense and that's when I realized that in fact my fear of taking off was because it said that the most accidents occur at the beginning of flights. They are obviously not premeditated. That's when I started to be even more afraid to take off. I realized that in fact most of the problems happened at the beginning. So, until the flight attendants are up, I'm never really comfortable. When I hear the first noise for them to get up, I feel more relaxed."</p>

Subcategory	Patterns
Negative	- Affects negatively
Media	- Watch to understand
Coverage	- Remember the images
Sources	Data
Clinical Psychologists	<p>Psy1: "This is a major factor for people who are anxious, because maybe Mariana or I see the same news as other people and we don't develop a phobia because of it. This has to do with how each one processes the information they receive. And, therefore, if I have an excessive fear of something, the way I will process that information will be different from a person who does not have this fear and more, it is also found a lot in these people who have a phobia of flying the behavior of going looking for more information and the issue is that they are going to look for that information and what they find on Google is not "flying is safe", it's accidents, turbulence, things like that and then they go to videos, for example there are many people who they are regulars of "Mayday", National Geographic which is all about accidents. And by chance that thing is even well done and even didactic and who sees it in a mindset that is not afraid of flying, that can even reinforce the idea that everything is very safe, but who sees the same Mayday and is afraid of flying , what they mainly going to remember is not that message, it's going to be the images, images of things you've seen are retained and often this even remains at a subconscious level, but what is certain is that it feeds the iceberg. And therefore, when the person is going to fly, sometimes they might not even be afraid, but suddenly because they are having a bad day, because they didn't sleep, because they drank too many coffees, because they argued the day before, because whatever, suddenly there is a noise different on the flight and go get those images. So, when it starts, they associate to their own flights."</p> <p>Psy2: "They've all seen it all, they know plane crashes better than you and me. They stay with the idea of not getting on the plane, with the negative."</p> <p>Psy3: "I think there is a strong correlation between how the media portray accidents and I think that there's also sort of a big industry of sensationalizing disasters. So, these various documentaries that get made, these films that catastrophize, there are the papers that all jump on any opportunity to highlight something that's happening in the industry. At the moment this one that had happened the other day with the door. So, it's just going to be domination the next course that we do. I'm sure. People will be asking lots of questions about the doors next time. It's now imprinted on their minds when in fact, flying is the safest form of transport, with 110 thousand flights a day and nobody looks at all the flights that went well, but the papers will zoom in on the flights that don't go so well. (...) If somebody's got a fear of flying is going to latch on to that story, rather than hearing all of the positive stories, which is human nature. It's called negativity bias, that our brains are constructed in such a way (...) Sometimes our brains become overactive and that negative bias kicks in when there are no real dangers, when is a perceived threat or danger and they start doing comparisons and our brain information gets loaded with perceived truth rather than thoughts and not facts, just thoughts."</p>

**Table 19** – Media: Negative coverage  
Sources: Author's elaboration

### Safety information

1. During the web collection analysis, only Web39 and Web44 were found to mention researching a lot to find safety information about air travel.

According to Web44, the intention is to calm oneself down. This leads to an interpretation that the safety information aims to reduce the air travel risk perception.

2. Among the participants, FoF2 and FoF6 admitted that do active research about safety information, although they both only do it about companies that are not familiar to them. This perception is strictly related to the airlines' reputation. There are others that do not research but pay attention and take into account safety rankings (FoF1, FoF8, and FoF9) or if the company follows safety European requirements (FoF3). Some participants were not very familiar with safety rankings.
3. Psy1 believes that all the information that reaches the public affects the perception and is taken into consideration. Psy2 thinks that FoF passengers take these rankings into account if the company is rated low, above that she thinks is not very decisive. Psy3 has a different opinion, she believes that depends on the individual level of fear. If it is a person that has an extreme fear would even challenge those safety rankings. If it is a person with mild to moderate fear might consider analyzing them positively. All the statements can be found in Table 20.

Subcategory	Patterns
Safety Information	- Active researchers - Attention to the information
Sources	Data
Web collection	<p>Web39: "I have done lots of <b>research</b> about how flying is the safest mode of transport."</p> <p>Web44: "I have a flight of 8h on Tuesday and I've been <b>watching</b> every video on YouTube about flying to see if I can calm down."</p>
FoF Passengers	<p>FoF1: <b>I don't look</b> for the rankings, but whenever there's news about an airline, I look at it. I know that TAP is among the best, it's very well spoken, so I won't specifically look at the rankings, but if I do, <b>I'll remember</b>.</p> <p>FoF2: "I look through the specialized sites that now I don't know the name. I do this <b>research</b> with some companies and not others, for example, if I travel with a company I've never heard of and which has a strange name, I do this research to find out; Now if it is a flag company that is familiar to me, but that I have never traveled, for example, now I remember Austrian Airlines or Swiss Airlines, which I have never traveled, but because they are European, from countries that I know have very much into account the levels of safety and the procedures I trust I will not research."</p> <p>FoF3: "I would never get on a plane with a company that doesn't fly to Europe, that's out of the question. If they don't meet the <b>safety requirements</b>, I don't even think about it, I don't get in there."</p> <p>FoF6: "If we go to Asia, I think I would <b>research</b>. Europe and these big companies, I'm confident. I'm frank with you, maybe I'm being prejudiced. Asia and Latin America worries me a bit about some safety issues that they might not be as strict as they are here in Europe. It's more from that perspective, more of safety and there are also the flights that crashed there were also a lot in Asia, there were problems and maybe I'm more suggested; not being some company that I didn't know, yes, I would do research to understand."</p> <p>FoF8: No, <b>I don't do that</b>, no way. That would be terrible. That only happened to me in Asia, I remember that at the time what I did was <b>text to my sister asking</b> "What do you think about this company?", because I didn't want to see the information and she said "Pick another one".</p> <p>FoF9: "I take <b>safety rankings into account</b> to make the decision and normally when I know I'm going to fly with these flag carriers, I'm more relaxed."</p>
Clinical Psychologists	<p>Psy1: "Yes, yes, <b>everything that reaches the public</b> and these rankings often do, but these rankings, as you know, are normally not very reliable, there is an entity called IATA that annually publishes a report with safety statistics, it would be wonderful that people, passengers, the general public, could have access to these, I'm not saying the report, but to what matters."</p> <p>Psy2: "They also <b>watch all the videos of how they are safe in the plane</b>, but there are people who do not have this information about why a plane is safe, why it ends up flying, why you should trust a plane, all this that happens from the flats, the wheels. They do not have all this information. It could be something interesting from the company's marketing. They could, for example, give information, explaining why the plane flies. In my case I have not seen so much if the ranking does take it into account. Well, they are not going to fly with someone whose ranking is low, we are clear about that, they better not fly. I don't think it is, between one that has a 1 or a 5, I don't think it is very decisive, but well will <b>take it into account</b>. They need to have everything under control."</p> <p>Psy3: "I think if somebody is completely paralyzed by this fear, no matter how many safety rankings, that fear will still take hold of them. That some would even challenge the safety rankings, and they would always do the question, "What if?". They would never be satisfied. But for some passengers, people who, perhaps, have a mild to moderate fear, not as extreme or as severe, imagine, moderate people might use that information in a different way and <b>might do their own sort of analysis to help them</b> think about which airline. It really depends on how they think about data, and whether or not they will trust it."</p>

**Table 20** – Media: Safety information  
Sources: Author's elaboration

### **3.1.4. Individual Profile (PR4)**

#### **Age/gender/demographics/education/income/flying frequency**

1. It was not possible to have access to most of the personal information about the individuals who wrote the testimonials and the testimonials themselves did not reveal significant data to interpret on this matter.
2. This information about the interviewees and their answers, apart from what was already mentioned in the other subcategories, were not insightful on enlightening findings.
3. Clinical psychologists did not mention relevant insights related to the originally grouped subcategory that are not already present in the other subcategories, nonetheless, they added the importance of the phobia itself. All of them explain the evaluation process and diagnosis of the phobia. In Table 21 are only excerpts that show the phobia can be different. Psy1 detailed that in individual terms each person is different, and each mind is different. Therefore, it is not possible to find an equal phobia because each person has their stories, their experiences that might be related, or not, to air travel. While some interviewees slightly reveal information about the phobia itself, it is important to mention that the researcher did not explore this subject.

Subcategory	Patterns
Age/Gender/Demographics/Education /Income/Flying frequency	- No patterns found
Phobia	- Different phobia type / not explored
Sources	Data
Web Collection	-
FoF Passengers	-
Clinical Psychologists	<p>Psy1: "People are all different, minds are all different from each other, so we never find an equal phobia. Some patterns may be common, but to say that a person has a phobia is the same as another person is not possible, because each person has their stories, their experiences, in short, experiences related or not related to air travel."</p> <p>Psy2: The first thing we do with the evaluation is to see the origin of the fear of flying because it could be people who have had a critical event inside the plane. Then there are people who suffer claustrophobia for other things and fear suffering an anxiety attack inside the plane. And I have a third case that is sometimes the fear flying, that doesn't have to do with the fear flying, but with the fear, in a moment of your life that has to do with freedom, so sometimes the phobias are like, let's say it's just the projection of a different thing that's happening in your life.</p> <p>Psy3: "For some people is just purely around flying and sometimes it could be about being enclosed, like claustrophobic. It is fine for some people to be on the plane but feel encapsulated. Every story has some common themes if you evaluate what the fear is attached to, but invariably once you look underneath, there are some other layers that are happening about why now the fear is becoming more pronounced in their lives."</p>

**Table 21** – Individual profile: Age/Gender/Demographics/Education/Income/Flying frequency  
Sources: Author's elaboration

### Previous experiences

1. Previous experiences influence FoF passengers in two ways, either if they had a critical experience, such as Web23 hearing an announcement from the cockpit saying that there is a problem, or Web38's experience that from the whole testimonial, it seems biased by the fear.
2. FoF2, FoF5, and FoF6 had rejected landings that made their risk perception rise because they were not aware that it was possible to happen. FoF9 caught a storm and faced turbulence with things falling during meal time.
3. In this particular matter, it is very important the psychologist's opinion. Psy1 explained that all phobias are different because of previous experiences that have to do with the airplane or not. In the case of airplane

experiences, she says that most of the time the experiences that FoF passengers had were perceived as riskier because they are biased by fear. Web38 does a description of the experience that matches exaggerated terms Psy1 said it is common. Some passengers have a FoF even before they ever flew. Psy2 refers that critical events on the plane affecting these passengers' perception to the point they think that the same thing could happen again and do not want to go back to a place where they felt bad. This information can be verified in Table 22.

Subcategory	Patterns
Previous Experiences	- Critical experiences - Experiences biased by the fear
Sources	Data
Web collection	<p>Web23: "The usual drill with flying is the pilot chats to us on takeoff and then only again 40 minutes before landing, so in my mind if I don't hear from the pilots in between, we're good. I've actually experienced the dreaded "We have a problem" announcement"</p> <p>Web38: "As soon as the aircraft starting reversing and rolling down the aprons, there was a loud banging coming from under my area and it sounded like the wheels had a bump in them, because the whole plane was banging every second or so. I immediately started to panic... I'd never heard or felt that feeling before (and every bloody flight seems to have a new sound or feeling I haven't heard before), and it got worse the faster the aircraft got. My mind started to think things like 'Is the tire going flat?! Is there a ridge in the wheel?! Are suitcases falling out?! Is the wheel locking?!'... and then as I was shaking almost uncontrollably thinking I was about to die after take-off, the plane starts down the runway after a longer than normal pause, and the runway seems so short for such a heavy aircraft that when it takes off it tilts to one side and I feel my mind going "This is it, I'm dead, we're going sideways and the plane doesn't have enough thrust to keep taking off', and then when we're a few hundred meters in the air my mind thinks 'We're climbing too steep, the plane isn't going to make it, the engines are going to suddenly stop and the tail of the plane with sag and we'll all fall to our deaths'... I will still shake uncontrollably clutching my Singapore Airlines pillow just wanting someone to knock me out cold or at least give me something to knock me out. I hate this feeling... It happens almost every time and it lasts all the way up until we flatten out a little and start cruising."</p>
FoF Passengers	<p>FoF2: "Once I was flying with Lufthansa and the plane was landing and very close to the runway, it almost touched the runway and it took back off and I didn't know what it was, it had never happened, I didn't know that that was possible to do and I got scared and thought we were crashing. After I did a researching and understood. If it happens again, maybe I'm not as scared as the first time, but I still don't feel comfortable knowing that it happens."</p> <p>FoF5: "I wasn't afraid at all before, zero, it didn't scare me at all. I think it was basically this thing, my expectation at that moment was to land and I heard that giant noise, and like the plane plummeted upwards, to a point that some things fell (...) and from then on, I got scared; then it was almost twice in a row."</p> <p>FoF6: "A bad experience I had was going to Bilbao, when landing we hit the wheels on the ground and got back up. (...) There are procedures that we don't know about and that scares us."</p> <p>FoF9: "There was an experience, I took a trip from Paris to Porto and we went through a storm with a lot of thunder and everything started to shake, things to fall, at meal time everything was falling to the ground. I was already afraid, then I was even more. Then it stopped, it was something like a quarter of an hour or so."</p>

Subcategory	Patterns
Previous Experiences	- Critical experiences - Experiences biased by the fear
Sources	Data
Clinical Psychologists	<p>Psy1: "People are all different, minds are all different from each other, therefore we never meet a phobia that is the same. There are traits that can be common, but saying that a person having a phobia is the same as another person is not possible, because each person has their own history, their experiences, in short, experiences related or not related to the plane trip. By the way, there are people who come to ask for help and have never traveled by plane. Most of the time, not to say the overwhelming majority of the time, people don't have anything serious to report. They have never experienced anything serious and they may have had a perception on a certain flight, but it is already a perception that is biased by the fear they have. "In free fall, or it took off in a way, it shook," that is, everything is already a little amplified by the very fear that people have."</p> <p>Psy2: The first thing we do with the evaluation is to see the origin of the FoF because they may be people who have had a critical event inside the plane, for example, generally in South America there are a lot like air holes, there is more turbulence and then of course, there is more probability that at a certain moment they have, especially when they are young, and they have had a bad flight; They have it anchored and that is where the primitive brain influences, all those psychological things, they have it anchored in their mind, I explain that as the puppy and the kitten. You have a puppy or a kitten and you go to the vet and then he stays behind the door, because he has recorded that it was a moment that went wrong. In people it is you get on the plane and you have an unpleasant sensation, your brain records that you do not return to that place, because you have had a bad time there. When you are going to make a different association, the brain can no longer think in the same way; They are affected because they think that the same thing could happen. Now, if the company surprises them, because suddenly they have a slightly more special place or it surprises them, or manages to distract their attention, that perception would be less.</p>

**Table 22** – Individual profile: Previous Experiences  
Sources: Author’s elaboration

### Travel purpose

1. The reason for travel itself seems to not affect considerably the perceived risk of travel, but it has consequences for the individuals that can rise other categories of perceived risk. For example, Web7, Web8, Web15, and Web36 were forced to travel, therefore FoF7 was concerned with flight time, Web8’s fear got worse because of flying frequency and Web36 was nervous to fly alone. Web4, Web12, Web23, We24, and Web37 chose to travel to please themselves on holiday or to please families, such as on a honeymoon trip and their words do not express less fear that the forced ones. However, for Web12 and Web37 the effort was worth it.
2. The same happens with the interviewees. FoF4, FoF7, and FoF10 said that one of the things that affect them the most in traveling for work is to travel

alone. FoF4 as she was new in the company did not want to say no to the trip and FoF7 manages to say no and just travel for work when it is strictly necessary because she prefers to travel on her terms. FoF10 admits avoiding travel either for work or for vacations. FoF8 feels no difference because she is motivated for both reasons of traveling, so it does not affect her perceptions of risk. These comments are shared in Table 23.

### 3. Clinical psychologists did not manifest statements about travel purposes.

Subcategory	Patterns
Travel purpose	- Traveling against will
	- Travelling to please oneself or family
	- Traveling alone
Sources	Data
Web Collection	<p>Web7: "Whenever I was forced to travel (I studied the hours I would be in the air until exhaustion)."</p> <p>Web8: "In fact, everything got worse when, in 2013, I started a new phase of my sports career, participating in the European Rally Championship, which forced me to travel constantly between the various countries of Europe."</p> <p>Web15: "I have monthly meetings in different cities in Europe and sometimes I also have to travel to the US. In desperation, I came up with excuses not to go and managed to dodge it a few times. Either treat me or have to change jobs."</p> <p>Web4: "On 19th November my new husband, Dan, and I, had tickets to fly (with BA, from Gatwick) on our once in a lifetime Honeymoon to Mauritius - an 11 hour flight! Only problem was ... I was terrified of flying, and worried that I would spend my wedding day stressing about having to endure the flight the following afternoon"</p> <p>Web12: "I booked a trip to New York with the family and I made up my mind that I couldn't give up. After all, the trip went well and we were all already thinking about the next one."</p> <p>Web23: "Despite my fear, I get on the plane and I always find I'm less fearful on the return flight. If I'm going to go in a plane crash, I'd prefer it to be after my holiday."</p> <p>Web24: "It actually sucks cause its ruining our family holidays because as soon as we land, I'm panicking about the return flight."</p> <p>Web36: "i had to fly alone to Romania to pick up my gf and son, i must admit the discomfort started building from the moment i bought the ticket and i noticed it was fking up my days leading up to the flight"</p> <p>Web37: I was still very nervous but I was forcing myself (always worth it) to take 2 trips the Caribbean a year up until 2020.</p>
	FoF Passengers

Subcategory	Patterns
Travel purpose	- Traveling against will
	- Travelling to please oneself or family
	- Traveling alone
Sources	Data
FoF Passengers	<p>FoF7: For me there are two different things in terms of work. "Are other people going with me that I know, who give me safety?" "Are we going to do something important, which I consider important or not?" Last year I told him (the manager) that I didn't want to go and this year I also told him "I'm out of the country right now", but I already had to, so when I was at X company, they told me that I had to go to NY with CEO from Friday to Sunday, I spent the weekend crying, I was crying at the airport and my CEO wanted to sit next to me to calm me down and I said "No, let it be" and then I thought I'll be quiet. I had to go and I went, but we went on TAP to NY. Then we went on TAP to Monaco, there I went with colleagues and we were going to a fair. then I had to mentalize myself and go with people; Yes, I only go to work if it's strictly necessary, otherwise I won't. On these travel agents, you go on a charter. I have no idea who those people are and what they're going to do and they've already caught me in one of those. For me it's not worth it, the stress it causes me to go there for sightseeing, if it's to go sightseeing I'd rather go on my terms.</p> <p>FoF10: "It's the same, worse if it's work, but on vacation I've also avoided it. It affects a lot; I go alone to work and then it's not just the trip, but all the logistics outside of the trip, I hate traveling alone."</p> <p>FoF8: These are two things that motivate me a lot, if I traveled for work and I didn't like what I was doing, it was one thing, but as I like it, since I have a business trip and I'm excited at the start, just like I am on vacation, so it's the same.</p>
Clinical Psychologists	-

**Table 23** – Individual profile: Travel purpose  
Sources: Author's elaboration

## 3.2. FoF PASSENGERS' CONSUMPTION COPING RESPONSES WHEN FACING AIR TRAVEL DECISION-MAKING

### 3.2.1. Cognitive Approach (CCR1)

#### Logical Analysis

1. The testimonials of Web1, Web6, and Web17 express the thoughts they had during flight using coping tools acquire from the FoF courses, which consist in analyzing the turbulence and the noises and understanding them.
2. Some examples of FoF interviews, on the logical analysis they do, are also related to understanding the situations and analyzing them according to what they know. FoF1 and FoF3 also refer to turbulence like the

testimonials. FoF6, FoF7, and FoF9 express doing a logical decision. FoF6 when she does not have another means of transport, she airs travels and manages well the fear. FoF7 chose TAP because it is more humanized in her opinion and hearing Portuguese relaxes her the most. FoF9 flies because he knows that his fear reduces when he boards the airplane.

- Psy1 says that FoF passengers are aware that they have an irrational fear, as she states it is part of the diagnostic of the phobia. This information can be verified in Table 24.

Subcategory	Patterns
Logical Analysis	- Understanding the situation - Logic decisions
Sources	Data
Web collection	<p>Web1: "I'm typing this I had the best time ever. Was a little turbulent for about 5 minutes but I was going through the <b>its uncomfortable but not dangerous speech I'm my head.</b>"</p> <p>Web6: "This time the flight was a little different as I had some "moderate" turbulence to deal with. I went hardcore on the breath and squeeze and also <b>the mantra of turbulence can be uncomfortable but never dangerous</b> and it worked."</p> <p>Web17: "it was so helpful to know that I <b>knew what all of the noises meant.</b>"</p>
FoF Passengers	<p>FoF1: "For me it's seeing the technical parts because if I rely a lot on it, if I understand how things work if I understand why the plane tilts what does the plane have turbulence All these things if I <b>understand how</b>, it's done maintenance and if the planes that the entities certify in fact are certified, that calms down."</p> <p>FoF3: "When we pass clouds, I already know <i>"Ok, we are passing clouds, the plane will shake"</i>. I'm afraid, but I already know that is because if the clouds, it's nothing more, it's the clouds". I have a feeling of fear and anxiety, but rationally <b>I understand that this will pass</b> "Don't be like that, this is shaking and stuff", I don't know, <b>I can control those little things.</b>"</p> <p>FoF6: "I don't know very well, but I wasn't afraid at all and I can tell you that it's been 5 years, 5, 6 years since I've been there, but <b>I manage well</b>. Therefore, when I think about traveling, it's like <b>I want to go to a certain place, there being no other means of transport...</b>"</p> <p>FoF7: "One of the things I value is humanization because I want to look. The part I'm most afraid of is taking off, it's the part I'm most afraid of, I can't explain it to you, I need to look at people's faces and feel that the people around me are happy. if the people around me are OK, if I feel that people are calm, that they are comfortable with each other, I always feel more relaxed. <b>Hearing Portuguese spoken around me, which is why I often choose TAP, it relaxes me a lot more.</b>"</p> <p>FoF9: <b>"After being on the plane, it doesn't affect me, there's no stress, it doesn't scare me</b>, the problem is between choosing to go on a plane, getting on the plane, and from then on things are calm. Until when it's time to board, I'm always thinking about it."</p>
Clinical Psychologists	Psy1: <b>"That person knows they have an irrational fear.</b> This is one of the diagnostic criteria for a phobia, the person is aware that the fear is irrational."

**Table 24** – Cognitive approach: Logical analysis  
Source: Author's elaboration

## Positive reappraisal

1. The web testimonials show that positive reappraisal is done based on thinking of solutions when negative thoughts appear, such as remembering advices (Web9), self-verbalizations (Web10), and positive thoughts (Web18 and Web39). Positive feelings also contribute, such as confidence, a sense of achievement (Web3), self-pride (Web18), and love for traveling (Web39).
2. Regarding the interviews most of them also have cognitive approach as a coping response in order to travel. The solutions they think of are not overthinking (FoF1, FoF5, FoF7), do not let fear deprive from traveling (FoF4), and focus on the positive (FoF7). The positive feelings they shared toward air travel are most of all enthusiasm (FoF1 and FoF2), excitement (FoF7). In Table 25 all of the references mentioned are shared.
3. Information given by clinical psychologists was not associated with positive reappraisal.

Subcategory	Patterns
Positive Reappraisal	- Thoughts of solutions - Positive feelings
Sources	Data
Web collection	<p>Web3: "I am not "cured" I will always have anxiety; however, I now know I can "manage" these symptoms which gives an enormous <b>boost of confidence</b> with flying and a <b>real sense of achievement</b>."</p> <p>Web9: "I've flown 17 times this year and it couldn't have gone better. <b>Every time I felt less comfortable, I tried to remember all the advice</b> they gave me and, in just seconds, without even realizing it, I felt completely fine."</p> <p>Web10: "sometimes thoughts would come up that I would <b>quickly dispel with self-verbalizations</b>."</p> <p>Web18: "kept <b>reinforcing positive thoughts</b>. Was actually <b>pretty proud of myself</b>; I'm feeling much more positive about flying in general!"</p> <p>Web39: "I have to fly because <b>I love to travel</b> and I don't want to stop. I'm <b>concentrating on all the positives</b>."</p>
FoF Passengers	<p>FoF1: First I feel <b>enthusiasm</b>, at the same time it seems that I feel a tightness inside, that shiver in my stomach, then I think, ok I'm going to visit a new place that I don't know, but to go I have to go through the plane, which is what I hate and, therefore, what I feel before buying the trip is before buying the trip, I even look and look and I can't buy it in 5 minutes. It takes me half an hour to click and then click and <b>I simply block these thoughts</b> and I only consciously think back to the day of the trip or almost before getting on the plane.</p>

Subcategory	Patterns
Positive Reappraisal	- Thoughts of solutions - Positive feelings
Sources	Data
FoF Passengers	<p>FoF2: "I feel happy and with enthusiasm."</p> <p>FoF4: When I know I'm going on a trip or planning a trip that requires taking a plane, I get a little nervous right away, because I already know that I'm scared and I already know what I'm going to feel, so I already know that I'm going to have to take a plane I was already a little nervous, however I never let this fear deprive me of flying, I have already taken very long, medium, short trips, the fear is the same for all trips, even on a Porto-Algarve trip which is 45 minutes I am afraid. Fear is the same on every trip, I always feel super anxious, but I never let that stop me.</p> <p>FoF5: "I feel like I really want to, I know I'm going to be very scared, because I had an episode that I didn't realize, which was the plane was going to land and didn't land, I got up right away and everything was going to fall and I was like "Oh my God, I'm going to die" and I was traumatized from there. But what do I think, nothing. I still want to travel and I don't think that much."</p> <p>FoF7: I have a relationship of fascination and fear at the same time. In the beginning it is always an excitement. I want to go traveling and I want to go and discover new things, so it's all very beautiful, only when I get closer to the day of travel do I start to think about the bad things. But there's a mechanism that I found kind of... I don't anticipate too much. Therefore, when I book it, it's always enthusiasm: "Let's get to know a new country", "Let's travel", "only positive things"; My goal of wanting to visit countries helps me a lot, until the pandemic it was to visit 3 new countries a year.</p> <p>FoF9: "Despite being apprehensive, afraid, seeing that many more people are going, that gives peace of mind. I do a mental exercise so that when it's time to travel, the fear disappears"</p>
Clinical Psychologists	-

**Table 25** – Cognitive approach: Positive reappraisal  
Source: Author's elaboration

### 3.2.2. Cognitive Avoidance (CCR2)

#### Denying/minimizing

1. Among the testimonials could be found the testimonials of Web8 and Web15 admitting that they used excuses to avoid flying. Web23 tries to minimize the fear by listening to music.
2. One of the things almost all interviews do is to try to minimize the fear, so like Web23, there are things that distract their thoughts from being on the plane. FoF1, FoF7, and FoF8 also listen to music to cancel out the noise and minimize their anxiety. FoF3, FoF8, and FoF9 consider the meals the best moment of distraction because it gives them the sensation of not being on

the plane while time goes by without being focused on the fear. FoF9 adds reading to his list of cognitive avoidance and FoF4 and FoF7 add chatting, the first to a person she knows and the second with Portuguese flight attendants. FoF2 values a combination of better service and entertainment system. FoF10 is in denial trying to come up with excuses not to fly at all.

3. Psy1 refers that FoF passengers many times when flying, face high levels of suffering, although very silent because are based on thoughts, physical sensations, and feelings. Some of the interviewees refer to anxiety and FoF3 to torture sometimes. Psy1 ads that others will come up with excuses not to do certain travels. Psy2 shares one of the methods she uses to minimize the fear, which is imagining that being inside of the airplane is like being seating on the couch at home, just like respondents mentioned about eating. Psy3 refers to the lucky charms such as FoF7 mentions as rituals, which according to Psy3 is attaching power to external things rather than to themselves. This information is presented in Table 26.

Subcategory	Patterns
Denying/ Minimizing	- Minimize with distractions
	- Denial with excuses
	- Negative feelings
Sources	Data
Web collection	Web8: "For as long as I can remember and due to various influences, I have always "looked" at air travel as <b>high risk and avoidable</b> . I used to avoid them <b>under the pretext</b> of: "I like to drive" or "by car you can see more things while traveling". This is how my mind constructed excuses to avoid planes."
	Web15: "I have monthly meetings in different cities in Europe and sometimes I also have to travel to the US. In desperation, <b>I came up with excuses not to go</b> and managed to dodge it a few times. Either treat me or have to change jobs."
	Web23: "I find my music playlist is the <b>best distraction</b> as I can get so <b>anxious</b> that I can't focus on something as long as a movie or book."
FoF Passengers	FoF1: I always travel with headphones <b>to avoid aircraft noises</b> .
	FoF2: It makes a difference to have better service and entertainment, <b>I get more distracted</b> .

Subcategory	Patterns	
Denying/ Minimizing	- Minimize with distractions	
	- Denial with excuses	
	- Negative feelings	
Sources	Data	
FoF Passengers	<p>FoF3: "It's not that I like food, but I think I'll be eating for 10 minutes and I won't be focused on anything so I eat. It's the same thing as the movie, I don't care about the movie at all, but look, I'm going to watch the movie because sometimes I stop watching movies, for example, because I can't focus on the movie, then time doesn't move. It starts to be torture and then it's just showing me, making me feel how much time it's taking to pass, so I stop."</p> <p>FoF4: "When I go alone, I get more nervous in the sense that I know a lot of thoughts will come to my head and the fact that I don't have anyone there next to me, I mean there are people next to me, but someone I know, someone from my relationships, with whom I can talk to try to distract myself."</p> <p>FoF7: "The only thing I do that I think might be negative, in the sense that it grabs me, is my rituals. I use always the same playlist, I always listen to vampire weekends, always (...) if something fails, I will be more anxious. (...) I prefer to do it anyway and there are many things that I do, and I think that on the one hand is good, on the other hand it is also bad, because you are also clinging to things that then if that fails you also have that in your head; One of the things I value is traveling with TAP is that they'll understand me if I need to talk to them like I just have to go back there and chat to distract myself."</p> <p>FoF8: "For me it would be important to have the headphones, the ones that really have sound isolation. Noise Cancelling, because I think one of the things that affects me the most is the noise. Just taking out that sound helps a lot. I would always pay for absolute noise cancellation; When meals are served, as is a daily habit on the ground and when you are in a space where you are in the air, bringing a habit of when you are in a more natural and normal habitat that is on land gives me comfort."</p> <p>FoF9: "After being on the plane, what interests me most is reading. When meals are given, we seem to forget that we are on the plane and that makes time pass. And not thinking about anything else is also more peaceful. When I think about other things, I stop thinking I'm on the plane."</p> <p>FoF10: "As soon as I know I have a trip, I'm immediately upset, anxious, imagine if the trip is scheduled 3 months in advance, I'm 3 months in advance thinking about that day and I experience anxiety every day and trying to find an excuse not to go."</p>	
	Clinical Psychologists	<p>Psy1: "There is so much fear, fear is such a powerful emotion that deep down the person is doing something that goes against a very powerful instinct which is fear; many times, these people even go, but they go with very high levels of suffering on the plane. A very silent suffering because it is very much based on thoughts and physical sensations, but these are things that are not seen, only the person feels it; Some people will not fly and come up with excuses to not do certain travels."</p> <p>Psy2: "When they are afraid of flying, the FoF therapy, I try to get them to make the connection that being inside the plane is like being in the armchair at home, a super comfortable place."</p> <p>Psy3: "They might start creating like "I gotta bring all these different objects. I gotta bring a special ornament, or I gotta bring my lucky socks" and they start attaching powers in these external things and if they forgot the lucky socks, they gonna be... so just thinking where people locate the power externally rather than locating the power in themselves that they can do it. So, just thinking about some of those avoidant behaviors leading up to, or not sleeping very well, getting very anxious in the day sledding up to the flight. So, rather than adapting good, sort of restful sleep, relaxation techniques, kind of getting them into a flight mindset."</p>

**Table 26** – Cognitive avoidance: Denying/Minimizing  
Source: Author's elaboration

## Acceptance/resignation

1. Many FoF passengers limited their lives because of this fear. Web7, Web11, Web37, and Web41 shared that they avoided flying for many years.
2. The participants that fly also show resignation by being limited to their fear. FoF7 does not imagine herself working outside of Portugal because of this fear of air travel. FoF3 gets upset with herself every time she travels for putting herself in that situation, although she flies, while FoF10 who used to be a frequent flyer is now avoiding it, resigning to the fear of being stronger as can be seen in Table 27.
3. Clinical psychologists did not mention relevant insights regarding passengers that fly, only referencing those who never flew (Psy1 example).

Subcategory	Patterns
Acceptance/Resignation	- Limited by fear
Sources	Data
Web Collection	<p>Web7: "For many years I always avoided traveling by plane. The fear of not being able to control it, of having an anxiety attack on board, of being closed off, has always limited my life. Deep down, there were places in the world that I wanted to go, but the physical discomfort, just thinking about traveling, was more than enough to not do it."</p> <p>Web11: "I developed such an intense phobia of flying that for seven years it kept me from even thinking about airplanes. - The simple fact of going to take or pick someone up at the airport left me in an abnormal state of tension and it wouldn't even cross my mind to get on a plane. I postponed the resolution of the matter"</p> <p>Web37: "I've been a nervous flyer my whole life, avoided it like the plague for 20 years. Then I decided I was going to start traveling."</p> <p>Web41: "Thank you. I'm getting on a flight tomorrow for the 1st time since I was 17. I'm 42 now &amp; this fear has paralyzed me long enough. You're right at this point I'm choosing to have this fear."</p>
FoF Passengers	<p>FoF3: "I'm one of those people who get on a plane and think I shouldn't have bought it. Well, on a plane and I say "This is the last time I'm going to do this. I'm not going to put myself in this position again". But I travel, I've never stopped taking a vacation or because of fear, but I'm upset with myself for putting myself in this situation."</p> <p>FoF7: "I think that although I fly, this limits not only my travels, but obviously also my professional life, because I wouldn't imagine myself working outside Portugal because of this."</p> <p>FoF10: "This year I wanted to travel on vacation, but I didn't, the fear is stronger."</p>
Clinical Psychologists	Psy1: "There is a percentage of people who have never traveled by plane in their life, they don't even have negative experiences with flying."

**Table 27** – Cognitive avoidance: Acceptance/Resignation  
Source: Author's elaboration

### **3.2.3. Behavioral Approach (CCR3)**

#### **Seeking guidance and support**

1. It is important to mention that all the web testimonials are from individuals that looked for guidance, either attending FoF programs or watching YouTube videos with tips to overcome the fear. However, in between these testimonials, it is also possible to find that to cope with the fear FoF passengers often recur to crew members, either the flight crew (Web6) or the cabin crew (Web31).
2. Most of the participants do the same as the Web testimonials, especially seeking the cabin crew because they are the ones present the whole flight. FoF3 mentions calling for their support, FoF4 looks at them to understand what is happening, and just like FoF7 goes to talk to them to calm down. FoF7 ads that she finds support in flying accompanied because she sees others' calm facial expressions as a way to calm herself down too. FoF8 and FoF10 resorted to professional help, the first to a FoF program and the second to a psychology not sharing if it was a specialist on treating FoF.
3. The clinical psychologists are the guides and supporters themselves to the ones that attend their programs. Psy1 also refers to most extroverts being able to call flight attendants to talk to. Psy2 recommends them, to give a word to the captain if possible. Their statements are shared in Table 28.

Subcategory	Patterns
Seeking Guidance and Support	- Talk to crew members
	- Professional support
Sources	Data
Web Collection	Web6: "I was also able to talk to the BA captain."
	Web31: "I asked a crew member if she can hold my hand just for a sec. (I also have panic attack and at the moment i thought somebody was chocking me)."
FoF Passengers	FoF3: "I often have to call the flight attendants closer to me. Or when they order everyone to sit down and I can't be there I get up and stand next to them, because I've already managed to find some tools that calm me down; I've done more than one flight hand in hand with people I've never seen in my life."
	FoF5: "If there's this weird little noise, I start looking at the flight attendants and staring at their faces, like "What's going on? Nowadays I sit further forward to look at the flight attendants. I always look at their faces, always; I think that on any flight I was a little scared and it was from Emirates and then I was talking to one of them, like drinking and talking to one of them and it was great because I was so distracted that I forgot I was on a plane, but sometimes I'm a little embarrassed to speak."
	FoF7: "Hearing speaking Portuguese around me, which is why I often choose TAP, it relaxes me a lot more; I can go talk to the flight attendants and tell them the things I'm feeling and they understand what I'm saying and have a word to calm me down. One of the things I value is traveling with TAP because they'll understand me if I need to talk to them like I just have to go back there and talk to distract myself; I always prefer to go accompanied. I look at people, and people are always great. It's the moment when my antenna starts looking for someone who is super calm and I look to that person to relax."
	FoF8: "I took the TAP course in 2008, I took a course that TAP has, which was to lose the FoF, which was called Flying without fear and that helped me slightly, but not absolutely. FoF10: "I've already been to a psychologist and she told me that there were high levels of anxiety and first I had to treat the underlying causes."
Clinical Psychologists	Psy1: "Psy1: They think it's ridiculous, that it's stupid and that they're going to have to spend money (therapy) to solve a problem that they think is stupid; They often call the crew member to ask if everything is ok, "How is the weather at the destination?", or "How is the route weather? "Will there be turbulence?", those who are less shy sometimes ask these questions to the crew."
	Psy2: "Most of the people who fly if they could, for example, one of the recommendations is that if they can talk to the captain, give him a few words, for example, another recommendation is that they can talk to the captain. That's the part of people who like to have everything under control."

**Table 28** – Behavioral approach: Seeking guidance and support  
Source: Author's elaboration

## **Problem-solving**

1. Some of the web FoF individuals express how they solve fear-related problems after having had guidance and support. In this case, actions are different, such as preparing everything in advance, reading the notes from

the program (Web10), flying alone (Web13), seat by the window, and being able to look at the ocean, disregard the noises, do breathing exercises, do muscle relaxation (Web18), listening to guided meditation and to fly without alcohol (Web12). In general, they can do things that they usually avoided.

2. In the case of participants, only FoF8 mentioned being part of an actual program. According to her it helped her slightly with the FoF, as so treating other fears individually through therapy and self-work, did. Regarding the other participants research did not interpret behaviors to minimize or avoid fear included in problem-solving, but in seeking alternative rewards. For example, having a preference to sit on the aisle to avoid seating on the window. The problem would be considered solved and dealt with straightforwardly if the person would be able to sit by the window as Web18 shared. Although, few passengers shared possible solutions that could improve their experiences, such as communicating in their mother tongue, having screens even on short flights to know the route, having internet access (FoF7), and having more attention like in business class (FoF10).
3. Psy1 underlines that solving this problem involves a lot of willpower, motivation and it is an investment. This information is available on Table 29.

Subcategory	Patterns
Problem-solving	- Deal with the situation - Possible solutions
Sources	Data
Web Collection	<p>Web10: "I'm here to give you news of my first trip after the <i>Voar sem medo</i> course. I went and came to Copenhagen and everything went very well. Starting with the outward journey, I <b>prepared everything in advance</b> and read the notes they gave us on the course. I sat at the window and was able to look out during take-off"; "After that, I read the self-verbalizations, the VoarApp tips and everything was fine"</p> <p>Web13: "Today, I feel that I am part of the 90% success rate, at least judging by the <b>trips I took after therapy</b>: Faro, Porto Santo, Nice, Ponta Delgada, Rome, New York, Charleston, Paris, Los Angeles, Maui and 6 trips to Miami, <b>two of which alone</b>."</p> <p>Web18: "<b>I put everything into practice – ie. things I'd usually avoid</b>. I sat at the window seat, looked out the window to the ocean, and didn't drown out noises of take-off. I did the breathing exercises and muscle relaxation"</p> <p>Web22: "I managed to go <b>without alcohol</b> and listened to a guided meditation mp3, and by the end of the flight I was pretty relaxed."</p>
FoF Passengers	<p>FoF7: "<b>Everything that can improve, positive experiences</b> that can improve those who are afraid to travel is the mother tongue, the moment you live on board, feeling safe is fundamental, but this is already a prerequisite; Another thing I paid for was <b>knowing where I am at any moment</b>, which before we had, any short-haul flight had a <b>screen</b>. I think when we're passing the sea or when we're leaving the sea or when we're passing Ecuador because those areas are always turbulent because there's a crossing of winds and it's much easier to anticipate, that relaxes me. If I know that I am entering the sea, starting to enter the sea, or leaving the sea, I already know that there is turbulence due to the winds. You only have it on ocean liners, I'd love to have that, knowing where I am at any time. This is another thing that I would easily pay for, it also has to do with this <b>communication problem</b>. I never paid to have <b>internet</b>, because I didn't even have that option, there I had, on the 330, on the Tap neos, in fact it was the last big flight I took and it was after we had those options, but communication with the abroad and knowing where I am is also a little bit the same thing that would make me pay."</p> <p>FoF8: "I took the TAP course in 2008, which was to lose the fear of FoF and <b>helped me slightly</b>, but not absolutely. <b>Then it was much more self-work</b>, because I also started to work on other fears in therapies and in general try to face them all and individually, I think I ended up... as I was facing one by one, they started to minimize. Not quite, I'm not, it's not a thing that disappeared, but <b>there's no comparison</b>."</p> <p>FoF10: "Maybe traveling in <b>business</b>, it's psychological, but feeling that <b>a person maybe has more attention</b>, I don't know."</p>
Clinical Psychologists	<p>Psy1: (treatment) "it takes a lot of willpower; these people have to be very brave at the same time when they take this step of asking for help because they are not taking the easiest path for them. This is going the hardest way, because <b>it requires investment, because it requires motivation</b>."</p>

**Table 29** – Behavioral approach: Problem-solving  
Source: Author's elaboration

### 3.2.4. Behavioral Avoidance (CCR4)

#### Seeking alternative rewards

1. In this category could be included some of the behaviors already mentioned in objective one because many of the risk perceptions make them avoid

certain airlines, flight routes, or seat allocations. Then, there are those who avoid air travel in general, such as Web8, Web27 and Web40 that prefers other means of transport.

2. The same is applied to the participants, many revealed preferences based on risk perceptions leading to choose alternatives. Regarding taking another mean of transport like the Web testimonials, FoF3, FoF6, and FoF7 said that use a car instead of airplane. If possible, FoF3 has the car as a first option, FoF6 only once took an airplane to a destination when she could take a car. Depending not only on the destination but also on who makes the flight choice, FoF9 might prefer riding a car, giving the example of driving to Madrid when her friends planned to go with a low-cost. In Table 30 it is possible to find original excerpts.
3. All of the information regarding this subcategory mentioned by the clinical psychologists was exposed in the first specific objective.

Subcategory	Patterns
Seeking Alternative Rewards	- Chose alternative means of transport - Choosing a specific airline, route, and seat
Sources	Data
Web collection	<p>Web8: "In the first year, I still used my <b>car</b> to move around, <b>trucks</b> to take material and even a boat to cross with all the logistics to Ireland. It was an exhausting and time-consuming and labor-intensive adventure."</p> <p>Web27: "I am going to go on a 2.30h flight in a month and to be honest I am sh1t scared. Like, slightly panicking and considering <b>buying a train ticket instead</b>"</p> <p>Web40: "Took a 4-hour flight from Ottawa to Edmonton. I was white knuckled in a trance the whole time. After I got off, I was still feeling vertigo. I got so scared that 2 days before I had to leave to come back, <b>I rented a Uhaul and drove</b> over 3000km.</p>
FoF Passengers	<p>FoF3: Here to Spain, I already went by car. I took a trip not long ago in Romania, around Romania and I could have done it by plane, but I preferred to go by car. <b>If can go by car, I will avoid the plane.</b></p> <p>FoF6: "I think it's only happened to me <b>once in my life that I've taken a plane and could have taken anything other than a plane</b>, since this fear developed because in the past, I wasn't afraid of flying at all."</p> <p>FoF7: "For example Madrid. At a friend's bachelorette party, some of them went by plane with the bride and I immediately said that <b>I was taking a car</b>. But why? I wasn't in control of that trip, we were friends, I didn't want to go alone and I would only go on TAP, unless I paid someone else for the trip. They were all on Ryanair. I said right away that was out of the question. I said soon, I'll take a car, and it would come in handy for some, so we went by car. But there is a limit, I also realize that there is a limit. Maybe Madrid still has the possibility to choose, in other cases, I never considered it."</p>
Clinical Psychologists	-

**Table 30** – Behavioral avoidance: Seeking alternative rewards  
Source: Author's elaboration

### **Emotion discharge**

1. From the 44 testimonials, only 2 shared episodes of discharging their emotions. Crying is a way to express emotions common to Web27 and Web36, however, the last also slapped oneself during take-off.
2. Among the participants as in the testimonials, only FoF3 and FoF7 revealed crying, and FoF3 also a gesture like grabbing someone. Other participants did not mention expressing their emotions but FoF4 said specifically that she does not express fear, that she lives it for herself.

3. Psy1 said FoF passengers are very afraid of possible discharges of emotions and confirm what FoF4 shares, which is silent suffering. Their statements can be read in Table 31.

Subcategory	Patterns
Emotion Discharge	- Crying
	- Gestures
	- Silent suffering
Sources	Data
Web collection	Web27: "I frantically started playing a game on my phone while crying almost the whole way."
	Web36: "I felt so defeated and was waiting for my cab when i saw the plane take off normally and climb to cruising altitude and i just kept slaping myself and started crying."
FoF Passengers	FoF3: "I suffer a lot, but I don't limit myself, i cry on flights; I grab, I don't scream, I never screamed, I cry;
	FoF7: "Once I made such a sad figure, I was driving, there was a lot of traffic, I thought I wasn't going to arrive in time, I was already crying in the car, in a trance; My tendency, I used to cry heartlessly when I took off and now, I can calm myself down; Now I no longer cry."
	FoF4: "I'm really scared and those who travel with me know, but I don't express my fear, that is, I'm not that person who starts screaming or crying or hyperventilating or needing a sick bag. No. I kind of live it all for myself, if someone inspects me during a flight it would be a storm inside my body, inside my head, but it's too deep inside. For example, when taking off or when the plane is shaking a lot, I get I'm very stressed and people sometimes want to talk to me and I just close my eyes and say "let me be" and I'll go there taking a deep breath."
Clinical Psychologists	Psy1: "A very silent suffering because it is very much based on thoughts and physical sensations, but these are things that are not seen, only the person feels it; They are people who are mainly afraid of their reaction inside the plane. They're afraid of losing control, they're afraid of having a panic attack and they want to get off the plane and they can't. It's the fear of being in a situation they can't control, of having a panic attack and finally, this having catastrophic consequences and the "I want to get out of here and I can't". It is very much linked to disturbances; these people are usually not just the plane."

**Table 31** – Behavioral avoidance: Emotion discharge  
Author's elaboration

### **Impulsive or risky behavior**

1. In web collection it was possible to find many testimonials of passengers recurring to medication, more specifically tranquilizers (Web7, Web14, Web21, Web32, and Web33). Although the researcher inserts them in this subcategory, some are not possible to interpret as risky or not because it is not clear if it is self-medication or over the recommended prescript doses.

Web21 and Web33 admit to mixing them with alcohol. The aim of all of this behavior is to feel calmer. One of the impulsive behaviors found was to give up flying at the last minute, such as Web36 tells it happened.

2. Regarding the participants' answers, the information was more explicit. FoF3, FoF2, and FoF9 mentioned having also recurred to tranquilizers, but in this case, FoF3 shared had an effect on making her not remember the flight connection and tells an episode of apology at the end of the flight because she felt she was almost rude. FoF9 says that the tranquilizers once only made effect after landing, affecting her for the meeting she went on purpose for. From the 4 participants that mentioned drinking alcohol in order to relax or not to think about fear, only FoF8 and FoF11 shared that it was too much. FoF4 has that problem solved and FoF11 believes that it helped him overcome a critical event during flight. Just like Web36, FoF10 reports having had the impulsive behavior of not showing up to a scheduled flight. While these last avoidance behaviors affect FoF passengers and might affect others this next one affects oneself particularly, in this case, FoF6, which is not doing anything during flight, not standing up, not eating, not drinking. FoF11 does not stand up either, only did once under the influence of alcohol.
3. Psy1 confirms all the previous coping responses with the exception of alcohol. She explains that although people behave this way to feel better, they are negative. What concerns tranquilizers, she even explains that sometimes the effect is just felt when the person relaxes, which usually is when landing, and in some worse cases, the person needs medical

assistance. Referring to the ones that give up at the last minute, she emphasizes that many times apart from oneself affects family members and flight performance. Psy2 saw it from a perception of affecting others and did not attend FoF individuals revealing impulsive or risky behavior. Refers to the medication, but apparently in a controlled way. Psy3 corroborates the negativity of alcohol and self-medication and the most dangerous scenario the mix of both. All the information is presented in Table 32.

Subcategory	Patterns
Impulsive or Risky Behavior	- Take medication
	- Drink alcohol
	- Give up on a booked flight
	- Doing nothing
Sources	Data
Webcollection	Web7: "I always took medication to be able to go safer"
	Web14: "I didn't take tranquilizers and I managed to sleep well for most of the trip."
	Web21: "For many years I dealt with my fear with a mixture of alcohol and diazepam. I was never an unruly passenger but I noticed that when the alcohol wore off, the anxiety was multiplied many times (and it's difficult to stay drunk for a long-haul flight)"
	Web32: "Plus I took 400mg quetiapine to calm me down. Did almost nothing. I do not want to know what it would have felt like if I did not take that medication."
	Web33: "But I've learned that 10mg of Tranxene and two glasses of white wine do the best job for me. No more anxiety."
FoF Passengers	Web36: "There was a time me and my gf were literally about to step on the plane to Spain and i literally chickened out and turned back and caused a sht ton of security breach apparently."
	FoF2: "Sometimes I drink a glass of wine when I'm more stressed, but under control."
	FoF3: "It happened to me when I got to the end of the flight and apologized, if I wasn't rude it was close, which is being told to sit down and I say "I don't want to be here and leave me alone" and I don't know why, because I completely lose control and I just want to get out of there and I think that if they tell me "Open the door and jump", I would open the door and jump; It has happened to me, imagine, I arrived here in Porto, I did Toronto-Brussels and then Brussels - Porto I don't remember being in Brussels, I have no idea of being in Brussels. I was completely drugged."
	FoF4: Just drinking to relax, it is what I usually, do."
FoF Passengers	FoF6: "For Zanzibar I had 8 hours or whatever it is, for the United States, wherever it is, I'm there, I don't get up, I don't drink, I don't eat, I don't go to the bathroom, I don't do anything. I don't sleep, I don't take anything, I always go with the pill, but I've never taken it, because I'm afraid that one day I'll pass and I have the pill there, but I don't do anything at all, it's like I told you, I don't drink, I don't eat. I can't read as I can't focus, I'm always trying everything I can't read a page I can read like big letters."
	FoF8: "I drank a lot of alcohol (before flights) in the past until I got better. I don't know, at least 4 times, which was with the intention "I don't even want to think". I also used tranquilizers and still always bring them with me, just in case...as an SOS."

Subcategory	Patterns
Impulsive or Risky Behavior	- Take medication
	- Drink alcohol
	- Give up on a booked flight
	- Doing nothing
Sources	Data
FoF Passengers	<p>FoF9: victans didn't work, it only worked after I landed, then it worked and I got <b>drugged</b>. When I made a direct trip to go to a meeting, I arrived at the meeting KO'd, not knowing what I was doing there. I tried to take it before the flight, at flight time, under the tongue, but the adrenaline level is so high that I can't relax and I only relax when I feel safe; The last few trips I started to panic every time the plane had air holes and then I avoided it, avoided it and now I can't, to the point of <b>not showing up</b> with a scheduled trip I didn't even go, my husband and son went to England, I had a flight and decided not to go."</p> <p>FoF11: I remember, for example, the first time I traveled there was an air pocket of, fortunately at that time <b>I was drunk, it had to be</b> and I didn't feel that much. I mean, I felt the air pocket, but I thought right away if it wasn't for the alcohol, I would probably be clinging to the floor or something like that; I <b>only got up once</b>, which was after an air pocket came back from Paris and I only did that because <b>I was drunk</b>, I had to go to the bathroom and that was the only time I got up. Besides, I take my seat belt off, when they say to take it off, but I remember the first time I traveled I didn't take it off.</p>
Clinical Psychologists	<p>Psy1: "These are people who often don't get up for an entire trip, which on a long-haul flight is complicated, because in addition to all the stress they're going through, they're still anxious to pee, they're people who avoid talking, don't want to talk, and therefore, they go there silently, which makes the journey even more difficult, so these are safety behaviors. They are coping mechanisms, but they are negative coping mechanisms, because deep down the person is supposedly doing that to feel better, but it only makes the flight experience worse, <b>they don't get up, they don't talk, they often can't eat, they do nothing to distract themselves, they can't read a book, they don't listen to music because they have to listen to the noise all the time. They take a lot of pills</b>, I've been hearing stories of people who do self-medication and with massive doses that I think if I took that I'd be in a coma for 2 or 3 days and the curious thing is that as fear is a powerful and very instinctive emotion, the person takes that and continues ... and often only when the plane is descending, making the approach, the person's danger detector is turned off and that takes effect, and then we have a problem, there we have a big problem prob. People who have to leave by plane in an ambulance, who go straight to the hospital from there because they can't take care of themselves or who go to the hotel in very bad shape, because they are having a lot of trouble catching a taxi, because they are completely <b>drugged</b>. What these people suffer, some of them, is torture. It doesn't even cross their minds what some people go through to take a plane trip and <b>often they arrive at the boarding gate or are already seated and leave</b>, which is horrible, with families having to run after and then having to go get luggage, handling, the entire flight."</p> <p>Psy2: "No, because, poor them, they handle it, they take the <b>medication</b> they can, at least those who have asked me for help. Sometimes they go to the bathroom more than necessary, but not something that could harm the flight."</p> <p>Psy3: "Some people, perhaps, leading up to the flight will start watching films, and documentaries about disasters, so, they are putting in all the negative information into their minds, because they are doing this kind of biased research to prove that they are right, that they shouldn't go flying. I think the obvious ones, the negative behaviors that happen are people using <b>alcohol</b> as a self-medicating substance to alleviate the discomfort around the fear that their experiencing. (...) Some people might take <b>sleeping tablets</b>, might take some sort of medicines that they bought on the internet which is always a worry, by all means, some people will be already on anti-anxiety medication by the doctor, and as long as they medically sign off that's they choice, but I think for other people, <b>mixing alcohol with anti-anxiety</b> medication, that's really danger. People need to be careful with what they use and if people use diazepam, another benzodiazepine drug (...) not mixing it with alcohol."</p>

**Table 32** – Behavioral avoidance: Impulsive or risk behavior  
Source: Author’s elaboration

In order to conclude this chapter and before presenting the discussion in Table 33 is possible to find a summary of all subcategory patterns and the corresponding categories.

Objective	Category	Subcategory	Patterns
1	Airline	Reputation	Accidents track record; Low-cost / Unknown airlines; Geographic location
		Service Quality	Cabin crew behavior; Flight crew communication
		Customer Loyalty	Home carrier; Flag airlines
		Satisfaction	Overall experience
		Airplane	Size, State and Model of the airplane
		Recruitment	Crew selection; Flight Crew Experience
	Route & Seat	Flight Route	Connecting; Flight time; Fly over the ocean
		Seat Allocation	The back of the airplane; Window/ aisle; Emergency exit row
	Media	Negative Coverage	Affects negatively; Watch to understand; Remember the images
		Safety Information	Active researchers; Attention to the information
	Individual Profile	Age/Gender/Demographic/ Education/Income/Flying Frequency	No patterns found
		Phobia	Different phobia type / Not explored
		Previous Experiences	Critical experiences; Experiences biased by the fear
Travel Purpose		Traveling against will; Travelling to please oneself or family; Traveling alone	
2	Cognitive Approach	Logical Analysis	Understanding the situation; Logic decisions
		Positive Reappraisal	Thoughts of solutions; Positive feelings
	Cognitive Avoidance	Denying/ Minimizing	Minimize with distractions; Denial with excuses; Negative feelings
		Acceptance/ Resignation	Limited by fear
	Behavioral Approach	Seeking Guidance and Support	Talk to crew members; Professional support
		Problem-solving	Deal with the situation; Possible solutions
	Behavioral Avoidance	Seeking Alternative Rewards	Chose alternative means of transport; Choose a specific airline, route, and seat.
		Emotion Discharge	Crying; Gestures; Silent suffering
		Impulsive or Risky Behavior	Take medication; Drink alcohol; Give up on flying; Doing nothing

**Table 33** – Summary of results and findings  
Source: Author’s elaboration

## **4. DISCUSSION**

After demonstrating the results and findings it is crucial to go in-depth into their relevance and relate them to the literature review. Remembering that the research problem was to understand how FoF affects the consumption behavior of commercial airline passengers, the discussion is divided into two specific objectives.

### **4.1. REASONS AND FEELINGS UNDERLYING THE PERCEIVED RISK OF FOF PASSENGERS TOWARD AIR TRAVEL**

This study revealed that FoF passengers' perceived risk of air travel is influenced by different categories and in general terms when they do not feel safe, they perceive risk. According to Reisinger & Mavondo (2016), risk can be real, absolute, or perceived, in this particular study, as Boksberger et al. (2007) affirmed that individual decisions are often based on the perceived risk, the researcher did not focus on investigating which risk perceptions of FoF passengers might constitute a real or absolute risk.

In what concerns airlines, the perceived risk is highly based on reputation, with an emphasis on airplane accidents, which confirms what Liao, (2015) stated. Fleischer et al. (2015) mentioned company identity and price as

being considered to fly or not to fly a specific airline, reflecting the willingness to pay for perceived higher levels of safety, which might be associated with the finding of some FoF passengers discarding unknown and low-cost airlines. Although, a few participants also added the geographic origin of the airline as a contributor to their perceived risk. In the study of Shiwakoti et al. (2022) in Asia it was mentioned that service quality, loyalty, and satisfaction are significantly correlated to passengers' perceived safety. The findings of this study corroborate this information, moreover, it unveils that service quality, especially related to cabin crew behavior, stands out significantly from the other two subcategories. Regarding airlines, two categories emerged that were not mentioned in the literature review, the airplanes used (size, state, and model) and the recruitment of crew members as affecting the perceived risk.

The present research showed that, not only the airline choice but also the route choice is based on the perceived risk of flying as Boksberger et al. (2007) referenced. Even though this reference dates back 16 years, it also applies today to FoF passengers, as they perceive connecting and long flights as riskier. Regarding seat allocation, it was explored to understand if superior class consumers felt safer than the lower tickets ones, according to Shiwakoti et al. (2022). However, this association was not significant, conversely to the avoidance of the rear of the airplane that was mostly perceived as riskier.

When discussing the influence of media, although some FoF individuals believed that understanding the reason for air crashes helps them, the majority, including the clinical psychologists, confirm that negative coverage fuels the growth of flying phobia as explored by (Schindler et al., 2016). On the other hand, safety information, including safety rankings had different results. The current study findings do not corroborate in detail what Fleischer et al. (2015) found regarding the score impact on FoF consumers. It corroborates that they pay attention and do consider this information, but it was not mentioned in the web collection and it was not familiar to some participants. This might be also influenced by what Savage (2012) stated relative to airlines not alluding to this matter and Schindler et al. (2016) affirmation of media covering mostly air crash images. The clinical psychologists participating in this study agreed that FoF passengers are highly affected by all the information that reaches them and will especially remember the negative, which is related to (Chua et al., 2006) theory of the pictorial presentations as propellers of consumption risk avoidance.

In the study multidimensional analysis of perceived risk in commercial air travel made by Boksberger et al. (2007), age, gender, demographics, income, previous experiences, and travel purpose made the difference. Although, not dedicated to FoF in particular, reveal the importance of considering possible individual characteristics when studying perceived risk. Another research that considered individual profiles was Shiwakoti et al. (2022) while studying the perception of safety, mentioning demographic

disparities, income, and flight frequency. Apart from previous experiences and travel purpose, none of the other characteristics mentioned revealed patterns in the present research. The clinical psychologists expressed that the phobia itself is a very individual diagnostic, which was not explored in this research but might be important to ascertain what Maner & Schmidt (2006) indicate about the willingness to engage, or not, in risky decision-making depending on anxiety levels.

#### **4.2. FoF PASSENGERS' CONSUMPTION COPING RESPONSES WHEN FACING AIR TRAVEL DECISION-MAKING**

This research revealed that patterns can be found in FoF consumers coping responses when deciding or purchasing air travel services. The outcome was found to be favorable, unfavorable or unresolved as Lazarus and Folkman (1984) stated many years ago, not specifying the situation, in the transactional stress-coping theory.

The cognitive approach of the FoF passengers considering Moos & Holahan (2003) generic stress-coping, in terms of logic analysis, was not explicit if they are concerned with one facet at the time but it was clear that based on previous experiences, they understand the situation and consider a different course of action. Others accept the truth and make logical decisions

for a positive outcome. The same happens with the positive reappraisal subcategory, where thinking of solutions dissipates negative thoughts and the effort to attract positive feelings leads to a favorable outcome for embracing air travel.

The present research also found that cognitive avoidance is very recurrent in these consumers. They are constantly trying to minimize fear by using distractions during flight. There are no references in the literature review for most of these specific distractions unless a very ancient study (Yamaguchi, 1998) that corroborates the preference traveling accompanied. Other FoF consumers when facing the decision to air travel trying to think of excuses not to go, either to others or even to themselves. It is mainly to avoid negative feelings, which sometimes is not possible. This showed to be related to common feelings Oakes & Bor (2010a) said FoF individuals have, such as fear of crashing, death, losing self-control, having anxiety, and being ashamed of their fear. This also leads to being limited by fear, by accepting the consequences of avoidance and resigning from flying. In this category Moos & Holahan's (2003) description of cognitive avoidance is confirmed.

The results showed a main finding which is the role of the crew, especially the cabin crew in giving support to the consumers under study. It is much more than questioning about flight or pilots as some authors mention (Foreman et al., 2012; L. van Gerwen & Bor, 2016), it is looking for attention, empathy, and a word or a gesture to help them. Clinical psychologists

have a major role when FoF seek guidance and support, as it was possible to confirm, in testimonials of those who recurred to their services. This behavior leans toward proactive and preventive coping responses (Biggs et al., 2017). Problem-solving as defined by Moos & Holahan (2003) is to take actual action to deal with the situation or its outcome straightforwardly which in this research apart from most of the web FoF individuals that did programs and one of the FoF interviewees, the others did not demonstrate making air travel decisions that they used to avoid, instead referenced some possible solutions.

The last category of consumption coping responses is behavioral avoidance and it is one of the most relevant findings to consumption. The findings correspond to Moos & Holahan's (2003) inclusion of seeking alternative rewards, emotion discard, and impulsive or risky behavior. FoF passengers showed that by avoiding certain airline companies, routes, and seats based on risk perception, as mentioned in objective one, they are creating alternative sources of satisfaction to fly, which meliorated their fear but does not resolve the original problem. Some examples that match previous studies mentioned in the literature review are preferring nonstop flights, preferring a specific seat (Fleischer et al., 2012), and choosing to travel by another means of transport (Oakes & Bor, 2010b). The preference for scheduled carried to avoid nonscheduled carriers did not result significantly, as well the home carrier preference for facilitating communication (Oakes & Bor, 2010b), only one of the interviewees mentioned these preferences for these reasons. Most of the

choices lean toward the perceived risk unveiled in the previous specific objective. Some passengers revealed internal suffering, but not all of them express those feelings, and those who do, discharge their emotions mostly through crying. In what concerns impulsive or risky behavior, the most recognizable behaviors found in this study are taking medication and alcohol. It was not clear if it is usually self-medication as Foreman et al. (2012) state or prescribed, but as well as alcohol it was possible to conclude that in some cases affected in a negative way, which means that the outcome apart from being unfavorable, it is unresolved. These findings correspond to Moos & Holahan (2003) definition of momentarily reduce one's stress. Becoming aggressive while in fear situations toward other passengers or cabin crew (van Gerwen, L. & Bor2016) was not a pattern found on this research.

To conclude, it is important to mention that the lack of marketing studies referring to FoF commercial airline consumers specifically, and to their coping responses as a consumption coping responses, made this discussion more challenging. This fact, makes the conclusions of this marketing research even more relevant.



## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

At last is presented the chapter of the conclusions of this entire research, which entails the answers to the objectives, study contributions, including theoretical and managerial contributions, limitations of its realization and finally, recommendations for future studies.

### **5.1. ANSWERS TO THE OBJECTIVES**

#### **5.1.1. Reasons and feelings underlying the perceived risk of FoF passengers toward air travel**

Various reasons contribute to the perceived risk of FoF passengers toward air travel, starting with airline brands as one of the most important considerations for these consumers. The international reputation of the airline encompasses the most decisive reason for feeling safe, followed by the service quality that has the flight attendants as leading direct influencers in reducing the perceived risk. Customer Loyalty in the form of frequent flyer programs, although mainly associated with convenience, seems to include the same airline brands associated with reputation. As well as overall satisfaction, which contributes to these passengers feeling of comfort, contributing to a less stressful experience. The two emerging categories, the airplane appearance,

and the recruitment process showed to be essential, especially the first. This information indicates that airlines cannot jeopardize any of these subcategories.

The flight route and seat allocation were proven to be part of FoF's perceived risk, mainly the connecting flights due to having more take-offs and landings, the long flights, and seating in the back of the plane, mainly because of turbulence. These facts show that airlines' offers of flight routes and the possibility to choose seats might be decisive.

Negative media coverage is definitely more present than safety information in FoF passengers' perceptions. Either the perceptions of risk or the perceptions of safety come mainly from the negative media. Even though some FoF consider that understanding the reasons for air crashes helps them, the majority including clinical psychologists think the opposite way. This fact enhances that these consumers have an interest in more information and the sources are not appropriate for individuals with this fear.

FoF individuals' perceived risk is highly based on their previous experiences, which influences highly these passengers' expectations and decisions. The travel purpose contributes also, mainly business travel because the booking decisions are not on the FoF passenger control. It is important for them to be involved with the purchase. At last, according to clinical

psychologists, although there are patterns, the phobia itself is extremely individual, which interferes with perceived risk. Individual profiles along with the other subcategories play an important role in consumption behavior.

### **5.1.2. FoF passengers' consumption coping responses when facing air travel decision-making**

Air travel, for FoF passengers, was revealed to be a stressful consumption, resulting in consumption coping responses. They can be cognitive or behavioral responses. Cognitive approach responses are reflected on an essential logical analysis, based on understanding the situation that frightens FoF individuals, for a positive outcome. Moreover, thinking of solutions to dispel negative thoughts and reinforce positive ones proved to result in greater outcomes, whether on decisions prior to fly or during the flight.

When related to cognitive avoidance, minimizing the fear with distractions during flight is shown to be an attempt made by these passengers, giving importance to entertainment. This entertainment includes mainly talking to the cabin crew, the meals, and the entertainment system. A more unfavorable thought is denying this fear to themselves not to fly. This also includes acceptance and resignation of living with limitations caused by this fear, which also affects airline demand.

The same happens to behavioral-based responses, the fear can be approached or avoided. The behavioral approach coping response that stood out was seeking support from crew members, not invalidating that many testimonials and a couple of interviewees looked for this support and guidance through professionals. This professional support, namely FoF programs including psychological treatment shows successful problem-solving.

At last, the behavioral avoidance coping response comprises seeking alternative rewards, such as deciding to travel by other means of transport, only choosing certain airlines, flight routes, and specific seat allocations to avoid the perceived riskier options. These consumers suffer internally, while some discharge their emotions mostly through crying, others are very silent. The last example consists in momentarily reducing those emotions through medication, and alcohol, which can become a risky behavior if mixed or if not in recommended proportions, and finally deciding last minute to not board the plane. These avoidance behaviors affect negatively the airlines in all aspects.

### **5.1.3. Understanding how FoF affects the consumption behavior of commercial airline passengers**

Remembering the main objective of this research, which is to understand how FoF affects the consumption behavior of commercial airline passengers, it is now crucial to answer it.

FoF passengers perceived risk is influenced by different categories, such as commercial airlines, flight route, seat allocation, media, and their individual profiles. Nonetheless, these categories are all interconnected when FoF individuals think of air travel. When stress-related consumption decisions arise, they initiate consumption coping responses in all stages of the air travel experience. Furthermore, they can be preventive, proactive, or reactive and the outcome is more positive if they approach the fear or more negative if they avoid the fear. Ultimately, FoF passengers pursue to reduce the levels of stress and anxiety by making decisions that they believe will make them feel safer, calmer, and more comfortable.

Overall, FoF passengers were revealed to be extremely engaged consumers, with high knowledge of commercial airlines and their services. They demonstrate to be active researchers, attentive to all the information available regarding air travel, and considerably retaining previous experiences.

Therefore, when booking a flight, the decision is not taken spontaneously or lightly.

It was possible to identify that most of the FoF interviewees are in charge of the purchase themselves to choose based on their risk perceptions and their coping responses. Some of the decisions correspond to having preference and being willing to pay more for choosing the airline, the direct flights, or the seat allocation. Others choose the destination regarding the flight's offer or include the place of the flight connection as a stopover in their vacations, at last, some assumed to avoid flying preferring another means of transfer when possible.

Among FoF individuals who had flight tickets, there were two main outcomes, those who fly and those that give up last minute to board. The majority fly, however from those who fly the coping responses during flight vary and impact their experiences. Those who think in a positive way seem to overcome the stress better than those who try to minimize it, as well as, those who seek guidance and support from the crew or try to solve the problem by looking for professional help. The interpretation made, mostly from the web testimonials and clinical psychologists, is that the programs aiming to help these individuals overcome their fear are a success, being beneficial not only for the FoF passengers themselves but also for the airline companies. On the other

hand, behavioral avoidance such as emotion discharge, impulsive or risky behavior mainly impact negatively the passengers' experiences and the airlines.

To summarize, the consumption behavior of FoF passengers is affected not just by their air travel perceptions but also by how they cope with the stress associated with it. Moreover, some airlines are losing demand and the opportunity to deliver a great experience due to not having a strong brand, not having the proper offer for this segment, or not being efficiently supportive of the passengers that have this fear. Finally, FoF affects the airline market when individuals with FoF choose not to fly at all.

## **5.2. STUDY CONTRIBUTIONS**

From the theoretical perspective, this qualitative approach fulfills the gap of understanding the FoF consumers' reasons and feelings in-depth by combining the air travel perceived risks with consumption coping responses. To the researcher's knowledge, this introduction of consumption coping responses regarding FoF was not previously explored in the Marketing research. Therefore, it contributes to the theory by showing how important psychology studies are for marketing consumer behavior research.

Regarding the perceived risk, it contributes to the research by studying the FoF consumer as a target segment in particular and their perceived risk in general towards air travel, not focusing in a specific context but in triangulating sources for a robust qualitative analysis. It reveals that although different categories contribute to perceiving risk, they are interrelated and patterns can be found in reasons and feelings. These results compliment previous research dedicated to FoF passengers in specific categories, such as Fleischer et al. (2012) which dedicated to the impact of FoF on flight choice, Fleischer et al. (2015) to the effect of safety information on flight choice and Shiwakoti et al. (2022) to passengers' perception of safety in oriental Asian route.

In what concerns consumption coping responses the present research contributes by being specific about air travel and FoF consumers, following the generic studies of Moos and Holahan (2003) on coping responses and of Moschis (2007) on consumption coping responses, revealing these consumers decision-making process and outcome. In addition, contributes to marketing research by revealing results in consumption that were previous mainly only referred in psychology research on the phobia (Oakes & Bor, 2010a; Oakes & Bor, 2010b; van Gerwen, L. & Bor2016).

From the managerial perspective, it was possible to recognize contributions to commercial airlines, starting by underlining that FoF passengers were revealed to be very attentive and engaged air travel

consumers. Although the researcher is aware of airlines not advertising on safety, this study reveals how FoF consumers perceive safety without that advertising. Remembering that this fear affects more than one third of all the people and consequently their families, there are aspects that airlines should consider to potentialize the size of the market, arising the demand and maintain customer loyalty. A list of suggestions is presented below:

- To assure a strong brand image and establish an international reputation.
- To be recognized in the countries that airlines have flights for or by potential visitors to those countries.
- To have a preventive marketing plan to gain back the trust of FoF consumers in case of an incident or accident occurs. Additionally, if the brand is solid in other subcategories, it might recover faster.
- To optimize the booking process and logistics for simplifying an already stressful process for these consumers.
- To improve the service quality, by including specialized training for the crew in how to communicate and deal with FoF passengers.
- To endorse programs to help FoF individuals to overcome their fear.
- To give the option for passengers to identify themselves as having FoF, to be aware of their preferences, to support them and reach them to promote airline FoF programs.
- At last, to create, in an appealing way, content explaining airplane aerodynamics and mechanics avoiding these passengers to learn

from negative media. An example can be simply explaining how airplanes fly.

Concluding, it is recommended to consider this target segment in marketing strategies for benefiting both, commercial airlines and passengers.

### **5.3. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES**

Some limitations were faced throughout the realization of this research. The first important to mention is the absence of studies relating marketing to FoF passengers. A significant part of the studies found on FoF belong to the literature of psychology, evidently focused on the phobia itself, which leads to complexity and limitation for the researcher. While the web testimonials and the clinical psychologists are from different nationalities, all the FoF consumers interviewed were Portuguese, constituting the last limitation significant to be cited.

In the future, a similar study could include FoF interviews from different nationalities for more global in-depth qualitative research. Additionally, future studies on airline brand trust recovery after a crisis equating these target segments can be carried out.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Semi-structured Interview Guide: FoF Passengers

FoF Participants' Interview Guide					
Researcher self-introduction. Explanation of the research. Clarification of the data usage. Ask for the consent of the audio record and transcript. Question about gender /age /profession. Researcher availability to clarify doubts.					
No	Questions	Literature Review	Authors	Objective	Category
1	How often do you travel?	Frequent passengers felt flying was safer than those who flew less frequently.	Shiwakoti et al. (2022)	1	PR1 PR4
2	How do you feel when planning to air travel?	FoF individuals frequently are ashamed of their fear and physical consequences and occasionally cannot sleep for days when they know they are going to travel by airplane.	Oakes & Bor (2010a)	2	CCR2
		Risk-avoidant decision-making is often related to anxiety in various behavioral contexts. The higher the levels of anxiety, the less willingness to engage in risky decision-making.	Maner & Schmidt (2006)	1	PR4
3	What are the differences between flying on vacation and for work?	The risk dimension relevance differs according to gender, age, cultural background, income, previous experience, and travel purpose.	(Boksberger et al., 2007)	1	PR4
		Undesirable consumer decisions lead to more stress than desirable ones.	Moschis, (2007)	2	CCR1 CCR2
4	How do you feel about traveling alone?	Preference for traveling accompanied or in a group.	Yamaguchi (1998)	2	CCR3
5	What do you consider when choosing an airline company?	Whensoever an airplane accident occurs the result is a severe decrease in the airline's reputation and international prestige.	Liao (2015)	1	PR1
		The level of service quality, overall satisfaction, and loyalty among airline passengers are all significantly correlated with how safe passengers believed their flight to be.	Shiwakoti et al. (2022)	1	PR1
6	Do some specific airlines make you feel safer? why?	Company identity and price among others are considered when deciding to fly or not with a specific airline, which also reflects in willingness to pay for a higher safety level.	Fleischer et al. (2015)	1	PR1
		Schedule Carriers (regular) are preferred rather than nonscheduled carriers (charter).	Fleischer et al. (2012)	2	CCR4
7	Are you a member of any airline Frequent Flyer Program? Why?	Passengers who were members of the Frequent Flyer Program felt safer than those who were not.	Shiwakoti et al. (2022)	1	PR1
8	What kind of research do you do when booking a flight?	The greater stress experienced at each stage of the decision-making process, suggests higher levels of consumer involvement with the service or purchase	Moschis, (2007)	2	CCR3

9	Where do you search for information regarding airlines safety?	Airlines do not allude to their safety record vis-à-vis rivals in their advertising and press statements.	Savage (2012, p.297)	1	PR3
10	How do safety rankings affect your decision to choose the airlines?	If the airlines have a low or medium rate of safety it has worse repercussions than if it has no information at all. When the airlines are ranked highly safe the difference is not as significant between FoF travelers and others when choosing a flight carrier.	Fleischer et al. (2015)	1	PR1 PR3
11	If you find negative media how does that affect your choice?	Negative media coverage is likely one of the fuels of the growth of a flying phobia.	Schindler et al. (2016)	1	PR3
		When a pictorial nature of a graphic risk is exhibited, might rise risk avoidance.	Chua et al. (2006)	1	PR3
		Travelers' airlines and route choices are based on their perceived risks, affected by past incidents.	Reisinger & Mavondo (2016)	1	PR1 PR2 PR4
12	What are your preferences when deciding the flight route?	Choice of airline and route is partially based on the perceived risks of flying.	Boksberger et al. (2007)	1	PR2
		There is a preference for nonstop flights over connecting flights.	Fleischer et al. (2012)	2	CCR3
13	Do have any preference when choosing seat allocation? Why?	Preferring a specific seat as a fear-alleviating attribute, for example, a seat near the emergency exit, makes them feel safer.	Oakes & Bor (2010b)	2	CCR2 CCR4
		Superior class, respondents' perceptions of safety were higher than those in lower tickets.	Shiwakoti et al. (2022)	1	PR2
14	What would make you pay extra for feeling better?				
15	What makes you feel safer during the flight?	Home Carriers are preferred due to the facilitation of communicating with the cabin crew and social proximity, being helpful for anxiety levels.	Fleischer et al. (2012)	2	CCR3
		Questioning about flight conditions: Weather; Technical problems; Pilots' qualifications, and experience.	Foreman, Bor & van Gerwen (2012) van Gerwen, L. & Bor (2016)	2	CCR3
16	Tell me about your remarkable flight experiences.	The risk dimension relevance differs according to gender, age, cultural background, income, previous experience, and travel purpose.	(Boksberger et al., 2007)	1	PR4
		Separation anxiety, dwelling on recent traumatic or unpleasant events, or media coverage.	Saadat et al. (2014)	2	CCR2 CCR4
17	What negative behaviors do you recognize that were triggered by your fear of flying?	Becoming aggressive while in fear situations toward other passengers and cabin crew.	van Gerwen & Bor (2016)	2	CCR4
		Self-medication or alcohol.	Foreman et al. (2012)	2	CCR4
18	How does fear affect your decision to fly when you have other options to travel?	Preferring riding a car or taking the train, even though via airplane would be safer, faster and cheaper.	Oakes & Bor (2010b)	2	CCR2

## Appendix 2: Semi-structured Interview Guide: Clinical Psychologists

Clinical Psychologists Interview Guide					
Researcher self-introduction. Explanation of the research. Clarification of the data usage. Ask for the consent of the audio record and transcript. Question about gender /age /profession. Researcher availability to clarify doubts.					
No	Questions	Literature Review	Authors	Objective	Category
1	How is the process of evaluating individuals Fear of Flying for the program?	Physical risk together with psychological and social can be complex and travelers can be unable or unwilling to admit having these risk perceptions even to themselves.	Boksberger et al. (2007)	1	PR4
2	What are the most common thoughts and feelings shared by FoF passengers?	FoF individuals frequently feel fear of crashing, death, losing self-control, having anxiety, and are ashamed of their fear and physical consequences and occasionally cannot sleep for days when they know they are going to travel by airplane.	Oakes & Bor (2010a)	2	CCR1 CCR2
3	How do you consider that FoF perceived risk is affected by airline image?	The level of service quality, overall contentment, and loyalty among airline passengers are all significantly correlated with how safe passengers believed their flight to be.	Shiwakoti et al. (2022)	1	PR1
4	How is the influence of past incidents in FoF passengers risk perceptions?	Travelers' airlines and route choices are based on their perceived risks, affected by past incidents.	Reisinger & Mavondo (2016)	1	PR3
5	How does media affect the FoF passengers?	Negative media coverage is likely one of the fuels of the growth of a flying phobia (Schindler et al., 2016)	Schindler et al. (2016)	1	PR3
6	How do you think airline safety rankings affect FoF passengers?	Airlines do not allude to their safety record vis-à-vis rivals in their advertising and press statements.	Savage (2012, p.297)	1	PR3
		If the airlines have a low or medium rate of safety it has worse repercussions than if it has no information at all.	Fleischer et al. (2012)		
7	What kind of fear alleviation strategies do you recognize when FoF passengers chose a flight route?	Choice of airline and route is partially based on the perceived risks of flying	Boksberger et al. (2007)	1	PR2
		There is a preference for nonstop flights over connecting flights.		2	CCR4
8	When choosing a flight what are the most common buying preferences for alleviating passengers FoF during flight?	Superior class, respondents' perceptions of safety were higher than those in lower tickets.	Shiwakoti et al. (2022)	1	PR2
		Preferring a specific seat as a fear-alleviating attribute, for example, a seat near the	Fleischer et al. (2012)	2	CCR3

		emergency exit, makes them feel safer.			
		Home Carriers are preferred due to the facilitation of communicating with the cabin crew and social proximity.		2	CCR3
9	What is the importance of the crew for FoF passengers?	Questioning about flight conditions: Weather; Technical problems; Pilots'	Foreman, Bor & van Gerwen (2012) van Gerwen & Bor (2016)	2	CCR3
10	What negative behaviors are more common triggered by the fear of flying?	Becoming aggressive while in fear situations toward other passengers and cabin crew.	van Gerwen & Bor (2016)	2	CCR4
		Self-medication or alcohol.	Foreman et al. (2012)		

### Appendix 3: Web Collection Frameworks: Testimonials

Program 1					
No.	Testimonials	Identification	Objective	Subcategory Coding	Category Coding
1	"Today we flew to Prague. Usually, I am so nervous the weeks coming up to a flight feeling sick, anxious etc and i can safely say as I'm typing this I had the best time ever. Was a little turbulent for about 5 minutes but I was going through the its uncomfortable but not dangerous speech I'm my head."	Web1 (Female)	2	Logical Analysis	CCR1
2	"She had a little wobble just before getting on to the plane and the cabin crew were absolutely fantastic, one young man (I didn't get his name unfortunately!) immediately came and took her by the hand, encouraging her and really seeming to care about how she was feeling."	Web2 (Female)	1	Service Quality (crew)	PR1
3	"I am not "cured" I will always have anxiety; however, I now know I can "manage" these symptoms which gives an enormous boost of confidence with flying and a real sense of achievement. It was so good to be on the plane and listen to you talk us through all the bits, that normally made me feel so scared. I was able to understand what was actually happening, and crucially, to appreciate it was all very normal and to be expected! I must also just mention a member of the cabin crew, Steve, who was particularly kind and supportive, understanding my need to overcome a fear of being in a tiny space on the plane, the loo, as I hope to fly to Australia next year for my daughter's wedding."	Web3 (Female)	1 & 2	Positive reappraisal (turbulence)	CCR1
				Service quality (cabin crew)	PR1
				Seek for guidance and support (cabin crew)	PR1
4	"On 19th November my new husband, Dan, and I, had tickets to fly (with BA, from Gatwick) on our once in a lifetime Honeymoon to Mauritius - an 11 hour flight! Only problem was ... I was terrified of flying, and worried that I would spend my wedding day stressing about having to endure the flight the following afternoon."	Web4 (Female)	2	Flight Route (flight time)	PR2
				Travel purpose (vacation)	PR4
5	"I am no longer feeling sick at the thought of my next flight and trying to avoid it. "	Web5 (Female)	2	Denying	CCR4
6	"This time the flight was a little different as I had some "moderate" turbulence to deal with. I went hardcore on the breathe and squeeze and also the mantra of turbulence can be uncomfortable but never dangerous and it worked - I even comforted my wife. I was also able to talk to the BA captain and will now be sitting over the wing not at the back of the plane."	Web6 (Male)	2	Positive reappraisal (turbulence)	CCR1
				Seek for guidance and support (crew)	CCR3

Program 2					
No.	Testimonials	Identification	Objective	Subcategory Coding	Category Coding
1	<i>"Durante muitos anos evitei sempre viajar de avião. O receio de não poder controlar, de ter uma crise de ansiedade a bordo, de ir fechada, sempre limitou a minha vida. No fundo, existia sítios no mundo que desejaria ir, mas o mau estar físico, só de pensar em viajar, já era mais que suficiente para não o fazer. Sempre que me via obrigada a viajar (estudava as horas que estaria no ar até à exaustão) tomava sempre medicamentos para conseguir ir mais segura. Até que, por contingências da vida, tive de ir morar a 11 horas de avião de Portugal. Fui pesquisar na internet algo ou alguém que me pudesse ajudar nestes meus receios."</i>	Web7 (Female)	1 & 2	Resignation	CCR2
				Travel purpose	PR4
				Risk Behavior (medication)	CCR4
2	<i>"Desde que me lembro e por influências várias, sempre "olhei" para as viagens de avião como de alto risco e evitáveis. E fugia delas sob que pretexto fosse: "Gosto de conduzir" ou "de carro vê-se mais coisas enquanto se viaja". Foi assim que a minha mente construiu desculpas para evitar os aviões. Na verdade, tudo piorou quando em 2013 iniciei uma nova fase da minha carreira desportiva, a participação no Campeonato Europeu de Ralis, que me obrigava a viajar constantemente entre os vários países da Europa. No primeiro ano, ainda usei o meu carro para me deslocar, camiões para levar material e até um barco para</i>	Web8 (Male)	2	Minimizing	CCR2
				Travel Purpose (business)	PR4

	<i>atravessar com toda a logística para a Irlanda. Era uma aventura desgastante e me que consumia muito tempo e trabalho. Tive que parar e simplificar todo o meu pensamento. A única forma era... apanhar um avião.</i>			Seeking alternative rewards (car)	CCR4
3	<i>"Após ter tido uma má experiência a bordo, decidi procurar a Voar Sem Medo no início deste ano, para poder voltar a viajar com todo o prazer que antes sentia. Durante as sessões de terapia, tive oportunidade de explicar os meus medos e partilhar as minhas emoções, para que me mostrassem técnicas que me permitissem evitar essas preocupações. Desde então, já voei 17 vezes, este ano, e não podiam ter corrido melhor. De cada vez que me sentia menos confortável, eu tentava lembrar-me de todos os conselhos que me deram e, em apenas segundos, mesmo sem notar, sentia-me completamente bem."</i>	Web9 (Male)	1	Previous experiences	PR4
				Positive Reappraisal	CCR1
4	<i>"Olá a todos! Venho dar notícias da minha primeira viagem pós curso Voar Sem Medo. Fui e vim a Copenhaga e correu tudo muito bem. Começando pela viagem de ida, preparei tudo com antecedência e li os apontamentos que nos deram no curso. Sentei-me à janela e consegui olhar para fora durante a descolagem. Senti-me muito melhor do que antes. Numa escala de 1 a 10, o meu nível de ansiedade nessa altura foi de 3/4, e foi o máximo. Depois disso, li as auto-verbalizações, as dicas da VoarApp e ficou tudo bem. Passei a viagem toda entre 2/3 de ansiedade. Na viagem de regresso a Lisboa, o meu nível de ansiedade no aeroporto foi de 1/2, à entrada subiu para 2/3. A chefe de cabine foi muito atenciosa, chamou-me para cumprimentar o Comandante e o Co-piloto e só por este simples gesto o nível de ansiedade desceu. A descolagem foi tranquila, passei a viagem quase toda a olhar pela janela, por vezes surgiam uns pensamentos que eu afastava rapidamente com as auto-verbalizações."</i>	Web10 (Female)	1 & 2	Posite appraisal	CCR1
				Problem solving (window seat)	CCR3
				Service quality (cabin crew)	PR1
5	<i>"Depois de alguns voos sem qualquer tipo de incidente ou perturbação, desenvolvi uma fobia tão intensa em relação a voar que durante sete anos isso me impediu sequer de pensar em aviões. O simples facto de ir levar ou buscar alguém ao aeroporto deixava-me num estado anormal de tensão e nem sequer me passava pela cabeça entrar num avião. Adiei a resolução do assunto até que um dia me falaram da Voar Sem Medo. Já na avaliação antes do curso percebi que o meu problema não seria com aviões, mas com o facto de que voar implica estar numa situação em que nós não controlamos absolutamente nada. Ao longo dos três dias do curso passei de um estado de aerofobia para um outro, o actual, em que aprecio precisamente o facto de não controlar nada e de saborear deixar-me levar por profissionais que sabem o que fazem e que nunca inventam em situação alguma, porque tudo está previsto."</i>	Web11 (Male)	1&2	Previous experiences (no past incidents)	PR4
				Resignation	CCR2
6	<i>"Desde o dia em que fiquei fechada num elevador, aos poucos fui conseguindo ultrapassar a minha claustrofobia. A excepção eram os voos com duração superior a 4 horas. Este problema não só me limitava como me fazia sentir culpada, sobretudo quando envolvia também a família. Decidir enfrentá-lo ao inscrever-me no curso e procurar ajuda especializada foi uma das decisões mais acertadas da minha vida. Quando terminei, senti que tinha ferramentas para lidar com esta fobia e o apoio incondicional dos seus organizadores. Marquei uma viagem a Nova Iorque com a família e mentalizei-me que não podia fraquejar. Afinal a viagem até correu bem e todos ficamos já a pensar na próxima."</i>	Web12 (Female)	1 & 2	Flight Route (flight time)	PR2
				Travel purpose	PR4
				Positive Reappraisal	CCR1
				Problem solving (travel with family)	CCR3
7	<i>"Há 2 anos era impensável para mim andar de avião. Hoje, sinto que faço parte dos 90% de taxa de sucesso, pelo menos a avaliar pelas viagens que fiz depois da terapia: Faro, Porto Santo, Nice, Ponta Delgada, Roma, Nova Iorque, Charleston, Paris, Los Angeles, Maui e 6 viagens a Miami, duas das quais sozinha."</i>	Web13 (Female)	2	Problem solving	CCR3

8	<i>"Nesta viagem que fiz ao Bali, tentei seguir à letra tudo o que a equipa do Voar Sem Medo me tinha ensinado. Dentro do primeiro avião, a ansiedade era tremenda, mas quando descolou senti aquilo que me tinham prometido... finalmente voei sem medo, tranquilo e muito confortável, até chorei de felicidade! Não levei calmantes e consegui dormir bem durante grande parte da viagem. Mais uma vez, agradeço tudo o que fizeram por mim, em especial à Dra. Cristina, esta sensação de voar tranquilo não tem preço."</i>	Web14 (Male)	2	Risk behavior (medication)	CCR4
9	<i>"Tenho reuniões mensais em diferentes cidades da Europa e, às vezes, também tenho de me deslocar aos EUA. Em desespero, cheguei a inventar desculpas para não ir e consegui esquivar-me algumas vezes. Ou me tratava ou tinha que mudar de emprego. Pedir ajuda especializada foi o melhor que fiz!"</i>	Web15 (Male)	2	Travel purpose	PR4
				Denying (excuses)	CCR4

Program 3					
No.	Testimonials	Identification	Objective	Subcategory Coding	Category Coding
1	"Despite accidentally seeing the unbelievable footage of a 747 cargo plane falling from the sky in Afghanistan three days before I fly, I do not think of death once while I'm in the air. Next time, I'm not even going to touch the fuselage."	Web16 (Female)	1	Negative media coverage	PR3
2	"My flights were all fantastic and I was so calm, I honestly surprised myself and can happily say that I'm no longer nervous AT ALL when flying. I did all flights on my own and it was so helpful to know that I knew what all of the noises meant, had exercises to do in case I became anxious however I honestly didn't need to calm myself down."	Web17 (Female)	2	Logical analysis	CCR1
				Problem solving	CCR3
3	"I put everything into practice – ie. things I'd usually avoid. I sat at the window seat, looked out the window to the ocean, didn't drown out noises of take off. Did the breathing exercises and muscle relaxation, and kept reinforcing positive thoughts. Was actually pretty proud of myself, and my fiancée said it was the most relaxed he's been on a flight with me, as I didn't grip his hand once or look at him panicked! So that was awesome! I'm feeling much more positive about flying in general!"	Web18	2	Positive Reappraisal	CCR1
				Problem solving	CCR3
4	"What I was not expecting was that 'crazy lady' just never turned up. I was sure it was a fluke so when she didn't appear the second flight I felt confident that I could fly anywhere! So after 4 flights all longer than 13 hours I really have had my over sensitive brain sensor turned off."	Web19 (Female)	2	Flight route (flight time)	PR2

YouTube Video No. 1					
No.	Testimonials	Identification	Objective	Subcategory Coding	Category Coding
1	"I feel like aircraft investigations made me less scared of flying as it makes you realize just how much detail has been put into the design and maintenance to make sure almost every eventuality has been covered so the aircraft safe and we have learned an applied fixes from things that failed in the past so they can't happen again (or at least are very unlikely to)."	Web20	1	Negative media coverage	PR3
2	"I had a fear of flying many years ago, I overcame it with a visit to the flight deck on the B767 I was flying on. I sat and chatted with the flight crew for about 30 minutes. When I saw how relaxed they were, it relaxed me. I've been fine ever since. Sadly, this opportunity is no longer possible, which is a great shame!"	Web21	1 & 2	Service quality (crew)	PR1
				Seeking guidance and support	CCR3
3	"For many years I dealt with my fear with a mixture of alcohol and diazepam. I was never an unruly passenger but I noticed that when the alcohol wore off, the anxiety was multiplied many times (and it's difficult to stay drunk for a long-haul flight). Last flight I took before lockdown I managed to go without alcohol and listened to a guided meditation mp3, and by the end of the flight I was pretty relaxed."	Web22	2	Risk behavior (medication)	CCR4
				Problem-solving	CCR3

4	"I watch air crash investigations and follow a few YouTube pilots. With the knowledge gained, and knowing how pilots react in certain circumstances gives me less to worry about. My fear is mostly about the lack of control and having to trust others to make sure everything is good with the plane - more the maintenance side. I close my eyes and count for takeoff. I find my music play list is the best distraction as I can get so anxious that I can't focus on something as long as a movie or book. The usual drill with flying is the pilot chats to us on takeoff and then only again 40 minutes before landing, so in my mind if I don't hear from the pilots in between, we're good. I've actually experienced the dreaded "We have a problem" announcement. Despite my fear I'm okay with turbulence, and I enjoy landing... probably because I'm keen to get my feet back on mother Earth! Despite my fear, I get on the plane and I always find I'm less fearful on the return flight. If I'm going to go in a plane crash, I'd prefer it to be after my holiday."	Web23	1	Negative media coverage	PR3 PR4
				Previous Experience	PR4
5	"In my younger years I never feared flying. Went all over the world. Now at 41 I'm absolutely terrified of even the shortest trips. I'm convinced turbulence has gotten worse on recent years as well regardless of where you fly. It actually sucks cause its ruining our family holidays because as soon as we land, I'm panicking about the return flight."	Web24 (Male)	1	Flight route (flight time)	PR2
				Travel purpose	PR4
6	"When you mentioned about the emergency exit, I believe this is what's made me scared of flying. Being told I need to open it in case of an emergency. I now have reoccurring nightmares about flying which has made me a lot worse and now I'm quite phobic :("	Web25	1	Seat allocation	PR2
				Previous Experience	PR4
7	"I am terrified of flying because I don't know if the pilots are good. I've been around the world but I have to take medication prior to departing. By watching the Flight CHANNEL, MAYDAY AIR DISASTER, ON THE MOVE, etc. I have learned that it doesn't matter how great the plane & pilots are, they still crash!"	Web26	1 & 2	Negative media coverage	PR3
				Resignation	CCR2
				Risk Behavior (medication)	CCR4
8	"I am going to go on a 2.30h flight in a month and to be honest I am sh1t scared. Like, slightly panicking and considering buying a train ticket instead. I've flown many times before, also long flights, and it used to never be a problem for me. Until I flew alone the last two times and sat by the window. The panic just struck and I felt the plane disappearing below my butt. I frantically started playing a game on my phone while crying almost the whole way."	Web27	1 & 2	Alternative Rewards; Emotional Discharge	CCR4
				Previous experience	PR4
				Seat allocation	PR2
9	"The most tiring and traumatic flying for me comes when I need to fly over 15 hours either on a break journey or nonstop. Anything around 6 hrs to 8 hrs or below is enjoyable. But long journeys never welcome."	Web28	1	Flight route (flight time)	PR2
10	"I've been watching a lot of air crash investigation videos, actually binge watching them. And I'm going to start touring again, now that I have all that information from all the binge watching I'm honestly kind of scared flying."	Web29	1	Negative media coverage	PR3
11	"For me, the anxiety is most prevalent when flying over the ocean at night and we hit turbulence for 20-30 minutes, or God forbid, longer."	Web30	1	Flight route (flight time)	PR3
12	"I am scared of flying , big time ! Once i was flying (alone) with a German airline to see my family, we hit a. Big turbulence and i asked a crew member if she can hold my hand just for a sec. (I also have panic attack and at the moment i thought somebody was chocking me) And she just bent her knees and said "awe Im sorry" and stormed off . Thank you."	Web31	1	Service quality (crew)	PR1
13	"I have a huge fear of flying (actually more a fear of losing control). I told everyone for years that I would never ever in my life get on a plane. Then I met my girlfriend, she is from Jakarta, Indonesia... So my first flight was alone from Brussels to Dubai, and then Dubai to Jakarta. I have a form of high functioning autism, so I was able to get assistance at the airport. Also, they informed the crew, so they	Web32	1 & 2	Service quality (crew)	PR1

	could keep an eye on me. Which was wonderful. During the flight, one of the crew came to get me for a drink with all the other crew member in the galley. Oh and the huge choice of in-flight entertainment helped as well. Another thing I noticed is that flying on those big planes feels massively more comfortable than flying on a small plane. The biggest thing that helps on those big planes is that you can track where the plane is at all times. You always know exactly where you are, how fast, altitude, how long it is going to take (helps me feel more in control). You do not have that in the small planes, I only was on small plane once from Bali to Jakarta. Never in my life I experienced that level of fear constantly for 2 hours. Plus I took 400mg quetiapine to calm me down. Did almost nothing. I do not want to know what it would have felt like if I did not take that medication."			Previous experience	PR4
				Risk behavior (medication)	CCR4
14	"Oh well.... Maybe... But I've learned that 10mg of Tranxene and two glasses of white wine do the best job for me. No more anxiety."	Web33	2	Risk behavior (alcohol and medication)	CCR4
15	"This video has really hit such a nail that I'm still moving past - I am AWARE that my phobia is really silly, and I know I'm unimaginably safe... I'm going to book some short flights soon and see what happens :)"	Web34	1	Flight route (flight time)	PR2

YouTube Video No. 2					
No	Testimonials	Identification	Objective	Subcategory Coding	Category Coding
1	"Oh well.... Maybe... But I've learned that 10mg of Tranxene and two glasses of white wine do the best job for me. No more anxiety."	Web35	2	Risk behavior (medication and alcohol)	CCR4
2	"For me it was a sad paradox.I love planes and aviation i know eveevery checklist and how a plane works and know every model of plane.Unfortunately the aicrash investigations got me building up this fear of flying bit by bit.There was a time me and my gf were literally about to step on the plane to Spain and i literally chickened out and turned back and caused a sht ton of security breach apparently.I felt so defeated and was waiting for my cab when i saw the plane take off normally and climb to cruising altitude and i just kept slaping myself and started crying.And that is when i decided and told myself "you re never gonna chicken out like that ever again" 2 months later,i had to fly alone to Romania to pick up my gf and son,i must admit the discomfort started buliding from the moment i bought the ticket and i noticed it was fking up my days leading up to the flight and bit by bit i realised im a dumbass who overthinks a lot and just rolled with it.And now i feel like the old me who used to love flying then got terrified by it now i love it again."	Web36	1 & 2	Negative media coverage	PR3
				Emotional discharge	CCR4
				Travel Purpose	PR4
3	"I've been a nervous flyer my whole life, avoided it like the plague for 20 years. Then I decided I was going to start traveling. I was still very nervous but I was forcing myself (always worth it) to take 2 trips the Caribbean a year up until 2020. Once I had to stop traveling due to rona I got way worse. I don't know how I'll ever get back all the work I put into this. Ugh"	Web37	1 & 2	Denying	CCR2
				Logic Analysis	CCR3
				Travel purpose	PR2
4	"I'm writing this as I sit on a plane, after a bout of quite terrible internal panic. I'm flying Singapore Airlines (supposedly one of the safest airlines in the world) and currently in an A350-900 (supposedly one of the most modern and best aircraft). I fly a lot... Probably 10-15 times a year, but lately I've found that the more I'm flying, the worse and more irrational my fear of flying is getting. For me, take-off is the worst. Especially today... As soon as the aircraft starting reversing and rolling down the aprons, there was a loud banging coming from under my area and it sounded like the wheels had a bump in them, because the whole plane was banging every second or so. I immediately started to panic... I'd never heard or felt that feeling before (and every bloody flight seems to have a new sound or feeling I haven't	Web38	1	Airline reputation, Airplane, Service quality (crew)	PR1

	heard before), and it got worse the faster the aircraft got. My mind started to think things like 'Is the tire going flat?! Is there a ridge in the wheel?! Are suitcases falling out?! Is the wheel locking?!'... and then as I was shaking almost uncontrollably thinking I was about to die after take-off, the plane starts down the runway after a longer than normal pause, and the runway seems so short for such a heavy aircraft that when it takes off it tilts to one side and I feel my mind going 'This is it, I'm dead, we're going sideways and the plane doesn't have enough thrust to keep taking off', and then when we're a few hundred meters in the air my mind thinks 'We're climbing too steep, the plane isn't going to make it, the engines are going to suddenly stop and the tail of the plane with sag and we'll all fall to our deaths'... I will still shaking uncontrollably clutching my Singapore Airlines pillow just wanting someone to knock me out cold or at least give me something to knock me out. I hate this feeling... It happens almost every time and it lasts all the way up until we flatten out a little and start cruising. If turbulence is quite bad and unpredictable then I start to panic... If it's windy when we're about to land, I panic... If the pilot sounds like he's half asleep... I panic. I think one of these days my internal panics are going to be so bad that I rip my seatbelt off and demand to be let off the plane or pace up and down the aisle like a mad woman until they kick me off. I really really hope I can find a cure for my fear, because it's a horrible feeling, to feel like you are preempting your horrible, slow, frightening death in 20 different gruesome scenarios only to finally feel relief when you land, but then the next time it feels even worse because your brain remembers your fears so quickly and easily. If anyone has similar irrational fears, and has found a proper fix, please don't hesitate to let me know!"			Previous experience	PR4
5	"Thank you for this. I'm flying with my family to Menorca this week and my daughter and I are nervous flyers. I've always been a nervous flyer and yes you nailed it - it's the fear of crashing not flying! I have done lots of research about how flying is the safest mode of transport. I have to fly because I love to travel and I don't want to stop. I'm concentrating on all the positives."	Web39	1 & 2	Travel purpose	PR2
				Seeking for guidance and support	CCR3
6	"Took a 4 hour flight from Ottawa to edmonton. I was white knuckled in a trance the whole time. After I got off, I was still feeling vertigo. I got so scared that 2 days before I had to leave to come back, I rented a uhaul and drove over 3000km. I am getting on another plane to go to punta cana this weekend, and I'm thinking repeating what he said as a mantra might help."	Web40	2	Alternative rewards	CS4
7	"My aerophobia comes from being afraid of freefalling in a crashing plane and dying (Also having no control of the situation). Maybe media has a lot of influence but just imagining that 1 in a million scenario will happen is terrifying."	Web41	1	Negative media coverage	PR3
8	"Thank you. I'm getting on a flight tomorrow for the 1st time since I was 17. I'm 42 now & this fear has paralyzed me long enough. You're right a this point I'm choosing to have this fear. No longer tomorrow I'm gonna get over this and beat this thing. Hell it's only a flight from Atlanta to Orlando. My wife said it will be a good 1st flight back."	Web42	1 & 2	Acceptance	CCR2
				Flight route (flight time)	PR2
9	"Thank you for this. I'm heading out to Vegas from hawaii for my first time ever. I just get so nervous and scared only because it's a 6hr flight. I don't mind traveling inter island cause it's 30- 45 mins tops but just being in the air for 5-6 hrs is making me very scared."	Web43	1	Flight route (flight time)	PR2
10	"I have a flight of 8h on Tuesday and I've been watching every video on YouTube about flying to see if I can calm down."	Web44	1	Flight route (flight time)	PR2
				Safety information	PR3