

THE STATUS OF ROADS IN RAJASTHAN

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ABSTRACT

Roads occupy an important place in transport development which is an essential part of infrastructural development of a region. Agriculture, Industry, Trade and movement of people depend upon the existence of good roads in a country. Development of roads is employment- intensive, therefore, it is resorted to under relief-works during droughts and famines.

KEYWORDS: *Transport Development, Infrastructural Development, Agriculture, Industry, Trade.*

Introduction

It is essential for mineral development and provides sound base for social infrastructural development such as education, health, etc. for the welfare of the masses. It can also be adopted as anti-poverty measures to provide jobs and income to weak sections of the community.

Objectives

The paper seeks to provide more information about:

- Status of roads in Rajasthan
- Classification of roads in Rajasthan
- District wise variations in road lengths in Rajasthan

Research Methodology

The present paper is based on secondary data. The results have been derived from average, percentage, time series and correlation methods. The condition of roads was unsatisfactory at the time of the formation of Rajasthan. On March 31, 1951, the length of roads in the state was 17339 KM, which has increased to a level of 2.08 lakh KM in end of the March, 2015. Roads have been developed under the following programmes:

- Development of irrigated regions (Under Command Area Development Programme)
- Minimum Needs Programme (MNP)
- Development of Milk-Route
- Mining Roads
- National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) which now merged with Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY)
- Famine Relief works.
- Roads constructed in agriculture-produce-mandies by agriculture marketing board.
- Roads built by local bodies such as Jaipur Development Authority (JDA), city corporations, municipalities, etc. in their respective areas.

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Although the length of roads in 2014-15 has become more than 12 times their length in 1950-51, yet the state is regarded as backward from the point of view of road-development as compared to the country as a whole. The following Table 1 shows the development of roads from 1980-81 to 2014-15. There has been quantitative as well as qualitative improvement in this sector.

Table 1: Road Length in the State of Rajasthan (in km)

Year	National Highways	State Highways	Major District Roads	Other District Roads	Village Roads	Border Roads	Other Deptt. Roads	Total
1980-81	2533	7274	3754	15294	10100	2239		41194
1990-91	2840	7247	3604	14987	27433	2239		58350
1991-92	2846	7136	3636	15054	29002	2239		59913
1992-93	2846	7151	3638	15067	30579	2239		61520
1993-94	2846	8720	3212	14394	31667	2239		63078
1994-95	2846	9810	5549	12143	33100	2239	46438	112125
1995-96	2846	10006	5707	12615	36816	2239	64220	134449
1996-97	2846	10047	5820	12684	41322	2239	64398	139345
1997-98	2964	9990	5789	60576		2239	64403	145961
1998-99	2964	9990	5789	63976		2239	64403	149361
1999-00	4453	8898	5741	65142		2239	64403	150876
2000-01	4547	8714	5739	68462			62012	149474
2001-02	4665	8601	6053	17934	113561			150814
2002-03	4665	8585	6232	18785	114613			152880
2003-04	5655	8627	6117	18653	118188			158240
2004-05	5655	10139	6735	22615	117976			163120
2005-06	5655	11594	7328	21412	121139			167128
2006-07	5655	11668	7447	23681	125063			173514
2007-08	5714	11750	7658	24424	132914			182460
2008-09	5722	11758	7673	24418	137235			186806
2009-10	5724	11866	7829	24480	128635			188534
2010-11	5724	11873	10137	24062	137606			189402
2011-12	7260	10953	9900	25033	136854			190000
2012-13	7310	10937	10168	25761	137518			191694
2013-14	7310	11971	9509	25626	141434			195850
2014-15	8016	11421	9815	29603	149487			208342

Source: Economic Review 2015-16, Pg. A29, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Department of Planning, Rajasthan, Jaipur

As we can see from this table, the road length in Rajasthan has grown from 41194 km in 1980-81 to 208342 km in 2014-15. Following a similar trend, the road length of National Highways has grown from 2533 km to 8016 km, State Highways from 7274 km to 11421 km; Major District Roads from 3754 km to 9815 km and Village Roads from 10100 km to 149487 km. But if we compare this data to the national averages, they are far too less, and thus there is a need to improve on these statistics.

Rajasthan is located between Northern States and Western port States, which requires good network of road including national and state highways for smooth interstate movement of people and goods. Twelve National highways pass through the state. These highways connect the state to major cities, ports and industrial centres such as Delhi, Indore, Ahmedabad, Kandla etc. The road corridors currently being used are National Highways, NH-8, NH-11, NH-12, NH-14 and NH-15 Highways are quite old and require the vehicles to travel substantially long distances to reach their destination.

Rajasthan State Road Development and Construction Ltd is the nodal agency responsible for construction of bridges and roads in the state. New roads are being constructed, to link villages across the state under various schemes, such as the Missing Link project, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) and Central Road Fund. Rajasthan's total road length was just 13553 km in 1949 and has reached to 208341.81 km as on 31 March 2015. Out of these 8016.18 km are National Highways, 11421.52 km are State Highways, 9814.77 km are major district roads, 29602.63 km are Other District Roads and 149486.71 km are Village roads. As on 31 March 2015, the road density was 60.88 km per 100 sq.km, which is much below the national average of 148 km per 100 sq.km. This description may be seen through the following table 2.

Table 2: Classification of the Road Length in Rajasthan (in km)

Classification	Black Top	Metal Road	Graveled Road	Fair Weather	Total
National Highways	7987.18	0.00	0.00	29.00	8016.18
State Highways	11366.62	4.20	5.00	45.70	11421.52
Major District roads	9698.07	1.00	53.00	62.70	9814.77
Other District roads	27628.10	922.76	958.81	92.96	29602.63
Village roads	109515.11	1022.22	35986.21	2963.17	149486.71
Total	166195.08	1950.18	37003.02	3193.53	208341.81

As we can see from the above table, the maximum road length belongs to the category of Village Roads and also the percentage share of National and State Highways is very low and it should be improved considerably. Govt. of Rajasthan has also emphasized to connect villages. As on 31 March 2016, 35423 villages were connected with roads, out of 39753 villages of the state. That was 89.10% of the total villages. The number of villages populated 1000 and above was 14198. Out of these 14180 villages were connected with roads, which was 99.87% of the total such villages. Thus, most of the villages of the state were well connected with roads. The detailed description may be seen through the following table 3.

Table 3: Road Connectivity of Villages

Population Group	Total no. of villages	Villages connected as on March 2015	Villages connected as (Likely) March 2016	Percent of Villages connected
1000 & Above	14198	14180	14180	99.87
500-1000	11058	10963	10963	99.14
250-500	7713	7192	7569	98.13
100-250	3852	1806	1806	46.88
Below 100	2932	905	905	30.87
Total	39753	35046	35423	89.10

Source: Economic Review 2015-16, Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Rajasthan, Jaipur

The above table shows that only 2711 out of 6784 villages which lie in the population group of 0-250 are connected with roads and hence a huge 60% of villages are still to achieve connectivity via roads and thus this is one aspect which should be definitely looked upon. To give a boost to road construction, the state government has formulated Road Construction policy. Institutional finance and private investment on a Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis is being done on a larger scale for the construction of bridges and bypasses in the state. For development of the state infrastructure, Govt. of Rajasthan has earmarked four road corridors aggregating a length of more than 1000 km under the project 'Mega Highways Project'. This project would reduce the distances for inter – state traffic along with development of roads and would lead to large scale economic and social development. Construction of good quality roads along these corridors would boost the tourism industry in the state.

Road Length in Rajasthan: Roads in Rajasthan have been categorized into 4 parts: Painted Roads (BT), Metalled Roads (WBM), Gravelled Roads (GR) and Seasonal Roads (FW). The following table illustrates district wise distribution pattern of roads in Rajasthan.

Table 3A: Road Length in Rajasthan

Districts	Painted Roads (BT)	Metalled Roads (WBM)	Gravelled Roads (GR)	Seasonal Roads (FW)	Total	Length of roads as a % of district area
Ajmer	4115	11	45	0	4171	49.18052
Alwar	5156	1	24	0	5181	61.82578
Banswara	3064	0	25	4	3093	68.39894
Baran	2350	0	79	36	2465	35.25458
Barmer	8996	21	330	10	9357	32.96227
Bharatpur	3012	13	1	4	3030	59.8105
Bhilwara	4592	1	458	5	5056	48.35964
Bikaner	5642	0	167	2	5811	19.21691
Bundi	2178	10	20	3	2211	38.27909
Chittorgarh	3042	16	40	0	3098	39.60624
Churu	4153	0	4	0	4157	30.04698
Dausa	2304	7	138	26	2475	72.11538
Dholpur	1795	0	0	0	1795	59.18233
Dungarpur	2374	0	17	0	2391	63.42175

Ganganagar	3763	0	51	0	3814	34.74221
Hanumangarh	3010	0	10	0	3020	31.27589
Jaipur	5588	10	8	1	5607	50.31859
Jaisalmer	4301	6	368	0	4675	12.17416
Jalore	3357	0	152	11	3520	33.08271
Jhalawar	2777	0	32	0	2809	45.16803
Jhunjhunu	3594	2	126	4	3726	62.85425
Jodhpur	7612	0	374	3	7989	34.9628
Karauli	2102	26	31	3	2162	39.13831
Kota	2078	0	64	6	2148	41.17309
Nagaur	7388	0	295	22	7705	43.48685
Pali	4628	3	687	0	5318	42.93211
Pratapgarh	1921	0	10	0	1931	43.40301
Rajsamand	2606	0	101	0	2707	58.15252
S.Madhapur	2124	5	62	10	2201	48.93286
Sikar	3930	1	145	38	4114	53.20745
Sirohi	1780	0	41	0	1821	35.45561
Tonk	2618	1	13	0	2632	36.58604
Udaipur	6140	0	20	0	6160	52.54179
Total	124090	134	3938	188	128350	37.50303

Source: Statistical Abstract, 2015, Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Rajasthan, Jaipur

(Here, colour cells indicate values above State Average and colour cells indicate values below it)

As seen from the table, Barmer has the highest share of road length amongst all districts, and is closely followed by Jodhpur and Nagaur. The major reasons behind this happen to be the large areas of these districts due to their presence in arid areas in the west of Rajasthan. Also there is a huge disparity amongst districts when it comes to connectivity via roads as some districts are far below state average when carefully looked upon. Also, Rajasthan has a lesser road density as compared to the national average. It speaks of the need to further enhance the road network in the state.

According to Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17)

- All villages with a population of 250 persons or more would be connected through roads
- By preparing time bound programme all the damaged roads would be repaired on priority basis
- Works on Missing Link roads would be undertaken on priority basis
- Highways, district roads would be strengthened and renovated to improve the mobility
- Inter-state connectivity would be developed and improved
- To construct roads, flyovers and underpasses on a BOT (Build, Operate and Transfer) basis across the highways and district roads.

But it is clearly evident that these directions have not been implemented yet in full discourse and hence, there is an urgent need to improve on these parameters and improve the road connectivity in Rajasthan.

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