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INFORMATION SHARING FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF ROAD TRANSPORT ACCIDENT VICTIMS BY NATIONAL UNION OF ROAD TRANSPORT WORKERS AND FEDERAL ROAD SAFETY CORPS IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the factors affecting information sharing for the identification of road transport accident victims by the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) and the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study specifically aims to assess the effectiveness of inter-agency collaboration, evaluate the accuracy and timeliness of shared information, and identify the challenges hindering effective data exchange between the two organisations. A quantitative research methodology was employed using a cross-sectional survey design to objectively analyze measurable variables across the three senatorial zones of the state. A multistage random sampling technique was applied to select 485 respondents from a total population of 2,954 staff members of both agencies. The findings revealed that although collaboration between NURTW and FRSC is generally perceived as beneficial, it is hindered by poorly defined roles, weak communication systems, and ineffective use of shared information. Incomplete records and the destruction of vital data during accidents were also identified as major challenges. These issues reflect broader structural and procedural shortcomings that compromise timely and accurate victim identification. Based on the findings, the study recommends the development of formal collaboration protocols, adoption of digital data systems, and establishment of joint operational frameworks to enhance inter-agency coordination and road accident response in Kwara State.

Keywords: Information sharing, Victim identification, Road safety

Introduction

Road transport remains one of the most utilised means of transportation globally, particularly in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), where it plays a crucial role in economic and social activities. However, increased dependence on road transport has led to a high incidence of road traffic accidents (RTAs), which pose significant public health and safety concerns (World Health Organisation [WHO], 2018). According to the Global Status Report on Road Safety, RTAs account for approximately 1.35 million deaths annually, with developing nations experiencing a disproportionately higher burden (WHO, 2018). In Nigeria, road transport accidents significantly contribute to injuries, disabilities, and fatalities, ranking among the top causes of death in the country (Onyemaechi & Ofoma, 2017).

A critical aspect of accident management and emergency response is the timely and accurate identification of accident victims, which facilitates prompt medical care, legal documentation, and family notification. The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) and the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) play key roles in this process in Nigeria. The FRSC is primarily responsible for accident response, enforcement of traffic regulations, and victim evacuation, while the NURTW maintains essential passenger records in motor parks. Their collaboration is therefore vital to effective accident victim identification (Adeyemi & Adewole, 2017).

Despite the importance of this collaboration, multiple challenges hinder effective information exchange between the two organisations. These include poor record-keeping practices, lack of standardised data protocols, weak inter-agency coordination, and limited adoption of digital communication platforms (Karlson *et al*., 2017). Additionally, delays in information dissemination and inconsistencies in accident reports contribute to prolonged victim identification processes and emotional distress for affected families (Huda, Nik, & Nik, 2017). Efficient information sharing has been shown to reduce emergency response time, improve medical outcomes, and support accurate victim identification (Abugessaisa, 2008). However, the limited integration of digital tools within Nigeria's transport system further impedes these benefits (Babajide, 2013).

Given these concerns, this study aims to: assess the effectiveness of inter-agency collaboration between NURTW and FRSC in facilitating accurate and timely identification of road transport accident victims; evaluate the accuracy and reliability of information shared between both agencies; and identify the challenges encountered in the information-sharing process in Kwara State, Nigeria. The findings will informstrategies for improving coordination and data exchange in accident response management.

Statement of the Problem

Effective information sharing is critical for the swift identification of road transport accident victims, enabling prompt medical attention, notifying relatives, and ensuring proper documentation (Sardjoe, 2011).However, in Kwara State, Nigeria, challenges persist in the exchange of accident-related information between the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) and the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC). These challenges hinder the efficiency of accident response and victim identification. Despite the NURTW maintaining passengers' records and the FRSC being responsible for accident management, gaps in communication, lack of standardised data collection, inadequate technological infrastructure, and poor inter-agency coordination often result in delays and difficulties in victim identification.

Additionally, factors such as insufficient public awareness, limited access to digital information-sharing platforms, and inconsistencies in data accuracy further complicate the process.

Without an effective and structured information-sharing system, families face distressing delays in locating accident victims, while emergency responders struggle with incomplete or missing data. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the specific factors affecting information sharing between NURTW and FRSC, identifying barriers and proposing solutions to enhance accident victim identification in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Research Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

1. assess the effectiveness of inter-agency collaboration between NURTW and FRSC in facilitating accurate and timely identification of Road Transport Accident victims;
2. evaluate the accuracy and timely of the information shared between NURTW and FRSC in the identification of road accident victims; and
3. identify the challenges faced in information sharing for the identification of Road Transport Accident victims by NURTW and FRSC in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Review of Related Literature

In the present day organisational structures, information or more specifically, knowledge is recognisedd as one of the most essential strategic resources. Effective information sharing and integration form the bedrock of operational efficiency, particularly in sectors where responsiveness is critical, such as emergency and accident response. However, many information-sharing systems and initiatives fail due to structural, technical, or behavioral constraints. This section reviews relevant literature relating to the effectiveness of inter-agency collaboration, the accuracy of shared information, and the challenges that hinder efficient information sharing in road transport accident response.

Ameghavi, Adou-Adjei, and Owusu (2017) investigated intra-organisational information-sharing challenges in Ghana's Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority(DVLA), focusing on the implementation of e-government platforms. Their findings underscore issues of poor communication channels, delays in feedback, and bureaucratic bottlenecks all of which impaired information flow and task execution. Despite access to digital platforms, DVLA staff often reverted to formal memos and circulars, which slowed down real-time coordination. Notably, trust issues among staff, lack of authorisation to share data, and dependency on directors for approvals created substantial communication delays. These structural and behavioral barriers echo the challenges often seen between agencies like the FRSC and NURTW in Nigeria.

Sonnenwald (2006) explored barriers to information sharing in dynamic, high-stakes environments, using command and control structures in military contexts as a case study. Although these environments are structured for rapid decision-making, information sharing was hindered by misinterpretations, emotional tone, and broken trust after critical errors. Sonnenwald's findings are instructive for inter-agency accident response scenarios where timing and clarity of information are paramount. The study highlighted how communication failures, even among trained personnel can lead to cascading operational inefficiencies and trust breakdowns, a scenario that may mirror FRSC–NURTW interactions during accident identification efforts.

To deepen the discussion around inter-agency collaboration, Harakan, Hilman, and Karso (2025) examined how urban agencies in Indonesia collaborate during fire disaster responses. They found that collaboration effectiveness depends largely on shared goals, communication protocols, and joint training. Using data from metropolitan disaster teams, the study revealed that agencies with formalised agreements and interoperable information systems were able to reduce disaster response times and enhance victim outcomes. This mirrors the potential for improved accident response outcomes in Kwara State, if FRSC and NURTW institutionalize their collaboration through clear protocols and regular joint simulations.

Further supporting this perspective, Sharma *et al*. (2024) evaluated large-scale emergency responses in the context of cyber security threats and physical disasters. The study focused on "collaborative intelligence" and how integrating digital tools with agency coordination boosted response efficiency. One of the core findings was that inter-agency collaboration must be proactive rather than reactive, relying on real-time decision-making supported by technology. Applied to road transport accident management, this reinforces the argument that systems supporting FRSC, NURTW data exchange must be digital, interoperable, and real-time to be effective. The accuracy and reliability of shared information is another critical factor influencing successful victim identification in accident scenarios. According to Karlson *et al*. (2017), information quality can be compromised by manual record-keeping, inconsistent reporting formats, and staff turnover. In their study on health data systems, they found that inaccurate or delayed data led to duplicated efforts and misidentification like challenges found

in roadside victim identification when passenger manifests or driver logs are incomplete or outdated. These issues emphasize the need for digital data systems and staff training to ensure information accuracy.

Moreover, Huda, Nik, and Nik (2017) identified how delayed dissemination, and inconsistent formats further hamper the utility of shared data. Their research in emergency medical services revealed that poorly standardised information between emergency agencies increased the likelihood of administrative errors, delayed care, and family distress. For the FRSC and NURTW, the implication is that unless shared information is timely, verifiable, and clearly formatted, accurate identification of accident victims remains compromised.

The challenges surrounding information sharing also include organisational culture and trust. As noted by Ameghavi *et al*. (2017), employees often hesitate to share information due to mistrust, fear of consequences, or unclear authorization chains. In the Nigerian context, particularly within NURTW, where informal structures sometimes coexist with formal protocols, lack of trust can undermine coordination. Trust and mutual respect are necessary prerequisites for open information flow, especially in emergency contexts. Also noteworthy are technological constraints. Babajide (2013) emphasized that although digital platforms like SMS, radio, and social media are gaining traction in emergency communication globally, their adoption in Nigeria remains limited due to infrastructure gaps, cost barriers, and lack of training. This affects both the accuracy and timeliness of victim data exchanged between the FRSC and NURTW. Real-time mobile applications and national-level accident reporting portals could significantly reduce delays and duplication in victim identification.

Lastly, Abugessaisa (2008) highlighted that centralized data systems across agencies tend to improve accountability, data quality, and cross-checking capabilities. In his analysis of Nordic accident registries, centralised reporting improved both identification speed and legal documentation for accident victims. Applying this insight to Nigeria, the adoption of centralized and interoperable systems could facilitate a more cohesive FRSC–NURTW data ecosystem.

Methodology

Quantitative research methodology was adopted for this study, because it allows for an objective examination of measurable variables, providing a clear and data-driven understanding of the research questions. Cross-sectional survey research design will be adopted for this study. This design is deemed appropriate for this study because it allows the researcher to collect data from different locations in the study area on the influence of sharing between FRSC and NURTW in the identification of Road Accident victims in Kwara State. The population of the study is 2,500 staff of the National Union of Road Transport Workers, and 454 staff of FRSC in Kwara State, Nigeria, their total number is 2,954. Multiple stage random sampling techniques was used and 485 respondents were sampled to represents the entire population.

Data Analysis and Results

Table 1: Effectiveness of inter-agency collaboration between NURTW and FRSC

S/N	Effectiveness	NURTW			FRSC			Total	
		AG	D	U	AG	D	U	Freq.	%
1.	There is a clear system of collaboration between NURTW and FRSC during accident response.	128 (50.7)	40 (15.9)	84 (33.4)	45 (24.1)	85 (45.4)	57 (30.4)	439	191.9 %
2.	The roles of each agency are well-defined and understood in accident victim identification.	51 (20.2)	48 (19.0)	52 (20.6)	43 (22.9)	38 (20.3)	21 (11.2)	253	114.2 %
3.	NURTW and FRSC regularly communicate during emergency situations.	57 (22.6)	28 (11.1)	37 (14.7)	49 (26.2)	68 (36.4)	52 (27.8)	291	138 %
4.	The collaboration between the two agencies leads to quicker identification of accident victims.	71 (28.2)	40 (15.9)	17 (6.7)	39 (20.9)	27 (14.4)	41 (21.9)	235	108 %
5.	Information shared through the collaboration is used effectively in the field.	57 (22.6)	28 (11.1)	37 (14.7)	49 (26.2)	68 (36.4)	52 (27.8)	291	138 %

Field Survey, 2024

Table 1 presents a mixed view of inter-agency collaboration between the NURTW and the FRSC in road accident victim identification. Only 39.4% of respondents believe there is a clear collaboration system, while over 60% are either uncertain or disagree about regular communication and well-defined roles. This reflects a lack of clear protocols and coordination. Although 46.8% agree that collaboration leads to quicker victim identification, this benefit is inconsistently achieved due to procedural gaps. Additionally, only 36.4% feel that shared information is effectively used in the field, highlighting issues of implementation. The results suggest that while the concept of collaboration is viewed positively, its actual practice is undermined by communication breakdowns, undefined responsibilities, and poor information use. Strengthening collaboration frameworks, clarifying agency roles, and establishing joint operational protocols are essential to improving emergency response effectiveness in Kwara State.

Table 2: Accuracy and Reliability of Information shared between NURTW and FRSC

S/N	Accuracy and Reliability	NURTW			FRSC			Total	
		A	D	U	A	D	U	Freq	%
1.	Information shared between the agencies is usually complete and error-free.	81 (32.1)	76 (30.2)	69 (27.4)	67 (35.8)	72 (38.5)	48 (25.7)	413	189.7
2.	Passenger manifests and transport records are accurately maintained by NURTW.	92 (36.5)	72 (28.6)	87 (34.5)	65 (34.6)	77 (41.2)	58 (31.0)	451	206.4

3.	FRSC personnel consistently receive accurate data from NURTW after accidents.	81 (32.1)	62 (24.6)	51 (20.2)	48 (25.7)	51 (27.3)	41 (21.9)	334	151.8
4.	Shared data includes all relevant details needed for victim identification (e.g., names, contacts).	40 (15.9)	38 (15.1)	19 (7.5)	28 (14.9)	48 (25.7)	32 (17.1)	205	96.2
5.	I can rely on the information provided by the other agency during accident investigations.	32 (12.7)	37 (14.7)	51 (20.2)	47 (25.1)	51 (27.3)	43 (22.9)	261	122.9
6.	Mistakes or missing data in shared records are rare.	28 (11.1)	32 (12.7)	41 (16.3)	32 (17.1)	51 (27.3)	45 (24.1)	229	108.6

Field Survey, 2024

Table 2 highlights varying perceptions regarding the effectiveness of collaboration between the NURTW and the FRSC in identifying road transport accident victims. Only 39.4% of respondents agreed that a clear system of collaboration exists, while 28.5% disagreed and 32.1% were undecided. Similarly, only 37.2% believed that the roles of both agencies are well-defined and understood, suggesting ambiguity in operational responsibilities. Communication during emergencies is also a concern, as only 36.4% agreed that regular communication occurs, with the majority either disagreeing or unsure. The highest agreement rate (46.8%) was recorded for the statement that collaboration leads to quicker identification of accident victims, indicating that when coordination occurs, it has a positive impact. However, this benefit is not consistently realised due to structural and procedural shortcomings. Furthermore, only 36.4% felt that information shared is effectively used in the field, while 63.6% expressed doubt or

uncertainty. These findings suggest that despite a general acknowledgment of the importance of collaboration, practical implementation is hindered by weak communication systems, unclear roles, and inefficient data utilisation. There is a pressing need to establish formal protocols, improve communication channels, and clearly define responsibilities to enhance inter-agency coordination in Kwara State.

Table 3: Challenges faced by the Respondents

S/N	**Challenges**	**NURTW**			**FRSC**			**TOTAL**	
		KC	**KN**	**KS**	**KC**	**KN**	**KS**	**Freq.**	**%**
1.	Incomplete information of the road transport accident victims	93 (36.9)	72 (28.6)	87 (34.5)	58 (31.0)	61 (32.6)	53 (28.3)	424	191.9 %
2.	Lack of attention given to the media by the people	51 (20.2)	48 (19.0)	52 (20.6)	43 (22.9)	38 (20.3)	21 (11.2)	253	114.2 %
3.	Destroying of the information about the road transport accident victims by fire and other agents of damage during accident	57 (22.6)	28 (11.1)	37 (14.7)	49 (26.2)	68 (36.4)	52 (27.8)	291	138 %
4.	Lack of comprehension of the information of the road transport accidents victim	71 (28.2)	40 (15.9)	17 (6.7)	39 (20.9)	27 (14.4)	41 (21.9)	235	108 %

Field Survey, 2024

Table 3 highlights key challenges faced by the NURTW and the FRSC in sharing information for the identification of road transport accident victims across the three senatorial zones in Kwara State.

Among NURTW officials, the most commonly reported challenge was incomplete information about accident victims, with Kwara Central recording the highest frequency (93 or 36.9%), followed by Kwara South 87(34.5%) and Kwara North 72(28.6%). Similarly, FRSC personnel in Kwara Central 58(31.0%) and Kwara South 53(28.3%) also cited incomplete information as a major challenge. However, in Kwara North, FRSC officials

identified destruction of victim information by fire or other damaging agents during accidents as the most pressing issue, with a frequency of 68 (36.4%).

Overall, the findings indicate that incomplete and damaged information significantly hinders the accurate identification of road accident victims. These issues align with previous research by Sonnenwald (2006), which identified barriers to information sharing in dynamic and high-pressure environments, such as military command operations. Similar to military contexts, the accident response environment requires timely, accurate data, which is often compromised due to structural and situational challenges.

Conclusion

The findings from this study reveal significant gaps and challenges in the information-sharing processes between the NURTW and the FRSC in Kwara State, particularly in the identification of road transport accident victims. Across all three senatorial zones, incomplete and unreliable information emerged as the most critical barrier, especially among NURTW respondents. Additionally, FRSC personnel in Kwara North reported cases where vital accident records were destroyed by fire or other damaging agents, further compounding the difficulty in victim identification. Moreover, perceptions of inter-agency collaboration were generally weak. Less than half of the respondents agreed that effective collaboration mechanisms are in place, while a significant proportion either disagreed or were unsure about the existence of regular communication and clearly defined roles. Even though there is some recognition that collaboration can speed up victim identification, this potential is undermined by procedural inefficiencies, unclear responsibilities, and poor implementation of shared information. Collectively, these findings underscore the urgent need for systemic reforms. Strengthening institutional collaboration, implementing digital record-keeping, and establishing clear, actionable protocols are crucial steps toward improving emergency response outcomes and ensuring timely and accurate identification of road transport accident victims in Kwara State.

Recommendations

a. Formal collaboration protocols be established, roles clearly defined, and effective communication channels implemented between NURTW and FRSC to enhance coordination, improve information sharing, and ensure timely identification of accident victims in Kwara State.
b. NURTW and FRSC develop joint operational protocols, enhance communication systems, and improve information utilisation, and ensure timely and effective identification of road accident victims in Kwara State.
c. NURTW and FRSC adopt standardised digital data collection tools, improve record-keeping practices, and implement secure backup systems to prevent data loss, ensuring accurate and reliable information sharing for effective accident victim identification across Kwara State.

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