

How fatal is fatal? How serious is serious? A content analysis of newspaper reportage on road crashes in Ghana.

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abstract

The media play a significant role in road safety education and situational awareness, yet, can also create biased perceptions through inconsistent road crash reporting. This quantitative content analysis study set out to explore (1) the accuracy of road crash reportage by two major Ghanaian newspapers and (2) the extent to which the newspapers' crash reports are factual based on the official police report on the reported crashes. This aims to provide further opportunities to strengthen the media's role in road safety education and promotion. The study sampled the Daily Graphic and The Ghanaian Times articles on road crashes in Ghana from 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2016. For comparison, articles published on the same crash were purposively sampled for analysis. Twenty-five common crash reports from both newspapers were flagged for analysis in a two-stage process. The study observed inconsistencies in the newspapers' reported crash details. Further, the reported crash details were also inaccurate when compared to the official police road crash reports. However, traffic fatalities were more accurately reported than injuries. The findings implicate the media's road crash reporting standard and suggest an urgent need for collaboration between road safety stakeholders and media houses on improving the media road crash reporting regarding what is reported and how it is reported.

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Introduction

The Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023 indicates that 1.19 million road traffic deaths occurred in 2021 worldwide, and this equates to 15 road traffic deaths per 100,000 population (World Health Organisation, 2023). This total of 1.19 million road traffic deaths reflects a 5% decrease from the 2010 figure of 1.25 million. This slight decline in fatalities occurred despite the global motor vehicle fleet more than doubling (WHO, 2023).

The situation in Africa remains a significant public health concern. In 2021, approximately 225,482 road traffic deaths occurred on the continent. Africa accounts for 19% of the global burden of traffic fatalities despite representing only 15% of the worldwide population and having merely 3% of the global vehicle fleet. Since 2010, the African Region has seen a worrying 17% increase in fatalities, making it the only WHO region to experience such a surge. The African Region also has the highest fatality rate globally, at 19.4 deaths per 100,000 population, with significant variations among countries (WHO African Region, 2024).

According to the National Road Safety Authority (NRSA, 2021), 313,915 road crashes involving 496,365 vehicles were recorded in Ghana over the last three decades (1991-2021). Injury-only crashes constituted 61.8% of all crashes, producing 429,147 casualties (i.e., 12.4% killed, 37.7% severe injuries and 49.9% slight injuries). On the average, Ghana records 1,800 traffic deaths and 14,500 traffic injuries annually, with an estimated socioeconomic cost of 1.6% of the country's gross domestic product (National Road Safety Authority, 2021). In 2021, about 11,207 crashes were recorded in Ghana, with 2,890 fatalities, the highest ever recorded in the country. The 2021 fatalities represent a 14.3% increase over the 2020 figures (National Road Safety Authority, 2021).

Ghana's road safety challenges are underpinned by three main issues: increasing fatal crashes and fatalities, the prominence of motorcycle (two-wheeler) use and associated fatalities, and incomplete reporting of relevant crash details (NRSA, 2021). Since 2017, Ghana has witnessed a rise in traffic fatalities, particularly, on the non-urban (trunk) roads, which accounted for 56.3% of all traffic fatalities in 2021. Traffic fatalities increased by 14.3% in 2021 compared to the 2020 figure and by 31.4% compared to the 2011 figure. Between 2019 and 2021, cars (41.9%), motorcycles (20.9%), buses (17%), and heavy goods vehicles (13.3%) were significantly over-represented in the crash statistics. Notably, between 2019 and 2020, bus occupants recorded a high increase in fatalities of 62.4%. Fatal crashes in 2021 increased by 6.7% and 31.6% over the 2020 and 2011 figures, respectively. For the second consecutive time, motorcyclists (two-wheelers) represented the road user type with the highest risk of death (31.7%, an increase of 10.4% in 2021 compared to 2020) in traffic in Ghana. The surge in the use of motorcycles as taxis and the non-use of helmets by their riders underline the rising trend of motorcycle fatalities (NRSA, 2021).

Road traffic crash statistics and reports highlight a country's road safety problem(s) and inform road safety policy formulation (targets, indicators, and strategies) and evaluation. Thus, it is vital to ensure that the statistics and corresponding reports accurately capture, record, and report (Evans, 2004). Moreover, road infrastructure investment programmes at any given location also utilise, among other things, information on the location's crash statistics (Daniels et al., 2010).

A characteristic feature of road crash data, especially in developing countries, is the issue of incomplete reporting (underreporting, non-reporting, and misclassification of injury severity- i.e., the outcome of the crash) (Elvik & Mysen, 1999; Elvik & Vaa, 2004; Hauer, 1997; Yankson et al., 2010). Previous studies, including Yankson et al. (2010) and Derriks and Mak (2007), have revealed certain crash data collection biases, and argued that crashes with motorised vehicles are more likely to be registered and captured than crashes with non-motorised transport (pedestrians, cyclists, etc.). Moreover, the higher the injury severity, the less likely they will be underreported (or non-reported). By implication, the probability that a crash will be reported depends strongly on injury severity- fatal injuries are almost

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entirely reported in official road crash statistics compared to the other injury categories (see Elvik & Mysen, 1999). This situation impacts data completeness and accuracy for road safety policy and related interventions. As Daniels et al. (2010) and Kamaluddin et al. (2018) maintain, underreporting and misclassification of road crash data (incomplete reporting) may lead to a systematic underestimation (or overestimation) of the magnitude of the safety problem in a country. In addition, it increases the uncertainty of the estimated effects of road safety measures (Hauer & Hakkert, 1988). Crash report completeness is essential to quantify the extent and socioeconomic implications of the crash problem. It provides the basis for setting and monitoring the progress of implementing realistic targets for safety interventions (Salifu & Ackaah, 2012).

Literature Review

The media play a significant role in road safety education and situational awareness, but can also create biased perceptions due to inconsistencies in reporting road traffic casualties (Connor & Wesolowski, 2004; Frost et al., 1997). Previous research examined the discrepancies in media crash reporting and their implications for public risk awareness and blame attribution. For instance, Connor and Wesolowski (2004) conducted an observational study of newspaper coverage of fatal motor vehicle crashes in the United States between 1999 and 2000 to examine the public health messages conveyed by the coverage of these crashes and to determine the extent to which it accurately reflects real risks and crash trends. They compared the details and causal factors reported by the newspaper articles to fatality analysis reporting system (FARS) data using odds ratios and two-tailed z-tests. They found that the papers covered fewer fatal crashes over the period than documented in the FARS, assigned blame in 90% of the crashes covered, under-reported restraint use and drivers' risk of death, and misrepresented the roles played by alcohol and teen drivers.

In a similar study conducted in Belgium, Daniels et al. (2010) explored the factors contributing to the likelihood of crashes being reported in official statistics and newspapers. They also examined the accuracy of the information published in newspaper articles regarding these crashes. They found that 82% of the articles reporting injury severity contained precise details (e.g., the number of individuals involved, age, and gender when mentioned). However, the newspaper articles seldom specified the potential causes of the crashes. In a related study, Beullens et al. (2008) employed content analysis to investigate the framing of traffic crashes on Flemish television news. They argue that television news fails to report traffic crashes from a public health perspective, consequently missing opportunities to inform the public about the causes and consequences of risk-taking in traffic.

Another study by Ralph et al. (2019) in the United States aimed to determine whether framing news articles about traffic crashes influences readers' perceptions of blame and their support for various safety interventions. This study involved an experiment in which 999 participants randomly read one of three versions of a news article about a pedestrian-involved crash, each differing in language and framing. Participants then answered questions regarding blame attribution and support for safety measures. The study found that subtle language changes significantly affected readers' interpretations. Articles that used driver-focused language reduced victim-blaming and increased perceived driver responsibility.

Additionally, a recent study by Feyver and Aldred (2022) examined how fatal road traffic collisions are reported in the media, focusing on the portrayal of different road users. Their critical discourse analysis of 17 articles from the London Evening Standard, covering various fatal collisions involving cars, bicycles, and pedestrians, revealed distinct narratives: drivers are often backgrounded unless involved in exceptional behaviour (e.g., hit-and-run), cyclists are depicted as typical participants in collisions, and pedestrian deaths are framed as isolated tragedies, contributing to a skewed public understanding of road safety and responsibility.

Janstrup et al. (2016) also found high underreporting rates for road crash injuries in Denmark. They discovered that underreporting decreases not only with injury severity but also the involvement of vulnerable road users, such as cyclists (reporting rates of about 14% for serious injuries and 7% for slight injuries) and motorcyclists (reporting rates of about 35% for serious injuries and 10% for slight injuries).

Daniels et al. (2010, p.4) opine that "the number of reported crashes and the way of reporting are likely to influence the perception of the risk of certain behaviours. Whenever this risk does not correspond with the real risk, biases in the perception of the risk might occur. Consequently, people may have a wrong or biased perception of the size and severity of the casualty risk in traffic".

Incidentally, public perceptions and beliefs about road safety are influenced by what is reported and how it is reported in the media (Yankson et al., 2010). Adams (1992, p.30) revealed that "three maxims often govern perceived newsworthiness of any event: rare hazards are more newsworthy than common ones; new hazards are more newsworthy than old ones, and dramatic hazards

(sudden and mysterious) are more newsworthy than long-familiar ones". This implies that the media are more likely to report road traffic crashes that are relatively new, rare, and more dramatic. Related to this, the World Health Organisation (2015) revealed that even though more crashes and fatalities are being recorded globally (especially in developing countries), full details of the incidence (for instance, the victims, causes, and circumstances surrounding the crashes and how they could have been avoided) are often left untold.

The study aims

In their paper *Reporting on Road Traffic Injury: Content Analysis of Injuries and Prevention Opportunities in Ghanaian Newspapers*, Yankson et al. (2010) underscored the Ghanaian media's vital role in promoting road safety in Ghana. Regarding what is reported, Yankson and colleagues observed that the media usually report the number of persons injured (in about 70% of the cases they reviewed), whether fatal injuries occurred (in 92% of the cases), and potential contributing factors. In some instances, the crash's date (day and time), location (roadway), and the number of vehicles involved are also reported. It is crucial to note that these reports are primarily based on eyewitness and local reporters' accounts of the events leading to the crash (i.e., immediate reporting) (see also Yankson et al., 2010). Occasionally, the media house may call the relevant institutions or persons (mainly the Motor Traffic and Transport Department of the Ghana Police Service or the Ghana National Fire Service) for further insights, depending on the magnitude and implications of the crash (i.e., follow-up stories).

Yankson and colleagues further reveal that media crash reportage mainly prioritises crashes involving motorised transport over pedestrians or vulnerable road users, despite the fact that pedestrians (33.6%) are the road users with the highest fatality rate in Ghana (National Road Safety Authority, 2024). For instance, Yankson et al. (2010) observed that reports on motorised transport crashes outnumbered those on pedestrian injuries by 3 to 1. They recommended that editors enhance coverage of pedestrian injuries.

The present study presents a quantitative content analysis of newspaper articles on common road crashes reported by two major state-owned print media outlets, The Ghanaian Times and Daily Graphic. The study explored the following:

- The accuracy (similarities and differences) of the newspaper-reported crash details (i.e., date and time of the crash, place of the crash, roadway, number of vehicles involved, crash casualties (number killed and injured) and the probable cause(s).
- The extent to which the newspapers' crash reports are factual when compared to the official police report (reference category) of the reported crashes.

This study is similar to Yankson et al. (2010, p. 197)'s initial exploration of the role of the media in injury prevention in Ghana to provide further opportunities and evidence to harness and strengthen the media's role in road safety education and promotion. However, unlike Yankson and colleagues' study, the present study explores the accuracy and factuality of the reported crash details. This is against the backdrop of Yankson and colleagues' assertion that opportunities to strengthen the role of the media in injury prevention have not been well addressed in low- and middle-income countries.

Media crash statistics and reports are relevant because they can provide alternative, timely data for research, policymaking, and interventions. Official national crash reports always lag, impacting timely interventions to improve the country's road safety situation. For instance, the most current and complete national crash statistics and reports in Ghana are those of 2022; the 2023 report and statistics have yet to be released.

The study findings hold much promise for policymaking and practice in several ways: a) policymakers and safety experts can use the study's findings to address gaps in crash data accuracy and completeness. Highlighting inconsistencies between media reports and official crash data can inform initiatives to improve the crash reporting process, ensuring reliable and timely information for decision-making; b) by revealing underreporting and biases in media coverage, the study provides a foundation for policies that focus on comprehensive data collection. Safety experts can advocate for integrating media-reported data with official statistics to better understand traffic incidents; and c) the study highlights opportunities for collaboration between media outlets and road safety institutions to formalise partnerships that ensure timely and factual crash reporting and advocacy for road safety measures.

Official road crash data collection and reporting in Ghana

In Ghana, the official crash database is managed by the Building and Road Research Institute (BRRI) of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Kumasi, Ghana. The database contains police-compiled road crashes on Ghanaian roads captured via a standard road crash reporting form. The report captures information from surviving crash casualties, witnesses, detailed crash sketches, hospital post-mortem reports of fatal crashes, and

detailed reports from crash investigators and vehicle examiners (National Road Safety Authority, 2021). The data is stored in computers using the Transport Research Laboratory, UK -developed Microcomputer Accident Analysis Package (Windows version) software.

The database provides information on the driver, traffic elements, and road environment conditions during the crashes. The driver information includes the name, sex, age, injury sustained, license number and status, a declaration of whether drunk driving was involved, and the driver errors associated with the crash (if any). The captured traffic elements and road environment information include the vehicle types involved, vehicle manoeuvre, vehicle ownership and usage, the extent of damage, vehicle defects suspected and the direction of travel at the time of the incident. In addition, the road type and description, surface type, shoulder type and condition, weather and light conditions, the presence of road separation, surface condition, crash location, traffic control, collision type and surface repair are also specified. Furthermore, the data also indicate the day and time of the crash, the number of vehicles involved, the number of casualties killed and injured, and the crash severity, measured on a 4-point scale (Sam et al., 2018):

- Fatal crash: a crash where at least one casualty dies of injuries sustained within 30 days of the occurrence.
- Hospitalised or severe injury crash: at least one person is detained in the hospital as an inpatient for more than 24 hours.
- Injured, but not hospitalised or minor injury crash: a crash in which the most severe injury sustained by a casualty is only minor, requiring at most first-aid attention.
- Damage-only crash: a crash which results only in vehicle or other material damage.

The BRRI, through the National Road Safety Authority of the Ministry of Transport, produces an annual report on road crashes in Ghana based on official data collected and stored in the national crash database hosted at the BRRI.

Materials and methods

The study sampled articles from the Daily Graphic and The Ghanaian Times on road crashes in Ghana published between 1 January 2005 and 31 December 2016 (accessible at the time of the study). It utilised the physical (hardcopy) newspapers of the two media outlets at the University of Education, Winneba Library Archives, to gather relevant data. Two research assistants meticulously scanned the news items (manual search) to identify road crash stories. Stories that provided crash details were photocopied for further content analysis. Samples of the newspaper coverage of road crashes reviewed for this study are included in the appendix. The two newspapers were selected because (1) they have extensive national coverage and readership and (2) they are more likely to prioritise national issues (e.g., road crashes) as state-owned entities compared to private newspapers, which are primarily motivated by profits (Atawura, 2015). For instance, Yankson and colleagues' study sampled two public newspapers (Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times) and two private newspapers (The Guide and Chronicle). They observed that the public newspapers more frequently published articles on injuries (i.e., crash reports, pedestrian reports, commentary, editorial, and informational pieces) than the private newspapers. Nevertheless, there is a potential bias in public, state-owned newspapers being liberal in their road safety advocacy and recommendations to the government. A 2017 report on media measurement in Ghana by GeoPoll revealed that the Daily Graphic and The Ghanaian Times were the first and third most popular daily newspapers, with 1.5 million and 532,000 readers per day (Elliot, 2018).

The study utilised a quantitative content analysis research design, which focuses on counting and measuring rather than interpreting and understanding, which lies with qualitative content analysis. Through descriptive content analysis, this study examined the substantive features of the road crash reportage from the two newspapers (i.e., what is being said in the reportage-message content) (Rose et al., 2015; Schreier, 2012). Quantitative content analysis has been widely applied in social science studies, particularly in media reporting, and is considered a valuable method for analysing newspaper and textual data (Beullens et al., 2008; Fevryer & Aldred, 2022; Ralph et al., 2019; Rose et al., 2015).

For comparison, articles published on the same crash were purposefully sampled for the analysis. Twenty-five (25) common crash reports from both newspapers were selected for quantitative content analysis through a two-stage process; all other reportage not common to both newspapers were excluded from the analysis. In the first stage, reports on the crashes from the two papers were manually matched based on the date and time of the crash, crash location/roadway, reported casualties (numbers of killed and injured), and reported causes of the crashes to assess accuracy (similarities and differences) in the reports. A code of 1 was assigned if there was disagreement in the newspapers' reported details, and 0 when there was agreement.

In the second stage, the common newspapers' reporting was also compared to the official police reports (from the BRRI database) on the same crashes to

determine the extent to which the newspapers' crash reports are factual. During this stage, the extracted crash details from stage 1 were sent to the BRRI to query the official database. Sixteen (16) of the newspaper-reported crash details matched those in the BRRI database and were thus, retrieved for further analyses (second objective). Similarly, a code of 1 was assigned if there was disagreement between the newspapers' reported details and the official police reports, and 0 when there was agreement. Given the limited number of data entries, all extracted data were entered into a structured Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for further analysis. Each row corresponded to a unique crash incident, and columns captured the reporting from the Ghanaian Times, Daily Graphic, and official police records. Differences between newspaper reports and police reports were computed for:

- Fatalities: (Newspaper fatalities – Police fatalities)
- Injuries: (Newspaper injuries – Police injuries)

The analysis utilised descriptive statistics (mean, median, and standard deviation values of reporting differences calculated separately for each newspaper regarding police data on fatalities and injuries), visual analysis (line graphs illustrated trends in reported fatalities and injuries, and histograms displayed the distribution of discrepancies between newspapers and police reports (see appendix)), and disagreement evaluation (the magnitude and direction of reporting discrepancies- overreporting or underreporting- were examined). All calculations were performed using an Excel spreadsheet.

Results and discussion

Accuracy (similarities and differences) of the newspapers-reported crash details

The quantitative content analysis of the crash extracts from the two newspapers revealed that the Ghanaian Times (n=146) published more crash reports than the Daily Graphic (n=98) from 2005 to 2016.

Further analysis revealed that the two newspapers shared twenty-five crash reports based on the reported crash date (Table 1a and 1b). The data show that the Daily Graphic reported slightly more fatalities (23 out of 25 cases; mean difference = 0.27) and significantly more injuries (mean difference = 1.93) per incident than the Ghanaian Times. While most cases showed no difference (median difference = 0), the higher standard deviation in injury reporting (4.46) indicates greater inconsistency in that category. Analysing the common reportage further revealed that (a) in about 94% of the cases, the newspaper-reported crash dates were consistent; (b) the times of the crashes and the number of injured were inconsistently reported (in about 52% and 54.7% of the cases, respectively); and (c) crash locations (73%), the number of vehicles involved (72%), the number of the killed (72%), and probable causes (52%) were consistently reported. There were also instances of unreported or missing crash details. Discrepancies in death tolls were found in 9 incidents. For example, regarding the crash on 9 April 2009 (Crash #1), the Ghanaian Times reported one killed, while the Daily Graphic reported three. Similarly, the Ghanaian Times reported that six were killed, whereas the Daily Graphic reported seven killed regarding the crash on 1 January 2012 at 6 pm (Crash #11).

The reportage on the number of injuries also contained conflicting details (including non-reports). The Ghanaian Times provided injury counts in 19 reports, while the Daily Graphic provided injury counts in 20 reports. Injury numbers varied in several instances. For example, regarding the crash on 11 January 2011 (Crash #5), the Ghanaian Times reported that 40 persons were injured, whereas the Daily Graphic did not report any injuries. Additionally, the Daily Graphic stated that six persons were injured in the crash on 21 January 2011 (Crash #7), but the Ghanaian Times reported that only one person was injured. Most reports included vehicle counts, with discrepancies noted in four incidents (e.g., Crash #19: The Ghanaian Times reported seven vehicles, and the Daily Graphic reported five vehicles).

Taken together, the study observed inconsistencies in the newspapers' reported crash details concerning the number of injured (54.7% of the cases) compared to the number of killed (16% of the cases) (i.e., under-recording) (see Figure 1a and 1b below and Figure 3a-c in appendix), attributable to the media outlets' reliance on eyewitness and local reporters' accounts of the traffic incidents (immediate reporting) without much recourse to further investigations and follow-ups. As expected, fatalities (number of people killed) were reported more consistently than the other injury categories. Moreover, the study also found a high chance that the reportage would miss essential crash details (i.e., non-reporting), particularly in the case of the Daily Graphic newspaper. These results confirm previous findings that crash reporting accuracy declines with decreasing injury (Yannis et al., 2014; Janstrup et al., 2016; Salifu & Ackaah, 2012; Elvik & Mysen, 1999; Daniels et al., 2010). For instance, Salifu and Ackaah's (2012) study in Ghana revealed that the level of non-reporting of crashes and casualties differed with the degree of severity. Non-reporting of crashes ranged from about 57% for damage-only crashes, 29.8% for slight crashes, and 8.3% for severe crashes, respectively, to 0% for fatal crashes. On the other hand, they found

considerable non-reporting in injury crashes, ranging from 54.2% for slight injuries to 37.8% for severe injuries. In contrast, Daniels et al.'s (2010) study in Belgium observed that about 82% of the sampled articles reporting injury severity contained accurate details. Notwithstanding this, studies across different regions have consistently shown that injury crashes are vastly underreported compared to fatal crashes.

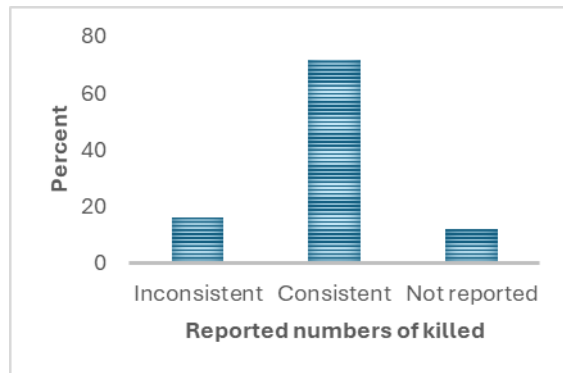


Figure 1a. Accuracy of newspaper-reported crash details (numbers killed vs numbers injured)

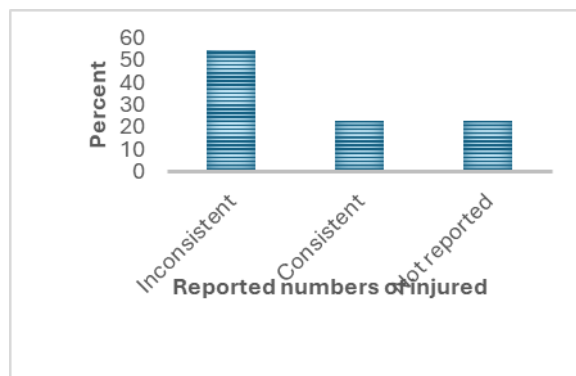


Figure 1b. Accuracy of newspaper-reported crash details (numbers killed vs numbers injured)

Factuality of the newspapers' crash reports based on the official police report.

The study further explored the extent to which the newspaper crash details were factual using the official police report (stored in the BRRI database) as the reference point (baseline for verification). Table 2a and 2b presents the findings of the content analysis. Nine (9) of the 25 common newspaper reports did not match the BRRI database details and thus, could not be retrieved for further analysis. A possible reason could be the total mismatch (inconsistencies) between the newspaper-reported details (the search terms used for the query) and police crash reports (stored in the database). A match is likely even where a few search terms correlate with the actual crash details in the database.

For the 16 crashes matching some details in the BRRI database, key crash details (e.g., date and time of the crash, etc.) reported by the newspapers were inconsistent with the police-captured details. In eight instances (highlighted in bold in Table 2a and 2b), the newspaper-reported dates were either later (in five instances) or earlier (in three instances) than the official police-reported dates. For crashes reported earlier than the police reports, this suggests that the newspapers' reports could refer to a different crash or incident altogether from the reference crash. In three instances, the newspaper-reported crash times were also earlier than the times reported by the police.

It also became apparent that the newspaper reports were inaccurate when compared to the official police reports, with instances of both over-reporting

and under-reporting (misreporting) as well as non-reporting of crash casualties, particularly regarding the number of injured. Out of the 16 crash comparisons, 10 revealed discrepancies in fatalities between the newspapers and police data. Both newspapers, on the average, overreported fatalities, with a mean difference of +2.14 between The Ghanaian Times and police data (standard deviation = 4.54) and +2.57 between the Daily Graphic and police data (standard deviation = 4.78). The high standard deviations indicate frequent inconsistencies.

The newspapers generally underreported injuries but had some instances of overreporting. The mean difference between the Ghanaian Times and the police injury report was +1.58 (standard deviation = 7.04), while the mean difference between the Daily Graphic and the police injury report was +3.73 (standard deviation = 8.22). The larger spread in the differences indicates less reliability in the injury data.

In the case of The Ghanaian Times, the reported crash dates (62.5%) and times (87.5%) were inconsistent with the police reports. Furthermore, although The Ghanaian Times accurately reported the crash location (81.3%) and number of vehicles involved (68.8%), it inaccurately reported the number killed (87.5% of the cases), injured (81.3% of the cases), and the probable crash cause (75% of the cases). The extent of inconsistent reportage was similar for the Daily Graphic newspaper. For instance, the reports on the crash of 9 April 2009 (Crash #1) had issues. None of the papers reported the number injured, even though 22 people were officially reported injured by the police. However, the Daily Graphic correctly reported the number killed (i.e., three persons), consistent with the official police report. Interestingly, both papers wrongly reported the crash date, which the police recorded as 10 April 2009 at Akyem Anyinasin.

Moreover, regarding the crash on 3 January 2010 (Crash #2), the police reported nine fatalities and 16 injuries. Although the newspapers accurately reported the number of deaths, the Daily Graphic underreported the number of injuries by half, while The Ghanaian Times reported no injuries. Similarly, according to the official police report, 16 individuals died, and 50 were injured in the crash of 11 January 2011 (Crash #3) at Afrancho Nkenkaasu. The newspapers provided contradictory reports: both papers reported 15 deaths and 40 injuries (in the case of The Ghanaian Times), which are one and ten less than the official counts of fatalities and injuries, respectively. On the other hand, the official police report on the 19 January 2011 crash at Gomoa Onyaadze near Apam junction in the central region (Crash #4) revealed that ten individuals were killed and three injured. Table 2a and 2b shows that the newspapers reported 13 deaths and overstated the number of injuries by 107% and 136.8%, respectively, in the cases of The Ghanaian Times and the Daily Graphic. There were inconsistent newspaper reports on the number of fatalities and injuries in the crash on 1 January 2012 at Sefwi Wiawso (Crash #7). Whereas the police reported that one person died, and two others were injured, the Daily Graphic reported seven deaths and provided no information on injuries, while The Ghanaian Times reported six deaths and one injury, contradicting the official police report.

Further analysis revealed a significant degree of non-reporting, including misreporting, of the number of injured relative to the number of killed. In four of the seven instances, the newspapers did not report the number injured but accurately reported the number killed. Notably, the Daily Graphic accurately reported the number of killed in three of the seven instances, consistent with the official police report. As previously stated, these findings corroborate earlier results indicating that crash reporting accuracy declines with the severity of injuries, suggesting that the less fatal the crash or injury outcome, the more likely it is not to be reported or is misreported (Yannis et al., 2014; Janstrup et al., 2016; Salifu & Ackaah, 2012; Elvik & Mysen, 1999; Daniels et al., 2010).

Another interesting finding was that the newspapers reported an entire roadway as the crash site rather than a specific location, which has implications for crash location selection, analysis, and treatment (i.e., targeted safety improvements). It is important to note that official Ghana police crash reports capture the exact crash location and geographical coordinates. A potential reason for the newspapers' inability to report specific crash locations is their excessive reliance on eyewitness accounts to report crashes without much recourse to follow-up field investigations (Yankson et al., 2010). Previous studies, including the World Road Association (2013) and Daniels et al. (2010), have underscored the importance of identifying the exact crash locations and the circumstances of crashes for prioritising crash locations and road infrastructure investment programmes.

Table 1a: Cross-tabulation of common Ghanaian Times and Daily Graphic reported crashes, 2005-2016.

Reported crash details								
Crash #	Newspaper	Date of crash	Time of crash	Crash location (road/highway)	No. vehicles involved	No. killed	No. injured	Probable cause(s)
1	The Ghanaian Times		8:00 PM	Kumasi-Accra highway	NR	1	NR	NR
	Daily Graphic	9-Apr-09	6:30 PM	Kumasi-Accra highway	2	3	NR	Overtaking
2	The Ghanaian Times		7-8 pm	Kumasi-Accra highway	2	9	NR	Overtaking
	Daily Graphic	3-Jan-10	NR	Near Konongo	2	9	8	Speeding
3	The Ghanaian Times	2-Feb-10	Evening	Akuapem-Mamfe road	1	0	0	Brake failure
	Daily Graphic		NR	Mamfe-Koforidua road	1	0	0	Mechanical fault
4	The Ghanaian Times	14-Feb-10	3:16 AM	Accra- Takoradi highway	1	2	NR	Brake failure
	Daily Graphic		3:15 AM	Accra- Takoradi highway	1	2	1	High speed
5	The Ghanaian Times	11-Jan-11	4:30 AM	Afrancho- Nkenkaasu road	2	15	40	Speeding
	Daily Graphic		2:00 AM	Ashanti region	2	15	NR	Fell in a ditch
6	The Ghanaian Times		4:30 AM	Cape Coast- Winneba highway	2	13	10	Overtaking
	Daily Graphic	19-Jan-11	5:30 AM	Apam-Winneba road	2	13	16	Speeding
7	The Ghanaian Times		NR	Kwame Nkrumah Circle road	NR	NR	1	Speeding
	Daily Graphic	21-Jan-11	5:30 AM	Achimota-Nsawam road	2	NR	6	Distracted driving
8	The Ghanaian Times	16-Sep-11	Dawn	Konongo road	2	22	15	Overtaking
	Daily Graphic		3:00 AM	NR	2	22	30	Overtaking
9	The Ghanaian Times	30-Dec-11	4:30 AM	Tesano-Fadama road	1	4	3	Overtaking and speeding
	Daily Graphic		4:00 AM	Abeka-Fadama road	1	5	5	Collision with electricity pole
10	The Ghanaian Times	1-Jan-12	4:00 AM	Half-Assini-Takoradi Road	2	2	4	Overtaking
	Daily Graphic		4:30 AM	Jomoro	2	2	NR	NR
11	The Ghanaian Times	1-Jan-12	6:00 PM	Sefwi Bekwai road	2	6	1	NR
	Daily Graphic		6:00 PM	Sefwi Bekwai- Wianfo road	2	7	NR	NR
12	The Ghanaian Times	1-May-12	3:45 AM	George Walker Bush highway	1	2	NR	NR
	Daily Graphic		3:30 AM	Tema- Cape Coast road	1	2	NR	Not yet known
13	The Ghanaian Times	19-Jan-13	Friday morning	Okponglo in Accra	2	2	2	NR
	Daily Graphic			Okponglo junction near Legon	2	2	1	Attention deficit

Table 1b: Cross-tabulation of common Ghanaian Times and Daily Graphic reported crashes, 2005-2016.

Crash #	Newspaper	Date of crash	Reported crash details					
			Time of crash	Crash location (road/highway)	No. vehicles involved	No. killed	No. injured	Probable cause(s)
14	The Ghanaian Times	23-Feb-13	6:40 AM	Gomoa- Mampong (Accra-Winneba road)	2	12	5	Overtaking
	Daily Graphic		NR	Gomoa-Mampong (Accra-Winneba road)	2	14	NR	Overtaking
15	The Ghanaian Times	16-Aug-13	1:30 AM	Kobina Ansah, Central Region	2	8	15	Overspeeding by both drivers
	Daily Graphic		1:00 AM	Kobina Ansah, Cape Coast road	2	8	16	Fatigue and overspeeding
16	The Ghanaian Times	19-Oct-13	10:50 AM	Asonomanso Nkwanta, Ashanti region	NR	9	14	Overspeeding
	Daily Graphic		NR	Asonomanso, Kumasi-Mampong road	2	9	13	Driver failed to observe oncoming vehicle and run into it
17	The Ghanaian Times	5-Nov-13	Monday	Atwedie near Juaso	2	10	4	Reverse of a truck unable to climb a hill running into an urvan
	Daily Graphic			Kumasi- Accra highway	3	10	7	Wrongful overtaking
18	The Ghanaian Times	31-Dec-13	NR	Antando near Komenda	2	15	1	Head-on collision
	Daily Graphic		NR	Antado Komenda Cape Coast Takoradi road	3	15	1	Driver lost control of the truck and ran into an urvan from the opposite direction
19	The Ghanaian Times	2-Jul-14		Suame Roundabout, Kumasi	7	NR	4	An articulated truck jammed into six other vehicles after failing to climb
	Daily Graphic			Suame Roundabout, Kumasi	5	NR	1	Articulated truck lost control during curve negotiation
20	The Ghanaian Times	7-Jul-14		Adaiso Mamfe-Koforidua road	1	1	60	A school bus overloaded with students veered off the road
	Daily Graphic			Osubeto- Koforidua-Mamfe road	1	1	60	Bus veered off the road and landed on its side
21	The Ghanaian Times	28-Jul-14	11:30 AM	Hebron Junction, Nsawam-Kumasi road	1	3	NR	An articulated truck veered off the road and crashed resulting in fire
	Daily Graphic	29-Jul-14		Hebron Junction	1	3	NR	Truck veered off the road and caught fire
22	The Ghanaian Times	4-Aug-14		Tema-Accra motorway near Ashiaman	1	1	10	Bus skidded off the motorway and fell in a gutter
	Daily Graphic		1:30 AM	Tema motorway	1	1	10	Yutong bus ran into a ditch on the Tema motorway
23	The Ghanaian Times	4-Oct-14	2:00 AM	Osino Anakaase	2	12	50	The VIP driver attempted to overtake a stationary car and collided with the other bus
	Daily Graphic		2:00 AM	Ankaase	2	12	50	Unlawful overtaking by a bus from opposite direction which lead to the crash
24	The Ghanaian Times	11-Mar-16	4:30 AM	Weiija Kasoa road	1	NR	NR	Gas tanker skidded off the road
	Daily Graphic	10-Mar-16	5:00 AM	Kasoa old barrier	2	NR	2	A private car making a U-turn caused a gas tanker to veer off the road and turn upside down
25	The Ghanaian Times	28-Apr-16	8:00 PM	Tema Aflao road	2	3	NR	A saloon car collided with a tipper truck loaded with sand
	Daily Graphic			Dawhenya Aflao highway	2	3	4	Saloon car collided with tipper truck

Table 2a: Comparison of newspapers' reported crash details with official police-reported crash details, 2005-2016.

Crash #	Reported crash details							
	Source	Date of crash	Time of crash	Crash location (road/highway)	No. vehicles involved	No. killed	No. injured	Probable cause(s)
1	The Ghanaian Times		8:00 PM	Kumasi-Accra highway	NR	1	NR	NR
	Daily Graphic	9-Apr-09	6:30 PM	Kumasi-Accra highway	2	3	NR	Overtaking
	Police report	10-Apr-09	6:00 PM	Akyem Anyinasin	2	3	22	Overtaking, speeding
2	The Ghanaian Times		7-8 pm	Kumasi-Accra highway	2	9	NR	Overtaking
		3-Jan-10						
	Daily Graphic		NR	Near Konongo	2	9	8	Speeding
3	Police report		7:00 PM	Nobewam near Konongo (Ohene Nkwanta)	2	9	16	Speeding, No signal
	The Ghanaian Times	11-Jan-11	4:30 AM	Afrancho- Nkenkaasu road	2	15	40	Speeding
	Daily Graphic		2:00 AM	Ashanti region	2	15	NR	Fell in a ditch
4	Police report		2:00 AM	Afrancho Nkenkaasu	2	16	50	Inattention
	The Ghanaian Times		4:30 AM	Cape Coast- Winneba highway	2	13	10	Overtaking
	Daily Graphic	19-Jan-11	5:30 AM	Apam-Winneba Road	2	13	16	Speeding
5	Police report		5:00 AM	Gomoa Onyaadze, near Apam junction	2	10	3	Inattention, too close
	The Ghanaian Times	16-Sep-11	Dawn	Konongo road	2	22	15	Overtaking
	Daily Graphic		3:00 AM		2	22	30	Overtaking
6	Police report		3:00 AM	Yaw Kwei near Konongo	2	26	17	Inattention
	The Ghanaian Times		4:30 AM	Tesano-Fadama road	1	4	3	Overtaking and speeding
	Daily Graphic	30-Dec-11	4:00 AM	Abeka-Fadama road	1	5	5	Collision with electricity pole
7	Police report		4:00 AM	Abeka Freepipe	1	5	4	Inattention
	The Ghanaian Times	1-Jan-12	6:00 PM	Sefwi Bekwai road	2	6	1	NR
	Daily Graphic		6:00 PM	Sefwi Bekwai- Wianfo road	2	7	NR	NR
8	Police report		8:00 PM	Sefwi-Wiawso	2	1	2	Inattentiveness
	The Ghanaian Times	19-Jan-13	Morning	Okponglo near Legon, Accra	2	2	2	NR
	Daily Graphic		NR	Okplongo junction near Legon	2	2	1	Attention deficit
	Police report	12-Jan-13	5:30 PM	Okplongo near Legon	2	0	0	Inattentive

Table 2b: Comparison of newspapers' reported crash details with official police-reported crash details, 2005-2016.

Crash #	Reported crash details							
	Source	Date of crash	Time of crash	Crash location (road/highway)	No. vehicles involved	No. killed	No. injured	Probable cause(s)
9	The Ghanaian Times	23-Feb-13	6:30 AM	Gomao-Mampong (Accra-Winneba road)	2	12	5	Overtaking
	Daily Graphic		NR	Gomoa-Mampong (Accra-Winneba road)	2	14	NR	Overtaking
	Police report		2:50 PM	Gomoa-Mampong (Accra-Winneba road)	4	0	4	Inattentive
10	The Ghanaian Times	16-Aug-13	1:30 AM	Kobina Ansah, Central Region	2	8	15	Overspeeding by both drivers
	Daily Graphic		1:00 AM	Kobina Ansah, Cape Coast road	2	8	16	Fatigue and overspeeding
	Police report	15-Aug-13	1:00 AM	Kobina Ansah, Cape Coast road	2	7	12	Driving too fast
11	The Ghanaian Times	31-Dec-13	NR	Antando near Komenda	2	15	1	Head-on collision
	Daily Graphic		NR	Antado Komenda Cape Coast Takoradi road	3	15	1	Driver lost control of the truck and ran into an urvan from the opposite direction
	Police report	30-Dec-13	11:00 AM	Antando near Komenda (Cape Coast-Takoradi road)	3	13	3	Improper overtaking
12	The Ghanaian Times	2-Jul-14	NR	Suame roundabout, Kumasi	7	NR	4	An articulated truck jammed into six other vehicles after failing to climb
	Daily Graphic		NR	Suame roundabout, Kumasi	5	NR	1	Articulated truck lost control during curve negotiation
	Police report	7-Jul-14	8:00 PM	Suame roundabout, Kumasi	4	1	3	Driving too close
13	The Ghanaian Times	28-Jul-14	11:30 AM	Hebron junction, Nsawam-Kumasi road	1	3	NR	An articulated truck veered off the road and crashed resulting in fire
	Daily Graphic	29-Jul-14	NR	Hebron junction	1	3	NR	Truck veered off the road and caught fire
	Police report	27-Jul-14	11:30 PM	Hebron junction (Nsawam-Kumasi road)	1	2	0	Driving too fast
14	The Ghanaian Times	4-Aug-14		Tema-Accra motorway near Ashiaman	1	1	10	Bus skidded off the motorway and fell in a gutter
	Daily Graphic		1:30 AM	Tema motorway	1	1	10	Yutong bus ran into a ditch on the Tema motorway
	Police report	3-Aug-14	1:30 AM	Tema motorway	1	0	9	Driving too fast
15	The Ghanaian Times	4-Oct-14	2:00 AM	Osino Anakaase	2	12	50	The VIP driver attempted to overtake a stationery car and collided with the other bus
	Daily Graphic		2:00 AM	Ankaase	2	12	50	Unlawful overtaking by a bus from opposite direction which led to the crash
	Police report	21-Oct-14	2:30 AM	Osino Ankaase	2	1	30	Driving too fast
16	The Ghanaian Times	11-Mar-16	4:30 AM	Weija Kasoa road	1	NR	NR	Gas tanker skidded off the road
	Daily Graphic	10-Mar-16	5:00 AM	Kasoa old barrier	2	NR	2	A private car making a U-turn caused a gas tanker to veer off the road and turn upside down
	Police report	5-Mar-16	10:30 PM	Kasoa old barrier-Weija	2	0	2	Inattentive

Study limitations

The study is limited by its exploratory nature and limited coverage (2005–2016). As previously indicated, it relied on the physical (hardcopy) newspapers from media outlets to retrieve the relevant data. Nonetheless, this study provides insights into the degree of accuracy and factuality of media road crash reporting in Ghana.

Moreover, there is a potential bias in public, state-owned newspapers leaning towards liberal views in their road safety advocacy and recommendations to the government. Additionally, it is crucial to examine the media's focus on crash reporting and the framing of such reports to provide a comprehensive understanding of media crash reporting in Ghana.

The study sought to assess the accuracy of newspaper crash reports based on official police reports regarding the incidents. Previous studies, including Yannis et al. (2014) and Goddard et al. (2019), have argued that police reports can also be biased or incomplete (i.e., not always entirely accurate), particularly in the initial reporting, which perpetuates inconsistent and inaccurate narratives. Therefore, the study suggests that future research should rely on multiple crash data sources (data triangulation) (e.g., matching crash data from newspapers, police, and hospital records) in road safety analysis and policy formulation.

Conclusion

This study explored: (1) the accuracy of road crash reporting by two major Ghanaian newspapers and (2) the factuality of the newspapers' crash reports using the official police report of the crashes as the reference point.

The most apparent finding of this study is that the newspapers' road crash reports are inconsistent (comparing reports on the common road crash carried by the two media outlets to official police road crash reports), particularly regarding the number of injured. There is also a high possibility that the media road crash reportage will miss essential crash details (i.e., non-reporting). The

findings expand knowledge in this field by confirming that media crash reporting accuracy declines with injury severity.

The study has implications for the media's road crash reporting standards. Although incomplete crash reportage is not peculiar to developing countries alone (Ghana inclusive), there is widespread misreporting and non-reporting in developing countries that warrants attention. As previously mentioned, incomplete reporting may result in systematic miscalculation of a country's safety problems, affecting the likelihood of the finding and implementation of relevant interventions. Given that media crash reportage shapes public perception of road safety and drives social change, there is an urgent need for collaboration and focused efforts between road safety stakeholders and media houses to improve media road crash (injury trauma) reporting concerning what is reported, how it is reported, and when it is reported. The study findings suggest that media houses and local reporters or correspondents should be trained and sensitised to report factually. To this end, the media must conduct comprehensive investigations and follow-ups on road crash incidents with the relevant stakeholders, such as the National Road Safety Authority, National Fire Service, National Ambulance Service, and the Motor Traffic and Transport Department of the Ghana Police Service before reporting. In this context, road traffic incident reporting should be evidence-based. The media can leverage its position to help the audience understand the problem at hand, evoke positive behaviour change, and shift societal beliefs by reframing road traffic incidents as preventable public health issues. Streamlining media crash reportage to enhance its accuracy could improve the country's road safety profile and provide a valuable source of timely road safety data for research, policymaking, and interventions.

Declaration of interest statement

The author reports that there are no competing interests to declare.

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2 killed in accident at Kpone

From Godfred Blas Gbibiash, Tema

TWO persons died when the cars in which they were travelling collided on Saturday dawn near the Kpone Police barrier in the Greater Accra Region.

Police identified one of the deceased as Michael Affeh, 30, driver of an unregistered Toyota Tundra, who died on the spot.

The other, yet to be identified was driving a Mitsubishi Pajero with number GS 508-16.

He died at the Tema General Hospital soon after he was rushed there.

Both bodies have been deposited at the hospital's morgue.

A passenger in the Mitsubishi, who sustained injuries was on admission at the hospital.

Police said the Mitsubishi was travelling from Sogakope to Accra while the other vehicle was travelling from Tema to Dawkenya.

The Tundra overtook a car, but unfortunately it collided headlong with the Mitsubishi.

The impact of the crash was so loud that it attracted many people to the scene.



The two vehicles which were involved in the accident

A Good Samaritan among them rushed the occupants of the Mitsubishi to the hospital, but its driver, who was in a critical condition was pronounced dead soon after arrival at the hospital.

'Galamsey' operator jailed 7 years

22-year-old 'galamsey' operator, Isaac Mensah, has been

sentenced to seven years imprisonment in hard labour by the Tarkwa Circuit Court for indecently assaulting a 14-year-old school girl, who was on an errand to fetch water.

Prosecuting Detective Chief Inspector Oscar Ampomah told the court, presided by Mr Justice Emmanuel Bart-Plange Brew, that the victim lived with her parents at '4 Miles', a village, near Damang in the Prestea Hun Valley District.

He said at 8.30am on July 30 this year, the victim left the house to fetch water from the only stand-pipe in the community.

Inspector Ampomah said while fetching water, Mensah, who also resided in the neighbourhood, lured the victim to the outskirts of the village and sexually assaulted her in an abandoned structure in the bush.

Inspector Ampomah told the court that when the victim was coming out of the structure after the act, her mother saw her and sent her (girl) home.

The court heard that when the girl's mother asked her what she went to do inside the structure, the victim narrated her ordeal to her mother, who informed her husband.

With the help of a unit committee member, he said, Mensah was arrested on August 8, and handed over to the Police and a medical form was issued to the victim to seek medical attention.

GN4

Kodua that he wanted to buy the vehicle

DSP Teteh said the suspect asked her to meet her at Roman Ridge, Accra, so that they could drive to the area.

DSP Teteh said while Madam Yanny was waiting for Kodua, she received another call from him to meet him at Lincoln School area.

According to DSP Teteh the two bargained for the price of the car and settled at GH¢25,000.

He said Kodua told Madam Yanny he wanted to test-drive the vehicle, and she sat at the passenger's seat.

The District Police Commander said while on the test drive, Madam Yanny told the suspect he was interested in the vehicle and wanted to buy it for his father.

DSP Teteh said Kodua asked his victim to come and drive the car, adding that when she got out of the car he sped off.

"The shouts of the woman attracted a good Samaritan, also a driver and they together pursued him and caught him stuck in traffic at Abofo," he added.

The District Police Commander said they raised alarm which attracted residents and they gave Kodua who had abandoned the car in the traffic a hot chase.

DSP Teteh stated that the police assisted in the arrest of the suspect.

The Divisional Commander, Chief Superintendent, Lydia Donkor, urged the public to do a thorough background check before going in to business deals with people.

1

News

6 perish as 2 vehicles crash at Akuse Junction

From Ama Tekijwa
Ampadu-Nyarko, Koforidua

SIX people died on the spot, and two others were injured when a Toyota Lexus 4x4 vehicle ran into a Toyota Corolla saloon car at Tel Kwame, near Akuse Junction in the Eastern Region on Saturday evening.

The bodies of the four males and two females have been deposited at the Akuse Government Hospital Mortuary awaiting autopsy, while the injured are responding to treatment at the same facility.

The Akuse District Police Commander, Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Francis Ackah who confirmed the incident to *The Ghanaian Times*, said it occurred at about 6.45 p.m. on Saturday.

He explained that the Lexus 4x4 vehicle was from Tema heading towards Akuse Junction while the Toyota Corolla, which was carrying a family of eight, was also heading towards Tema, from the.

Upon reaching the spot at about 6.35 p.m., the driver of the Lexus 4x4 tried to overtake another vehicle but in the process, he collided head on with the Toyota Corolla.

ASP Ackah said six of the eight passengers on board the Toyota Corolla saloon car died on the spot and two others sustained injuries.

ASP Ackah said the driver of the Lexus after the accident fled the scene, leaving his car behind, and had since gone into hiding. He said the police had intercepted the vehicle and were waiting for the driver to report to the police, to assist in investigations.



One of the accident vehicles

Asanti Police search for illegal guns

From Kingsley E. Hope,
Kumasi

THE Asanti Regional Police Command is to conduct thorough search on vehicles to arrest and prosecute people found with guns and other offensive weapons, ahead of the election.

According to the Regional Commander, Commissioner of Police (COP) Nathaniel Kofi Boskye, anyone who would be found with any weapon would be dealt with severely.

“The Police are going to conduct a search of vehicles before, during and after the election and any weapon found would be confiscated,” COP Boskye declared.

Eight die in accident at Ewusiejoe

By Dotsey Koblah Almorboru,
Sekondi/Takoradi

EIGHT people died in a gory accident when two mini-buses collided at Ewusiejoe, near Agona Nkwanta in the Ahanta West District in the Western Region, last Saturday.

Some of the passengers were said to be returning from a funeral in Takoradi when the accident occurred.

More than 21 others who survived are said to be unconscious and receiving treatment at the Effia Nkwanta Government Hospital in the Sekondi/Takoradi metropolis.

The victims were members of the Church of Christ, Tarkwa-Tanoasi branch who were returning to Tarkwa after attending a funeral in the Central Region. The dead were the driver and seven members of the church.

Collusion

According to police sources, the accident occurred when the driver of the Tarkwa-bound Toyota mini bus,

with registration number WR 1955-09, crashed into the Takoradi-bound Nissan Urban bus, with registration number CR 894-35.

The driver of the Toyota mini-bus allegedly attempted to overtake a vehicle and ended up crashing into the Nissan mini-bus, somersaulting several times in the process.

Speeding

The Agona Nkwanta District Police Commander, Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Mr Samuel Osei, told the *Daily Graphic* that eight dead bodies were counted at the scene of the accident.

He said those who were injured were in critical condition at the Effia Nkwanta Government Hospital.

He attributed the accident to speeding and bad judgement on the part of the drivers.

The commander said on a visit to the hospital yesterday morning he learnt that the injured were responding to medical care, with a few still in

critical condition.

"There are communities in the area where the accident occurred and we don't expect drivers to be driving at such high speed, to the extent that they could lose control of the steering wheels," he said.

The dead, Mr Osei said, were conveyed to the Effia Nkwanta Regional Referral Hospital morgue, awaiting identification, preservation and autopsy.

Quick
Read

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AN accident at Ewusiejoe, near Agona Nkwanta in the Ahanta West District of the Western Region, last Saturday claimed eight lives.



• The mangled vehicles involved in the accident

Andani on Graphic

students killed in accident

By Benjamin Xorman Glover, TEMMA

Three law students of the Central University at Miotso, near Dawhenya, died on the spot when their saloon car collided with a tipper truck.

The accident occurred on the Dawhenya-Aflao highway about 8 p.m. last Tuesday.

Two others, the driver and the mate of the tipper truck, who were rushed to a clinic at Prampran and the Tema General Hospital, respectively, are said to be responding to treatment.

The identities of the deceased, who were believed to be students of the Law Faculty of the university, have been given as Sodem Nodjo, Nana Koti Asare and Bolison Kobbi Junior. They were said to be between the ages of 21 and 24.

The saloon car, a VW Passat, with registration number ER 228-14 and carrying four male passengers, was heading towards the Central University while the Benz tipper truck, with registration number GR 9897 X and loaded with sand, was heading towards Dawhenya from the Aflao direction.

The impact of the crash damaged the saloon car beyond repairs. The roof of the vehicle was ripped off, while the belongings of the students were scattered at the scene of the accident.

Speeding

Speaking to the Daily Graphic, the Tema

Quick Read

Three students of the Central University were killed when the saloon car in which they were travelling collided with a tipper truck loaded with sand on the Dawhenya-Aflao Highway on Tuesday night.

Regional Police Public Relations Officer, Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASPP) M. Juliana Obeng, who confirmed the accident, said preliminary investigations indicated that the saloon car was trying to overtake another vehicle when it ran into the tipper truck.

She said the tipper truck driver was admitted at a clinic at Prampran, while his mate was rushed to the Tema General Hospital.

The PRO said the bodies of the deceased had been deposited at the Police Hospital in Accra, adding that the police had started investigations into the accident.

State of mourning

Meanwhile, the Miotso campus of the Central University was thrown into a state of shock after news of the death of the students reached their colleagues.

A number of the students were clad in black and red outfits when the Daily Graphic visited the campus yesterday. A cross-section of the students who spoke to the Daily Graphic expressed shock at the death of their mates.

"We are very sad. This is not the first time such a tragedy has hit us. We are, indeed, pained by their demise. As you can see, the entire campus has been thrown into a state of mourning," one of the students said.

The student leaders were unavailable for comment at the time of filing this report, as they were said to be in a meeting.

Recall

This is the second time such a tragedy has



The tipper truck after the accident

occurred at the university in several times. In March 2014, one student died in a similar road crash involving the university's bus and a BMW vehicle near the Kpone Police Barracks.

The bus was conversing members of the university's SRC to the campus when the crash occurred.

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Visit www.dailypic.com

Daily Graphic, Thursday, April 28, 2016

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Figure 2. Sample newspaper crash reports

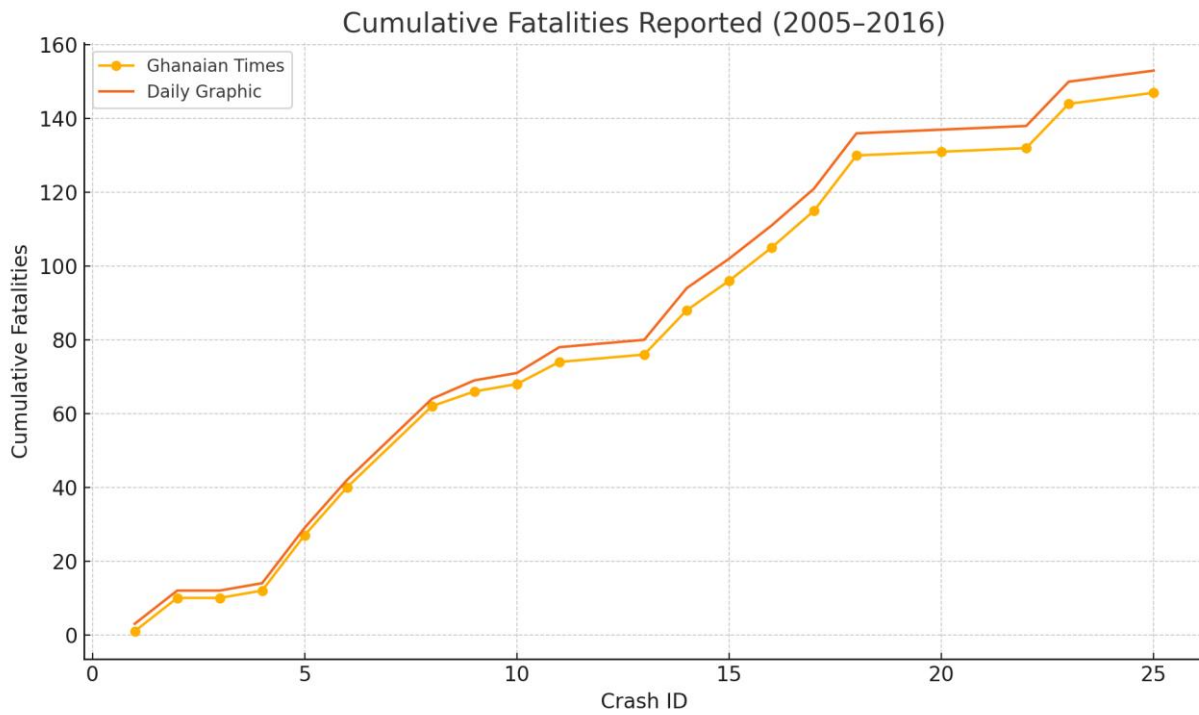
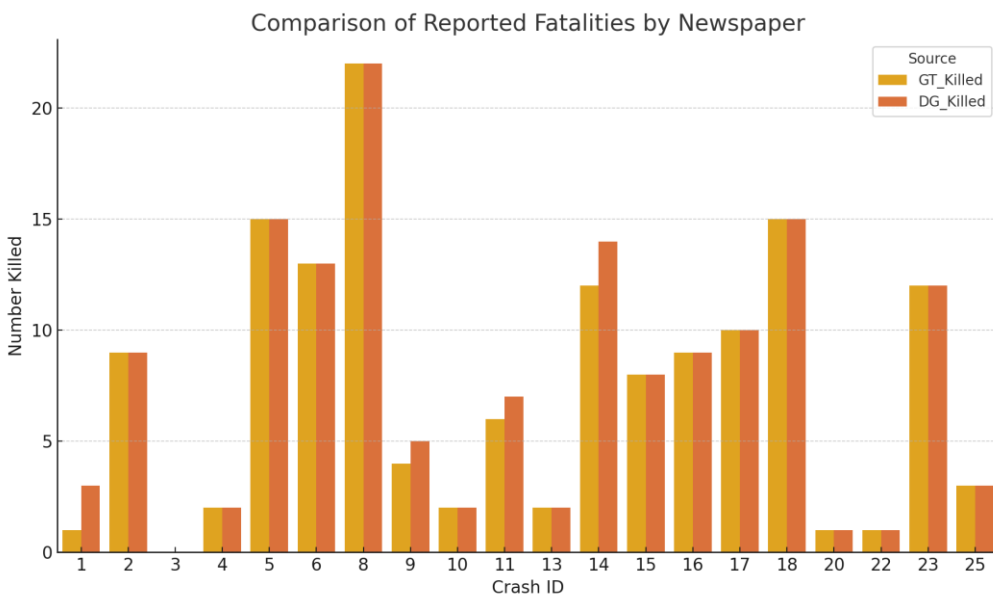


Figure 3a. Cumulative fatalities reported by the newspapers (2005-2016)



NB: GT= Ghanaian Times; DG= Daily Graphic

Figure 3b. Comparison of reported fatalities by newspaper

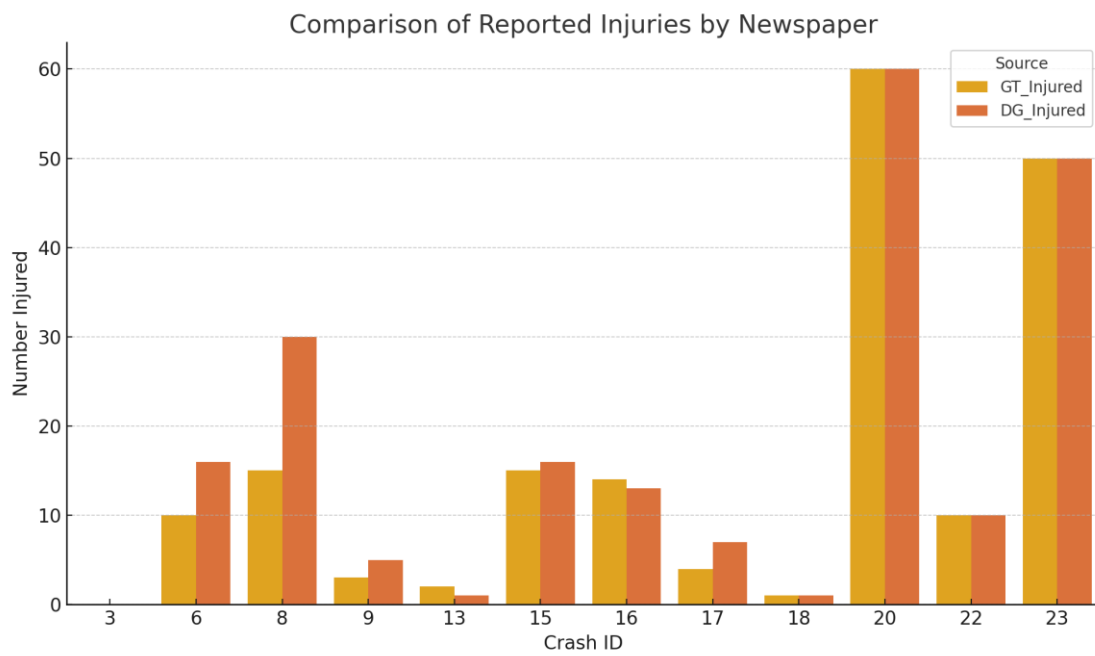


Figure 3c. Comparison of reported injuries by newspaper