

## Background

According to the joint publication by WHO and the World Bank of the World Report on Injury Prevention, every year road accidents are responsible for more than 1.2 million deaths worldwide. 90% of these deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries. In Mauritania, road accidents are a major public health problem because of the morbidity and mortality associated with this scourge. According to the annual report of accidents in 2017 provided by the Directorate of Transport, Mauritania registered 660 accidents causing 443 deaths and 2031 wounded, this road death toll is higher than of the year 2016 or were recorded 128 deaths and 1601 injured in 526 road accidents. The material losses related to these accidents amount to 1-2% of gross domestic product (GDP).

## Methods

We adopted a quantitative descriptive cross-sectional study carried out in the NHC emergency department of Nouakchott, during a month of activity (July 2019). Clinical and epidemiological data were collected through a questionnaire. We conducted extensive accidental non-probabilistic sampling of all RTC survivors admitted to CHN emergencies during the study period. The data was entered into Excel and analyzed on SPSS software, version 20.

## Results

During the month of July 2019, the Nouakchott NHC emergency department registered 1700 consultations, including 67 victims of road accidents, or 3.94% of those injured by RTC. The majority of these accidents occurred outside the city of Nouakchott (61.2%, n=41) and between 1:00 am and 12:00 pm (56.7%, n=38) and the most accidental axis was of Nouakchott-Néma or hop with (76.7%, n=33). Transit vehicles accounted for the largest number of RTC (51.5%, n=34). Victims were young male adults with an average age of 35.93 years of all socio-occupational classes and who did not have health insurance in (87.1%, n=54) cases, mainly presented serious trauma (49.3%, n=33), dominated by lower extremity injuries (35.8%, n=24) and who arrived at the hospital within less than six (6) hours (76.1%, n=51) by self-referral in 61.1%, n=41 cases. The rear passengers (34.3%, n=23) and the drivers presented the main victims of these accidents. A very high mortality rate was recorded estimated at 12.1% (n=8) deaths. A significant association was found between the degree of severity of the trauma and the variables: Speeding (p=0.009), reference mode (p=0.000), day of occurrence of the accident (p=0.013), seat trauma (p=0.000), wearing a seatbelt (p=0.036) and finally the hospitalization variable (p=0.000).

## Conclusion

This study has shown that road accidents in Mauritania are a real public health problem and that fatal accidents occur more in the open countryside i.e. on roads outside the city of Nouakchott and that human factors through non-compliance with the highway code (speeding) was incriminated in the occurrence of these accidents and their serious traumas. Faced with these results, the Mauritania state must take measures aimed at reducing these fatal accidents.

Keywords: Road accident (RTC), epidemiology, emergencies, NHC Nouakchott