

An Assessment of the Trend and Pattern of Vital Registration System in Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State, Nigeria

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Abstract : Vital registration or registration of vital events is one of the three major sources of demographic data in Nigeria. The other two are the population census and sample survey. The former is judged to be an indispensable source of demographic data because, it provide information on vital statistics and population trends between two census periods. Various literacy works however depict the vital registration in Nigeria as incapable of providing accurate data for the country. The study has both theoretical and practical significances. The trends and pattern of vital registration has not received adequate research interest in Sub-Saharan Africa in general and Nigeria in particular. This has created a gap in understanding the extent and consequence of the scourge in Africa sub-region. Practically, the study also captures the policy interventions of government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that would help enlighten the public on the importance of vital registration in Nigeria. Furthermore, feasible policy strategies that will enhance trends and pattern vital registration in the society would emanate from the study. The study adopted a cross sectional survey design and applied multi stage sampling techniques to sample 230 respondents from the general public in the study area. The first stage involved the splitting of the local government into wards. The second stage involves selecting streets, while the third stage was the households. In all, 6 wards were sampled for the study. The study utilized both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary sources of data used were the questionnaire, focus group discussion (FGD) and in-depth interview (IDI) guides while the secondary sources of data were journals and books, newspapers and magazines. Twelve FGD sessions with 96 study participants and five IDI sessions with the heads of vital registration facilities were conducted. The quantitative data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics like tables, frequencies and percentages were employed in presenting and interpreting the data. Information from the qualitative data was transcribed and ordered in themes to ensure that outstanding points of the responses are noted. The following conclusions were drawn from the study: the available vital registration facilities are not adequate and were not evenly distributed in the study area; lack of awareness and knowledge of the existence and the importance of vital registration by majority of the people in the local government; distance to vital registration centres from their residents; most births in the area were not registered, and even among the few births that were registered, majority of them were registered after the limited period for registration. And the study reveals that socio-economic index, educational level and distance of facilities to residents are determinants of access to vital registration facility. The study concludes by discussing the need for a reliable and accurate vital registration system if Nigeria's vision of becoming one of the top 20 economies in the world in 2020 would be realized.

Keywords : trends, patterns, vital, registration and assessment

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