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Civil Data and Development Administration: Initiating Council Administration Narratives in Nigeria

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Abstract

This extract contributed knowledge to an under-research field of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CVRS) in Nigerian public administration research. It investigated the dynamism surrounding the application of civil data in administering development at the level of council administration in a Nigerian setting. As a survey research, data were gathered from council administrators in the two selected local government councils on the areas, effects and constraints of the deployment of CVRS for local development administration purposes in Nigeria. The findings revealed diverse implications and challenges associated with the implementation of CVRS in the Nigerian local government system. Based on the findings, actionable policy options were offered for the effective implementation of the CVRS for council development in Nigeria.

Key words: Nigeria; Development administration; Local government; Council administration; Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CVRS)

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1. INTRODUCTION

Development administration in Nigeria is currently facing several complex issues such as poor project planning, unrealistic plans and strategies, lack of measures to filter data duplication and limited national budgets (Adele, 2019). Adele (2019) argued that adequate data collection on the human population such as births, deaths, marriages, adoption, and so on is crucial for proper tackling of development challenges. He explained that data collection is usually done by direct enumeration for every individual in the territory at approximately the same time. Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CVRS) have the potential to provide complete and reliable data which will enable informed decisions by the government and its officials. The United Nations Handbook on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System defined civil registration as the universal, continuous, permanent, and compulsory recording of vital events occurring in a country's population according to the legal requirements of each country while vital statistics is the collection of statistics of vital events or person lifetime (United Nations, 2014).

CVRS has enabled governments of developed nations to carry out their duties efficiently due to its reliability and effectiveness. These duties can be classified into three aspects, namely administrative, legal, and statistical (Mills et al., 2019). CVRS sets up a legal identity which is used as proof of name to access governmental services such as education and health. Administrative duties enable the government to carry out targeted and purposeful planning by providing demographic information which shows the conditions and needs of the people resulting in improved resource allocation. Statistical duties provide complete and accurate data at the national and sub-national administrative levels continuously.

Despite the well-documented benefits of CVRS, many countries do not have an adequate system in place to implement it. In Nigeria, there is growing uncertainty about the development of civil registration and vital statistics at the sub-national structures, especially at the council level. According to research conducted by Abass (2014), Adi et al. (2015), Ogunbela et al. (2021), Akande and Sekoni (2005), and Maduekwe et al. (2016), there is

a massive gap regarding the location of centres as well as inconsistencies in the definition and pursuit of the objectives of CVRS. Their findings revealed that aside from the location of registration and agents being far from the rural populace, there is also a problem of duplication of responsibilities and unacknowledged responsibilities among the levels of government (federal, state, and local), and this arrangement continues to dismantle the accuracy and constituency of CVRS.

Beyond these scholars' views, the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) publication of 2013 shows that only 30% of births are registered, and there is a disparity between urban (49.8%) and rural (18.6%) areas and geographical zones; North (19.5-27.8%), South (37.3-51.8%) which revealed the existence of challenges in CVRS. In Ogun state, for instance, the National Population Commission says they were only able to record 25,728 births in the state outof the possible 67,343 for January and June 2018. Also, in an interview administered by Okafor (2020) with a local registrar, it was revealed that people find it difficult to give out information to agents of authority whenever the issue of birth outside the hospital, death, or marital incidence is raised. This was ascribed to the fear of involving in government matters or that once a child is given birth, other activities that go on in the hospital are not necessary.

It is expected that local councils are expected to deploy CVRS for development-related services such as education, retirement and health benefits. However, the available evidence shows a sharp contrast to that expectation. It is evidenced from the above that while many talks about the causes of inefficiency and potential gain of CVRS at the national level, none has attempted to look at how local councils deploy CVRS to bring about development. It is based on the above that research is conceived to examine how selected local councils in Ogun State deploy CVRS to ensure that its potential is successfully scaled up to engender development at the local level andpossible pitfalls are being minimized. It is on this ground that this research becomes imperative to investigate how local councils are deploying CVRS for the development administration of the local communities in Nigeria. This article employed descriptive quantitative research to investigate the extent to which council governments deploy CVRS for development-related activities in the selected councils; assess the effect of CVRS on development-related activities in the selected councils; and analyse the constraints associated with the deployment of CVRS for development-related activities.

2. LITERATURE

2.1 Extent of Deployment of CVRS at the Council Level

CVRS systems in Nigeria have experienced significant modifications, and various deployment strategies have been utilized to increase their efficiency. The employment of Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) and Community Health Workers (CHWs) who were trained to register critical events in their particular communities was one of the early means of implementing CVRS at the local level (Sarmento,2014; Sakeah et al.,2014; Moller et al., 2019 and Okafor, 2020).

This method was beneficial in remote locations with limited access to official healthcare facilities. According to Garces et al., (2019), and Tabong et al. (2021), the usage of TBAs and CHWs increased birth registration coverage. However, several researchers have critiqued the use of TBAs and CHWs for their limited ability to give precise and dependable data. TBAs may lack the requisite skills and training to record crucial events effectively, and their data may be skewed owing to cultural beliefs and traditions (Vieira et al., 2012). Similarly, CHWs may lack proper training in data collection and management, resulting in incomplete or incorrect data.

Ye et al. (2012) discovered that the level of deployment differed significantly among the countries. According to the findings of the study, deployment was more successful in nations with strong political will and well-resourced national systems. In Ghana, Dake and Fuseini (2018) discovered that, despite great improvements in CVRS deployment across the country, there were still issues in reaching outlying regions and consuming entire coverage of critical events. Musadad et al. (2023), Kiswanti (2017) and Siagian et al. (2019) conducted yet another investigation where CVRS deployment in and Indonesia was examined and discovered that it was unequal across the nation, with some parts having higher coverage than others. Poor coordination among parties and insufficient money were highlighted as important obstacles to efficient deployment in the research.

CVRS system implementation in Nigeria has been rather gradual and confined to a few states. However, the federal government has undertaken efforts through the National Population Commission (NPC) to increase the usage of the CVRS system across the country. The NPC is in charge of regulating crucial events and issuing vital statistic certificates. Despite the NPC's efforts, the adoption of CVRS for development-related activities is not evident. This may be due to several issues, including politicians and the general public's lack of knowledge and comprehension of the need for CVRS systems.

According to the Centre of Excellence for CVRS Systems (n.d), there is a need to educate policymakers and the general public on the value of CVRS systems for national development. Similarly, Maduewkwe et al. (2017) stated that Nigeria's system is insufficient and inefficient. The other researchers, however, like Mills and Amponsah (2019), Jimenez-Soto et al. (2014) and Yokobori (2021) contend that the efficiency of CVRS systems is dependent on the availability and accessibility of other critical

services such as healthcare and education. They proposed that obtaining sustainable development results requires an integrated strategy that takes these services into account.

World Health Organization & United Nations Children's Fund (2021), on the other hand, propose that CVRS systems should be responsive to the needs and concerns of the community they serve. They argue that community involvement and participation in CVRS activities are critical to accomplishing long-term goals. Some academics have recommended the use of mobile technologies in CVRS implementation at the local level to alleviate these constraints. Data may be collected and transmitted via mobile phones and other technological devices (Modi, 2016; Braun et al., 2013). For example, the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Mobile Vital Records System (MVRS) has been utilized in Nigeria to enhance death and birth registration in rural regions.

While mobile technology has been demonstrated to improve CVRS data quality and coverage, it has also been critiqued for its potential to worsen existing inequities. Vasudevan et al. (2021) argue that the usage of mobile technologies may further marginalize vulnerable populations that do not have access to mobile phones or cannot pay the expense of data collecting. As a result, there is a need for a more inclusive approach to CVRS implementation that takes into account the requirements and preferences of all community members.

Aside from the strategies mentioned above, several researchers have pushed for a community-based approach to CVRS implementation at the local level. This technique entails collaborating with community people and local organizations to provide data collecting and management training and assistance. A community-based strategy, according to Bryce (2016) and Effiong (2023) has helped raise birth registration coverage in various African nations, including Nigeria.

According to Uzobo and Ogbanga (2017), Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CVRS) systems are widely recognised as crucial requirements for advancing human development. The value posed by this system can be categorized into three, namely establishing fundamental human and civil rights, providing vital statistics for measuring and monitoring development, and establishing a legal entity for all members of the population (Uzobo and Ogbanga, 2017). CVRS is also very crucial for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) due to its ability to provide accurate data on vital statistics (Mills et al., 2017)

Similarly, according to the World Health Organization (2014), three major vital events are crucial for planning: *birth registration*, *death registration* and *marriage registration*. For birth registration, it helps to identify the population's health needs. This means that birth registration needs to take place immediately following birth. In the same vein, death registration is important in providing a legal right for the family such as in conferring property or personal transfer of rights to remaining family members. Also, cause of death registration provides critical information for health and development planning to improve the survival of children and adults. CVRS is useful for making and testing public health policy. They are the cornerstone of any health information system because they generate vital statistics. These systems have many social, political and economic benefits apart from their public health importance (Maharpatra et al., 2007).

2.2 CVRS's Role in Development-Related Activities

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in the function of CVRS systems in bringing about local development. Several studies have proven that CVRS data is crucial for local development planning, implementation, and monitoring. Langlois (2020), Yokobori et al. (2021) and the World Health Organization & United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2021), discovered that enhanced CVRS systems can lead to better health planning and policy by giving accurate information regarding mortality rates and causes of death in low- and middle-income countries when they investigated the influence of CVRS systems on health planning and policy in low- and middle-income countries.

Similarly, Mills et al. (2019) and Shiyanbade et al. (2017) discovered that enhanced CVRS systems can aid in monitoring progress toward universal health coverage (UHC) by giving information on the population's health status. AbouZahr et al. (2015), on the other hand, argue that while CVRS systems can give helpful information for health planning and policy, they may not address the core causes of health inequality. They contended that addressing sustainable development requires a more holistic strategy.

Ikubaje and Bel-Aube (2016) discovered that enhanced CVRS systems can help promote good governance by providing correct information for decision-making in their study on the role of CVRS systems in supporting good governance. National Research Council. (2009) performed research to examine the influence of vital statistics on local government in the United States, and their findings demonstrated that vital statistics have a beneficial impact on local governance by giving accurate and trustworthy information to policymakers. However, while CVRS systems can give helpful information to policymakers, they may not always result in enhanced governance or development results. Other variables, such as political will and successful execution, they argue, are equally vital for accomplishing development goals.

Wenz and AbouZahr (2016) and Suthar et al. (2019) investigated the potential influence of CVR systems on child mortality in Africa. They discovered that enhanced CVRS systems can aid in the reduction of child mortality by giving information on the causes of death and enabling

targeted treatments. CVRS systems can give important information for reducing child mortality, they may not be necessary to improve health outcomes in the absence of appropriate resources and investment in healthcare systems. They submitted that addressing the underlying socio-economic determinants of health requires a more comprehensive approach.

According to a study conducted by Suthar et al. (2019) on the role of CVRS systems in disaster response and recovery, improved CVRS systems can aid in disaster response and recovery efforts by providing accurate information about the impact of the disaster on the population. Contrarily, while arguing that CVRS systems can give helpful information for disaster response and recovery, they may not address the underlying vulnerabilities and inequities that contribute to disaster risk. Mills et al. (2017, 2019) investigated the potential contributions of CVRS systems to the post-2015 development agenda. The authors suggested that enhanced CVRS systems are critical for attaining several of the SDGs, especially those linked to health, gender equality, and good governance. Becedas et al. (2022) noted that even though CVRS systems are necessary for reaching the Sustainable Development Goals, they may not be adequate. They suggest that a more comprehensive approach is required, one that considers the complex interaction of economic, social, and environmental elements that have contributed to the development woes.

CVRS systems have the potential to significantly improve local development, but they can also cause population marginalization and raise concerns about data privacy and security. According to Cinnamon (2020), the adoption of CVRS systems might add to societal disparities, particularly for vulnerable populations such as refugees and stateless people. UN ESCAP (2021), and Brolan et al. (2017) suggested in the same spirit that it can lead to the acquisition of sensitive information that is personal and can be exploited by local officials.

2.3 Challenges Facing Deployment of CVRS

Despite the relevance of CVRS data for development operations, many local governments confront challenges in adopting CVRS. According to Ye et al. (2012), and Ogunbela et al. (2021) political instability is a key barrier to CVRS implementation in several nations. According to the study, political insecurity may impede the efficiency of CVRs by impeding the formation of robust national systems and decreasing political will to prioritize CVRS. Similarly, the World Health Organization (2014) contended that many governments lack the political will and commitment required to create and sustain CVRS systems. This is because CVRS is frequently regarded as a low-priority problem, and financing for its implementation is frequently insufficient.

In addition, the Centre of Excellence for CVRS Systems (n.d), Atama et al. (2021) and Apeloko et al. (2020) believe that the deployment of CVRS at the local level is frequently hampered by a lack of capacity and resources, such as skilled personnel, equipment, and infrastructure, limiting local government's ability to collect, manage, and disseminate vital statistics. Similarly, Sejersen et al. (2022) and Apeloko et al. (2020) highlighted insufficient finance as a major barrier to the implementation of CVRs in Indonesia. According to the report, there was insufficient funding allocation for CVRS operations, resulting in insufficient manpower, inadequate training, and poor-quality data. Lack of awareness and comprehension by many individuals at the local level, according to Makinde et al. (2016) are another set of key limitations to the adoption of CVRS at the local level. He claimed that many individuals at the local level are unaware of the significance of CVRS and do not comprehend how it may help them. Lack of awareness and comprehension might result in poor demand for CVRS services and involvement in CVRS initiatives.

According to the World Health Organization (2014), insufficient legal and institutional frameworks impair CVRS adoption. Many nations have poor CVRS legislative and institutional frameworks, which can lead to ambiguous roles and duties for CVR stakeholders and low accountability for CVRS outcomes. Similarly, Sejersen et al. (2022) stated that a lack of coordination and collaboration among various stakeholders such as government agencies, civil society organisations, and the private sector affects CVRS deployment at the council level, this was supported by AbouZahr et al. (2019), who revealed that a lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities among stakeholders is a key barrier to effective CVRS deployment. Sejersen et al. (2022) also pointed out that limited usage of data quality and completeness hinders CVRS adoption, attributing this to variables such as poor data gathering techniques, limited training for data collection, and insufficient supervision and monitoring. Similarly, Maduekwe et al. (2017) contended that there is a lack of technology adoption, which might contribute to inefficiencies and mistakes in the CVRS system. He also argues that the utilization of technology, such as mobile phones and electronic systems, can help with the local deployment of CVRS.

Some of the following restrictions have been highlighted as significant limits or problems to the application of CVRS reasoning. In response to the lack of political will and commitment, some researchers propose that CVRS may be emphasized by arguing for its relevance and increasing awareness among policymakers and stakeholders. World Health Organization (2014) suggests that a multi-stakeholder strategy incorporating collaborations with the commercial sector and civil society groups can assist in alleviating the restrictions. This can make it easier for local governments to provide resources such as technology and capacity. Similarly, Sejersen et al. (2022) propose that community participation and

awareness-raising efforts can assist in solving the issue of lack of awareness and comprehension expressed by Ghana Statistical Service (2015). He proposed that this may entail including community leaders in CVRS efforts. In contrast to the World Health Organization's (2014) claim on poor legal and institutional frameworks, Suthar et al. (2019) suggest legal and policy reforms to enhance CVRS institutional and legal frameworks. This might include defining the roles and duties of various stakeholders, improving accountability systems, and expanding civil society groups' engagement in CVRS operations.

3. METHODS AND DATA

This research employed a case study research design that incorporated quantitative methodologies. This study examines the subjects of civil registration, vital statistics, and development administration through the analysis of case studies conducted in Yewa South Local Government and Ewekoro Local Government. This approach enabled the researchers to summarize the data and offer an explanatory framework for the observed events. There was a total of 805 employees, with 416 and 389 staffers in Yewa South Council and Ewekoro Local Council of Ogun State respectively. Israel estimation method at 5% significance was used to compute a total of 267 samples for the study. This figure was further shared proportionately into 138 (Yewa South) and 129 (Ewekoro). The selection of these locations was on the uniform local administration system that is constitutionally established in Nigeria, as such, there is a high chance of similar experiences witnessed by all local councils when it comes to the deployment of civil data for development administration.

This investigation mainly depends on primary data. The collection of primary data will be conducted through the survey questionnaire which was administered via a drop-and-pick method. The research instrument was divided into section A and section B. In section A, relevant background information of the respondents was considered while section B was further segmented into B1, B2, and B3 representing each of the stated research questions. The respondents were asked to rate the research items using options strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), agree (3), and strongly agree.

For B1, the variables tested were drafted from existing literature on the local utilization of CVRS through references; planning (WHO, 2014), sustainable development goals (Mills et al., 2017), fundamental human rights (Uzobo & Ogbanga, 2017), legal rights (Uzobo & Ogbanga, 2017), and public health policy (Maharpatra et al., 2007). Items in B2 reflected the effect of CVRS on certain developmental activities in line with existing literature; mortality rates (Wenz & AbouZahr, 2016; Suthar et al., 2019), good governance (Ikubaje & Bel-Aube, 2016), health planning and policy (AbouZahr et al., 2015), and disaster response and recovery (Suthar et al., 2019). For B3, insufficient financial resources (Sejersen et al., 2022), insufficient knowledge and comprehension (Makinde et al., 2016), precariousness (Sejersen et al., 2022), restricted capabilities and assets (Centre of Excellence for CVRS Systems, n.d.; Atama et al., 2021), and political volatility (Ye et al., 2012; WHO, 2014). The data collected was analysed with the aid of frequency tables and a regression model to analyse the data with the view of confirming the stated hypothesis.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Validity and Reliability Analysis of Survey Instrument

The study instrument's face validity was ensured through the implementation of appropriate editing adjustments. The assessment of the reliability of the items, specifically the measuring scales for civil registration, and development administration, was conducted by employing SPSS software to compute Cronbach's alpha. Reliability tests were conducted on the two sub-constructs of the research, namely civil registration and development administration, as they employed a Likert scale for rating. The alpha coefficient of the structures surpasses the threshold of 0.70, which is widely considered an acceptable level according to the existing scholarly literature. Table 1 presents the alpha values deemed acceptable for the measurement of the subject matter of this research, which is 0.782.

Table 1
Cronbach Alpha

Sub-constructs	Items	Cronbach alpha
Objectives	16	0.782

Source: SPSS Computations

4.2 Results

Descriptive analysis was employed to achieve the objectives set out in the introductory section. Table 1 below shows the frequency distribution of sampled respondents on each stated variable.

The extent to which CVRS is deployed at the Council Level

The first variable shows that the respondents were asked about their agreement with statements related to the extent to which civil data were used for upholding fundamental human rights. The majority (52.6%) agreed with the statements, while 15.8% strongly disagreed, 15.8% disagreed, and 15.8% strongly agreed. This suggests a mix of opinions on this topic, with a significant portion agreeing. In the case of sustainable development goals, a substantial number of respondents (43.9%) strongly agreed with statements related to SDGs, indicating a strong positive sentiment toward these goals. Additionally, 38.6%

agreed, 12.3% disagreed, and 5.3% strongly disagreed. When it comes to planning, 42.1% of respondents agreed with the related statements, and 26.3% strongly agreed, showing a generally positive view of planning. However, 17.5% disagreed, and 14.0% strongly disagreed, reflecting a range of opinions on the effectiveness of planning.

In the context of legal rights, 42.1% of respondents agreed with the statements, and 28.1% strongly agreed, indicating strong support for the importance of legal rights. Meanwhile, 26.3% disagreed, and 3.5% strongly disagreed. Public health policy received relatively positive feedback, with 50.9% of respondents agreeing and 28.1% strongly agreeing with the related statements. Only 10.5% strongly disagreed, and 10.5% disagreed. This shows public health policy is one main domain civil data can be exploited for development administration.

Roles of CVRS in Development Administration

The quantitative interpretation of the view of respondents on the roles of CVRS in development administration. Table 1 below shows the quantitative analysis of the frequency distribution of sampled respondents on each stated research item.

As shown in Table 1, the first variable reveals that a substantial majority of respondents (86%) expressed either strong agreement (43.9%) or agreement (42.1%) with statements related to health planning and policy. A smaller portion disagreed (3.5%), and 10.5% strongly disagreed. This indicates a strong overall positive sentiment toward health planning and policy among the surveyed individuals.

Responses regarding good governance showed a similar trend. A significant portion of respondents (71.9%) either strongly agreed (35.1%) or agreed (36.8%) with statements related to good governance. On the other hand, 21.1% disagreed, and 7.0% strongly disagreed. This suggests a predominantly positive perception of good governance among the respondents.

In terms of child mortality, a majority of respondents (72%) expressed strong agreement (35.1%) or agreement (36.8%) with the related statements. A smaller portion disagreed (22.8%), and 5.3% strongly disagreed. This data indicates a positive perception of efforts to address child mortality. The post-2015 development agenda (SDGs) received relatively positive feedback as well. Approximately 79% of respondents either strongly agreed (29.8%) or agreed (49.1%) with the statements related to this agenda. A smaller proportion disagreed (15.8%), and 5.3% strongly disagreed. This suggests a general acceptance of the post-2015 development agenda among the surveyed individuals. Responses regarding disaster response and recovery showed a similar trend to the previous variables. A majority of respondents (79%) either strongly agreed (29.8%) or agreed (49.1%) with statements related to disaster response and recovery. A smaller portion disagreed (12.3%), and 8.8% strongly disagreed. This indicates a generally positive perception of disaster response and recovery efforts.

Challenges associated with the deployment of CVRS at the Council Level

The first variable reveals that the data indicated that a significant proportion of respondents strongly agree (43.9%) that limited data quality and the inadequate use of technology are challenges in the deployment of CRVS at the local level. An additional 29.8% of respondents agree with this perspective. This suggests that the majority of respondents recognize the need for improved data quality and technology utilization to enhance the use of CRVS. Regarding limited capacity and resources, 45.6% of respondents agree that this represents a challenge, and 28.1% strongly agree. This indicates that a substantial portion of the sample acknowledges the constraints in terms of both capacity and resources at the council level. With limited capacity, personnel may struggle to manage the CRVS system effectively, and insufficient resources may hinder system upgrades and maintenance.

The data reveals that 49.1% of respondents strongly agree that inadequate funding is a challenge, with an additional 36.8% agreeing. This finding underscores the critical role of financial resources in supporting CRVS deployment. Without adequate funding, it becomes challenging to invest in the technology, training, and infrastructure required for an effective CRVS system. In terms of a lack of awareness and understanding, 33.3% of respondents strongly agree that this is a challenge, and 42.1% agree. This emphasizes the importance of awareness campaigns and education to ensure that the local population and stakeholders comprehend the significance of CRVS and its proper use.

Insecurity is recognized as a significant challenge by the respondents. Specifically, 47.4% strongly agree, and 35.1% agree with this perspective. In regions affected by insecurity, it can be challenging to deploy and maintain CRVS systems, as data collection teams may face threats or difficulties accessing certain areas. The data shows that 33.3% of respondents strongly agree that political instability is a challenge, and 50.9% agree. Political instability can have a detrimental effect on the continuity and functioning of CRVS systems, as it may lead to disruptions, changes in government priorities, and resource allocation challenges

How significant is the effect of CVRS on Development Administration?

To determine the extent to which civil registration and vital statistics influence development administration. The study assumed an alternate hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between civil registration and vital statistics and development administration. Simple linear regression analysis (SPSS 20) was conducted to ascertain the effects of CVRS on dependent administration. In line with the responses of the field administrators, Table 3

shows that there is a positive and significant relationship between civil registration and vital statistics and development administration (coefficient = 0.428, p-value = .000). In overall, the *F*-ratio shows that the independent variable (CVRS) statistically and significantly predict the dependent variable (development administration), *F*= 50.549, p > .000.

Table 2
Descriptive Results on Deployment, Roles, and Challenges of CVRS in Council Administration

Variables	SD (%)	D (%)	SA (%)	A (%)
Areas of CVRS Deployment in Council Administration				
Fundamental Human Rights	36(15.8)	36(15.8)	36(15.8)	120(52.6)
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	12(5.3)	28(12.3)	100(43.9	88(38.6)
Planning	32(14.0)	40(17.5)	60(26.3)	96(42.1)
Legal Rights	8(3.5)	60(26.3)	64(28.1)	96(42.1)
Public Health Policy	24(10.5)	24(10.5)	64(28.1)	116(50.9)
CVRS is driving Development Administration at the Council Level				
Health Planning and Policy	24(10.5)	8(3.5)	100(43.9)	96(42.1)
Good Governance	16(7.0)	48(21.1)	80(35.1)	84(36.8)
Child Mortality	12(5.3)	52(22.8)	80(35.1)	84(36.8)
Post-2015 Development Agenda	12(5.3)	36(15.8)	68(29.8)	112(49.1)
Disaster Response and Recovery	20(8.8)	28(12.3)	68(29.8)	112(49.1)
Challenges Associated with Deployment of CVRS at the Council Level				
Limited Data Quality and Use of Technology	32(14.0)	28(12.3)	100(43.9)	68(29.8)
Limited Capacity and Resources	8(3.5)	52(22.8)	64(28.1)	104(45.6)
Inadequate Funding	32(14.0)	112(49.1)	84(36.8)	-
Lack of Awareness and Understanding	28(12.3)	28(12.3)	76(33.3)	96(42.1)
Insecurity	4(1.8)	36(15.8)	108(47.4)	80(35.1)

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 3
Linear Regression Results on *How significant is the effect of CVRS on Development Administration*

Variable	Coefficient	*T*-stat	*P*-value
Constant	10.361	13.644	.000
Civil Registration and Vital Statistics	0.428	7.110	.000
Adjusted R Squared		0.179	
F-stat		50.549	
Sig		.000b	

a. Dependent Variable: Development Administration
Source: Field survey, 2023

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The findings will be exposed to empirical results or arguments of previous related works to ascertain the veracity of the findings generated by this study. Findings revealed that civil registration and vital statistics help to establish fundamental human rights and civil rights of the citizens, this aligns with Uzobo and Ogbanga (2017) who opined that by providing vital statistics for measuring and monitoring development and establishing a legal entity for all citizens, CVRS helps to guarantee their fundamental human rights. The study observed that CVRS can be deployed in the area of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), if implemented effectively to attain SDGs. This position correlates with the idea of Mills et al. (2017) who argued that a good data system such as CVRS helps attain SGDs and this reveals that there is a high prospect that CVRS, if adopted by the government can help attain SDGs.

On planning, findings revealed that CVRS can be utilized by the government to make informed and data-driven decisions and this is in unison with the viewpoint of WHO (2014), which argued that vital events such as birth, death and marriage registration are crucial for planning such as identifying the population needs and testing population health policy. Vital statistics such as death registration provide critical information for health and development planning, hence there is a need for them to ensure the proper running of the CVRS system in the country. In the same vein, findings reveal that a good data system such as CVRS can help ensure that the legal rights of citizens are ensured. CVRS provides legal rights for families in coffering property or personal transfer of rights to individuals or families, this is in harmony with the opinion of Uzobo and Ogbanga (2017) who posit that CVRS is an important means of ensuring the legal rights of individuals in the country.

It was also reported that a good CVRS system will help ensure a good public health policy as the government will be able to make policies that will benefit all citizens. This implies that CVRS are the cornerstone of any health information system because they generate vital statistics and make sure everyone counts by counting or recording everyone. This assertion was supported by Maharpatra et al. (2007) who argue that CVRS are the cornerstone for generating accurate vital statistics that would assist the government in making health policy. Findings also revealed that CVRS helps to enhance health planning and policy. Enhanced CVRS system leads to better health planning and policy by giving accurate information regarding mortality rates and causes of death. This assertion is in viewpoint with the work of Langlois (2020), Yokohari et al. (2021) and AbouZahr et al. (2015) who deduce that CVRS particularly birth and death registration if administered efficiently, can help ensure proper health planning and policy.

It was also discovered that the CVRS system can help to ensure good governance in Nigeria by providing correct information for decision-making. This is in line with the study conducted by Ikubaje and Bel-Aube (2016) who assert that CVRS when implemented efficiently, can help to promote good governance, and the government will be able to make data-driven decisions based on facts, hence ensuring good governance. It was reported that CVRS can help to reduce child mortality, enhanced CVRS system can aid in the reduction of child mortality by giving information on the causes of birth and death and enabling targeted intervention. This is by the position conducted by Suthar et al., (2019) and Wenz and AbouZahr who concurred that a good CVRS system can reduce child mortality by providing information about death and enabling targeted intervention. As Mills et al. (2017; 2019) opined CVRS systems help achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), so is one of the results from these findings, as a plurality of the respondents assent that CVRS can help to achieve Post-2015 development goals set by the United Nations,

On disaster response and recovery, results exposed that CVRS leads to improved disaster response and recovery, this view aligned with Suthar et al. (2019) presumption attested that a good CVRS helps to facilitate disaster response and recovery efforts by providing information about the impact of disaster on the population. Despite the calculated benefit of CVRS, it is faced with certain challenges. According to findings, it was revealed that limited data quality and the use of technology is a major impediment to the successful implementation of CVRS. Poor technological adoption can reduce the viability of a good CVRS system. This assertion is in line with Madueke et al. (2017), who argued that poor data collection and limited use of technology affect the efficiency and lead to errors of the CVRS system.

It was revealed that limited capacity and resources are constraints affecting the successful deployment of CVRS at the local level, this is in harmony with the comments of the Centre of Excellence of CVRS Systems (n.d) and Atama et al. (2021) who believe that inadequate skilled labour, equipment and infrastructure limits the local authorities' ability to collect, manage and disseminate CVRS particularly at the local level. Hence, there is a need for the government to provide the necessary facilities that will aid the collection of CVRS and also conduct training for its workers on how they can manage CVRS efficiently while avoiding potential pitfalls.

Findings also revealed that inadequate funding is a key barrier to the successful deployment at the local level, as most times government are not willing to spend on the CVRS system. This assertion is in accordance with the position of Sejerssen et al. (2022) who endorsed insufficient budget allocation for CVRS activities. On lack of awareness and understanding, results revealed that according to Makinde et al. (2016) is a challenge facing CVRS, this position is in coherence with the opinions of Makinde et al. (2016) who agree that lack of awareness and understanding of many people at the local level is a constraint to a successful deployment of CVRS. This problem can be solved by embarking on proper sensitization of the citizens on the benefits of the CVRS system and reasons why they should take cognizance of it.

CVRS system is believed to be affected by insecurity by 82.5% of the respondents, this is in coherence with the work of Sejersen et al. (2022) who believe that security concerns such as conflict and war make it difficult to deploy CVRS at the local level. 83.2% of the respondents agreed that political instability affects the deployment of CVRS at the local and this assertion was supported by Ye et al. (2012) and WHO (2014).

5. CONCLUSION AND POLICY OPTIONS

This study concluded that civil registration and vital statistics significantly influence development administration. However, despite the expected benefits of civil registration and vital statistics such as enhancing health planning and policy, good governance, child mortality and facilitating disaster response and recovery, it is still faulted with challenges in financing, limited capacity and limited data quality which call for further investigation of research by adopting a holistic approach by the stakeholders to provide a solid financial framework for the implementation of civil registration and vital statistics in development administration. Given this submission, the following actionable policy options are suggested for handlers of the council administration in Nigeria.

i. There is urgent need to develop and implement community engagement strategies tailored to the unique characteristics of local communities involving local leaders, community members, and other stakeholders in the CVRS process to enhance participation and awareness.

ii. Government should explore the feasibility of integrating technology, such as mobile applications or electronic systems, to streamline CVRS processes, potentially improving the efficiency and accuracy of vital statistics collection and management.

iii. Government should advocate for increased political will and commitment at the local government level by highlighting the importance of CVRS in development administration. This may involve engaging with local policymakers and administrators to underscore the benefits of comprehensive vital statistics for effective governance.

iv. Government should invest in capacity-building initiatives for local government officials and staff involved in CVRS to enhance their skills and knowledge, ensuring the effective implementation and management of vital statistics systems.

v. There should be facilitation and collaboration with various stakeholders, including community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, and private sector entities, to create a multi-stakeholder approach for supporting and sustaining CVRS initiatives.

vi. The government should implement targeted public awareness campaigns to educate the residents and various stakeholders on the importance of civil registration and vital statistics, emphasizing the role it plays in development administration and individual rights.

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