

Introduction to the Issue

Following its tradition of holding an annual international conference, the Department of Religion and Cultural Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka organised its 8th hybrid international conference between February 26 and 28, 2025. The theme of the conference was Religion, Civil Liberties and Democracy. The conference attracted scholars from Nigeria and beyond whose papers addressed the theme of the conference from diverse perspectives. This special issue of *Nsukka Journal of Religion and Cultural Studies* (NJRCS) represents some of the papers presented during the conference after being thoroughly peer reviewed. The first article in the issue is that of Moses Idemudia which reads 'Deuteronomy 16:20 in the Frame of John Rawls' Justice as Fairness: Implications for Social Justice and Political Order in Nigeria'. It is followed by 'The Role of Religion in Democratic Governance: Guardian of Civil Liberties or Catalyst for Conflict?' written by Stella Chinweudo Ekwueme, John Chijioke Madubuko and Joy Onyinyechukwu Ezugwu. The next article in the issue addresses 'Alternative Journalism and Hashtag Activism: The Influence of Netizens in the Drive for Social Justice in Southern Nigeria' and is written by Adonai Eziefula. Manasseh Terwase Iortyer and Katkuka Danjuma Gokum address the issue of 'Imperialism, Corruption and Protest in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood and Wizard of the Crow*'. Emmanuel Chijioke Agoha's article "Ethical Imperatives of Wisdom, Justice, and Human Dignity in Old Testament Wisdom Literature: Implications for Artificial Intelligence and Civil Liberties in Africa" addresses the issue of wisdom, justice and human dignity from the perspective of the wisdom literature to show what implications it has for Artificial Intelligence and Civil liberties in the African context. Isah Isiaka's article, 'The Role of Islamic Teachings in Maintaining Civil Liberties: The Case of Idah Local Government, Kogi State', explores how Islam plays a role in maintaining civil liberties in his native Idah, Kogi State, Nigeria. Finally, in the issue is contained, a 'stand-alone' article by Perpetua Omemo Oniala on 'Online Gaming and Socio-moral Well-being: The Case of Nairobi City Teenagers'. From a broad perspective, these articles have contributed to the ongoing scholarly discussion on the issues of religion, civil liberties and democracy: They have, in fact, shown that civil liberties and democracy could be addressed from various perspectives.

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