

www.growkudos.com

KBLSP Journal

[GoogleScholar](#) [GoogleAnalytics](#)[ORCID](#)[Open Research Europe](#)[Zenodo.org](#)[OpenAire](#)[ResearchGate.net](#)

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF RELIGION ON ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN NIGERIA

*Arebamen Abibu Obadan

**Charity U. Emaviwe

[LLM, B.L] Doctoral candidate & Currently, Lecturer, Faculty of Law, Lagos State University, Lagos
<obadan.arebamen@iuokada.edu.ng> <<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7213-7522>>

[PhD, B.L] Professor of Law and Doctoral Advisor, Igbinedion University College of Law Okada, Nigeria
<emaviwe.charity@iuokada.edu.ng> digital id <<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-1087-776X>>

DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.17020160](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17020160)

Abstract

This paper examines the substantial impact of religious beliefs on the governance of Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) in Nigeria, where the religious landscape is heavily influenced by both Islam and Christianity, thereby shaping societal views, legal systems, and access to ART services. It examines how religious principles and interpretations influence the formulation and enforcement of ART regulations, often resulting in complex ethical and legal challenges. Through an analysis of religious texts, legal documents, and constitutional provisions, the study reveals the complex interrelationship between religious beliefs, cultural practices, and ART governance. It emphasizes the difficulties in reconciling religious freedom with individual rights and autonomy, especially where religious and secular laws overlap. Additionally, the research explores how religious views on ART affect access to services, frequently restricting choices for individuals and couples looking for fertility treatments. The findings of this paper highlight the necessity for a thoughtful and inclusive approach to ART governance in Nigeria, one that recognizes the influence of religion on societal perceptions while safeguarding individual rights and advancing public health. This study enhances understanding of the connections between religion, law, and healthcare in Nigeria, providing valuable insights for policymakers, healthcare professionals, and stakeholders aiming to create more effective and equitable ART regulations. Ultimately, the paper calls for a regulatory framework that respects religious plurality while also ensuring the protection of human dignity, the promotion of public health, and access to safe and effective ART services.

Keywords: Assisted Reproductive Technology, Perspectives, Religious belief, secular society, and Regulation

I. Introduction

The emergence of Assisted Reproductive Technology¹ has fundamentally altered the domain of reproductive medicine, providing ground breaking interventions for individuals and couples facing infertility challenges.² Nonetheless, the regulation of ART in Nigeria represents a multifaceted issue, shaped by a diverse array of influences, including deeply entrenched religious convictions. The societal framework of Nigeria is marked by a significant degree of religiosity, with Islam and Christianity prevailing as the primary faiths.³ These religious traditions not only shape the individual's perspective but also guide the formulation of laws, policies, and societal norms that regulate ART.⁴ The convergence of religion and ART regulation in Nigeria is characterized by contention and discourse. Distinct religious factions present varying perspectives on the acceptability and ethical dimensions of ART procedures, including in vitro fertilization (IVF), donor conception, and surrogacy. For example, certain Islamic scholars contend that specific ART practices are permissible provided they do not involve third-party gamete donation, whereas some Christian denominations express apprehensions regarding the ethical ramifications of ART. These disparate religious viewpoints frequently influence the legislative and regulatory landscape, presenting challenges for policymakers who endeavour to reconcile respect for religious plurality with the imperative to safeguard individual rights and public health. The regulatory framework for ART in Nigeria may be further complicated by the nation's cultural and social milieu. The cultural significance of family and procreation in Nigerian society, coupled with the stigma associated with infertility, establishes a complex context for ART regulation. Furthermore, the absence of a cohesive regulatory framework for ART in Nigeria has culminated in a disjointed array of laws, regulations, and practices that often conflict and overlap. This paper aims to investigate the influence of religious beliefs on the regulation of ART in Nigeria, analysing the intricate interrelations between religion, law, and healthcare within the country. By exploring the varied religious perspectives on ART and their impact on legislations, policies, and societal norms, the paper aspires to enhance the comprehension of the challenges and opportunities inherent in regulating ART within a profoundly religious society. The outcomes of this study will inform the development of more effective and

¹ [Hereafter, The ART]

² TM Ola 'Assisted Reproductive Technology: Flawed or Favored' *International Journal Law, Social Science and Humanity* [2012] (2) (4) 331-334.

³ M Stonawski et al., 'The Changing Religious Composition of Nigeria: Causes and Implications of Demographic Divergence' *Journal of Modern African Studies* [2016] (54) (3) 1-27

⁴ G Salifu 'The Influence of Religion on Nigeria's Public and Foreign Policy Making' *Journal of Political Discourse* [2025] (3) (2) 195-206

equitable ART regulations that respect religious diversity while promoting public health, safeguarding human dignity, and ensuring access to safe and effective fertility treatments. Ultimately, this research will contribute to the on-going discourse regarding the role of religion in shaping healthcare policy and legal frameworks in Nigeria and beyond.

2. Interaction between Religion and Assisted reproductive technology in Nigeria

There is ample need to appreciate the two concepts: Religion and Assisted Reproductive Technology.

A. Religion

Religion is a multifaceted phenomenon that is interpreted variably by different scholars.⁵ It is interesting to note that religion has been defined by different scholars.⁶ Religion has been aptly described as a system which relates men to ultimate values, whether good or something else, and which embodies a creed, a code, and a cult.⁷ In a similar vein, Comte articulated religion as “a collective delusion, a symbolic thinking and an unstable behaviour, an imagination and powerful behaviour.”⁸ According to Emile Durkheim, religion constitutes a system centred on the sanctuary, which includes a framework of beliefs, practices, and social behaviours that collectively unify individuals within a moral community.⁹ Religion represents a complex and intricate concept that comprises an array of beliefs. In the case of *Nikulnikoff v Archbishop of Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church*, the court defined the term religion as meaning:

Man’s relation to divinity, to reverence, worship, obedience, and submission to mandates and precepts of supernatural or superior beings. In its broadest sense, it is a form of belief in the existence of superior beings exercising power over human beings by volition, imposing rules of conduct, with future rewards and punishments. Bond uniting man of God and virtue whose purpose is to render God worship due to him as the source of all beings, and principles of all government.¹⁰

⁵ TJ Gunn ‘The Complexity of Religion and the Definition of “Religion” in International Law’ *Harvard Human Rights Journal* [2003] (16) 190-215.

⁶ AG Adamu, *Religion and Public Affairs in Nigeria* (K-Success Print Media Kwara Sate, 2021)

⁷ JK Ayantoro ‘The History of the Living Faiths’ Monograph, Department of Religious Studies, University of Ibadan, Oyo State, 2002)

⁸ A Comte, *The Positive Philosophy* (London” Bell and Sons, 1986)

⁹ Emile Durkheim *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*

¹⁰ [1932] 142 Misc. 894, 225 NYS 635, 663

Religion plays a significant role in every human society. It provides a framework for understanding the world, life's purpose, and one's place in the universe.¹¹ It also fosters a sense of community, belonging, and social bonding among adherents.¹² Religion provides moral principles and values that guide human behaviour and the decision-making process. It facilitates personal growth, spiritual development, and emotional well-being.

B. Assisted Reproductive Technology

Assisted reproductive technology refers to medical techniques specifically designed to help infertile couples and individuals achieve conception and bear children.¹³ It has also been defined as 'all treatments or procedures that include the in vitro handling of both human oocytes and sperm, or embryos, for the purpose of establishing a pregnancy.'¹⁴ This does not include artificial insemination. These technologies involve manipulating gametes outside the human body to facilitate conception. ART procedure encompasses in vitro fertilization (IVF), gamete intrafallopian transfer (GIFT), zygote intrafallopian transfer (ZIFT), intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI), round nuclei injection (ROSNI), assisted hatching, and surrogacy.¹⁵ The potential of these technologies cannot be overemphasized. It is estimated that over 13 million children have been born through ART. While these procedures continue to assist millions of people to bear children to overcome the emotional and psychological trauma associated with infertility, they have also raised ethical concerns, including issues related to varying religious perceptions about these procedures, their regulations, and access.

3. Nature and scope of religion in Nigeria

The omission of religion as a category in the 2006 national census hindered the accurate demographic representation of the various religious groups in Nigeria. Consequently, we are left with assumptions and estimates. Nigeria consists of 36 states, divided into 19 in the northern region and 17 in the southern region. It is widely recognized that Muslims are predominant in the northern states, while Christians are the majority in the southern parts of the country, though there is a notable presence of Muslims in the Middle Belt and South-western regions where the populations

¹¹ H. Spencer, *Structure, Function and Evolution of Religion* (London: Nelson, 1971)

¹² S Radhakrishshanan, *Religion and Society* (George Allen & Unwin: London, 1947)

¹³ American Bar Association Model Act Governing Assisted Reproductive Technology 2008, s. 102

¹⁴ F Zegers-Hochchild, GD Adamson, J de Mouzon, et al, ICMART/WHO Revised Glossary on ART Terminology, 2009. Hum Reprod [2009] (24) (11) 2683-2687.

¹⁵ M R Begum 'Assisted Reproductive Technology: Techniques and Limitations' *Journal of Bangladesh College of Physicians and Surgeons* [2008] (26) (3) 136-141.

tends to be more mixed. There appears to be a consensus that Muslims make up a slightly larger or equal portion compared to Christians, along with a significant number of individuals who follow traditional indigenous religions or identify as non-religious. It is reasonable to assert that Islam and Christianity are the two principal religions in Nigeria. The majority of Muslims in the country are Sunni, although there are also Shia followers. Christianity encompasses various denominations, including the Roman Catholic Church, the Anglican Communion, the Baptist Convention, the Seventh-day Adventists, the Methodist Church of Nigeria, the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, the Jehovah's Witnesses, and numerous Evangelical and Pentecostal congregations, many of which are African instituted and have no ties to Western influences.

3.1 Religion and the Right to Freedom of Thought as well as Conscience in Nigeria.

Belief in a religion is a fundamental right. Section 38 (1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999 Constitution) safeguards the freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. It expresses this as follows:

Every person shall be entitled to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, including freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom (either alone or in community with others and in public or in private) to manifest and propagate his religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice, and observance.¹⁶

The right is supported by several secondary rights, including the right to freedom of association outlined in Section 40, the right to private and family life specified in Section 37, the right to freedom of expression detailed in Section 39, and the right to freedom of movement described in Section 41. To make this right effective and significant, section 42 of the Constitution states that no individual shall face discrimination based on their religion. While this provision allows individuals to freely practice any religion they choose, it also emphasizes the equal status of all religions. The right to freedom of religion must be exercised in a context where no religion is favored. Therefore, section 10 of the 1999 Constitution asserts that “the government of the federation or a state shall not adopt any religion as state religion.” The right to freedom of religion is not without limitations. It is constrained by section 45 (1), which allows for individual and group considerations, stating that “nothing in sections 37, 38, 39, 40 and 41 of this constitution shall invalidate any law that is reasonably justifiable in the interest of defence, public safety, public order, public morality or public health or for the purpose of protecting the right and freedom of other persons.”¹⁷ In the case of *Medical and Dental*

¹⁶ S. 38 CFRN 1999.

¹⁷ Ibid, at S 45 (1)

Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal v Okonkwo,¹⁸ the Nigerian Supreme Court, per Ayoola JSC, described the scope of this right thus:

The right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion implies a right not to be prevented, without lawful justification, from choosing the course of one's life, fashioned on what one believes in, and a right not to be coerced into acting contrary to one's religious beliefs. The limits of these freedoms, as in all cases, are when they impinge on the rights of others or where they put the welfare of society or the public in public health jeopardy... Law role is to ensure the fullness of liberty when there is no danger to public interest. Ensuring liberty of conscience and freedom of religion is an important component. The courts are the institutions society has agreed to invest with the responsibility of balancing conflicting interests in a way that ensures the fullness of liberty without destroying the existence and stability of society.

In that case, the court affirmed the right of a Jehovah's Witness to refuse a blood transfusion, asserting that a physician could not override the patient's decision based on public interest considerations. Although the court did not explicitly mention section 45 (1), it is clear that the reference to public interest could relate to any of the grounds outlined in that section.¹⁹

3.2 Religious views on Assisted Reproductive Technology

In Nigeria, religious perspective on assisted reproduction varies across different faiths and denominations. These perspectives significantly impact legislative interventions in these procedures. The views of the major religious groups include:

A. Islam

The Islamic faith was established by the Prophet Muhammad (570-632 CE) in Mecca. The fundamental principle of Islam is Sharia law. This law outlines the pathways Allah intends for humans to follow throughout life, addressing matters related to religious practices, governance, social interactions, and personal matters. The core texts of Islam are the Quran and Hadith, which include the teachings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad.²⁰ Although Sharia law does not specifically address artificial reproduction, it underscores the importance of marriage, procreation,

¹⁸ [2001] 10 WRN 1 SC at 41

¹⁹ See generally, A K Anya, Right to Object to Particular Medical Treatment: Examining the Implicated Professional Ethics and Moral Notion in a Secular Society, Kogi State University Law Journal, Vol. 2 & 3 2008-2009, Pp. 144, 161. Now uploaded to <scholar.google/Prof.anya-kingsley-anya> and also <researchgate.com/anya-kingsley-anya>, where the author considered the possibility of the exercise of right to object to a medical treatment, especially objection to a particular medical prescription, premised on religious tenet. This is partly in response to the responsibility of a Medical Practitioner, who ordinarily is charged by professional ethics to ensure and save human life as well as the subsisting impact of moral rules in a plural and secular state.

²⁰ Rakshita Muthur, 'Sources of Islamic Law,' *International Journal of Law, Management and Humanities* [2022] (5) (1) 1509-1517

and family formation.²¹ Islam encourages individuals to seek medical help when natural procreation fails, as adoption is not permitted.²² Therefore, pursuing infertility treatments is deemed acceptable and even a moral duty. Physicians have a role in helping couples who struggle with infertility. The procedure of IVF embryo transfer is permissible only when it involves a married couple. The involvement of a third party in the reproductive process, such as the use of donor eggs, sperm, or a surrogate, is not acceptable.²³ Furthermore, egg donation is prohibited as it requires third-party involvement.²⁴ Surrogacy agreements are entirely forbidden under Islamic law. The cryopreservation of gametes or embryos is only allowed if the gametes or eggs are utilized by the same married couple in future IVF attempts.²⁵ In 2000, a workshop held by the International Islamic Centre for Population Studies and Research at Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, approved the use of PGD.²⁶ According to Islamic law, any child conceived through forbidden methods is considered illegitimate, even if the parents later choose to adopt this child.²⁷

These religious perspectives on ART may complicate the formulation and execution of effective ART regulations in Nigeria, necessitating thoughtful dialogue and consideration among stakeholders and religious groups.

B. Christianity

The view of Christians on ART in Nigeria remains very diverse, apparently due to the multifarious denominations having spread dominance in Nigeria. These denominations include the following:

i. The Roman Catholic Church

²¹ Holy Quran 14:46 and 25:74

²² Holy Quran 26:80

²³ GI Serour 'Bioethics in Artificial Reproduction in the Muslim World'' *Bioethics* [1993] (7) 207-217.

²⁴ M Partowmah 'Biotechnology Issues in the Opinion of Islamic Scholars' *Journal of Islamic Medical Association* [1993] (25) (9) 10-11; S. Islam et al 'Ethics of Artificial Insemination: An Islamic Perspective' *Journal of the Islamic Medical Association of North America* [2007] (39) (1) 29-32; A. Shabana 'Islamic Normative Principles Underlying Fatwas on Assisted Reproductive Technologies: Al-Azhar Fatwa on Artificial Insemination' *The Muslim World* [2021] (111) (3) 511-533.

²⁵ GI Serour 'Medically Assisted Conception Dilemma of Practice and Research. Islamic Views. In: GI Serour (ed.) Proceedings of the First International Conference on Bioethics in Human Reproduction Research in the Muslim World, Cairo, IICPSR 2.

²⁶ GI Serour, BM Dickens 'Assisted Reproductive Developments in the Islamic World' *International Journal of Gynecology and Obstetrics* [2001] (74) 187-193.

²⁷ HF Fadel 'The Islamic Viewpoint on New Assisted Reproductive Technologies' *Fordham Urban Law Journal* [2002] (30) (1) 147-157.

The teachings of the Roman Catholic Church are based on the Bible and the Church's traditions. These traditions are tenets established by the church Councils and Popes. The Roman Catholic Church holds that the unbreakable union of marriage is the sole foundation for responsible procreation.²⁸ The church follows certain doctrines to direct its adherents. The first doctrine focuses on safeguarding human life from the moment of conception, grounded in the fundamental right to life.²⁹ The second doctrine asserts that procreation must be linked to a marital relationship, and therefore, from a moral viewpoint, children should be the product of marriage. The Roman Catholic Church emphasizes marital fidelity, signifying that spouses' commitment indicates that their parenthood originates from one another; that their children represent their love; and an everlasting symbol of their marital bond. According to Catholics, healthcare providers are not accountable for the act of procreation: they may aid couples in achieving conception, but cannot be viewed as the actual 'baby makers'. The third doctrine addresses the principle of individual integrity and dignity, which must be honoured in all medical decision-making, especially in matters concerning infertility. Over time, these doctrines have influenced the Roman Catholic Church's stance and beliefs regarding assisted reproductive technology. The Church opposes all types of ART methods. It asserts that the primary purpose of the marital union is to have children through sexual intercourse. Any alternative to this is deemed unacceptable. In 1956, Pope Pius XII declared that any effort to facilitate artificial fertilization in vitro is unacceptable, labelling it immoral and unlawful.³⁰ The Church maintains that the IVF process is sinful due to its disrespect for human life and its separation of procreation from sexual intercourse.

Furthermore, in 1987, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger signed the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (the *Donum Vitae*) with Pope John Paul II's approval.³¹ This document contributed to the discourse on honouring human life concerning assisted reproductive technologies. It was a reaction to the insights of the Episcopal Conferences and individual bishops regarding interventions in human procreation. The essential value of the document lies in the sanctity of human life and the respect for human dignity. According to it, interference in human reproduction can be evaluated based on the respect, defence, and protection of individuals with the right to life and dignity, as well as the moral responsibilities of a person created with a spiritual soul. The document permits human

²⁸ NT Okunade 'A Comparative Analysis of Nigerian Christian Perspectives on In Vitro Fertilization Ethical, Theological and Cultural Implications in Selected Denominations' *Jos Journal of Religion and Philosophy* [2024] (5) (2) 59-70.

²⁹ E Ike 'Natural Law and ART in Nigerian Catholicism' *Nigerian Journal of Ethics* [2019] (11) (2) 88-96.

³⁰ WF Colliton 'In Vitro Fertilization and the Wisdom of the Roman Catholic Church' *The Linacre Quarterly* [2007] (74) (1) 10-28.

³¹ Vatican, Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 1987

fertilization only when it is the result of a conjugal act, specifically, sexual intercourse between a husband and wife. Morality dictates that procreation may lack its proper fulfilment when it occurs outside of this conjugal act and without the union of spouses.

As a result, the document prohibits the transfer of IVF embryos, surrogacy, and the freezing of gametes and embryos. Both artificial insemination and IVF are banned due to their potential to disconnect the "goods" of marriage from its "meanings."³² Any effort to separate these elements may rob marriage of its true essence and go against the dignity of the human person. Children ought to be conceived within a marital relationship based on love, affection, and sexual intercourse. Husband artificial insemination may only be accepted in situations where the method does not replace sexual intercourse, but rather supports it, to ensure that the true nature of sexual intercourse is fulfilled. Gamete Intra-Fallopian Transfer (GIFT) is permitted when it involves the husband's sperm being retrieved from the wife after regular sexual intercourse and placed into the wife's fallopian tube, where fertilization can occur. The document bans donor artificial insemination as it contradicts the sanctity of marriage, the dignity of spouses, and the child's right to be conceived within the marital bond. This method also violates children's rights, jeopardizes their knowledge of their origins, and may affect their sense of identity. The artificial insemination of single women and widows, along with ovum and sperm donation, is similarly prohibited.

ii. The Protestants

The beliefs of Protestants regarding assisted reproductive technology (ART) vary widely and usually hinges on an individual's interpretation of scripture and theological views.³³ While the majority of Protestant groups and individuals accept certain ART methods, such as in vitro fertilization (IVF), some have raised concerns about procedures that lead to the creation and disposal of embryos. Most Protestants regard the use of ART for addressing infertility as a natural aspect of marital union and an attempt to fulfil the divine purpose of procreation. Certain Protestants uphold the sanctity of marriage and the natural conception process, viewing ART as a deviation from God's intended guidance. They also believe that human embryos signify human life from the moment of

³² R. Aluko 'The Catholic Church Stance on IVF in Nigeria' *African Journal of Theological Studies* [2019] (10) (4) 140-152.

³³ S Adeyemi 'Nigerian Pentecostal Views on Assisted Reproductive Technologies' *Journal of Nigerian Christian Studies* [2021] (22) (1) 45-59.

conception and see the use of ART as a violation of the sanctity of human life.³⁴ Nearly all Protestant denominations endorse IVF techniques that utilize the couple's gametes and avoid embryo wastage. Intrauterine insemination (IUI), which involves directly placing sperm into a woman's uterus, is accepted and regarded as a natural extension of the marital bond. Some Protestants are against surrogate motherhood because it introduces a third party (the surrogate) into the reproductive process, which may conflict with traditional notions of motherhood and family structure.

iii. The Anglican Communion

The Anglican Church holds a more permissive view on ART compared to other Christian denomination. In contrast to conservative Christian groups, such as the Roman Catholic Church, which typically reject many ART procedures due to their belief that embryos are human beings from conception, Anglicans generally accept most ART methods but with certain caveats. The Church endorses artificial insemination by husband (AIH), based on its stance on contraception. The Church argues that prohibiting AIH would be illogical since both AIH and contraception disrupt the natural process by decoupling sexual intercourse from procreation.³⁵ It also permits IVF procedures within a marriage using the couple's gametes for similar reasons.³⁶ There are varying opinions within the Anglican Church regarding gamete donation. While some denominations consider a child's genetic lineage to be important, others prioritize the love, affection, and overall well-being of the child within a stable marital environment.³⁷

Additionally, views on artificial insemination by donor (AID) differ among Anglicans. Although many accept IVF, some reject it due to concerns that it undermines the institution of marriage and family creation. Almost all Anglicans express hesitance about surrogacy practices due to ethical concerns related to exploitation, the separation of motherhood, and the commercialization of human reproduction. The majority of Anglicans underscore the necessity of safeguarding the welfare and well-being of children conceived through ART and emphasize the importance of having supportive parents, especially for children born to single women and same-sex couples using ART.

iv. Traditional African Religion

³⁴ CM Gilbert, *Body, Soul and Bioethics* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1996)

³⁵ The Board of Social Responsibility of the Church of England (BSR), 'Abortion: An Ethical Discussion, 1985, para. 117

³⁶ *ibid*, at 118

³⁷ *ibid*, at 108

African society is deeply rooted in religious practices.³⁸ Within these communities, belief systems play a crucial role in the daily lives of individuals and families. They influence the decision-making process regarding reproduction, including assisted reproductive technology. Those who follow traditional African religions often integrate their beliefs with either Christianity or Islam, which can lead to varied perspectives on ART.³⁹ Many traditional African belief systems place significant importance on family lineage and blood ties. Consequently, practices like gamete donation and surrogacy may be considered unacceptable, as they could lead to the birth of a child who lacks a biological connection to the family lineage.⁴⁰

4. Challenges to the impact of religion on the regulation of Artificial reproductive technology in Nigeria

Having examined the spread and demography of religious groups in Nigeria, there is therefore the need to consider the impact of these religious groups on the regulation of ART in Nigeria.

One of the primary regulatory challenges associated with ART is achieving a balance between religious freedom and the public interest. Successfully navigating the complex ethical, legal, and social factors is essential in reconciling these two aspects. As previously mentioned, perspectives on ART within various religious communities in Nigeria differ significantly, which has important ramifications for regulatory measures. Public interest in ART encompasses ensuring safety, enhancing access, and tackling ethical issues linked to these technologies. Finding a balance in this context necessitates respecting individual religious beliefs while upholding public health, safety, and ethical norms.

Policymakers might encounter difficulties in respecting various religious beliefs and practices in striving to foster inclusivity and acceptance. Developing a regulatory framework that recognizes all the diverse religious viewpoints within the nation could prove challenging for those in a policy-making role.

5. Conclusion

³⁸ DL Thompson 'African Religion and Mormon Doctrine: Comparisons and Commonalities' In TD, Blakely, EA Van Beek & DL Thompson (eds) *Religion and Africa* (Portsmouth, Heinemann, 1994).

³⁹ J Adetunji 'African Perspectives on Fertility and Reproductive Technologies' *African Journal of Ethics* [2019] (14) (3) 50-65.

⁴⁰ A Chigbo 'Family Lineage and Fertility: An African Perspective on ARTs' *African Journal of Cultural Studies* [2018] (15) (1) 199-134.

The investigation into religious perspectives on assisted reproductive technology in Nigeria uncovers a complex landscape. It has been demonstrated the varied perspectives among different religious communities, such as Islam, Christianity, and traditional African beliefs, regarding ART. These viewpoints carry important implications for the governance of ART in Nigeria. Based on this conclusion, the research proposes the following recommendations:

There is a need for relevant religious groups as well as legislations to formulate regulations to harmonize inherent religious freedoms with the promotion of artificial reproductive technology in order to harvest public good, safeguarding individual rights while enhancing communal welfare. In this regard, it is essential to involve religious leaders in Nigeria in the creation of ART regulations to ensure their perspectives are acknowledged. Additionally, these leaders should receive education on the advantages and possible challenges associated with ART procedures.

The regulation of ART should demonstrate cultural sensitivity as well as honour the beliefs and values of various religious communities. Stakeholders must take into account the significance of patriarchy, polygamous practices, and the high regard for children within Nigerian society.

It is important to establish regulations that consider differing religious viewpoints on ART, particularly concerning gamete donation and surrogacy. The distinctions between Sunni and Shia beliefs on ART, as well as Christian and traditional African religious positions, should be recognized.

The government should initiate public education campaigns to inform the populace about ART, its advantages, and its potential. Collaboration with local communities, religious groups, and traditional leaders should be encouraged to facilitate well-informed discussions regarding ART.

A regulatory structure needs to be developed that strikes a balance between necessary oversight and the flexibility required to accommodate various religious perspectives, addressing concerns related to gamete donation, surrogacy, and the rights of children conceived via ART.

The government should facilitate interfaith discussions and collaborations to foster understanding and respect among different religious communities. By encouraging partnerships among religious institutions, government entities, and civil organizations, the promotion of ART awareness and education can be enhanced.



KBLSP Journal