



# Religious Syncretism and Cultural Adaptation Among African Diasporas in Eswatini: A Mixed-Methods Study

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## Abstract

{ "background": "Religious syncretism refers to the blending of different religious beliefs and practices within a community, often through cultural adaptation mechanisms. In the context of African diasporas in Eswatini (formerly known as Swaziland), understanding how these communities integrate diverse religious traditions is crucial for comprehending contemporary cultural dynamics.", "purposeandobjectives": "The study aims to explore the extent and nature of religious syncretism among African diaspora populations in Eswatini, with a particular focus on cultural adaptation strategies employed. Objectives include identifying key religious practices, assessing inter-religious dialogue, and evaluating social cohesion within these communities.", "methodology": "A mixed-methods approach is adopted for this study, incorporating both qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys to gather comprehensive data. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with community leaders and members, while structured questionnaires are administered among a representative sample of the diaspora population in Eswatini.", "findings": "Findings suggest that approximately 40% of respondents reported engaging in syncretic religious practices, integrating elements from Christianity, African traditional religions, and indigenous healing rituals. Social cohesion was positively correlated with higher levels of inter-religious dialogue and mutual respect among community members.", "conclusion": "The study reveals significant instances of cultural adaptation through religious syncretism, which plays a vital role in shaping the social fabric of diaspora communities in Eswatini. These findings contribute to our understanding of how diverse religious beliefs coexist and influence social cohesion within these populations.", "recommendations": "Recommendations for future research include longitudinal studies examining changes over time and comparative analyses with other African diasporas globally. Policy recommendations suggest fostering inter-religious dialogue, promoting cultural literacy programmes, and supporting community-led initiatives that enhance mutual understanding and respect.", "keywords": "Religion,

Cultural Adaptation, Syncretism, Diaspora Studies, Eswatini", "contribution\_statement": "This study introduces a novel mixed-methods framework to explore religious syncretism in

**Keywords:** *African diaspora, cultural adaptation, ethno-methodology, interfaith studies, syncretism, qualitative comparative analysis, transdisciplinary approaches*

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