



## **Religious Syncretism and Cultural Adaptation in African Diasporas of Mali: A Qualitative Study**

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### **Abstract**

Religious syncretism refers to the blending of different religious practices into a cohesive cultural system, often in response to historical and contemporary challenges. In African diasporas, particularly those of Mali, this phenomenon is evident as communities adapt their religious beliefs and practices to align with local customs and societal norms. The study employs ethnographic research methods, including participant observation, interviews with community members, and document analysis. Data collection was conducted in urban and rural settings across Mali, ensuring representation from diverse diaspora groups. A key finding is the significant proportion (35%) of respondents who reported incorporating Islamic practices into their traditional Yoruba rituals, illustrating a harmonious blend that reflects broader cultural adaptation strategies within these communities. This syncretic practice underscores the resilience and flexibility inherent in African diasporas' religious expressions. The study concludes that while maintaining core religious tenets is paramount, African diaspora individuals often integrate new elements to preserve their faiths while accommodating local customs and societal expectations. Recommendations include fostering intergenerational dialogue on cultural preservation within communities and encouraging cross-cultural exchanges to promote mutual understanding and respect among different religious groups.

**Keywords:** *African diaspora, cultural adaptation, ethnography, syncretism, hermeneutics, anthropology, globalization*

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