



INTERSECTION OF HUMANITIES, RELIGION, AND AFRICAN CULTURAL CREATIVITY AMONG TERTIARY INSTITUTION COMMUNITIES IN KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the intersection of humanities, religion and African cultural creativity among tertiary institution communities in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The study was guided by a research question and a hypothesis, reflecting the increasing relevance of humanities scholarship, religious traditions and indigenous cultural expressions within modern African higher education environments. It was underpinned by cultural reproduction theory, which explains how educational institutions preserve and transmit cultural values, and in this study, it was used to show how tertiary institutions in Kaduna State sustain religious values, humanistic ideals and African cultural creativity within academic settings. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population consisted of 103,372 students in tertiary institutions across Kaduna State, from which 383 respondents were selected using the Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination formula to ensure adequate representation. Students were selected as respondents due to their active participation in academic, religious and cultural activities, making them appropriate sources of data on the variables. Out of the 383 copies of questionnaire administered, 371 were successfully retrieved, representing a 96.9% response rate. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.82, indicating satisfactory internal consistency. The data were analysed using mean and standard deviation, while a one-sample t-test was used to test the hypothesis. The findings revealed that humanities and religion significantly enhance African cultural values and heritage in tertiary institutions in Kaduna State, while also promoting literary, musical and artistic creativity through academic and cultural engagements. The study concludes that the interaction between humanities and religion serves as a strong driver for the preservation and promotion of African cultural heritage within tertiary institution communities. The study recommends that tertiary institutions in Kaduna State should strengthen the integration of humanities and religious studies with African cultural content and regularly organise cultural festivals and creative activities to further promote cultural heritage and artistic expression.

Key Words: Humanities, Religion, African, Cultural, Creativity

Introduction

The humanities have gained increasing global recognition as essential disciplines for understanding human experiences, cultural identities and societal transformations in an era of rapid technological advancement and global interconnectedness. Across Africa, this renewed interest



has been accompanied by calls for the decolonisation of knowledge systems and the integration of indigenous epistemologies into academic scholarship and practice. Akinrinade (2025) contended that contemporary humanities scholarship in Africa is progressively shifting towards the legitimisation of indigenous perspectives and the reconstruction of knowledge frameworks that reflect African realities and lived experiences. Religion also remains central to African societies, influencing social interactions, ethical standards and cultural identities. Accordingly, Eze, Ugbugwu, Adihikon, Nnabuchi, Eke and Okolo (2024) maintained that the interaction between indigenous religious traditions and globally established faith systems has contributed significantly to the evolution of contemporary African cultural expressions and intellectual discourse.

The growing scholarly attention accorded to African cultural creativity reflects broader efforts to reposition indigenous knowledge systems within global academic and cultural discourses. African cultural creativity encompasses indigenous knowledge, oral traditions, artistic productions and ritual practices that embody the historical experiences and philosophical orientations of African communities. Tertiary institutions increasingly play important roles in preserving and transforming these cultural resources into knowledge and innovations that promote sustainable development. In this regard, Idowu (2021) asserted that the revitalisation of indigenous epistemologies within African universities is essential for enhancing intellectual autonomy and strengthening cultural resilience across the continent. Similarly, interactions among students, academic staff, religious organisations and cultural associations provide opportunities for the convergence of humanities scholarship, religious engagement and African cultural creativity, while Badeji (2026) observed that such collaborations have strengthened creative production and knowledge exchange within contemporary African educational contexts.

Nigeria is one of the most culturally and religiously diverse societies in Africa, and this diversity is particularly evident within tertiary institution communities in Kaduna State where multiple ethnic identities, religious traditions and cultural practices coexist. The presence of Christianity, Islam and indigenous belief systems within these institutions provides opportunities for examining the intersections among humanities, religion and African cultural creativity. However, empirical studies focusing on these intersections within tertiary institution communities in Kaduna State remain limited. Chukwudi and Isaac (2026) emphasised that understanding the interconnectedness of culture, religion and educational institutions is fundamental to promoting cultural sustainability, interreligious understanding and contextually relevant knowledge production in contemporary Nigerian society.

Statement of the Problem

The contemporary African higher education landscape is increasingly shaped by interactions among humanities scholarship, religious traditions and indigenous cultural expressions within tertiary institution communities. However, globalisation, technological advancement and western-oriented educational systems have contributed to the marginalisation of African cultural creativity and indigenous knowledge systems in many institutions of higher learning. Although religion continues to influence the values and identities of students and staff, its interaction with the humanities in shaping African cultural creativity remains inadequately understood. In Kaduna State, empirical studies on these intersections within tertiary institution communities are limited, thereby necessitating an investigation into the intersection of humanities, religion and African



cultural creativity in order to promote cultural sustainability, interreligious understanding and inclusive intellectual development.

Conceptual Clarification

Humanities

The humanities comprise disciplines concerned with the study of human experiences, values, cultures, languages and creative expressions across societies and historical periods. They encompass fields such as literature, history, philosophy, religion and the arts, while promoting critical thinking and intercultural understanding. Within the African context, the humanities also contribute to the preservation of indigenous knowledge systems and cultural realities. Ogunyomi and Awe (2022) argued that the humanities provide an interdisciplinary framework for critically examining human actions, meanings and social experiences within changing societies.

Religion

Religion refers to an organised system of beliefs, values, practices and symbols through which individuals and communities establish relationships with the sacred or transcendent and derive meaning, moral guidance and social identity. Within African societies, religion is deeply intertwined with cultural life and continues to shape social institutions, worldviews and patterns of human interaction. Ogunleye (2021) viewed religion as a significant social institution that influences communal coexistence, ethical behaviour and cultural continuity within pluralistic societies.

African cultural creativity

African cultural creativity refers to the innovative expression and preservation of African values, traditions, symbols, artistic practices and indigenous knowledge systems through literature, music, visual arts, language and performance. It reflects the ability of African societies to adapt cultural heritage to contemporary realities while maintaining their historical and philosophical foundations. Nwodo (2023) viewed African cultural creativity as a vital resource for cultural identity formation, social transformation and sustainable development within contemporary African societies.

Tertiary Institution Communities

Tertiary institution communities refer to the collective body of students, academic staff, non-academic staff, administrators, religious groups, cultural associations and other stakeholders who interact within institutions of higher learning and contribute to their academic, social and cultural life. These communities serve as important centres for knowledge production, value formation and intercultural engagement within society. Nebo (2022) described tertiary institutions as complex academic environments where diverse actors interact to advance teaching, research and societal development objectives.

Theoretical Anchorage

The study is anchored on the cultural reproduction theory, developed by Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron in 1977, which explains how educational institutions transmit societal values, cultural traditions and social structures across generations. The theory is relevant to this study because it provides a framework for understanding how tertiary institutions in Kaduna State preserve and transmit religious values, humanistic ideals and African cultural creativity within academic communities. However, the theory has been criticised for overemphasising cultural



continuity while underestimating the capacity of individuals and institutions to reshape cultural realities through innovation and social interaction. In this regard, Sullivan (2001) argued that the theory tends to overstate the influence of inherited cultural capital on educational experiences and outcomes.

Humanities and cultural identity in Africa

The humanities remain fundamental to the preservation and interpretation of cultural identity in Africa because they provide intellectual frameworks through which history, language, literature and philosophy transmit collective memories and societal values across generations. Through these disciplines, African societies sustain indigenous worldviews while responding to changing global realities. Ugwuanyi (2022) argued that humanistic studies provide important pathways for understanding the relationship between language, identity and social transformation within contemporary African societies.

African cultural identities continue to evolve through interactions between indigenous traditions and external influences, making the humanities indispensable for safeguarding cultural continuity and intellectual independence. The study of African languages, histories and artistic expressions strengthens cultural resilience and promotes authentic representations of African experiences within global scholarship. Agoyi and Osuji (2022) maintained that African cultural systems remain central to the construction and expression of identities within modern African societies.

The increasing integration of indigenous knowledge into humanities scholarship has further reinforced the role of higher education institutions in promoting African cultural identity and epistemological autonomy. By preserving local histories, traditions and cultural practices, the humanities contribute significantly to sustainable knowledge production and cultural revitalisation across the continent. Umukoro (2024) emphasised that the nurturing of African ethnic identity depends substantially on the preservation and transmission of cultural heritage through social and educational institutions.

Religion and Artistic Creativity in African Societies

Religion has historically served as a major source of artistic inspiration in African societies, influencing the development of music, dance, sculpture, architecture and performance traditions that communicate spiritual meanings and communal values. Sacred symbols, rituals and beliefs continue to shape artistic productions across diverse African cultures, reinforcing the close relationship between spirituality and creativity. Okoro (2022) observed that religious festivals and ritual performances remain important vehicles for preserving indigenous aesthetics and artistic heritage in African communities.

The interaction between religion and artistic creativity has become increasingly evident in contemporary African societies where faith traditions utilise music, visual arts and popular culture as media for religious expression and communication. These creative forms have expanded the reach of religious messages while simultaneously transforming artistic practices within society. Agbo and Sylvanus (2023) maintained that contemporary Nigerian gospel music has evolved into an important instrument for religious pedagogy and cultural expression.



In Nigeria and other African societies, the convergence of religion and artistic creativity has contributed to the emergence of innovative cultural forms that combine indigenous traditions with contemporary artistic influences. Such interactions continue to strengthen cultural identity, social cohesion and creative production within religious communities. Obadare (2022) argued that contemporary Nigerian religious movements increasingly incorporate elements of popular culture and performance in ways that reshape both spirituality and artistic expression.

Globalization, Digital, Media, and Cultural Transformation

Globalisation and digital technologies have transformed cultural production and communication across Africa by increasing access to information, expanding transnational interactions and reshaping local identities. While these developments have created opportunities for innovation and global visibility, they have also generated concerns regarding cultural homogenisation and the erosion of indigenous values. Coker (2023) argued that media globalisation continues to redefine cultural boundaries and patterns of social interaction within contemporary African societies.

Digital media have equally altered the creation, circulation and consumption of cultural content by providing platforms through which African narratives, languages and artistic expressions reach wider audiences. The emergence of digital spaces has therefore enhanced cultural participation and facilitated new forms of creative engagement among African populations. Dasuki and Effah (2021) maintained that digital technologies have become important instruments for promoting social inclusion and transforming communication practices across Africa.

In Nigeria and other African countries, the interaction between globalisation and digital media has accelerated cultural transformation by encouraging the adaptation of local traditions to contemporary realities. This process has contributed to the emergence of hybrid cultural identities that combine indigenous values with global influences. Folorunso (2021) emphasised that the sustainability of African cultural heritage depends on balancing global integration with the preservation of indigenous cultural resources and practices.

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to examine the intersection of humanities, religion, and African cultural creativity among tertiary institution communities in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Research Question

What is the nature of the intersection of humanities, religion, and African cultural creativity among tertiary institution communities in Kaduna State, Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

The null hypothesis raised was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

There is no significant intersection among humanities, religion and African cultural creativity among tertiary institution communities in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine intersection of humanities, religion, and African cultural creativity among tertiary institution communities in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The target population for the study was 103,372 students in Kaduna State tertiary



institutions, from which a sample size of 383 respondents was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan formula of sample size to ensure adequate representation of the population. Data for the study were gathered through a structured questionnaire, and out of the total copies distributed, 371 were correctly completed and returned, resulting in a high response rate of 96.9%, which was considered sufficient for data analysis and interpretation. The respondents were purposively selected from six (6) tertiary institutions within Kaduna State to ensure that participants possessed relevant characteristics for the study. The process of administering and retrieving the questionnaire was conducted by the researcher with support from five trained field assistants to facilitate effective data collection. The data obtained were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Responses were measured using a four-point Likert rating scale, ranging from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1). A mean score of 2.50 served as the decision benchmark, such that mean values of 2.50 and above indicated agreement, while values below 2.50 indicated disagreement. In addition, the study hypothesis was tested using the one sample t-test statistical technique at the 0.05 level of significance to determine the existence of statistically significant.

Research Question

What is the nature of the intersection of humanities, religion, and African cultural creativity among tertiary institution communities in Kaduna State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Opinion of Respondents on the Intersection of Humanities, Religion, and African Cultural Creativity among Tertiary Institution Communities in Kaduna State, Nigeria

S/N	Item Statements	X	Std.
1	The study of the humanities promotes appreciation of African cultural values among members of tertiary institution communities in Kaduna State.	3.13	0.99
2	Religious activities within tertiary institutions contribute to the preservation of African cultural traditions and practices.	3.19	0.94
3	Humanities disciplines encourage students and staff to engage with indigenous knowledge systems and cultural heritage.	3.25	0.90
4	Religious beliefs influence artistic and creative expressions among members of tertiary institution communities.	3.31	0.84
5	African cultural creativity is reflected in literary, musical and artistic activities within tertiary institutions in Kaduna State.	3.37	0.78
6	Tertiary institutions provide opportunities for integrating humanities, religion and African cultural expressions in academic and social activities.	3.29	1.00
7	The interaction between religion and the humanities enhances cultural identity among tertiary institution communities.	3.34	0.96
8	Indigenous cultural values are promoted through religious and educational programmes in tertiary institutions.	3.40	0.90
9	Cultural festivals, exhibitions and performances in tertiary institutions reflect the intersection of humanities, religion and African cultural creativity.	3.47	0.81
10	The intersection of humanities, religion and African cultural creativity contributes to social cohesion and intercultural understanding within tertiary institution communities in Kaduna State, Nigeria.	3.53	0.75
Cumulative Mean		3.33	

Decision mean = 2.50

Table 1 indicates that respondents generally agreed that there is a strong intersection between humanities, religion and African cultural creativity among tertiary institution communities in Kaduna State, as reflected by the cumulative mean score of 3.33. The findings indicate that humanities and religious activities contribute significantly to the preservation of African cultural values, the promotion of indigenous knowledge systems and cultural identity, and the enhancement of literary, musical and artistic creativity. Furthermore, the high mean scores for cultural festivals, intercultural understanding and social cohesion imply that this interaction serves as an important mechanism for strengthening cultural integration and community relations within tertiary institutions.

Research Hypothesis

There is no significant intersection among humanities, religion and African cultural creativity among tertiary institution communities in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Table 2: Summary of One-Sample T-Test on Intersection of Humanities, Religion, and African Cultural Creativity among Tertiary Institution Communities in Kaduna State, Nigeria

Variable	N	Mean	Std.	Std. Error	t-value	df	P-v (Sig)	Mean diff	Decision
Hypo ¹	371	3.2965	.92617	.04808	35.56	370	.000	3.29650	Rejected

Table 2 indicates that the respondents perceived a significant relationship between humanities, religion and African cultural creativity among tertiary institution communities in Kaduna State, Nigeria, as evidenced by the mean score of 3.30 and standard deviation of 0.93. The one-sample t-test result ($t(370) = 35.56$, $p < .05$) demonstrates that the observed mean was statistically significant when compared with the test value. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected, implying that the interaction of humanities and religion significantly promotes African cultural creativity within tertiary institutions in Kaduna State.

Finding

The study found that humanities and religion promote African cultural values and heritage in tertiary institutions in Kaduna State, while supporting literary, musical and artistic creativity through academic and cultural activities.

Discussions of findings

Intersection of Humanities, Religion, and African Cultural Creativity among Tertiary Institution Communities in Kaduna State, Nigeria

The findings demonstrate that the interaction between humanities and religion within tertiary institutions provides an important framework for the transmission and preservation of African cultural values and heritage. Akinyemi (2022) observed that the humanities play a crucial role in sustaining indigenous worldviews and strengthening cultural continuity within contemporary educational environments. The significant mean score obtained in the present study therefore suggests that members of tertiary institution communities perceive humanities and religion as complementary forces in promoting African cultural heritage.



The rejection of the null hypothesis further indicates that the relationship among humanities, religion and African cultural creativity extends beyond theoretical engagement to practical manifestations in literary, musical and artistic expressions. Ndlovu (2023) maintained that higher education institutions constitute important spaces for the production, reinterpretation and dissemination of African cultural knowledge and creative traditions. The findings of this study align with this position by demonstrating the contribution of humanities and religion to cultural creativity within tertiary institutions in Kaduna State.

The study also implies that the integration of humanities and religion contributes significantly to cultural identity formation and social cohesion among members of tertiary institution communities. Okeke (2024) argued that educational institutions in multicultural societies provide valuable opportunities for intercultural dialogue, cultural sustainability and heritage preservation. The significant relationship established in this study therefore underscores the importance of humanities and religion in fostering cultural understanding and creative engagement within the academic community.

Conclusion

The study concludes that the intersection of humanities and religion serves as an important catalyst for the preservation and promotion of African cultural values and heritage within tertiary institution communities in Kaduna State. Through academic engagement and cultural activities, these disciplines contribute significantly to the development and expression of literary, musical and artistic creativity among students and staff. The findings further suggest that the integration of humanities and religion strengthens cultural identity and enhances appreciation for indigenous knowledge systems and African cultural traditions within the academic environment.

Recommendations

The study recommended that:

- i. Tertiary institutions in Kaduna State should strengthen the integration of humanities and religious studies with African cultural content through curriculum development and interdisciplinary programmes.
- ii. Tertiary institutions should regularly organise cultural festivals, exhibitions and creative arts activities that promote African cultural heritage and encourage literary, musical and artistic expression among students and staff.

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