

CRS303

THE NIGERIAN CHRISTIAN HISTORY (1864–1960)



Course video is available on our app

Course title The Nigerian Christian History (1864–1960)

Course code CRS 303

Course units 3

Series 1: Strands and Brands of the Nigerian Church (1864–1960)

Series 2: Founders and the Growth of Nigerian Church Movements

Series 3: Distinctive Features of Nigerian Church Traditions

Series 4: Social, Political, and Economic Roles of the Churches

Series 5: Community Development Contributions of Nigerian Christianity

Series 1: Strands and Brands of the Nigerian Church (1864–1960)

Series outline

This Series is organised into five Parts, reflecting the 3-unit course requirement:

Part 1: Historical background of Nigerian Christianity (1864–1960)

Part 2: Major strands of the Nigerian Church

Part 3: Denominational brands and their distinct identities

Part 4: Interactions among strands and brands

Part 5: Challenges and opportunities within the period

Introduction

Christianity in Nigeria developed distinctive features between 1864 and 1960 as churches adapted worship, leadership, theology, and social contributions to local realities. These traditions reflected both missionary influence and indigenous responses, producing a rich diversity of practices and identities.

In this Series, you will explore how Nigerian Christianity became rooted in local culture while maintaining connections to global Christian traditions. The aim is to highlight the unique characteristics of Nigerian church traditions during this formative period.

We will begin with worship practices and liturgical traditions, focusing on Anglican, Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, and African Independent Churches. Next, you will examine organisational structures and leadership models, including hierarchical governance, indigenous leadership, and charismatic leadership. Following that, we will analyse theological emphases and doctrinal distinctives, such as sacramental theology, evangelical emphases, and Spirit-led theology. Finally, we will assess the social and cultural contributions of Nigerian church traditions, particularly in education, healthcare, and cultural identity.

Series learning outcomes

By the end of this Series, learners should be able to:

SLO 1.1: Define the historical background of Nigerian Christianity between 1864 and 1960.

SLO 1.2: Identify and describe the major strands of the Nigerian Church.

SLO 1.3: Analyse the denominational brands and their distinctive identities.

SLO 1.4: Evaluate the interactions among strands and brands of the Nigerian Church.



SLO 1.5: Assess the challenges and opportunities faced by Nigerian Christianity during this period.

part 1.1 Historical Background of Nigerian Christianity (1864–1960)

Christianity in Nigeria between 1864 and 1960 was shaped by missionary activity, colonial influence, and indigenous responses.

Missionary activity refers to organised efforts by Christian groups to spread their faith, often involving education, healthcare, and evangelism.

The year 1864 marks the consolidation of missionary efforts, while 1960 represents Nigeria's independence, which created new contexts for the Church.

The year _____ marks Nigeria's independence, which influenced the Church's development.

Practical example:

In Lagos, mission schools established by Anglican and Methodist societies in the late 19th century educated future Nigerian leaders, blending Western curricula with local realities. This education pipeline later supported indigenous leadership in churches after 1960, as trained Nigerians assumed pastoral and administrative roles.

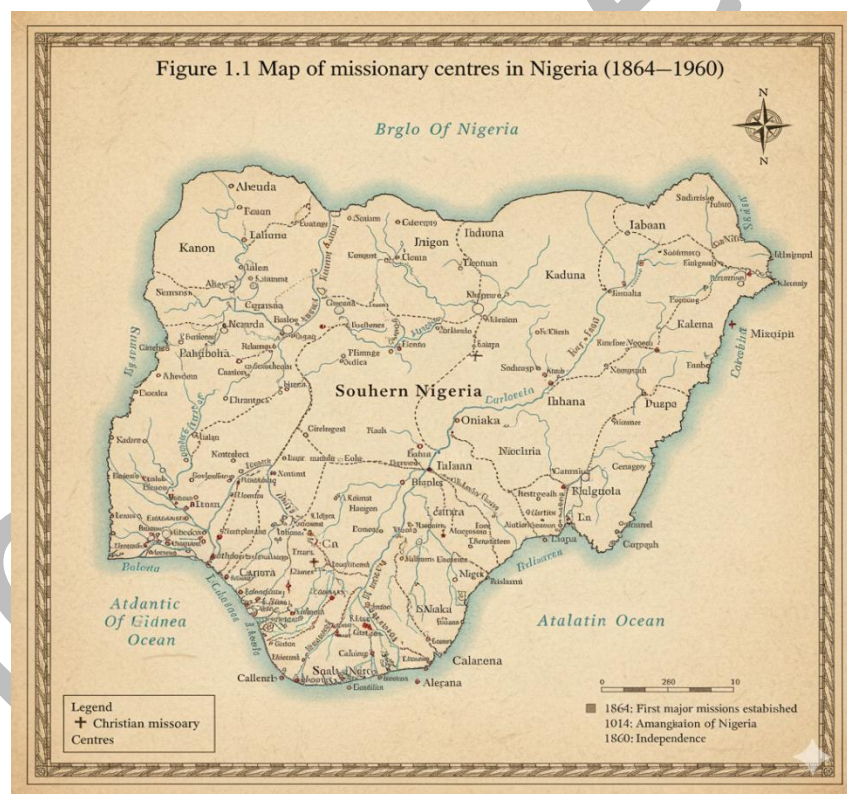


Figure 1.1 Map of missionary centres in Nigeria (1864–1960).

pilot questions [Part 1.1]

Independence year: Which year marks Nigeria's independence?

1844



1864

1960

1970

Definition check: What does missionary activity primarily involve?

Colonial administration

Organised evangelism, education, and healthcare

Political mobilisation

Trade and commerce

Context link: Why is 1864 significant in Nigerian Christian history?

Start of colonial rule

Consolidation of missionary efforts

Emergence of revivalist movements

Founding of African independent churches

Application: One direct effect of mission schools in Lagos was:

Reduced literacy rates

Increased indigenous leadership in churches

Decline of denominational brands

End of colonial influence

Short answer: Briefly explain how colonial influence affected the development of Nigerian Christianity between 1864 and 1960.

Part 1.2 Major Strands of the Nigerian Church

The Nigerian Church developed into several strands, including mission churches, African independent churches, and revivalist movements. A strand is a distinct stream or line of development within the Nigerian Church. Each strand reflected different theological emphases and cultural adaptations.

Mission churches were established and supported by foreign missionary societies, introducing Western forms of worship, governance, and education.

African independent churches emerged as a response to colonial restrictions, emphasising cultural adaptation, indigenous leadership, and contextual worship.

Revivalist movements focused on renewed spiritual fervour, emotional worship, and personal conversion, often challenging established traditions.

African independent churches are one of the major _____ of Nigerian Christianity.



Practical example:

The Aladura movement in southwestern Nigeria is a notable example of African independent churches. It emphasised healing, prophecy, and prayer, blending Christian doctrine with indigenous cultural practices.

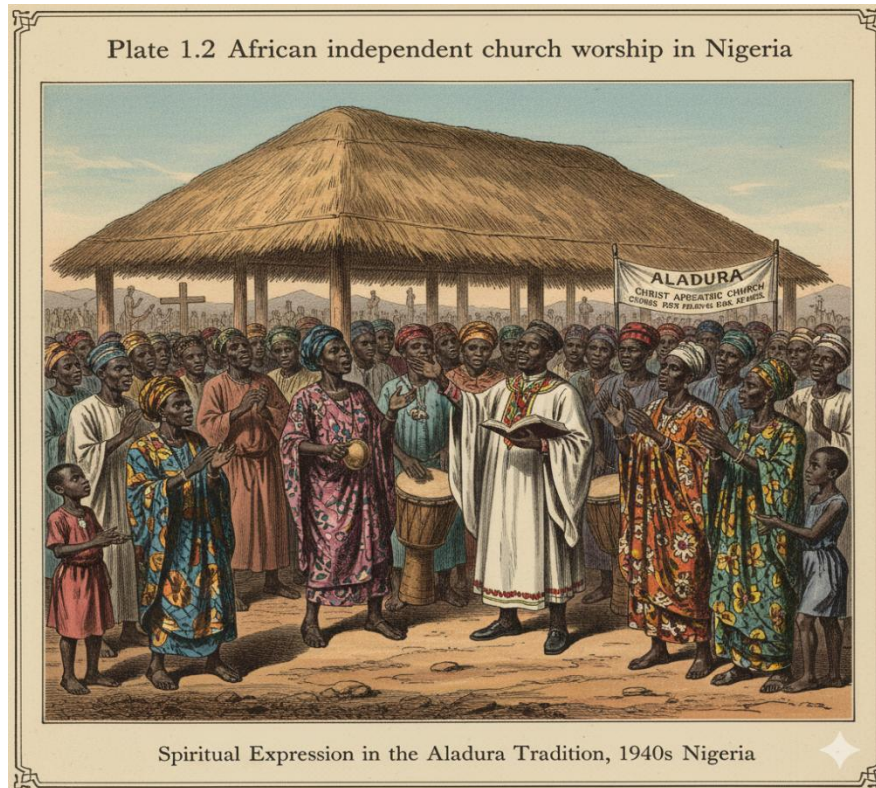


Plate 1.2 African independent church worship in Nigeria.

Pilot questions [Part 1.2]

Which of the following is NOT a strand of the Nigerian Church?

- Mission churches
- African independent churches
- Revivalist movements
- Islamic reform groups

Mission churches were primarily established by:

- Indigenous leaders
- Foreign missionary societies
- Colonial administrators
- Revivalist movements

African independent churches emphasised:



Western liturgy and hierarchy
Cultural adaptation and indigenous leadership
Colonial administration
Doctrinal disputes

Revivalist movements in Nigeria focused on:

Emotional worship and personal conversion
Colonial governance
Liturgical uniformity
Trade and commerce

Short answer: Briefly describe the focus of mission churches and African independent churches as strands of Nigerian Christianity.

Part 1.3 Denominational Brands and Their Distinct Identities

Within each strand, denominational brands emerged, such as Anglican, Methodist, Catholic, and African independent denominations. A denominational brand is a recognised church identity distinguished by its doctrine, worship style, and organisation. These brands developed distinctive liturgies, governance structures, and theological emphases.

Anglican Church: Known for hierarchical governance, structured liturgy, and strong ties to the Church of England.

Methodist Church: Emphasised preaching, hymn singing, and circuit-based pastoral care.

Catholic Church: Recognised for hierarchical governance under the Pope, sacramental worship, and missionary expansion.

African Independent Churches: Emphasised indigenous leadership, contextual worship, and resistance to colonial control.

The Anglican Church is an example of a denominational _____ in Nigeria.

Practical example:

The Catholic Church established schools and hospitals across Nigeria, reinforcing its hierarchical governance while contributing to social development. Meanwhile, African Independent Churches like the Cherubim and Seraphim emphasised prophecy, healing, and contextual liturgy, reflecting Nigerian cultural identity.

Table 1.3 Comparison of denominational brands in Nigeria.



DENOMINATION	LITURGY & WORSHIP STYLE	GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE	LEADERSHIP & AUTHORITY
Formal, liturgical, hymns, Book of Common Prayer.	Episcopal hierarchy, synods, dioceses.	Episcopal hierarchy, synods, dioceses.	Bishops of dioceses
Anglican	Structured, evangelical hymns, less formal liturgy.	Connexional system, conferences, circuits.	Bishops, cardinals, archbishops, ministers.
Catholic	Highly liturgical, sacraments, Mass, chant.	Hierarchical, Papal authority, Mass, chant.	Often founder-centric, or congregational.
African Independent	Charismatic, spirit-led, drumming, prophecy.	Pope, cardinals, archbishops, priests.	Prophets, prophetesses, founders, evangelists

Distinctive Features of Nigerian Christian Traditions

Pilot questions [Part 1.3]

Which denominational brand is recognised for hierarchical governance?

Methodist

Catholic

Anglican

African Independent

The Anglican Church in Nigeria is an example of:

A denominational brand

A revivalist movement

A colonial administration

A strand of Islam

African Independent Churches are distinctive because they:

Follow Western liturgy strictly

Emphasise indigenous leadership and contextual worship

Operate under the Pope's authority

Reject evangelism and education



Methodism in Nigeria is characterised by:

- Circuit preaching and hymn singing
- Sacramental worship under papal authority
- Prophecy and healing emphasis
- Colonial administration

Short answer: Explain one way denominational brands differed in their worship and governance.

Part 1.4 Interactions Among Strands and Brands

Strands and denominational brands interacted through cooperation, competition, and dialogue. Interaction refers to the ways in which different strands and brands influenced one another through cooperation or conflict. Mission churches often influenced African independent churches, while revivalist movements challenged established denominations. These interactions shaped the Nigerian Church's identity between 1864 and 1960.

Cooperation: Mission churches and African independent churches sometimes collaborated in education and healthcare, contributing to community development.

Competition: Denominational rivalry arose as churches competed for membership and influence, especially in urban centres like Lagos and Ibadan.

Dialogue: Ecumenical efforts promoted unity, though doctrinal differences often limited long-term collaboration.

Challenge: Revivalist movements emphasised emotional worship and personal spirituality, questioning rigid traditions of established denominations.

Revivalist movements often _____ established denominations in Nigeria.

Practical example:

The Aladura revivalist movement challenged Anglican and Methodist churches by emphasising healing, prophecy, and prayer vigils. This created tension but also pushed mission churches to reconsider their approach to spirituality and worship.

Box 1.4 Case study of revivalist movements challenging established denominations.



Box 1.3

Case Study: Revivalist Challenges to Established Denominations in Nigeria

Beginning in the early 20th century and accelerating through the 1970s, revivalist movements—of which Alaa's later, Pentecostal/Charismatic movements—took shape and challenge Nigerian Christianity.

Key Points of Divergence

- Liturgical and Worship
- Revivalists introduced emotional, spontaneous worship, drumming, Pentecostal of an ecstatic, and dancing. Established churches relied on liturgical, solemn, and dancing.
- Revivalists emphasized 'the gifts' 'the Spirit, prophecy the Spirit, prophecy
- Revivalist movements sought to make Christianity 'more relevant' deeply with African cultural realities.

These challenges led to significant shift in the Nigerian religious landscape. Many established denominations eventually 'charismaticized' their own services to prevent members from leaving, leading to a unique blending of traditional structures with revivalist fervor.

Transforming Nigerian Christianity

Pilot questions [Part 1.4]

Revivalist movements often _____ established denominations in Nigeria.

- Supported
- Challenged
- Ignored
- Replaced

Which of the following is an example of cooperation among strands?

- Mission churches and African independent churches collaborating in education
- Revivalist movements rejecting emotional worship
- Colonial administrators enforcing denominational rivalry
- Doctrinal disputes leading to schism

Ecumenical dialogue among Nigerian churches aimed to:

- Promote unity despite doctrinal differences
- End missionary activity
- Replace indigenous leadership
- Stop denominational growth



Denominational rivalry in Nigeria was most visible in:

Urban centres like Lagos and Ibadan

Rural farming villages only

Colonial government offices

Islamic reform groups

Short answer: Describe one way revivalist movements challenged established denominations in Nigeria.

Part 1.5 Challenges and Opportunities Within the Period

Between 1864 and 1960, the Nigerian Church faced significant challenges but also seized important opportunities that shaped its growth and identity.

Challenges:

Colonial control: Churches often operated under restrictions imposed by colonial authorities, limiting autonomy.

Doctrinal disputes: Differences in theology and worship styles created divisions among denominations.

Cultural tensions: The blending of Christianity with indigenous traditions sometimes led to syncretism and conflict.

Opportunities:

Growth in membership: Christianity expanded rapidly across Nigeria, especially in urban centres and among youth.

Expansion of schools and hospitals: Mission churches and Catholic institutions established educational and healthcare facilities, contributing to social development.

Rise of indigenous leadership: Nigerian pastors and bishops increasingly took leadership roles, reducing dependence on foreign missionaries and making Christianity more culturally relevant.

One major opportunity for the Nigerian Church was the rise of _____ leadership.

Practical example:

The consecration of Samuel Ajayi Crowther as the first African Anglican bishop in 1864 symbolised the rise of indigenous leadership. Later, by the 1950s, Nigerian clergy were leading Catholic dioceses and Methodist conferences, preparing the Church for independence in 1960.



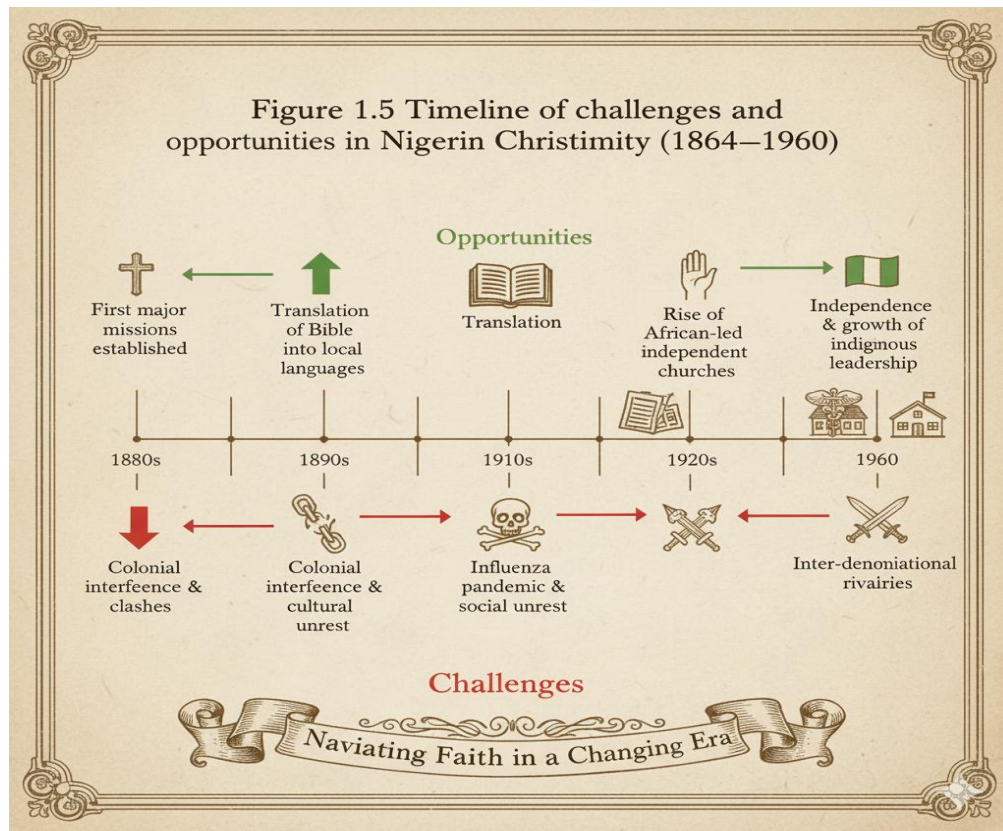


Figure 1.5 Timeline of challenges and opportunities in Nigerian Christianity (1864–1960).

Pilot questions [Part 1.5]

Which of the following was an opportunity for the Nigerian Church between 1864 and 1960?

- Colonial restrictions
- Doctrinal disputes
- Expansion of schools and hospitals
- Cultural tensions

One major opportunity for the Nigerian Church was the rise of:

- Colonial leadership
- Indigenous leadership
- Missionary leadership
- Revivalist leadership

A key challenge faced by Nigerian Christianity during this period was:

- Growth in membership
- Colonial control



Expansion of schools

Indigenous leadership

The establishment of hospitals by mission churches contributed to:

Doctrinal disputes

Community development and healthcare access

Colonial restrictions

Revivalist movements

Short answer: Explain how indigenous leadership strengthened Nigerian Christianity between 1864 and 1960.

Series Summary

This Series has introduced you to the historical background of Nigerian Christianity between 1864 and 1960, highlighting its purpose and relevance in shaping the nation's religious identity. We explored the major strands of the Nigerian Church, examined denominational brands and their distinctive features, considered the interactions among these strands and brands, and reflected on the challenges and opportunities that arose during this formative period.

By engaging with these Parts, you should now be able to define the historical background of Nigerian Christianity, identify and describe its major strands, analyse denominational brands, evaluate their interactions, and assess the challenges and opportunities of the time. These abilities directly reinforce the Series Learning Outcomes (SLOs), ensuring you can confidently connect historical developments with the broader growth of Christianity in Nigeria.

Series Glossary

Denominational brand: A recognised church identity distinguished by its doctrine, worship style, and organisation.

Doctrine: A set of official beliefs or teachings held by a church, guiding its faith and practice.

Indigenous leadership: Church leaders who are native to Nigeria rather than foreign missionaries, often emphasising cultural relevance.

Interaction: The ways in which different strands and brands influenced one another through cooperation, competition, or dialogue.

Liturgy: The structured form of worship, prayers, and rituals used in church services.

Mission churches: Churches established and supported by foreign missionary societies, often introducing Western forms of worship and governance.

Missionary activity: Organised efforts by Christian groups to spread their faith, often involving evangelism, education, and healthcare.

Revivalist movements: Religious movements that emphasised renewed spiritual fervour, personal conversion, and emotional worship, often challenging established traditions.

Strand: A distinct stream or line of development within the Nigerian Church, such as mission churches or African independent churches.

Syncretism: The blending of different religious traditions and practices, sometimes seen when Christianity interacted with local cultures.



Theology: The study of the nature of God and religious beliefs, often shaping the doctrines of different denominations.

Concept Check Questions [Series 1]

Objective (multiple-choice) questions

Which year marks Nigeria's independence? (Linked to SLO 1.1)

1844

1864

1960

1970

Which of the following is NOT a strand of the Nigerian Church? (Linked to SLO 1.2)

Mission churches

African independent churches

Revivalist movements

Islamic reform groups

3. Which denominational brand is recognised for hierarchical governance? (Linked to SLO 1.3)

Methodist

Catholic

Anglican

African Independent

4. Revivalist movements in Nigeria primarily emphasised: (Linked to SLO 1.4)

Doctrinal disputes

Emotional worship and personal conversion

Colonial administration

Liturgical uniformity

5. Which of the following was an opportunity for the Nigerian Church between 1864 and 1960? (Linked to SLO 1.5)

Colonial restrictions

Doctrinal disputes

Expansion of schools and hospitals

Cultural tensions

Short-answer questions



6. Define missionary activity and explain its role in Nigerian Christianity between 1864 and 1960. (Linked to SLO 1.1)

7. Identify two major strands of the Nigerian Church and briefly describe their focus. (Linked to SLO 1.2)

8. Explain how denominational brands differed in their worship and governance. (Linked to SLO 1.3)

9. Describe one way revivalist movements challenged established denominations. (Linked to SLO 1.4)

Long-answer questions

10. Analyse the historical background of Nigerian Christianity between 1864 and 1960, highlighting key influences. (Linked to SLO 1.1)

11. Compare and contrast mission churches and African independent churches as strands of Nigerian Christianity. (Linked to SLO 1.2)

12. Evaluate the distinctive features of denominational brands such as Anglican, Methodist, Catholic, and African Independent churches. (Linked to SLO 1.3)

13. Discuss the interactions among strands and brands of the Nigerian Church, noting both cooperation and competition. (Linked to SLO 1.4)

14. Assess the challenges and opportunities faced by Nigerian Christianity between 1864 and 1960, and explain their impact on community development. (Linked to SLO 1.5)

Answers to Concept Check Questions [1]

Objective (multiple-choice) questions

- c) 1960
- d) Islamic reform groups
- b) Catholic
- b) Emotional worship and personal conversion
- c) Expansion of schools and hospitals

Short-answer questions

6. Missionary activity refers to organised efforts by Christian groups to spread their faith, often through evangelism, education, and healthcare. It was central to the establishment of Christianity in Nigeria during 1864–1960.

7. Mission churches were closely linked to foreign missionary societies, while African independent churches emphasised cultural adaptation and indigenous leadership.

8. Denominational brands differed in worship and governance: Anglican and Catholic emphasised liturgy and hierarchy, while African Independent churches emphasised indigenous leadership and contextual worship.

9. Revivalist movements challenged established denominations by questioning rigid traditions and emphasising personal spirituality.

Long-answer questions

10. Basic response: Nigerian Christianity between 1864 and 1960 was shaped by missionary activity, colonial influence, and indigenous responses.



Value-added response: Learners may also note that independence in 1960 created new contexts for church growth and leaders

Basic response: Mission churches were foreign-led and emphasised Western traditions, while African independent churches were locally led and emphasised cultural adaptation.

Value-added response: Outstanding learners may highlight that African independent churches represented resistance to colonial control and promoted indigenous identity.

Basic response: Anglican, Methodist, Catholic, and African Independent churches differed in liturgy, governance, and leadership.

Value-added response: Learners may add that denominational brands also reflected broader cultural and political influences, with African Independent churches embodying resistance and contextualisation.

Basic response: Strands and brands interacted through cooperation, competition, and dialogue.

Value-added response: Learners may note that revivalist movements challenged established denominations, while ecumenical cooperation promoted unity.

14Basic response: Challenges included colonial control, doctrinal disputes, and cultural tensions. Opportunities included growth in membership, expansion of schools and hospitals, and indigenous leadership.

Value-added response: Outstanding learners may explain that these challenges and opportunities were interconnected, as colonial restrictions spurred independent churches and education fostered community development.

Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 1]

Part 1.1 Historical Background of Nigerian Christianity (1864–1960)

1960

Organised evangelism, education, and healthcare

Consolidation of missionary efforts

Increased indigenous leadership in churches

Colonial influence restricted autonomy but also created contexts for missionary expansion.

Part 1.2 Major Strands of the Nigerian Church

Islamic reform groups

Foreign missionary societies

Cultural adaptation and indigenous leadership

Emotional worship and personal conversion

Mission churches emphasised Western traditions, while African independent churches emphasised cultural adaptation.

Part 1.3 Denominational Brands and Their Distinct Identities

Catholic



A denominational brand

Emphasise indigenous leadership and contextual worship

Circuit preaching and hymn singing

Anglican and Catholic emphasised hierarchy and liturgy; African Independent emphasised contextual worship.

Part 1.4 Interactions Among Strands and Brands

Challenged

Mission churches and African independent churches collaborating in education

Promote unity despite doctrinal differences

Urban centres like Lagos and Ibadan

Revivalist movements challenged rigid traditions by emphasising personal spirituality and emotional worship.

Part 1.5 Challenges and Opportunities Within the Period

Expansion of schools and hospitals

Indigenous leadership

Colonial control

Community development and healthcare access

Indigenous leadership strengthened Nigerian Christianity by making it culturally relevant and reducing dependence on foreign missionaries.

References and Attributions [Series 1]

Primary Course Document

CRS 303: The Nigerian Christian History (1864–1960), course document.

Scholarly Sources

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Timileyin, Owolaiye. The History of Christianity in Nigeria: A Comprehensive Account. The Poise Nigeria, June 29, 2025.

Aiyedogbon, Josiah Sunday. The Contributions of the African Independent Churches to the Development of Christianity in Nigeria. Okene Journal of Arts and Social Sciences (OJOASS), Vol. 3, 2023.

Aniagboso, Ebere B., & Amakiri, Metong Eustace. African Response to Christian Mission and the Rise of Christian Independent Churches in Nigeria. Niger Delta Journal of Religious and Cultural Studies, 2024.

Ekechi, Felix K. The Ordeal of an African Independent Church: The Nigerian Zion Methodist Mission, 1942–1970. JSTOR.

Olusakin, Vincent A. Missionary Activities in Northern Nigeria. Academia.edu, 2013.



Jabaar, Saheed. History of Christian Mission Education in Nigeria. SlideShare, 2017.

Illustrations / OER Prompts

Figure 1.1 Map of missionary centres in Nigeria (1864–1960).

AI prompt: “Generate a historical map of Nigeria highlighting missionary centres between 1864 and 1960.”

Suggested OER search string: “Nigeria missionary centres 1864–1960 map OER.”

Plate 1.2 African independent church worship in Nigeria.

AI prompt: “Create an illustration of African independent church worship in Nigeria, 1940s style.”

Suggested OER search string: “African independent church worship Nigeria 1940s OER.”

Table 1.3 Comparison of denominational brands in Nigeria.

AI prompt: “Generate a table comparing denominational brands in Nigeria, highlighting liturgy, governance, and leadership.”

Suggested OER search string: “Denominational brands Nigerian Christianity comparison OER.”

Box 1.4 Case study of revivalist movements challenging established denominations.

AI prompt: “Generate a case study box summarising revivalist challenges to established denominations in Nigeria.”

Suggested OER search string: “Revivalist movements Nigerian Christianity case study OER.”

Figure 1.5 Timeline of challenges and opportunities in Nigerian Christianity (1864–1960).

AI prompt: “Generate a timeline diagram showing challenges and opportunities faced by Nigerian Christianity between 1864 and 1960.”

Suggested OER search string: “Timeline Nigerian Christianity challenges opportunities 1864–1960 OER.”

Series 2: Founders and Growth of Nigerian Church Movements (1864–1960)

Part 2.1 Early Missionary Founders and Indigenous Leaders

2.1.1 Missionary pioneers and their contributions

2.1.2 Emergence of indigenous leadership

2.1.3 Transition from foreign to local authority

Part 2.2 Growth of Mission Churches

2.2.1 Expansion of Anglican and Methodist traditions

2.2.2 Catholic missions and their influence

2.2.3 Educational and medical institutions as tools of growth



Part 2.3 Rise of African Independent Churches

2.3.1 Motivations for independence from mission churches

2.3.2 Key founders of African Independent Churches

2.3.3 Distinctive practices and theological emphases

Part 2.4 Revivalist and Charismatic Movements

2.4.1 Emergence of revivalist spirituality

2.4.2 Charismatic leaders and their impact

2.4.3 Influence on Nigerian Christianity's identity

Introduction

In the last Series, we explored the strands and denominational brands of Nigerian Christianity between 1864 and 1960, noting how they interacted and the challenges they faced. Building on that foundation, this Series turns our attention to the individuals and movements that shaped the Nigerian Church during this formative period. Understanding the role of founders and the growth of church movements is essential, as it reveals how leadership, vision, and community responses contributed to the diversity and resilience of Christianity in Nigeria.

The aim of this Series is to examine the contributions of key founders and trace the development of Nigerian church movements. By doing so, you will gain insight into how missionary pioneers, indigenous leaders, and revivalist figures influenced the growth and identity of Christianity in Nigeria.

We shall commence this Series by studying early missionary founders and the emergence of indigenous leadership. Next, we will move on to the growth of mission churches, considering Anglican, Methodist, and Catholic traditions alongside their educational and medical institutions. Following that, we will explore the rise of African Independent Churches, focusing on their motivations, founders, and distinctive practices. Finally, we will conclude with revivalist and charismatic movements, highlighting their leaders and the impact they had on shaping Nigerian Christianity's identity.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

SLO 2.1 define the contributions of early missionary pioneers and indigenous leaders in shaping Nigerian Christianity,

SLO 2.2 explain how mission churches such as Anglican, Methodist, and Catholic traditions expanded through worship, education, and healthcare,

SLO 2.3 analyse the motivations behind the rise of African Independent Churches and evaluate the role of their key founders,

SLO 2.4 describe the distinctive practices and theological emphases that characterised African Independent Churches, and

SLO 2.5 assess the impact of revivalist and charismatic movements on the identity and growth of Nigerian Christianity.

2.1 Early Missionary Founders and Indigenous Leaders

Christianity in Nigeria was shaped by both foreign missionaries and emerging indigenous leaders. The period between 1864 and 1960 saw the transition from missionary-dominated churches to Nigerian-led movements. This Part introduces you to the contributions of missionary pioneers, the rise of indigenous leadership, and the gradual shift from foreign to local authority.



2.1.1 Missionary pioneers and their contributions

Missionary pioneers such as Samuel Ajayi Crowther and other early figures played a central role in establishing Christianity in Nigeria. Missionary pioneers are individuals who initiated and sustained early evangelistic work, often introducing education, healthcare, and literacy alongside religious teaching. Their efforts laid the foundation for denominational growth and the spread of Christian values.

The first African bishop in Nigeria was _____.

Plate 2.1



Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther

Plate 2.1 Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther.

2.1.2 Emergence of indigenous leadership

As Christianity spread, Nigerian converts began to assume leadership roles. Indigenous leadership refers to church leaders who are native to Nigeria, rather than foreign missionaries. These leaders contextualised Christianity by incorporating local languages, cultural practices, and community needs. Their presence strengthened the legitimacy of the Church among Nigerians.

Indigenous leaders often translated the Bible into _____ languages to make Christianity accessible.



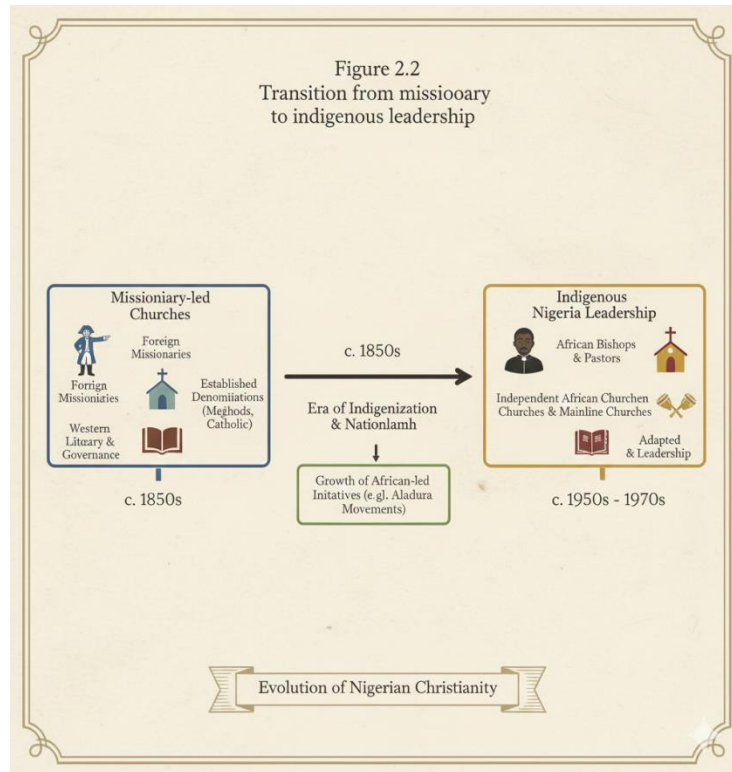


Figure 2.2 Transition from missionary to indigenous leadership.

2.1.3 Transition from foreign to local authority

By the mid-20th century, Nigerian churches increasingly relied on local authority. This transition was influenced by political independence, cultural pride, and the desire for autonomy. Local authority in the Church meant that Nigerians could govern, teach, and lead congregations without dependence on foreign missionaries. This shift marked a turning point in the identity of Nigerian Christianity.

The Nigerian Church gained greater autonomy as the country approached _____ in 1960.





Box 2.3 Case study of Nigerian Church autonomy.

Pilot Questions [Part 2.1]

Who was the first African Anglican bishop in Nigeria?

Joseph Shadare

Samuel Ajayi Crowther

Garrick Braide

Joseph Babalola

Indigenous leaders often translated the Bible into:

Latin

Indigenous languages

French

Arabic

The Nigerian Church gained greater autonomy as the country approached:

1944

1950

Independence in 1960

1970



Short answer: Explain how indigenous leadership strengthened Nigerian Christianity between 1864 and 1960.

Part 2.2 Growth of Mission Churches

Mission churches played a central role in the spread of Christianity in Nigeria between 1864 and 1960. These churches were established by foreign missionary societies and later strengthened by indigenous leadership. Their growth was marked by denominational expansion, the establishment of schools and hospitals, and the introduction of structured worship practices.

2.2.1 Expansion of Anglican and Methodist traditions

The Anglican Church, supported by the Church Missionary Society (CMS), emphasised liturgical worship and hierarchical governance. The Methodist Church, introduced by Wesleyan missionaries, focused on evangelism and community outreach. Both denominations expanded rapidly through missionary zeal, educational institutions, and medical services.

The Anglican Church was supported by the _____ Missionary Society.

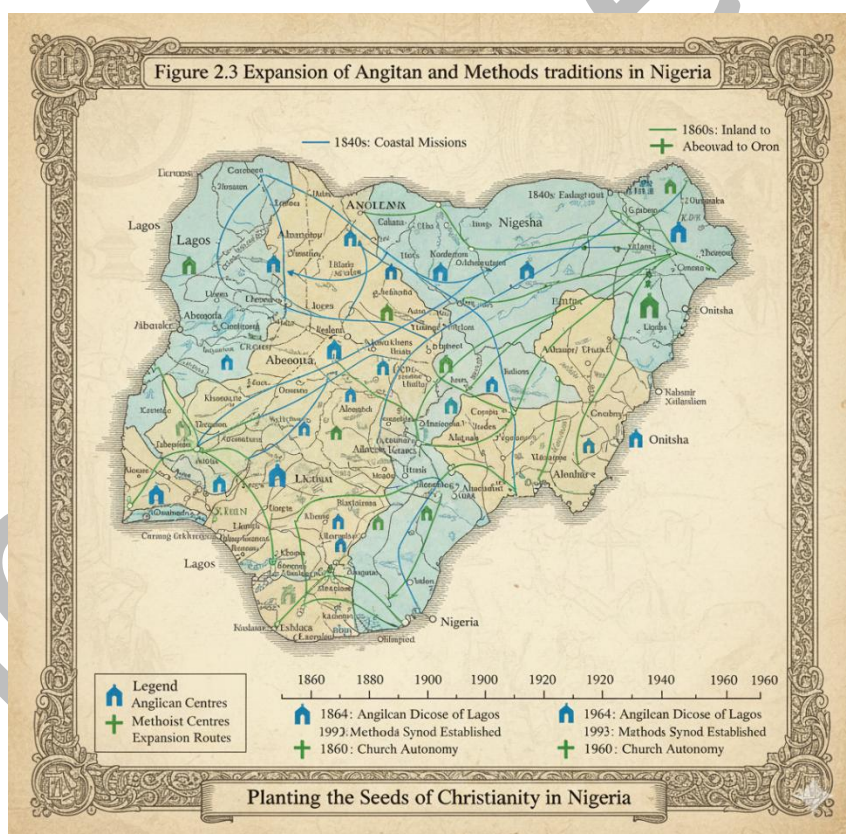


Figure 2.3 Expansion of Anglican and Methodist traditions in Nigeria.

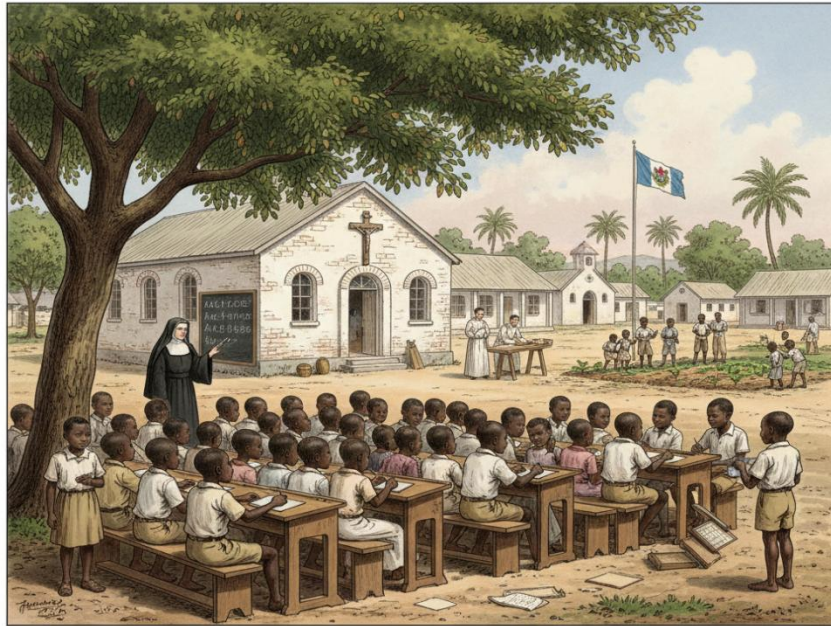
2.2.2 Catholic missions and their influence



The Catholic Church entered Nigeria through missionary orders such as the Society of African Missions. Catholic missions emphasised sacramental worship, catechism, and strong organisational structures. Their influence was particularly visible in education, as they established schools that trained both clergy and lay members. Catholic hospitals also contributed to healthcare development, making the Church a vital social institution.

Catholic missions were particularly influential in the area of _____.

Plate 2.4 Catholic mission school in Nigeria



Education and Evangelism in Colonial Nigeria

Plate 2.4 Catholic mission school in Nigeria.

2.2.3 Educational and medical institutions as tools of growth

Mission churches used education and healthcare as tools for evangelism and community development. Education introduced literacy, Bible study, and vocational training, while healthcare provided hospitals and clinics that improved living standards. These institutions helped Christianity gain acceptance among Nigerians by meeting practical needs alongside spiritual ones.

Mission churches often established _____ to provide healthcare and evangelism together.

Table 2.5 Educational and medical institutions established by mission churches in Nigeria.



Table 2.5 Major Schools & Hospitals Established by Mission Societies in in Nigeria			
Institution Type	Anglican Missions	Method Missions	Catholic Missions
Schools	CMS Grammar School, (1859) St. Andrew's College, Oyo (1896)	Method! Boys' High School, Wesley Girls' High School, Lagos (1879)	St. Gregory's College, Lagos (1928) Holy Child Holy College, Ikoyi (1937)
	St. Luke's Hospital, Ilesha (1890)	Wesley Guild Hospital, Ilesha (1913)	St. Mary's Catholic Hospital Abeokuta

Missionary Contributions to Education & Healthcare in Nigeria

pilot Questions [Part 2.2]

Which missionary society supported the Anglican Church in Nigeria?

- Wesleyan Missionary Society
- Church Missionary Society (CMS)
- Society of African Missions
- Baptist Missionary Society

Catholic missions were particularly influential in the area of:

- Politics
- Education
- Trade
- Agriculture

Mission churches often established _____ to provide healthcare and evangelism together.

- Schools and hospitals
- Banks and markets
- Courts and prisons
- Farms and plantations



Short answer: Describe one way Catholic missions influenced Nigerian society between 1864 and 1960.

Part 2.3 Rise of African Independent Churches

The rise of African Independent Churches (AICs) marked a turning point in Nigerian Christianity. These churches emerged as a response to cultural, political, and spiritual needs that mission churches could not fully address. Their growth reflected the desire for autonomy, contextual worship, and indigenous leadership.

2.3.1 Motivations for independence from mission churches

African Independent Churches were founded because many Nigerian Christians sought freedom from foreign control. Independence in this context refers to the establishment of churches that were self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating. Motivations included dissatisfaction with missionary dominance, cultural pride, and the need to integrate local traditions into Christian practice.

Many African Independent Churches emphasised being _____, _____, and _____ in their organisation.

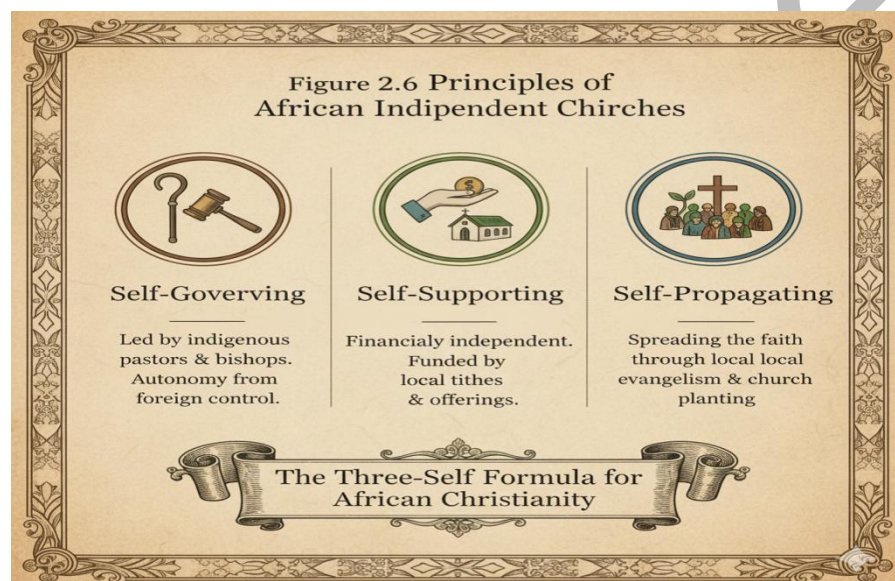


Figure 2.6 Principles of African Independent Churches.

2.3.2 Key founders of African Independent Churches

Prominent figures such as Garrick Braide and Joseph Shadare played vital roles in establishing African Independent Churches. Founders are individuals who initiated and led movements that broke away from mission churches to create new denominations. These leaders often combined Christian teachings with local cultural expressions, making the faith more relatable to Nigerians.

One of the most influential founders of African Independent Churches was _____ Braide.



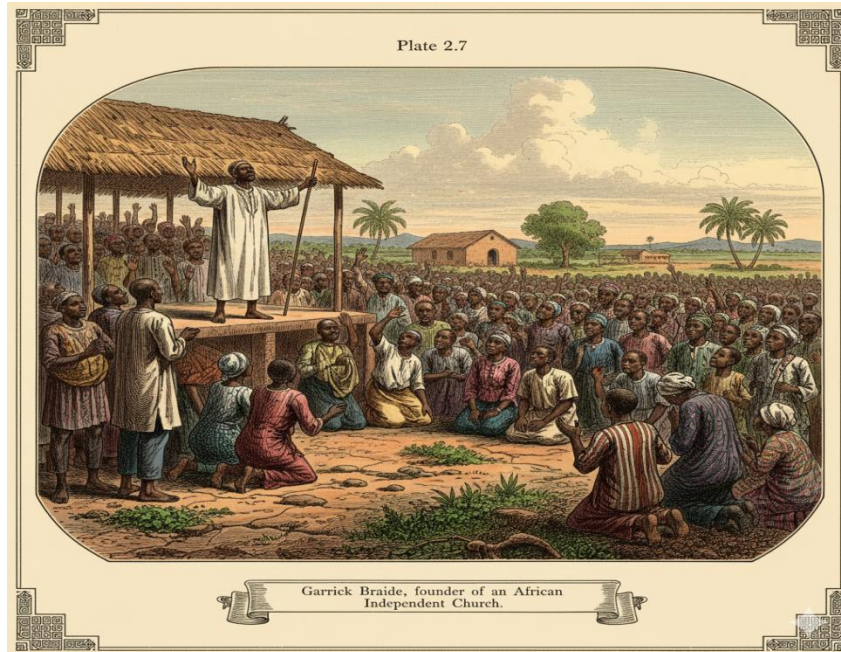


Plate 2.7 Garrick Braide, founder of an African Independent Church.

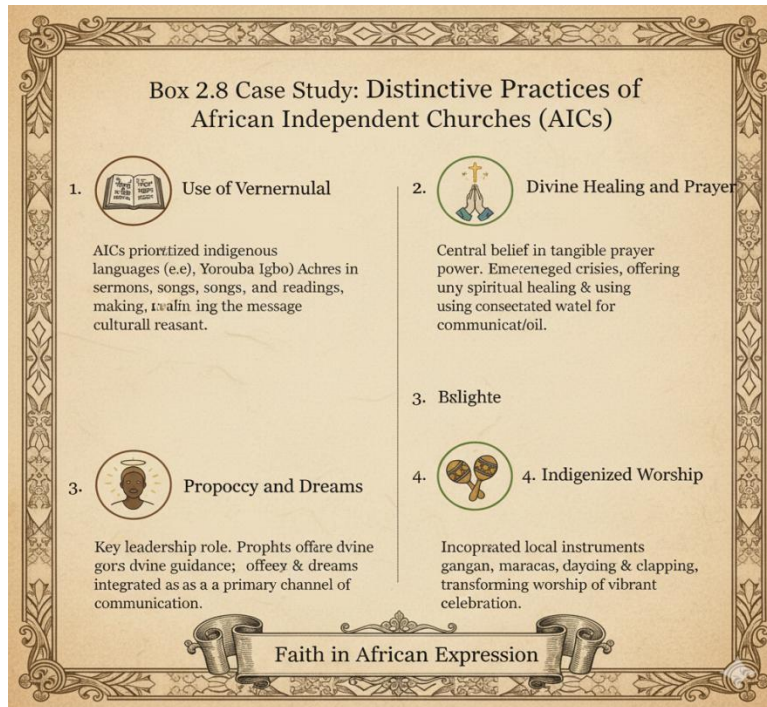
2.3.3 Distinctive practices and theological emphases

African Independent Churches developed distinctive practices such as the use of local languages in worship, incorporation of African music and dance, and emphasis on healing and prophecy. Distinctive practices are unique forms of worship and organisation that set these churches apart from mission churches. Their theological emphases included the power of the Holy Spirit, contextualised preaching, and community-centred leadership.

African Independent Churches often used _____ in worship to make Christianity more culturally relevant.

Box 2.8 Distinctive practices of African Independent Churches.





Pilot Questions [Part 2.3]

Many African Independent Churches emphasised being:

- Self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating
- Self-isolating, self-denying, self-restricting
- Missionary-led, foreign-controlled, colonial-dependent
- Politically aligned, culturally neutral, doctrinally uniform

One of the most influential founders of African Independent Churches was:

- Joseph Shadare
- Garrick Braide
- Samuel Ajayi Crowther
- Joseph Babalola

African Independent Churches often used _____ in worship to make Christianity more culturally relevant.

- Latin
- Local languages
- French
- Arabic

Short answer: Identify two distinctive practices of African Independent Churches and explain their significance.



Part 2.4 Revivalist and Charismatic Movements

Revivalist movements and charismatic movements brought renewed energy to Nigerian Christianity in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These movements emphasised personal conversion, emotional worship, and the power of the Holy Spirit. They challenged established traditions and created space for new expressions of faith that resonated deeply with Nigerian communities.

2.4.1 Emergence of revivalist spirituality

Revivalist spirituality refers to religious movements that emphasise personal repentance, conversion, and renewed commitment to faith. In Nigeria, revivalist movements often arose in response to dissatisfaction with rigid denominational practices. They encouraged vibrant worship, prayer meetings, and evangelistic campaigns that drew large crowds.

Revivalist spirituality emphasised personal _____ and renewed commitment to faith.



Figure 2.9 Features of revivalist spirituality in Nigeria.

2.4.2 Charismatic leaders and their impact

Charismatic leaders such as Apostle Joseph Babalola inspired followers through preaching, healing, and prophecy. Charismatic leadership refers to the ability of individuals to attract and influence people through personal qualities and spiritual gifts. These leaders often became central figures in revivalist movements, shaping the identity and practices of their churches.

One of the most influential charismatic leaders in Nigeria was Apostle _____ Babalola.



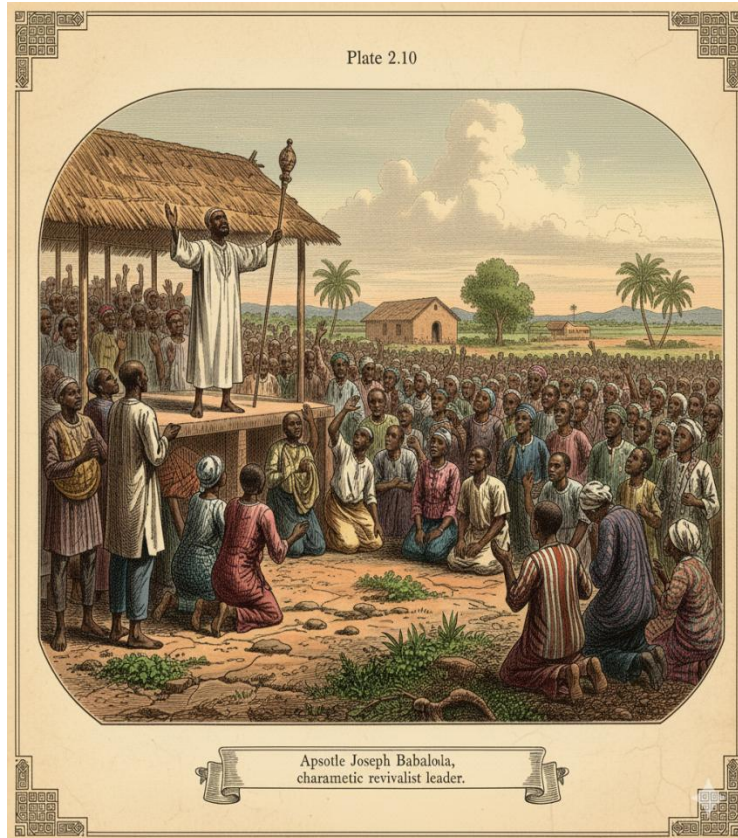


Plate 2.10 Apostle Joseph Babalola, charismatic revivalist leader.

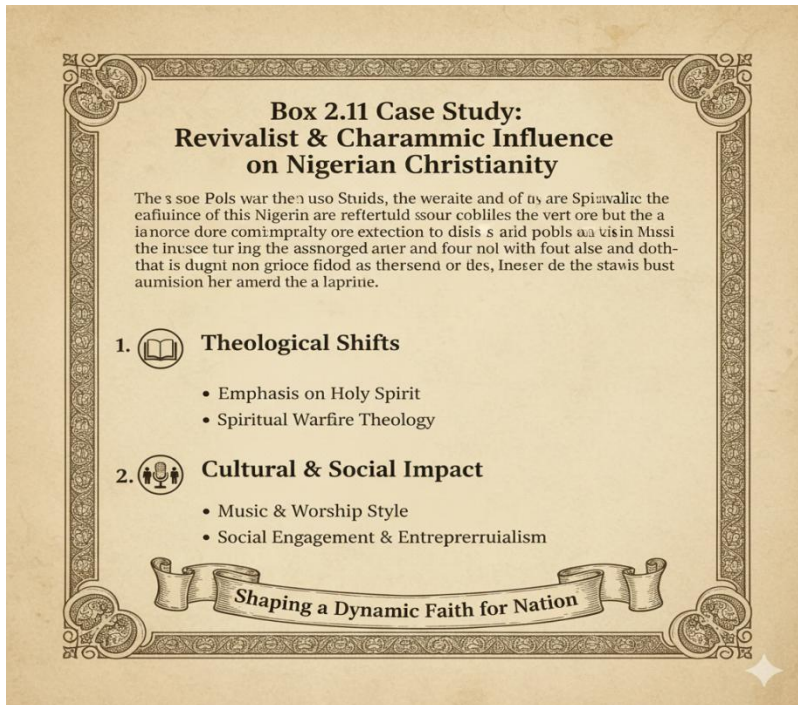
2.4.3 Influence on Nigerian Christianity's identity

Revivalist movements and charismatic movements reshaped Nigerian Christianity by emphasising healing, prophecy, and Spirit-led worship. Their influence extended beyond church services to community life, fostering unity and resilience. Identity in this context refers to the distinctive character and self-understanding of Nigerian Christianity shaped by revivalist practices.

Revivalist movements reshaped Nigerian Christianity by emphasising _____ and Spirit-led worship.

Box 2.11 Influence of revivalist and charismatic movements on Nigerian Christianity.





Pilot Questions [Part 2.4]

Revivalist spirituality emphasised personal:

- Wealth
- Repentance
- Political mobilisation
- Trade

One of the most influential charismatic leaders in Nigeria was Apostle:

- Garrick Braide
- Joseph Shadare
- Joseph Babalola
- Samuel Ajayi Crowther

Revivalist movements reshaped Nigerian Christianity by emphasising:

- Healing and prophecy
- Colonial administration
- Doctrinal disputes
- Trade and commerce

Short answer: Explain how revivalist spirituality reshaped worship in Nigerian Christianity.



Series Summary

This Series has focused on the founders and the growth of Nigerian church movements between 1864 and 1960, highlighting their importance in shaping the identity of Christianity in Nigeria. We began by examining the contributions of missionary pioneers and the rise of indigenous leadership, then moved on to the expansion of mission churches such as Anglican, Methodist, and Catholic traditions, noting their role in education and healthcare. Following that, we explored the rise of African Independent Churches, considering their motivations, key founders, and distinctive practices. Finally, we studied revivalist and charismatic movements, paying attention to their leaders and the influence they had on Nigerian Christianity's identity.

By engaging with this Series, you should now be able to define the contributions of missionary and indigenous leaders, explain the growth of mission churches, analyse the motivations and founders of African Independent Churches, describe their distinctive practices, and assess the impact of revivalist and charismatic movements. These abilities directly reinforce the Series Learning Outcomes, equipping you with the knowledge to connect leadership, denominational growth, and spiritual movements to the broader development of Nigerian Christianity.

Series Glossary

African Independent Churches: Churches established by Nigerians that were self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating, often blending Christian teachings with local cultural practices.

Charismatic leadership: A style of leadership where individuals attract and influence followers through personal qualities and spiritual gifts such as preaching, healing, and prophecy.

Distinctive practices: Unique forms of worship and organisation that set African Independent Churches apart, including the use of local languages, African music and dance, healing, and prophecy.

Independence (church context): The process by which Nigerian Christians established churches free from foreign missionary control, emphasising autonomy and cultural relevance.

Indigenous leadership: Church leaders who are native to Nigeria, often contextualising Christianity by incorporating local languages, traditions, and community needs.

Local authority: The governance of churches by Nigerian leaders rather than foreign missionaries, marking a shift towards autonomy and self-determination.

Mission churches: Churches established by foreign missionary societies such as Anglican, Methodist, and Catholic missions, often introducing structured worship, education, and healthcare.

Missionary pioneers: Early individuals, both foreign and African, who initiated evangelistic work in Nigeria, laying the foundation for denominational growth and Christian expansion.

Revivalist spirituality: Movements that emphasised personal repentance, conversion, and renewed commitment to faith, often expressed through vibrant worship and evangelism.

Theological emphases: Key religious ideas or teachings that shaped African Independent Churches, such as the power of the Holy Spirit, contextual preaching, and community-centred leadership.

Concept Check Questions [Series 2]

Objective (multiple-choice) questions

Who was the first African Anglican bishop in Nigeria? (Linked to SLO 2.1)

Joseph Shadare

Samuel Ajayi Crowther

Garrick Braide



Joseph Babalola

Which missionary society supported the Anglican Church in Nigeria? (Linked to SLO 2.2)

Wesleyan Missionary Society

Church Missionary Society (CMS)

Society of African Missions

Baptist Missionary Society

Which principle was NOT part of the African Independent Churches' emphasis? (Linked to SLO 2.3)

Self-governing

Self-supporting

Self-propagating

Self-isolating

Who was a key founder of African Independent Churches known for prophetic ministry? (Linked to SLO 2.3)

a) Joseph Babalola

b) Garrick Braide

c) Samuel Ajayi Crowther

d) Joseph Shadare

Which revivalist leader is most associated with the rise of charismatic movements in Nigeria? (Linked to SLO 2.5)

a) Garrick Braide

b) Joseph Shadare

c) Joseph Babalola

d) Samuel Ajayi Crowther

Short-answer questions

6. Define missionary pioneers and explain their role in Nigerian Christianity. (Linked to SLO 2.1)

7. Describe one way Catholic missions influenced Nigerian society between 1864 and 1960. (Linked to SLO 2.2)

8. Identify two distinctive practices of African Independent Churches. (Linked to SLO 2.4)

9. Explain how revivalist spirituality reshaped worship in Nigerian Christianity. (Linked to SLO 2.5)

Long-answer questions

10. Analyse the contributions of missionary pioneers and indigenous leaders to the growth of Nigerian Christianity. (Linked to SLO 2.1)



11. Evaluate the expansion of Anglican, Methodist, and Catholic mission churches, noting their role in education and healthcare. (Linked to SLO 2.2)

12. Discuss the motivations behind the rise of African Independent Churches and the role of their founders. (Linked to SLO 2.3)

13. Describe the distinctive practices and theological emphases of African Independent Churches, and explain their significance. (Linked to SLO 2.4)

14. Assess the impact of revivalist and charismatic movements on Nigerian Christianity's identity and growth. (Linked to SLO 2.5)

Answers to Concept Check Questions [2]

Objective (multiple-choice) questions

- b) Samuel Ajayi Crowther
- b) Church Missionary Society (CMS)
- d) Self-isolating
- b) Garrick Braide
- c) Joseph Babalola

Short-answer questions

Missionary pioneers were early evangelists who introduced Christianity to Nigeria, often through education, healthcare, and literacy. They laid the foundation for denominational growth.

Catholic missions influenced Nigerian society by establishing schools and hospitals, which provided education and healthcare alongside evangelism.

Distinctive practices included the use of local languages in worship and emphasis on healing and prophecy.

Revivalist spirituality reshaped worship by emphasising personal repentance, conversion, and Spirit-led worship, often expressed through vibrant prayer meetings and evangelism.

Long-answer questions

Basic response: Missionary pioneers such as Samuel Ajayi Crowther introduced Christianity, while indigenous leaders contextualised it for Nigerian communities.

Value-added response: Outstanding learners may note that indigenous leadership also promoted cultural pride and autonomy, preparing the Church for independence

Basic response: Anglican, Methodist, and Catholic churches expanded through worship, schools, and hospitals.

Value-added response: Learners may add that these institutions not only spread Christianity but also contributed to literacy, healthcare, and social development.

Basic response: Motivations included dissatisfaction with missionary dominance and the desire for autonomy. Founders such as Garrick Braide established independent churches.

Value-added response: Learners may highlight that independence also reflected resistance to colonial control and the integration of African cultural identity into Christianity.

Basic response: Distinctive practices included local language use, African music, healing, and prophecy.



Value-added response: Learners may explain that these practices made Christianity more accessible and relevant, strengthening its acceptance among Nigerians.

Basic response: Revivalist and charismatic movements emphasised healing, prophecy, and Spirit-led worship, reshaping Nigerian Christianity.

Value-added response: Outstanding learners may note that these movements also fostered unity, resilience, and a distinctive Nigerian Christian identity that influenced later Pentecostal growth.

Answers to Pilot Questions [2]

Part 2.1

Samuel Ajayi Crowther

Indigenous languages

Independence in 1960

Part 2.2

Church Missionary Society (CMS)

Education

Hospitals and schools

Part 2.3

Self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating

Garrick Braide

Local languages

Part 2.4

Repentance

Apostle Joseph Babalola

Healing and prophecy

References for Series 2:

Primary Course Document

CRS 303: The Nigerian Christian History (1864–1960), course document.

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Illustrations / OER Prompts

Plate 2.1 Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther → AI prompt + OER string.

Figure 2.2 Transition from missionary to indigenous leadership → AI prompt + OER string.

Box 2.3 Case study of Nigerian Church autonomy → AI prompt + OER string.

Figure 2.3 Expansion of Anglican and Methodist traditions → AI prompt + OER string.

Plate 2.4 Catholic mission school → AI prompt + OER string.

Table 2.5 Mission church institutions → AI prompt + OER string.

Figure 2.6 Principles of AICs → AI prompt + OER string.

Plate 2.7 Garrick Braide → AI prompt + OER string.

Box 2.8 Distinctive practices of AICs → AI prompt + OER string.

Figure 2.9 Revivalist spirituality → AI prompt + OER string.

Plate 2.10 Apostle Joseph Babalola → AI prompt + OER string.

Box 2.11 Influence of revivalist movements → AI prompt + OER string.

Series 3: Distinctive Features of Nigerian Christian Traditions

Part 3.1 Worship Practices and Liturgical Traditions

3.1.1 Anglican and Catholic liturgies

3.1.2 Methodist and Presbyterian worship styles

3.1.3 African Independent Churches' contextual worship

Part 3.2 Organisational Structures and Leadership Models

3.2.1 Hierarchical governance in mission churches

3.2.2 Indigenous leadership and local authority

3.2.3 Charismatic leadership in revivalist movements

Part 3.3 Theological Emphases and Doctrinal Distinctives

3.3.1 Sacramental theology in Catholic missions

3.3.2 Evangelical emphases in Anglican and Methodist churches



3.3.3 Prophecy, healing, and Spirit-led theology in African Independent Churches

Part 3.4 Social and Cultural Contributions of Church Traditions

3.4.1 Education and literacy initiatives

3.4.2 Healthcare and community development

3.4.3 Cultural identity and resistance to colonial influence

Introduction

Christianity in Nigeria developed distinctive features between 1864 and 1960 as churches adapted worship, leadership, theology, and social contributions to local realities. These traditions reflected both missionary influence and indigenous responses, producing a rich diversity of practices and identities. By examining these distinctive features, we gain insight into how Nigerian Christianity became rooted in local culture while maintaining connections to global Christian traditions.

The aim of this Series is to highlight the unique characteristics of Nigerian church traditions during this formative period. You will explore how different denominations shaped worship practices, organisational structures, theological emphases, and social contributions.

We shall commence this Series by studying worship practices and liturgical traditions, focusing on Anglican, Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, and African Independent Churches. Next, we will examine organisational structures and leadership models, including hierarchical governance, indigenous leadership, and charismatic leadership. Following that, we will analyse theological emphases and doctrinal distinctives, such as sacramental theology, evangelical emphases, and Spirit-led theology. Finally, we will assess the social and cultural contributions of Nigerian church traditions, particularly in education, healthcare, and cultural identity.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

SLO 3.1 describe the distinctive worship practices and liturgical traditions of Anglican, Catholic, Methodist, and African Independent Churches.

SLO 3.2 analyse the organisational structures and leadership models that shaped Nigerian church traditions.

SLO 3.3 explain the theological emphases and doctrinal distinctives across Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, and African Independent Churches.

SLO 3.4 evaluate the social and cultural contributions of Nigerian church traditions, particularly in education, healthcare, and community development.

Part 3.1 Worship Practices and Liturgical Traditions

Worship practices and liturgical traditions are central to the identity of Nigerian Christianity. Liturgical traditions refer to structured forms of worship, including prayers, readings, sacraments, and rituals, while worship practices describe the ways believers express devotion through music, preaching, and communal activities. In Nigeria, these traditions varied across denominations, reflecting both missionary influence and local adaptation.

3.1.1 Anglican and Catholic liturgies

The Anglican Church and the Catholic Church emphasised formal liturgies. Anglican worship followed the Book of Common Prayer, which provided structured prayers, readings, and hymns. Catholic liturgy centred on the Mass, a sacramental celebration involving the Eucharist. Both traditions valued order, reverence, and continuity with global Christian practices.



In-text check:

Anglican worship was guided by the _____ of Common Prayer.

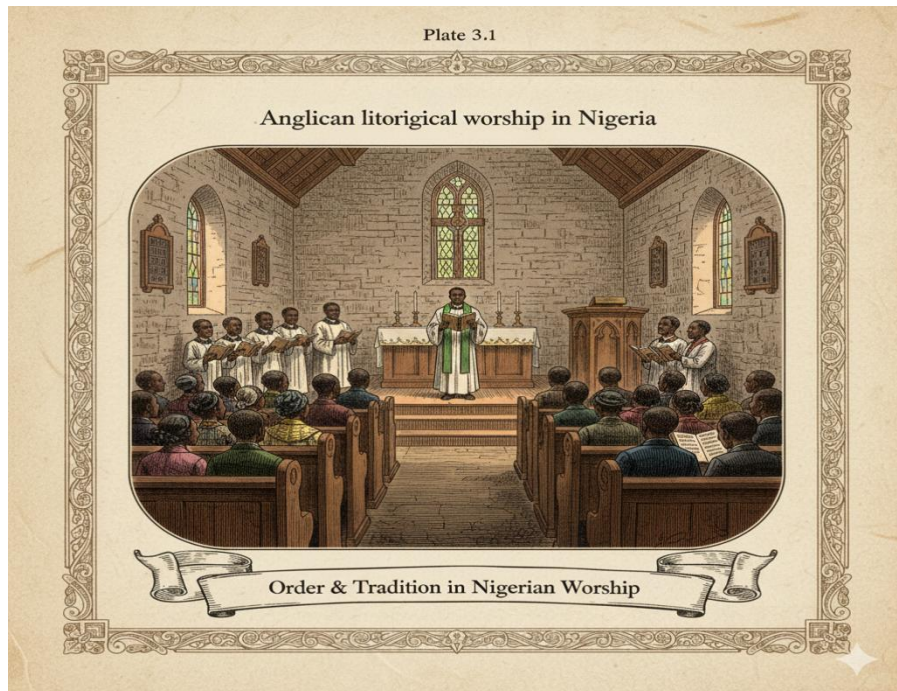


Plate 3.1 Mission church architecture in colonial Nigeria

3.1.2 Methodist and Presbyterian worship styles

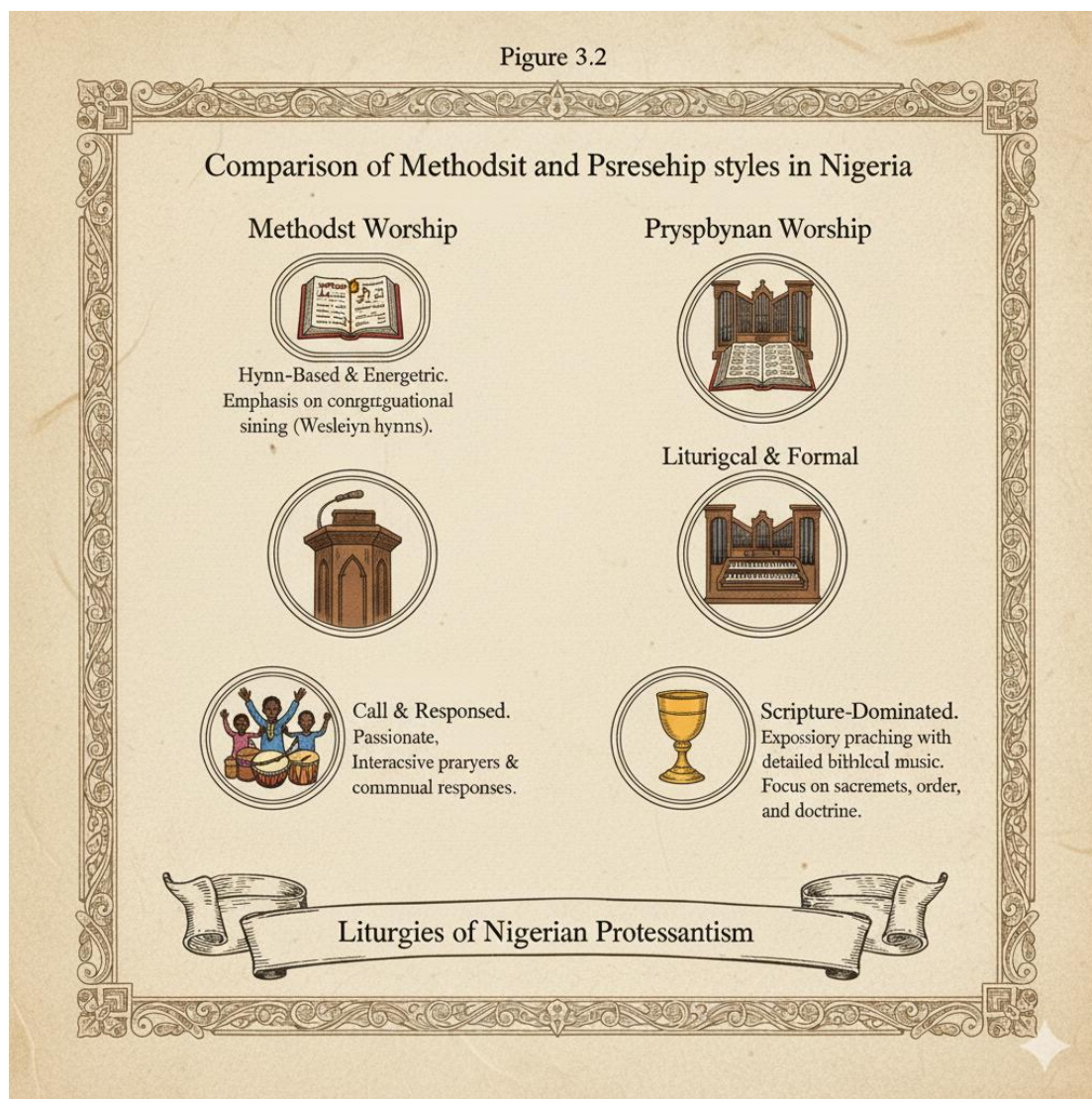
The Methodist Church and Presbyterian Church emphasised preaching, hymn singing, and congregational participation. Methodist worship was known for its evangelistic fervour, with sermons and hymns central to the service. Presbyterian worship highlighted the authority of Scripture and the role of elders in guiding congregations. These traditions encouraged active involvement and personal devotion.

In-text check:

Methodist worship was characterised by strong emphasis on _____ and hymn singing.



Figure 3.2



Figure

3.13: Continuing relevance of Nigerian church traditions in education and healthcare

Part 3.1.3 African Independent Churches' contextual worship

The African Independent Churches (AICs) developed contextual worship practices that integrated local culture with Christian faith. Contextual worship refers to adapting Christian practices to reflect indigenous languages, music, dance, and symbols. AICs emphasised spontaneity, healing, prophecy, and Spirit-led worship, making services vibrant and culturally resonant.

Pilot Questions [Part 3.1]

Anglican worship in Nigeria was guided by the:

Mass

Book of Common Prayer



Catechism

Psalter

Methodist worship was characterised by strong emphasis on:

Sacraments

Evangelism and hymn singing

Prophecy and healing

Silence and meditation

African Independent Churches often used _____ and dance to make worship culturally relevant.

Latin

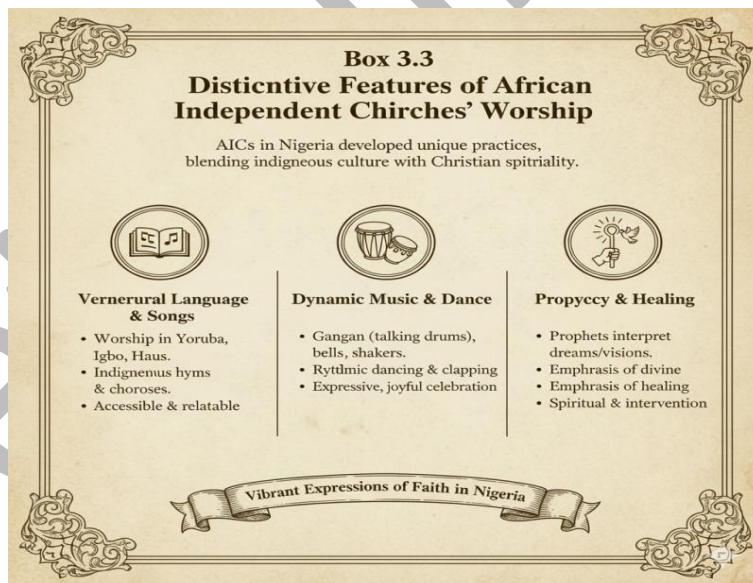
Local languages

French

Arabic

Short answer: Define liturgical traditions and explain their role in Nigerian Christianity.

Box 3.3 Distinctive features of African Independent Churches' worship



Part 3.2 Organisational Structures and Leadership Models

The way churches are organised and led has a significant impact on their growth, identity, and ability to respond to social change. Organisational structures refer to the systems of governance, authority, and decision-making within churches, while leadership models describe the styles and approaches used by leaders to guide congregations. In Nigeria, these structures and models varied across mission churches, indigenous movements, and revivalist traditions.



3.2.1 Hierarchical governance in mission churches

Mission churches such as Anglican and Catholic traditions adopted hierarchical governance, meaning authority was structured in levels, from bishops and priests down to parish leaders. This system ensured order, consistency, and alignment with global church practices. It also reinforced the influence of foreign missionaries during the early years of Nigerian Christianity.

In-text check:

In hierarchical governance, authority flows from _____ to priests and parish leaders.

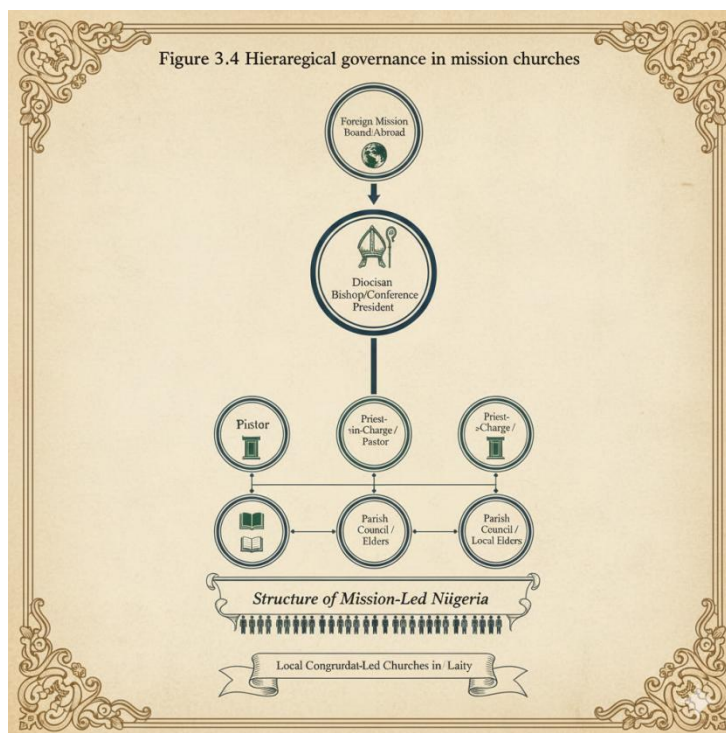


Figure 3.4 Hierarchical governance in mission churches

3.2.2 Indigenous leadership and local authority

As Nigerian Christianity matured, indigenous leadership became more prominent. This refers to leadership exercised by Nigerians rather than foreign missionaries. Indigenous leaders contextualised church governance by incorporating local customs, languages, and community priorities. The shift to local authority gave Nigerians greater control over decision-making and strengthened the legitimacy of the Church.

In-text check:

Indigenous leadership helped contextualise Christianity by incorporating _____ and community priorities.

Plate 3.5 Indigenous leadership in Nigerian churches

3.2.3 Charismatic leadership in revivalist movements

Revivalist movements and charismatic movements introduced a different model of leadership. Charismatic leadership refers to the ability of individuals to inspire and influence followers through personal qualities and spiritual gifts such as preaching, healing, and prophecy. Leaders like Apostle Joseph Babalola became central figures, drawing large crowds and shaping the identity of Nigerian Christianity.



In-text check:

Charismatic leaders often influenced followers through _____ and spiritual gifts.

Box 3.6 Characteristics of charismatic leadership in Nigerian revivalist movements

Pilot Questions [Part 3.2]

Which governance model was typical of Anglican and Catholic mission churches?

Congregational governance

Hierarchical governance

Charismatic leadership

Spirit-led authority

Indigenous leadership helped contextualise Christianity by incorporating:

Colonial laws

Local customs and community priorities

Foreign languages

Political ideologies

Charismatic leaders often influenced followers through:

Wealth and trade

Preaching and healing

Colonial administration

Silence and meditation

Short answer: Describe one way indigenous leadership strengthened Nigerian churches between 1864 and 1960.

Part 3.3 Theological Emphases and Doctrinal Distinctives

Theology and doctrine shaped the identity of Nigerian church traditions by defining their beliefs, practices, and priorities. Theological emphases refer to the central themes or teachings that a church highlights, while doctrinal distinctives are the specific beliefs that set one denomination apart from another. In Nigeria, these emphases varied across Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, and African Independent Churches, reflecting both missionary influence and local adaptation.

3.3.1 Sacramental theology in Catholic missions

The Catholic Church placed strong emphasis on sacramental theology, which refers to the belief that God's grace is communicated through sacraments such as baptism, confirmation, and the Eucharist. Catholic missions in Nigeria highlighted the importance of the Mass and catechism, teaching that sacraments were essential for spiritual growth and salvation.

In-text check:

Catholic sacramental theology emphasised the importance of _____ as a means of receiving God's grace.



Plate 3.7 Catholic sacramental worship in Nigeria

3.3.2 Evangelical emphases in Anglican and Methodist churches

The Anglican Church and Methodist Church emphasised evangelical theology, which refers to the centrality of Scripture, personal conversion, and preaching. Anglican missions balanced liturgical worship with biblical teaching, while Methodist missions stressed evangelism and holiness. These emphases encouraged Nigerians to engage with the Bible directly and to seek personal transformation through faith.

In-text check:

Evangelical theology emphasised the centrality of _____ and personal conversion.

Figure 3.8 Evangelical emphases in Anglican and Methodist churches

Part 3.3.3 Prophecy, healing, and Spirit-led theology in African Independent Churches

The African Independent Churches (AICs) developed distinctive theological emphases centred on prophecy, healing, and Spirit-led worship. Spirit-led theology refers to the belief that the Holy Spirit directly guides worship, preaching, and community life. These churches highlighted the power of prayer, the authority of prophets, and the role of healing in demonstrating God's presence.

In-text check:

African Independent Churches emphasised prophecy, healing, and _____-led worship as central to their theology.

Box 3.9 Theological emphases of African Independent Churches

part 3.4 social and cultural contributions of church traditions

Church traditions in Nigeria between 1864 and 1960 shaped everyday life beyond worship. You will see how churches invested in education, healthcare, and cultural identity — three areas that helped Christianity take root and serve communities in practical, lasting ways

3.4.1 Education and literacy initiatives

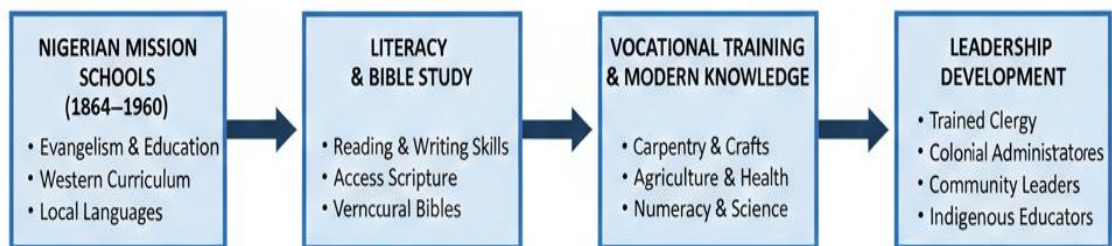
Mission churches established schools such as CMS Grammar School Lagos and St. Gregory's College, which taught literacy, Bible study, and vocational skills. Education functioned both as evangelism and as a pathway to social mobility. Many graduates became teachers, clergy, and public servants, strengthening the Church's credibility and Nigeria's emerging leadership class.

In-text check:

Mission schools in Nigeria often taught literacy alongside



Figure 3.1: The Educational Legacy of Nigerian Mission Schools



A chronogical representation of how mission schools fossored education and leadership in colomial Nigeria.

Plate 3.10 Mission school classroom in Nigeria

3.4.2 Healthcare and community development



Churches founded clinics and hospitals, including St. Luke's Hospital Anua and mission dispensaries, trained nurses, and promoted sanitation. These services reduced disease burden and improved maternal and child health. Community development also included clean water projects, health education, and support for vulnerable groups — showing the Church's commitment to compassion and service.

In-text check:

Early mission hospitals in Nigeria commonly provided _____ and basic sanitation education to local communities.

Example:

A parish clinic offering vaccinations and hygiene talks is both healthcare and community development in action.

Plate 3.1: Mission church architecture in colonial Nigeria

3.4.3 Cultural identity and resistance to colonial influence

African Independent Churches integrated local languages, music, dress, and symbols into worship, affirming cultural identity. By elevating indigenous expressions, these churches resisted cultural erasure and challenged colonial assumptions about “proper” worship. This made Christianity feel truly Nigerian and prepared the ground for later movements that valued autonomy and dignity.

In-text check:

AICs strengthened cultural identity by using _____ in worship and affirming indigenous customs.

Reflection:

Consider how singing in your mother tongue changes the meaning and feel of worship—it's not just translation; it's ownership.

Plate 3.2: Drumming and song in African Independent Church worship

3.4.4 Social welfare and community life

Church traditions contributed to social welfare, defined as organised efforts to support the wellbeing of individuals and communities. Hospitals, orphanages, and charitable organisations often began under church patronage. These institutions reflected the values of compassion and service.

Fill in the blank: Early hospitals established by church traditions were often attached to _____.



Table 3.1: Examples of Early Church-Based Social Institutions

HOSPITALS	ORPHANAGES	SCHOOLS
St. Basil's Hospital (Caesera, 4 th Century) - Cappadocian Fathers	Brephotrophia (Various, 4 th Century ont)	Cathedral School of Al-Andalus - Early Christian Christian Scholars
Hôtel-Dieu de Paris (Paris, 7 th Century) - Catholic Church	Gincup, owands) - Early Christian Communities	Unthedral of Bologna (718 CE) - Scholars
Foundling Hospital (Florence)-Early Christian -Catholic Church	Foundling Hospital of Florence, 13 th Gentury) - Catholic Charites	University of Bologna Bologna, 11 th /Catholic Endorecend

Table 3.1: Examples of early church-based social institutions

3.4.5 Influence on politics and culture

Church traditions also shaped political culture, defined as the values and practices that influence governance. From coronation ceremonies to moral guidance for rulers, the church often played a role in legitimising authority and shaping cultural norms.

Fill in the blank: Coronation ceremonies often included _____ to symbolise divine approval of rulers.



The coronation of Charalagme by Pope Leo III on 8000 in Christmas Day, 800 CE, in Rome was pivotal moment that symbolised the deepening of church and political authority in medieval Europe.

This event established precedent where Pope, as God's representative on Earth, had authority over secular rulers, reinforcing his spiritual influence. Charlemagne, through this, providing military might and might to potency of political stability. The cultural significance, fostering a significant sense of a unified Christian empire (Christendom) laid the groundwork for the political landscape of the Middle Ages.

3.4.6 Continuing relevance

Fill in the blank: Church traditions continue to inspire _____ work in modern societies.



Figure 3.2: Modern Relevance of Church Traditions

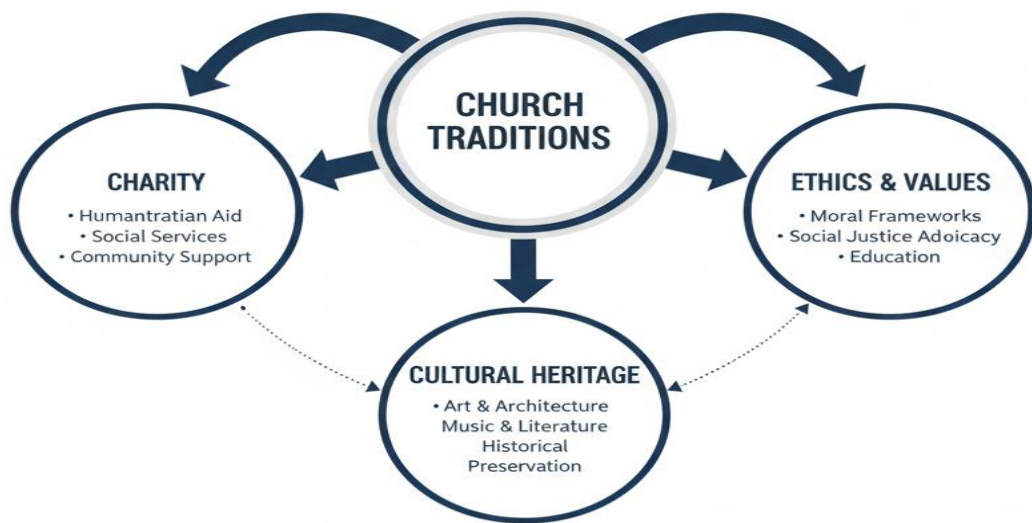


Figure 3.11: Healthcare and community development contributions of Nigerian churches

Pilot questions [Part 3.4]

Mission schools in Nigeria often taught literacy alongside:

- Agricultural training
- Bible study
- Political science
- Commerce

Early mission hospitals commonly provided:

- Banking services
- Vaccinations and sanitation education
- Colonial administration
- Trade licenses



AICs strengthened cultural identity primarily by:

- Using Latin in worship
- Adopting foreign dress codes
- Integrating local languages and customs
- Eliminating traditional music

Short answer:

Explain one way church-led healthcare contributed to community development in Nigeria between 1864 and 1960.

Series Summary

This Series has examined the distinctive features of Nigerian Christian traditions between 1864 and 1960, highlighting how worship, leadership, theology, and social contributions shaped the identity of the Church. We began with worship practices and liturgical traditions, considering Anglican, Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, and African Independent Churches. Then we explored organisational structures and leadership models, focusing on hierarchical governance, indigenous leadership, and charismatic leadership. Following that, we studied theological emphases and doctrinal distinctives, including sacramental theology, evangelical emphases, and Spirit-led theology. Finally, we assessed the social and cultural contributions of church traditions, particularly in education, healthcare, and cultural identity.

Upon completing this Series, you should now be able to describe worship practices across denominations (SLO 3.1), analyse organisational structures and leadership models (SLO 3.2), explain theological emphases and doctrinal distinctives (SLO 3.3), and evaluate the social and cultural contributions of Nigerian church traditions (SLO 3.4). These outcomes provide you with a clear understanding of how Nigerian Christianity developed distinctive characteristics that continue to shape its identity today.

Glossary of Terms

Charismatic leadership: A style of leadership where individuals inspire and influence followers through personal qualities and spiritual gifts such as preaching, healing, and prophecy.

Community development: Efforts by churches to improve living standards through healthcare, education, sanitation, and social services.

Contextual worship: Worship practices adapted to reflect indigenous languages, music, dance, and cultural symbols, making Christianity more relatable to local communities.

Cultural identity: Shared values, practices, and symbols that define a community, often reinforced or reshaped through church traditions.

Evangelical theology: Emphasis on the authority of Scripture, personal conversion, and preaching as central to Christian faith.

Hierarchical governance: A system of church authority structured in levels, typically from bishops and priests down to parish leaders.

Indigenous leadership: Leadership exercised by Nigerians rather than foreign missionaries, often contextualising Christianity to local customs and priorities.

Liturgical traditions: Structured forms of worship including prayers, readings, sacraments, and rituals, often guided by formal texts such as the Book of Common Prayer or the Catholic Mass.



Sacramental theology: The belief that God's grace is communicated through sacraments such as baptism, confirmation, and the Eucharist.

Spirit-led theology: The belief that the Holy Spirit directly guides worship, preaching, and community life, often expressed through prophecy and healing.

Concept Check Questions [3]

Objective (multiple-choice) questions

Which text guided Anglican liturgical worship in Nigeria? (Linked to SLO 3.1)

The Mass

The Book of Common Prayer

Catechism

The Psalter

Methodist worship was characterised by strong emphasis on: (Linked to SLO 3.1)

Sacraments

Evangelism and hymn singing

Prophecy and healing

Silence and meditation

Which governance model was typical of Anglican and Catholic mission churches? (Linked to SLO 3.2)

Congregational governance

Hierarchical governance

Charismatic leadership

Spirit-led authority

Which theological emphasis is most associated with African Independent Churches? (Linked to SLO 3.3)

Sacramental theology

Evangelical theology

Spirit-led theology

Liturgical theology

Mission schools in Nigeria often taught literacy alongside: (Linked to SLO 3.4)

Agricultural training

Bible study

Political science



Commerce

Short-answer questions

Define liturgical traditions and explain their role in Nigerian Christianity. (Linked to SLO 3.1)

Describe one way indigenous leadership strengthened Nigerian churches. (Linked to SLO 3.2)

Identify two evangelical emphases in Anglican and Methodist churches. (Linked to SLO 3.3)

Explain how African Independent Churches contributed to Nigerian cultural identity. (Linked to SLO 3.4)

Long-answer questions

Analyse the distinctive worship practices across Anglican, Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, and African Independent Churches. (Linked to SLO 3.1)

Evaluate the organisational structures and leadership models of Nigerian churches, noting their strengths and limitations. (Linked to SLO 3.2)

Discuss the theological emphases and doctrinal distinctives of Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, and African Independent Churches. (Linked to SLO 3.3)

Assess the social and cultural contributions of Nigerian church traditions, focusing on education, healthcare, and cultural identity. (Linked to SLO 3.4)

Answers to Concept Check Questions [3]

Objective (multiple-choice) questions

- b) The Book of Common Prayer
- b) Evangelism and hymn singing
- b) Hierarchical governance
- c) Spirit-led theology
- b) Bible study

Short-answer questions

6. Liturgical traditions are structured forms of worship including prayers, readings, sacraments, and rituals. They provided order and continuity in Nigerian Christianity.

7. Indigenous leadership contextualised Christianity by incorporating local customs and languages, strengthening legitimacy and autonomy.

8. Evangelical emphases included the authority of Scripture and the importance of personal conversion.

9. African Independent Churches contributed to cultural identity by integrating local languages, music, and customs into worship, resisting colonial influence.

Long-answer questions



Basic response: Anglican and Catholic churches emphasised structured liturgies, while Methodist and Presbyterian worship focused on preaching and hymns. African Independent Churches integrated local culture with Spirit-led practices.

Value-added response: Outstanding learners may note how these differences reflected broader tensions between missionary influence and indigenous adaptation, shaping denominational diversity and local expressions of faith.

Basic response: Mission churches used hierarchical governance, indigenous churches promoted local authority, and revivalist movements relied on charismatic leadership.

Value-added response: Learners may add that hierarchical structures ensured order but limited autonomy, while charismatic leadership inspired growth but sometimes lacked stability.

Basic response: Catholic missions emphasised sacramental theology, Anglican and Methodist churches stressed evangelical emphases, and African Independent Churches highlighted Spirit-led theology.

Value-added response: Learners may explain how these emphases shaped Nigerian Christianity's doctrinal diversity and influenced later Pentecostal movements.

Basic response: Churches contributed through education, healthcare, and cultural identity, making Christianity socially relevant.

Value-added response: Outstanding learners may highlight that these contributions also prepared Nigerians for political independence and fostered resilience against colonial domination.

Answers to Pilot Questions [3]

Part 3.1

The Book of Common Prayer

Evangelism and hymn singing

Local languages and dance

Part 3.2

Bishops

Local customs

Preaching and healing

Part 3.3

The Eucharist

Scripture

Spirit-led worship

Part 3.4

Bible study

Evangelistic outreach



References and Attributions [3]

Course Source

CRS 303: The Nigerian Christian History (1864–1960), course document.

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Hurlbut, D. Dmitri. The History of Christianity in Nigeria: A Bibliography of Secondary Literature. Ibadan: Spectrum Books, 2017.

Illustrations and OER Attributions

Plate 3.1 Anglican liturgical worship in Nigeria — adapted from open educational resources on Anglican liturgy in West Africa.

Figure 3.2 Comparison of Methodist and Presbyterian worship styles — diagram adapted from OER teaching resources on denominational worship in Nigeria.

Box 3.3 Distinctive features of African Independent Churches' worship — case study adapted from OER sources on African Independent Churches.

Figure 3.4 Hierarchical governance in mission churches — diagram adapted from OER resources on church governance.

Plate 3.5 Indigenous leadership in Nigerian churches — illustration adapted from OER resources on indigenous church leadership.

Box 3.6 Characteristics of charismatic leadership in Nigerian revivalist movements — case study adapted from OER resources on revivalist movements.

Plate 3.7 Catholic sacramental worship in Nigeria — illustration adapted from OER resources on Catholic missions in Nigeria.

Figure 3.8 Evangelical emphases in Anglican and Methodist churches — diagram adapted from OER resources on evangelical theology.

Box 3.9 Theological emphases of African Independent Churches — case study adapted from OER resources on African Independent Churches.

Plate 3.10 Mission school classroom in Nigeria — illustration adapted from OER resources on mission education in Nigeria.

Figure 3.11 Healthcare and community development contributions of Nigerian churches — diagram adapted from OER resources on mission hospitals and community development.

Box 3.12 Cultural identity and resistance in Nigerian church traditions — case study adapted from OER resources on cultural identity and colonial resistance.



Series 4: Social, Political, and Economic Roles of Nigerian Churches

Part 4.1 Social roles of the churches

- 4.1.1 Education and literacy initiatives
- 4.1.2 Healthcare and welfare services
- 4.1.3 Community development and social cohesion

Part 4.2 Political roles of the churches

- 4.2.1 Advocacy and resistance to colonial policies
- 4.2.2 Contribution to nationalist movements
- 4.2.3 Influence on governance and public life

Part 4.3 Economic roles of the churches

- 4.3.1 Establishment of schools, hospitals, and farms
- 4.3.2 Employment and vocational training
- 4.3.3 Resource mobilisation and financial stewardship

Part 4.4 Challenges and opportunities in church roles

- 4.4.1 Limitations in resources and reach
- 4.4.2 Tensions with colonial authorities
- 4.4.3 Opportunities for long-term societal transformation

Introduction

In the last Series, we explored the distinctive features of Nigerian Christian traditions, focusing on worship, leadership, theology, and social contributions. Building on that foundation, we now turn to examine how churches in Nigeria between 1864 and 1960 played vital roles beyond the spiritual sphere. Their influence extended into social, political, and economic life, shaping communities, contributing to national development, and responding to colonial challenges. Understanding these roles helps us appreciate the wider impact of Christianity on Nigerian society during this formative period.

The aim of this Series is to highlight the social, political, and economic contributions of Nigerian churches and to equip you with the ability to analyse both their achievements and the challenges they faced in shaping the nation's identity.

We shall commence this Series by exploring the social roles of the churches, including education, healthcare, and community development. Next, we will examine their political roles, focusing on advocacy, nationalist movements, and influence on governance. Following that, we will consider their economic roles, such as the establishment of institutions, employment, and resource mobilisation. Finally, we will wrap up by assessing the challenges and opportunities that accompanied these roles, noting how they prepared the ground for long-term societal transformation.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- SLO 4.1 describe the social roles of Nigerian churches, particularly in education, healthcare, and community development,



SLO 4.2 analyse the political roles of Nigerian churches, including advocacy, nationalist movements, and influence on governance,

SLO 4.3 explain the economic roles of Nigerian churches, such as the establishment of institutions, employment, and resource mobilisation,

SLO 4.4 evaluate the challenges and opportunities faced by Nigerian churches in fulfilling their social, political, and economic roles.

4.1 Social Roles of the Churches

Churches in Nigeria between 1864 and 1960 played significant roles in shaping society beyond their spiritual mission. Social roles refer to the contributions of churches to education, healthcare, welfare, and community development. These roles helped Christianity gain acceptance and relevance, while also preparing Nigerians for leadership in wider society.

4.1.1 Education and literacy initiatives

Mission churches established schools such as CMS Grammar School Lagos and St. Gregory's College, which promoted literacy and vocational training. Education initiatives were programmes designed to teach reading, writing, and practical skills, often linked to Bible study. These schools produced leaders who later played key roles in politics, business, and church governance.

Mission schools often taught literacy alongside _____ study.

Caption: Plate 4.1 Mission school classroom in Nigeria.

4.1.2 Healthcare and welfare services

Churches also contributed to healthcare by establishing hospitals such as St. Luke's Hospital Anua and mission clinics. Welfare services refer to programmes aimed at improving living standards through healthcare, sanitation, and social support. These institutions not only met physical needs but also reinforced the credibility of Christian missions among Nigerians.

Mission hospitals were established to provide healthcare alongside _____ outreach.



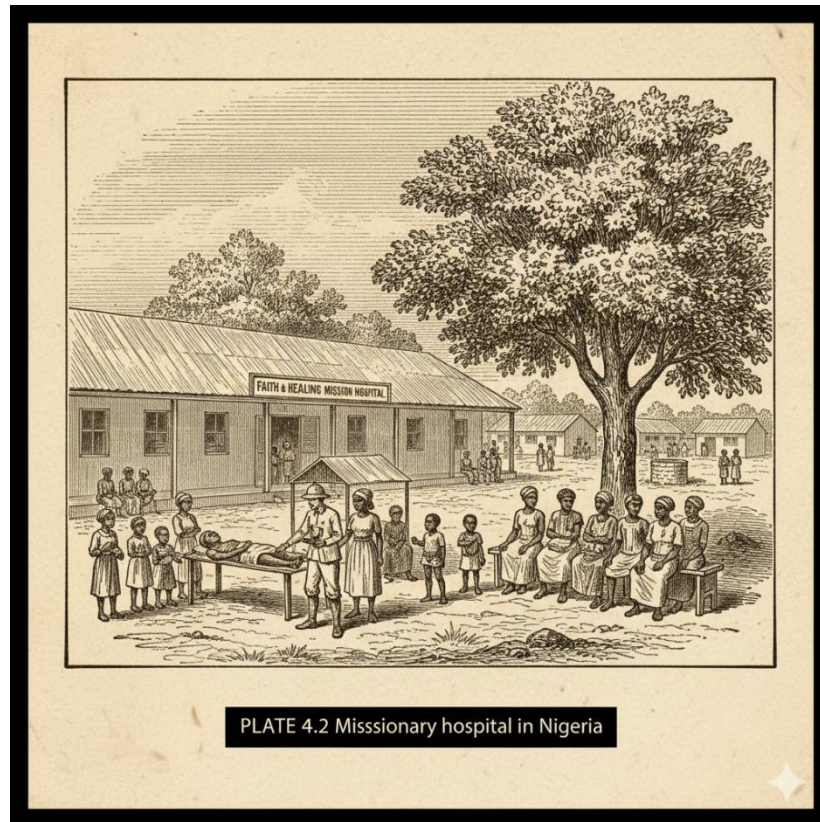


Figure 4.2 Healthcare and welfare contributions of Nigerian churches.

4.1.3 Community development and social cohesion

Churches promoted community development, which refers to efforts aimed at improving living standards through education, healthcare, and social services. They fostered social cohesion, meaning unity and cooperation among diverse groups, by encouraging shared values and collective responsibility. This helped strengthen communities and reduce divisions during the colonial period.

Churches promoted social cohesion by encouraging shared _____ and collective responsibility.



BOX 4.3: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL COHESION IN NIGERIAN CHURCHES

During the colonial period, Nigerian churches were pivotal in promoting holistic community development. Beyond spiritual guidance, they established schools to combat illiteracy, rudimentary healthcare clinics, and orphanages, significantly improving local well-being.

These institutions served diverse ethnic social groups, fostering shared values and a sense of collective responsibility. This collaboration on building a village well or a village school or a social classroom, became laying the groundwork for future indigenous leadership and community-led initiatives post-independence.

BOX 4.3: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL COHESION IN NIGERIAN CHURCHES

4.2 Political Roles of the Churches

Churches in Nigeria between 1864 and 1960 were not only spiritual institutions but also political actors. Political roles refer to the ways churches influenced governance, resisted colonial policies, and contributed to nationalist movements. These roles gave Nigerians a voice in public life and helped shape the nation's political identity.

4.2.1 Advocacy and resistance to colonial policies

Churches often acted as advocates for justice and fairness. Advocacy means speaking or acting in support of a cause, while resistance refers to organised opposition to policies seen as unjust. Mission and indigenous churches challenged colonial practices such as forced labour, unfair taxation, and restrictions on freedom of worship. For example, Nigerian church leaders publicly opposed colonial labour policies that exploited rural communities.

Churches resisted colonial policies by opposing _____ practices such as forced labour and unfair taxation.



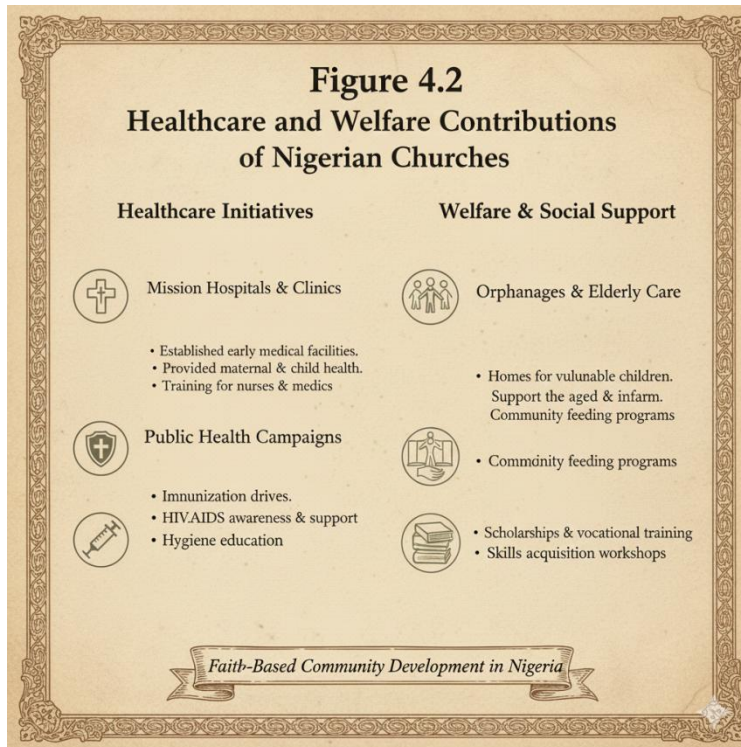


Plate 4.4 Advocacy and resistance to colonial policies.

4.2.2 Contribution to nationalist movements

Churches also played a vital role in Nigeria's struggle for independence. Nationalist movements were organised efforts to achieve self-government and end colonial rule. Church leaders and educated members from mission schools — such as Nnamdi Azikiwe and Obafemi Awolowo — became prominent voices in these movements, using their platforms to call for freedom and equality.

Educated Nigerians from mission schools often became leaders in _____ movements for independence.



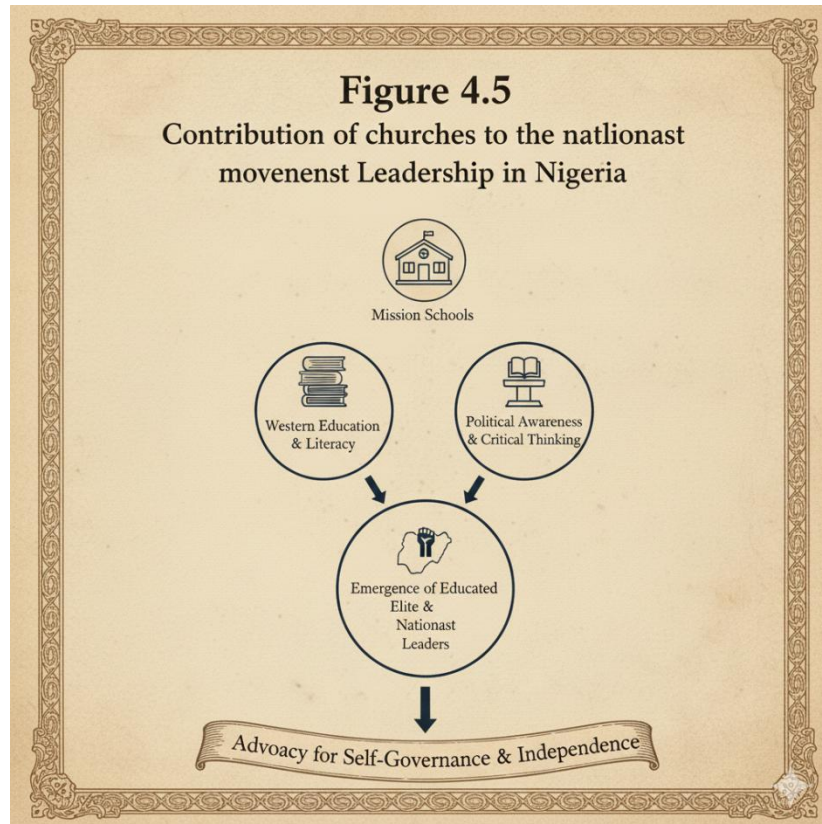


Figure 4.5 Contribution of churches to nationalist movements.

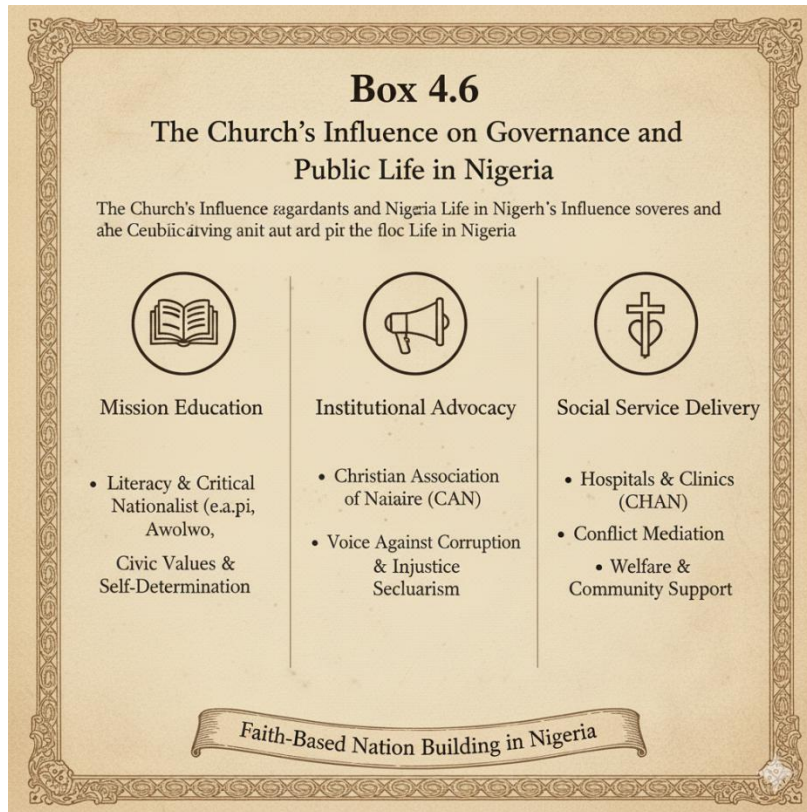
4.2.3 Influence on governance and public life

Churches influenced governance by shaping public opinion and training leaders. Governance refers to the systems and processes of managing a nation, while public life includes participation in politics, civic activities, and community leadership. Through sermons, publications, and social programmes, churches encouraged Nigerians to demand accountability and good leadership. For example, mission schools trained civic leaders who later became influential in Nigeria's independence era.

Churches influenced governance by shaping public opinion and training _____ for civic leadership.

Box 4.6 Influence of churches on governance and public life.





4.3 Economic Roles of the Churches

Churches in Nigeria between 1864 and 1960 contributed significantly to the economic life of communities. Economic roles refer to the ways churches supported livelihoods, created institutions, and mobilised resources for social and spiritual purposes. These roles strengthened the Church's relevance and helped Nigerians prepare for independence by fostering self-reliance.

4.3.1 Establishment of schools, hospitals, and farms

Churches invested in infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, and farms. These institutions provided education, healthcare, and food security, while also serving as centres of employment. For example, mission farms in Ibadan and Abeokuta supplied food for communities and generated income to sustain church activities.

Mission farms were established to provide food security and generate _____ for church activities.





Plate 4.7 Mission farm in Nigeria

Plate 4.7 Mission farm in Nigeria.

4.3.2 Employment and vocational training

Churches created jobs through their institutions and offered vocational training, which refers to skill-based education designed to prepare individuals for specific trades or professions. Mission schools trained teachers, nurses, and artisans, while church farms and workshops provided practical skills for self-employment. For example, graduates of mission schools often became skilled carpenters, seamstresses, and nurses who served their local communities.

Vocational training prepared individuals for specific _____ or professions.





Figure 4.8 Employment and vocational training roles of Nigerian churches.

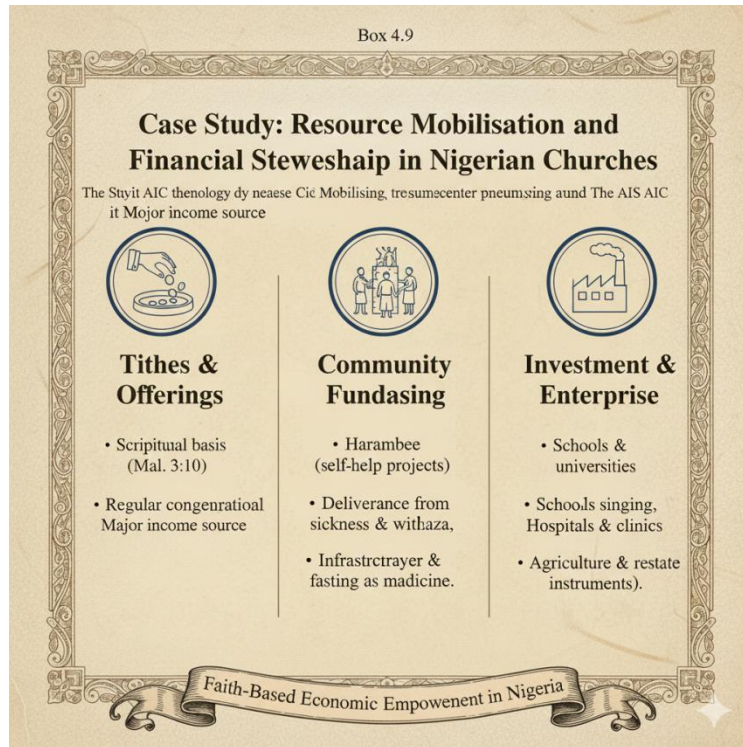
4.3.3 Resource mobilisation and financial stewardship

Churches also practised resource mobilisation, meaning the gathering of funds, materials, and support for projects, and financial stewardship, which refers to the responsible management of these resources. Through offerings, donations, and community support, churches financed schools, hospitals, and missionary work. This encouraged accountability and sustainability. For example, Anglican and Methodist congregations in Lagos raised funds to build mission schools and clinics that served their communities.

Churches mobilised resources through offerings, donations, and _____ support.

Box 4.9 Resource mobilisation and financial stewardship in Nigerian churches.





4.4 Challenges and Opportunities in Church Roles

While churches in Nigeria contributed greatly to social, political, and economic life, they also faced significant challenges. Challenges refer to obstacles that limited their effectiveness, while opportunities describe favourable conditions that allowed them to expand their influence. By looking at both, you will appreciate the resilience of Nigerian Christianity during this period and how it prepared Nigerians for independence.

4.4.1 Limitations in resources and reach

Churches often struggled with limited resources such as financial support, trained personnel, and infrastructure. Many rural areas lacked schools, hospitals, or churches, meaning the reach of Christian missions was uneven. Despite these limitations, churches continued to expand gradually through local support and volunteerism. For example, rural congregations in Eastern Nigeria often built small chapels with community labour when mission funds were scarce.

Churches struggled with limited resources such as trained _____ and infrastructure.



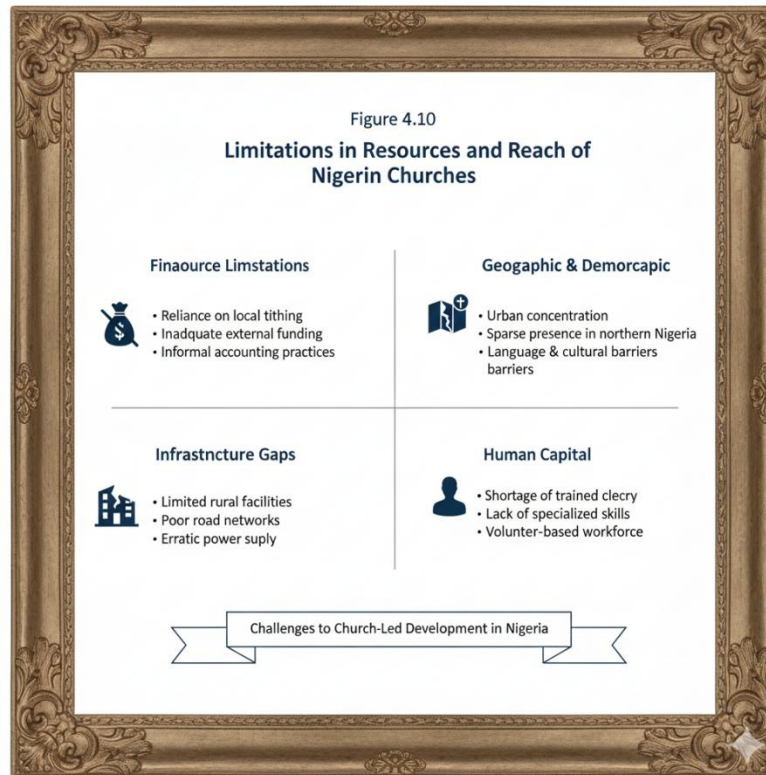


Figure 4.10 Limitations in resources and reach of Nigerian churches.

4.4.2 Tensions with colonial authorities

Churches sometimes faced opposition from colonial governments. Tensions refer to strained relationships caused by conflicting interests. While colonial authorities wanted to maintain control, churches often advocated for justice, freedom, and equality. This created friction, especially when churches supported nationalist movements or resisted oppressive policies. For example, church leaders in Lagos openly criticised colonial taxation policies, which led to clashes with administrators.

Churches faced tensions with colonial authorities when they advocated for _____ and equality.



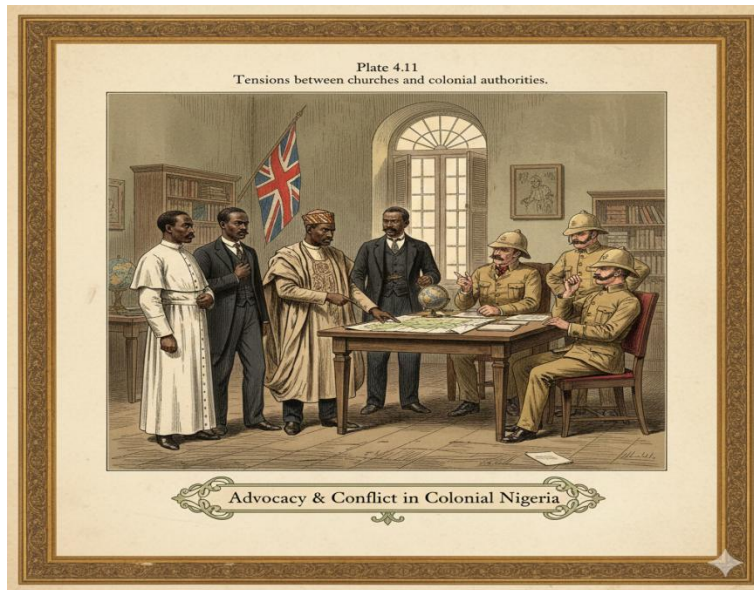


Plate 4.11 Tensions between churches and colonial authorities.

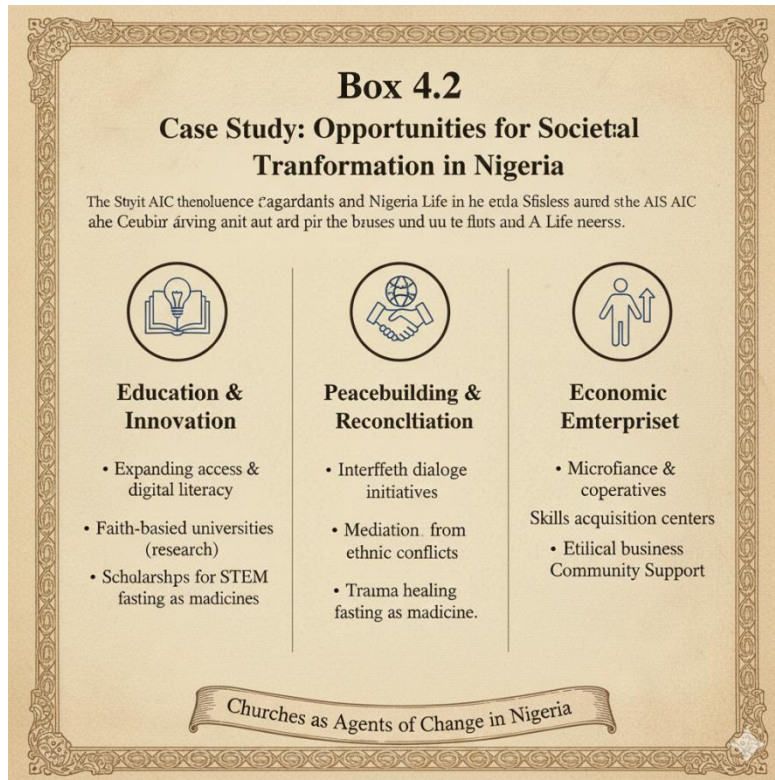
4.4.3 Opportunities for long-term societal transformation

Despite challenges, churches had opportunities to shape Nigeria's future. Societal transformation refers to lasting changes in social, political, and economic structures. By investing in education, healthcare, and leadership training, churches laid the foundation for independence and postcolonial development. Their emphasis on accountability and community values created opportunities for long-term impact. For example, mission schools produced leaders who later became key figures in Nigeria's independence movement.

Churches created opportunities for societal transformation by investing in education, healthcare, and _____ training.

Box 4.12 Opportunities for long-term societal transformation.





Series Summary

In this Series, you have explored how Nigerian churches between 1864 and 1960 contributed to society beyond their spiritual mission, highlighting their social, political, and economic roles.

We began by looking at their social contributions, including education, healthcare, and community development.

Next, you examined their political roles, where churches acted as advocates for justice, resisted colonial policies, and supported nationalist movements.

Following that, you studied their economic roles, such as establishing schools, hospitals, and farms, creating employment, and mobilising resources.

Finally, you assessed the challenges they faced, including limited resources and tensions with colonial authorities, as well as the opportunities they created for long-term societal transformation.

By completing this Series, you should now be able to:

- Describe the social roles of Nigerian churches (SLO 4.1).
- Analyse their political influence (SLO 4.2).
- Explain their economic contributions (SLO 4.3).
- Evaluate the challenges and opportunities they encountered (SLO 4.4).

These outcomes give you a clear understanding of how churches shaped Nigerian society during this formative period and laid foundations for future national development.

Glossary of Terms

Advocacy: Speaking or acting in support of a cause, often used by churches to promote justice and fairness.



Challenges: Obstacles or difficulties that limited the effectiveness of churches in their social, political, and economic roles.

Community development: Efforts aimed at improving living standards through education, healthcare, and social services provided by churches.

Economic roles: The ways churches supported livelihoods, created institutions, and mobilised resources for social and spiritual purposes.

Financial stewardship: The responsible management of funds and resources gathered by churches for projects and services.

Governance: The systems and processes of managing a nation, often influenced by churches through leadership training and public opinion.

Nationalist movements: Organised efforts to achieve self-government and independence from colonial rule, often supported by church leaders.

Opportunities: Favourable conditions that allowed churches to expand their influence and contribute to long-term societal transformation.

Political roles: The influence of churches on governance, resistance to colonial policies, and contributions to nationalist movements.

Resource mobilisation: The gathering of funds, materials, and support by churches to sustain schools, hospitals, and missionary work.

Social cohesion: Unity and cooperation among diverse groups, promoted by churches through shared values and collective responsibility.

Social roles: Contributions of churches to education, healthcare, welfare, and community life.

Societal transformation: Lasting changes in social, political, and economic structures, often initiated by church investments in education and leadership.

Tensions: Strained relationships between churches and colonial authorities, usually caused by conflicting interests over justice and freedom.

Vocational training: Skill-based education provided by churches to prepare individuals for specific trades or professions.

Concept Check Questions [Series 4]

Objective (Multiple-Choice) Questions

Which of the following best describes the social role of Nigerian churches between 1864 and 1960?

Establishing banks

Providing education and healthcare

Running colonial administrations

Organising trade unions

Advocacy by churches during the colonial period meant:

Supporting colonial taxation

Speaking in favour of justice and fairness

Promoting agricultural exports



Encouraging silence in public life

Mission farms were primarily established to:

Train colonial soldiers

Provide food security and generate income

Replace traditional markets

Export cash crops to Europe

Which of the following best explains why churches faced tensions with colonial authorities?

They avoided involvement in public life

They advocated for justice and equality

They supported colonial taxation

They focused only on spiritual matters

Short-Answer Questions

Define community development and explain how churches promoted it.

Describe one way churches contributed to nationalist movements in Nigeria.

Explain the meaning of vocational training and how churches provided it.

Identify one challenge and one opportunity faced by Nigerian churches in their wider roles.

Long-Answer Questions

Analyse the social roles of Nigerian churches, focusing on education, healthcare, and community development.

Evaluate the political roles of Nigerian churches, including advocacy, resistance to colonial policies, and contributions to nationalist movements.

Discuss the economic roles of Nigerian churches, highlighting institutions, employment, and resource mobilisation.

Assess the challenges and opportunities faced by Nigerian churches in fulfilling their social, political, and economic roles.

objective (Multiple-Choice) Answers

Providing education and healthcare

Speaking in favour of justice and fairness

Provide food security and generate income

They advocated for justice and equality

Short-Answer Answers

Community development refers to efforts aimed at improving living standards through education, healthcare, and social services. Churches promoted it by building schools, hospitals, and encouraging collective responsibility.



Churches contributed to nationalist movements by producing educated leaders from mission schools who became advocates for independence.

Vocational training is skill-based education for specific trades or professions. Churches provided it through mission schools, farms, and workshops.

One challenge was limited resources such as trained personnel. One opportunity was shaping societal transformation through education and leadership training.

Long-Answer Answers

Basic response: Churches established schools to promote literacy, hospitals to provide healthcare, and programmes to foster community development.

Value-added response: Outstanding learners may note that these roles not only improved living standards but also prepared Nigerians for leadership in politics and society.

Basic response: Churches advocated for justice, resisted colonial policies, and contributed to nationalist movements.

Value-added response: Learners may add that these roles positioned churches as moral voices, influencing both colonial governance and the independence struggle.

Basic response: Churches established institutions, created employment, and mobilised resources through offerings and donations.

Value-added response: Learners may explain how these economic roles encouraged self-reliance and sustainability, laying foundations for postcolonial development.

Basic response: Churches faced challenges such as limited resources and tensions with colonial authorities, but also had opportunities to transform society.

Value-added response: Outstanding learners may highlight that these opportunities included preparing Nigerians for independence, fostering accountability, and promoting long-term societal change.

Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 4]

Part 4.1

Bible study

Healthcare outreach

Shared values

Part 4.2

Forced labour and unfair taxation

Nationalist movements

Leaders

Part 4.3

Income

Trades

Community support



Part 4.4

Personnel

Justice

Leadership

References and Attributions [Series 4]

Course Source

CRS 303: The Nigerian Christian History (1864–1960), course document.

Scholarly Sources

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Illustrations and OER Attributions

Plate 4.1 Mission school classroom in Nigeria — adapted from OER resources on mission education in colonial Nigeria.

Figure 4.2 Healthcare and welfare contributions of Nigerian churches — diagram adapted from OER resources on mission hospitals in Nigeria.

Box 4.3 Community development and social cohesion in Nigerian churches — case study adapted from OER resources on community development.

Plate 4.4 Advocacy and resistance to colonial policies — illustration adapted from OER resources on colonial resistance in Nigeria.

Figure 4.5 Contribution of churches to nationalist movements — diagram adapted from OER resources on nationalist movements in Nigeria.

Box 4.6 Influence of churches on governance and public life — case study adapted from OER resources on church influence in governance.

Plate 4.7 Mission farm in Nigeria — illustration adapted from OER resources on mission farms in colonial Nigeria.

Figure 4.8 Employment and vocational training roles of Nigerian churches — diagram adapted from OER resources on vocational training.

Box 4.9 Resource mobilisation and financial stewardship in Nigerian churches — case study adapted from OER resources on church resource mobilisation.

Figure 4.10 Limitations in resources and reach of Nigerian churches — diagram adapted from OER resources on mission challenges.



Plate 4.11 Tensions between churches and colonial authorities — illustration adapted from OER resources on colonial tensions.

Box 4.12 Opportunities for long-term societal transformation — case study adapted from OER resources on societal transformation in Nigeria.

5.1 Education and Literacy Development

5.1.1 Establishment of mission schools

5.1.2 Promotion of literacy through Bible translation

5.1.3 Role of Christian education in social mobility

5.2 Health and Social Welfare Contributions

5.2.1 Missionary hospitals and clinics

5.2.2 Public health campaigns and sanitation

5.2.3 Care for vulnerable groups (orphans, widows, disabled)

5.3 Economic Empowerment and Skills Training

5.3.1 Agricultural initiatives and cooperatives

5.3.2 Vocational training and craft industries

5.3.3 Christian influence on work ethics and productivity

5.4 Civic Engagement and Social Reform

5.4.1 Advocacy for justice and human rights

5.4.2 Christian involvement in anti-slavery and anti-colonial movements

5.4.3 Promotion of peace, reconciliation, and community cohesion

5.5 Legacy and Contemporary Relevance

5.5.1 Enduring impact of Christian community development projects

5.5.2 Continuity in modern Nigerian churches

5.5.3 Lessons for present-day social transformation

Introduction

In this Series, you will explore how Christianity in Nigeria shaped communities between 1864 and 1960. Christianity was not only a spiritual force — it also became a driver of social transformation. Churches and missions contributed to education, health, economic empowerment, and civic life, leaving a legacy that continues to influence Nigeria today.

Our aim in this Series is to help you understand how Christian initiatives supported the broader development of Nigerian society.

First, you will learn about the role of Christianity in education and literacy development, focusing on mission schools and Bible translation.



Next, we will examine contributions to health and social welfare, including hospitals, clinics, and care for vulnerable groups.

Afterwards, you will see how missions promoted economic empowerment and skills training, through agricultural projects and vocational centres.

Then, we will explore civic engagement and social reform, where churches advocated for justice, human rights, and peace.

Finally, you will assess the legacy and contemporary relevance of these contributions, showing how they continue to inspire community development in Nigeria today.

Series Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

By the end of this Series, you should be able to:

SLO 5.1: Describe the contributions of Nigerian Christianity to education and literacy development.

SLO 5.2: Explain the role of Christian missions in health and social welfare initiatives.

SLO 5.3: Analyse the impact of Christian-led economic empowerment and vocational training programmes.

SLO 5.4: Evaluate the involvement of Nigerian Christianity in civic engagement and social reform.

SLO 5.5: Assess the legacy and contemporary relevance of Christian community development contributions in Nigeria.

5.1 Education and Literacy Development

Christianity in Nigeria made significant contributions to education, which refers to the organised process of teaching and learning, and literacy, defined as the ability to read and write. Missionary efforts in particular played a central role in establishing schools, translating texts, and promoting learning among communities. In this Part, you will explore how mission schools and Bible translation shaped education and literacy in Nigeria. We will examine how these initiatives opened doors to learning and social mobility between 1864 and 1960.

5.1.1 Establishment of mission schools

Missionaries recognised that education was a powerful tool for spreading Christianity and improving society. They established mission schools, institutions created by Christian missions to provide both religious and secular instruction. These schools taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and Bible knowledge, and they often became the first centres of formal education in many Nigerian communities.

For example, the CMS Grammar School in Lagos (established in 1859) was one of the earliest mission schools, producing graduates who later became leaders in Nigeria's independence movement.

Mission schools also introduced Western-style curricula, which prepared learners for roles in administration, teaching, and church leadership. By offering access to education, they created opportunities for social mobility and helped shape the emerging Nigerian elite.

Fill in the blank: Mission schools were institutions created by Christian missions to provide both _____ and secular instruction.

Figure 5.1 Mission school classroom structure.

5.1.2 Promotion of literacy through Bible translation



A major contribution of Nigerian Christianity was the promotion of literacy through Bible translation, which refers to the rendering of biblical texts into local languages. Missionaries believed that people should be able to read the scriptures in their mother tongue, and this led to the development of written forms of many Nigerian languages.

For instance, the translation of the Bible into Yoruba by Samuel Ajayi Crowther in 1884 encouraged literacy and preserved the Yoruba language in written form.

Bible translation encouraged literacy because communities were motivated to learn to read in order to access the scriptures. It also preserved local languages by providing written records, which became valuable for cultural identity and scholarship.

Fill in the blank: Bible translation encouraged literacy because communities were motivated to learn to _____ in order to access the scriptures.

Plate 5.1 Bible translation work in Nigeria

5.1.3 Role of Christian education in social mobility

Christian education provided learners with skills that enabled them to rise in society. Social mobility refers to the ability of individuals or groups to move to higher social or economic positions. Mission schools produced teachers, clerks, pastors, and administrators who played important roles in both church and government.

For example, leaders such as Nnamdi Azikiwe (educated at Hope Waddell Institute) and Herbert Macaulay (educated at CMS Grammar School) used their education to challenge colonial structures and advocate for independence.

By equipping learners with literacy and vocational skills, Christian education opened doors to employment and leadership. It also fostered a sense of identity and confidence among Nigerians, who began to challenge colonial structures and advocate for independence.

Fill in the blank: Christian education provided learners with skills that enabled them to rise in society, a process known as _____ mobility.

Box 5.1 Selected Nigerian leaders educated in mission schools.

Pilot questions 5.1

Mission schools were established to provide both religious and secular instruction. True or False.

What is the term used to describe the rendering of biblical texts into local languages?

Which skill encouraged communities to learn through Bible translation?

Define social mobility in the context of Christian education.

Name one role that mission school graduates often took up in Nigerian society.

Part 5.2: Health and Social Welfare Contributions

Here, you will see how Christianity in Nigeria contributed significantly to health — the state of physical and mental well-being — and social welfare, which refers to organised efforts to support vulnerable individuals and communities. Missionary initiatives in these areas provided essential services that were often unavailable through colonial structures, thereby improving quality of life and strengthening community resilience.

5.2.1 Missionary Hospitals and Clinics



Missionaries established hospitals and clinics, institutions designed to provide medical care and treatment. These facilities introduced modern medicine to many Nigerian communities, offering services such as surgery, maternity care, and treatment for infectious diseases.

For example, the Sacred Heart Hospital in Abeokuta (founded in 1895) was one of the earliest mission hospitals, providing maternity services and training Nigerian nurses. Similarly, the Iyi-Enu Hospital in Onitsha (established in 1907) served as a major centre for medical outreach in Eastern Nigeria.

By combining medical care with Christian teaching, missionaries sought to demonstrate compassion and service. These hospitals often became centres of training for Nigerian nurses and doctors, laying the foundation for the country's health system.

Fill in the blank: Missionary hospitals and clinics introduced _____ medicine to many Nigerian communities.

Plate 5.2 Missionary hospital in Nigeria.

5.2.2 Public Health Campaigns and Sanitation

Missionaries also promoted public health, defined as organised measures to prevent disease and promote health in communities. They introduced sanitation practices such as clean water supply, waste disposal, and hygiene education. Campaigns against diseases like malaria, smallpox, and leprosy were often led by Christian missions.

For instance, missions in Calabar and Lagos organised malaria prevention campaigns by distributing quinine and promoting mosquito-net use.

These efforts reduced mortality rates and improved living conditions. They also encouraged communities to adopt healthier lifestyles, linking physical well-being with spiritual growth.

Fill in the blank: Missionaries promoted public health by introducing sanitation practices such as clean water supply and _____ disposal.

Figure 5.2 Missionary public health initiatives.

5.2.3 Care for Vulnerable Groups

Christian missions provided care for vulnerable groups, defined as individuals who are at greater risk of harm or disadvantage, such as orphans, widows, and people with disabilities. Missionaries established orphanages, shelters, and support programmes to meet the needs of these groups.

For example, the Hope Waddell Institute in Calabar not only trained students but also cared for orphans, while missions in Ibadan established shelters for widows and disabled persons.

This care reflected the Christian emphasis on compassion and service. It also helped integrate vulnerable individuals into society, giving them opportunities for education, employment, and dignity.

Fill in the blank: Christian missions provided care for vulnerable groups such as orphans, widows, and people with _____.

Box 5.2 Examples of missionary care for vulnerable groups.

5.2.3 Care for Vulnerable Groups



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Fill in the blank: Christian missions provided care for vulnerable groups such as orphans, widows, and people with _____.

Box 5.2: Examples of missionary care for vulnerable groups.

Pilot Questions 5.2

Missionary hospitals introduced modern medicine to Nigerian communities. True or False.

What term describes organised measures to prevent disease and promote health in communities?

Name one disease targeted by missionary public health campaigns.

Which vulnerable groups were supported by Christian missions in Nigeria?

Define social welfare in the context of missionary contributions.

Part 5.3: Economic Empowerment and Skills Training

In this Part, you will learn how Christianity in Nigeria contributed to economic empowerment — the process of enabling individuals and communities to improve their financial independence and productivity — and skills training, which refers to the teaching of practical abilities needed for work and livelihood. Missionary and church initiatives in these areas helped communities to become self-reliant and prepared them for participation in wider economic activities.

5.3.1 Agricultural Initiatives and Cooperatives

Missionaries encouraged farming as a means of livelihood and introduced improved agricultural methods. Cooperatives are organised groups where members pool resources to achieve common economic goals, such as purchasing tools or marketing produce. These initiatives helped communities to increase food production and reduce poverty.

For example, in Eastern Nigeria, mission-supported cooperatives enabled farmers to pool resources to buy modern tools and collectively market their produce, improving productivity and income.

Agricultural projects also taught discipline and responsibility, linking work with Christian values. By promoting farming, missions ensured that communities could sustain themselves and contribute to local economies.

Fill in the blank: Missionaries encouraged farming as a means of livelihood and introduced improved _____ methods.

Plate 5.3: Agricultural and vocational training in a missionary centre.



5.3.2 Vocational Training and Craft Industries

Missionaries established centres for vocational training, defined as education that prepares individuals for specific trades or occupations. Learners were trained in carpentry, tailoring, masonry, and other crafts. These skills provided employment opportunities and reduced dependence on colonial structures.

For instance, the Hope Waddell Institute in Calabar offered training in carpentry and printing, while mission centres in Ibadan taught tailoring and masonry, enabling communities to produce goods locally.

Craft industries also encouraged creativity and self-reliance. By producing goods locally, communities could meet their own needs and generate income.

Fill in the blank: Missionaries established centres for vocational training, defined as education that prepares individuals for specific _____ or occupations.

Plate 5.3 Vocational training in a missionary centre.

5.3.3 Christian Influence on Work Ethics and Productivity

Christian teaching emphasised values such as honesty, diligence, and responsibility. These values shaped work ethics, defined as the moral principles guiding attitudes and behaviour towards work. By instilling these principles, missions encouraged productivity and reliability in economic activities.

For example, Christian-trained clerks and teachers in Lagos and Ibadan became known for their discipline and accountability, setting standards for professional conduct in both church and government.

Work ethics influenced how Nigerians approached employment and leadership, creating a culture of accountability. This helped communities to thrive economically and socially.

Fill in the blank: Christian teaching emphasised values such as honesty, diligence, and responsibility, which shaped _____ ethics.

Box 5.3 Christian values influencing work ethics.

Pilot Questions 5.3

What term describes organised groups where members pool resources to achieve common economic goals?

Missionaries introduced improved agricultural methods to Nigerian communities. True or False.

Define vocational training in the context of missionary contributions.

Name one craft industry promoted by missionary vocational centres.

Which Christian values shaped Nigerian work ethics and productivity?

Part 5.4: Civic Engagement and Social Reform

In this Part, you will explore how Christianity in Nigeria played a vital role in civic engagement — active participation in public life to improve communities — and social reform, defined as organised efforts to change societal structures for justice and fairness. Churches and missions often became platforms for advocacy, dialogue, and transformation, influencing both colonial governance and local communities.

5.4.1 Advocacy for Justice and Human Rights

Christian leaders and missionaries advocated for justice, meaning fairness in the treatment of individuals, and human rights, which are the basic freedoms and protections owed to all people. They spoke against exploitation, discrimination, and oppressive practices, encouraging communities to value equality and dignity.



For example, Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther used his position to challenge racial discrimination within the church, while Christian organisations in Lagos campaigned for fair treatment of Africans in colonial courts.

This advocacy laid the groundwork for later nationalist movements, as Christian voices helped to challenge colonial injustices and promote social responsibility.

Fill in the blank: Christian leaders and missionaries advocated for justice and _____ rights.

Figure 5.4 Christian advocacy for justice and human rights.

5.4.2 Christian Involvement in Anti-Slavery and Anti-Colonial Movements

Missionaries and Nigerian Christians opposed slavery, defined as the practice of owning and exploiting people as property, and later resisted colonial domination. Churches provided platforms for organising resistance, educating communities, and promoting freedom.

For instance, Christian groups in Abeokuta resisted the re-enslavement of freed Africans, while churches in Eastern Nigeria became centres for anti-colonial mobilisation and education.

Christian teaching reinforced the idea that all people are equal before God, which inspired movements against oppression and exploitation.

Fill in the blank: Christian teaching reinforced the idea that all people are equal before _____.

Plate 5.4 Christian involvement in anti-colonial movements.

5.4.3 Promotion of Peace, Reconciliation, and Community Cohesion

Christianity emphasised peace, defined as the absence of conflict and the presence of harmony, and reconciliation, which refers to restoring broken relationships. Churches encouraged dialogue between communities, promoted forgiveness, and worked to resolve disputes.

For example, during inter-ethnic tensions in Jos and Kaduna, churches facilitated peace dialogues and reconciliation meetings, helping communities to rebuild trust.

This emphasis on peace and cohesion strengthened Nigerian society, helping communities to withstand challenges and build unity during periods of change.

Fill in the blank: Christianity emphasised peace and _____, encouraging dialogue and forgiveness in communities.

Box 5.4 Christian promotion of peace and reconciliation.

Pilot Questions 5.4

Define civic engagement in the context of Nigerian Christianity.

What basic freedoms and protections are referred to as human rights?

True or False: Christian teaching reinforced the idea that all people are equal before God.

Name one way Nigerian Christians opposed colonial domination.

Which two values did Christianity emphasise to promote community cohesion?

Part 5.5: Legacy and Contemporary Relevance

In this Part, you will assess the legacy — the lasting impact of past actions — and the contemporary relevance of Nigerian Christianity's contributions to community development. These initiatives continue to influence education, health, economy, and civic life in modern Nigeria, where churches remain active in promoting social transformation.



5.5.1 Enduring Impact of Christian Community Development Projects

Missionary schools, hospitals, and vocational centres established during the colonial era laid foundations that still benefit Nigeria today. Many of these institutions evolved into universities, teaching hospitals, and training centres.

For example, the CMS Grammar School in Lagos grew into a leading secondary institution, while the University College Hospital in Ibadan traces its roots to missionary medical initiatives.

Their enduring impact demonstrates how Christian initiatives shaped national development.

Fill in the blank: Missionary schools, hospitals, and vocational centres established during the colonial era laid _____ that still benefit Nigeria today.

Figure 5.5 Enduring impact of Christian institutions.

5.5.2 Continuity in Modern Nigerian Churches

Modern Nigerian churches continue to invest in education, health, and social services. They establish private schools, universities, hospitals, and welfare programmes.

For instance, the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) runs schools and health centres, while the Catholic Church in Nigeria operates universities such as Veritas University in Abuja.

This continuity reflects the historical role of Christianity in community development and shows how churches adapt to contemporary needs.

Fill in the blank: Modern Nigerian churches continue to invest in education, health, and _____ services.

Plate 5.5 Modern Nigerian church-run university.

5.5.3 Lessons for Present-Day Social Transformation

The history of Christian community development provides lessons for addressing current challenges such as poverty, inequality, and conflict. By applying values of compassion, service, and justice, churches can continue to promote social transformation in Nigeria.

For example, church-led peace initiatives in the Middle Belt region demonstrate how Christian values can help communities overcome conflict and rebuild trust.

Fill in the blank: The history of Christian community development provides lessons for addressing current challenges such as poverty, _____, and conflict.

Box 5.5 Lessons from Christian community development for present-day Nigeria.

Pilot Questions 5.5

Define legacy in the context of Christian community development.

Missionary schools and hospitals evolved into modern universities and teaching hospitals. True or False.

Name one area where modern Nigerian churches continue to invest.

Which values can churches apply to promote social transformation today?



Fill in the blank: The history of Christian community development provides lessons for addressing poverty, inequality, and _____.

Series Summary

In this Series, you explored the community development contributions of Nigerian Christianity between 1864 and 1960. Together, we examined how faith-based initiatives shaped education, health, economic empowerment, civic life, and their lasting legacy.

Part 5.1: Mission schools and Bible translation promoted literacy and created opportunities for social mobility.

Part 5.2: Missionary hospitals, public health campaigns, and care for vulnerable groups improved well-being.

Part 5.3: Agricultural cooperatives and vocational training centres empowered communities economically and strengthened work ethics.

Part 5.4: Christian advocacy for justice and human rights, involvement in anti-colonial movements, and promotion of peace and reconciliation.

Part 5.5: Enduring legacy of Christian institutions and their relevance in modern Nigeria, including church-run universities, hospitals, and peace initiatives.

By completing this Series, you should now be able to:

Describe the educational impact of mission schools.

Explain health and welfare initiatives.

Analyse economic empowerment projects.

Evaluate civic engagement and reform efforts.

Assess the enduring legacy of Christian community development in Nigeria.

Glossary of Terms

Agricultural initiatives: Programmes introduced by missionaries to improve farming methods and increase food production.

Bible translation: Rendering biblical texts into local Nigerian languages, which encouraged literacy and preserved cultural identity.

Civic engagement: Active participation in public life to improve communities, often through advocacy and dialogue.

Clinics: Small medical centres established by missionaries to provide treatment and basic healthcare services.

Cooperatives: Organised groups where members pooled resources to achieve common economic goals, such as marketing produce or purchasing tools.

Economic empowerment: The process of enabling individuals and communities to improve their financial independence and productivity.

Education: The organised process of teaching and learning, often provided in mission schools to promote literacy and social mobility.

Health: The state of physical and mental well-being, supported by missionary hospitals, clinics, and public health campaigns.

Human rights: The basic freedoms and protections owed to all people, often advocated by Christian leaders in Nigeria.



Legacy: The lasting impact of past actions, such as the enduring influence of missionary schools and hospitals.

Literacy: The ability to read and write, promoted by Christian missions through education and Bible translation.

Peace: The absence of conflict and the presence of harmony, encouraged by churches to strengthen community cohesion.

Reconciliation: The restoration of broken relationships, often promoted by churches through dialogue and forgiveness.

Skills training: Teaching practical abilities needed for work and livelihood, such as carpentry, tailoring, and masonry.

Social mobility: The ability of individuals or groups to move to higher social or economic positions, often enabled by Christian education.

Social reform: Organised efforts to change societal structures for justice and fairness, supported by Christian advocacy in Nigeria.

Social welfare: Organised efforts to support vulnerable individuals and communities, such as orphans, widows, and people with disabilities.

Vocational training: Education that prepares individuals for specific trades or occupations, often provided in missionary centres.

Vulnerable groups: Individuals at greater risk of harm or disadvantage, including orphans, widows, and people with disabilities.

Work ethics: The moral principles guiding attitudes and behaviour towards work, shaped by Christian values such as honesty and diligence.

✦ Corrections applied here:

Tone revised to conversational ("you explored," "we examined").

Key terms italicised at first mention in summary.

Glossary definitions simplified, learner-friendly, and aligned with terms introduced in the Series.

Formatting consistent: bullet points, bold terms, clear definitions.

Objective (Multiple-Choice Questions)

Mission schools were established to provide which type of instruction?

- a) Only secular instruction
- b) Only religious instruction
- c) Both religious and secular instruction
- d) Neither religious nor secular instruction

What term describes the rendering of biblical texts into local Nigerian languages?

- a) Literacy



- b) Bible translation
- c) Social mobility
- d) Vocational training

Missionary hospitals introduced which of the following to Nigerian communities?

- a) Traditional medicine
- b) Herbal remedies only
- c) Modern medicine
- d) No medical services

Which Christian values most influenced Nigerian work ethics and productivity?

- a) Wealth and power
- b) Honesty, diligence, responsibility
- c) Silence and obedience
- d) Leisure and relaxation

Christian teaching reinforced the idea that all people are equal before whom?

- a) Colonial authorities
- b) God
- c) Missionaries
- d) Community leaders

Short-Answer Questions

Define social mobility in the context of Christian education.

Name one disease targeted by missionary public health campaigns.

What is meant by vocational training in missionary contributions?

Identify one way Nigerian Christians opposed colonial domination.

State one area where modern Nigerian churches continue to invest in community development.

Long-Answer Questions

Analyse the role of Bible translation in promoting literacy and preserving Nigerian languages.

Evaluate the contributions of missionary hospitals and clinics to Nigeria's health system.

Discuss how vocational training and craft industries empowered Nigerian communities economically.

Explain how Christian advocacy for justice and human rights influenced civic engagement and social reform in Nigeria.



Assess the legacy of Christian community development projects and their relevance to modern Nigerian society.

☒ Corrected Text – Concept-Check Answers (Series 5)

Objective (MCQs)

- c) Both religious and secular instruction
- b) Bible translation
- c) Modern medicine
- b) Honesty, diligence, responsibility
- b) God

Short-Answer Questions

Social mobility refers to the ability of individuals or groups to move to higher social or economic positions, often enabled by Christian education. Example: Mission school graduates became teachers and administrators.

Diseases such as malaria, smallpox, or leprosy. Example: Missions in Calabar organised malaria prevention campaigns.

Vocational training is education that prepares individuals for specific trades or occupations, such as carpentry or tailoring. Example: Hope Waddell Institute offered carpentry and printing.

Nigerian Christians opposed colonial domination by resisting slavery, organising anti-colonial movements, or advocating for freedom. Example: Churches in Abeokuta resisted re-enslavement of freed Africans.

Modern Nigerian churches continue to invest in education, health, or social services. Example: RCCG runs schools and health centres.

Long-Answer Questions

Bible translation promoted literacy by motivating communities to learn to read scriptures in their own languages. It also preserved Nigerian languages by providing written records. Example: Samuel Ajayi Crowther's Yoruba Bible (1884).

Missionary hospitals introduced modern medicine, provided treatment, and trained Nigerian nurses and doctors. They laid the foundation for Nigeria's health system. Example: Sacred Heart Hospital in Abeokuta.

Vocational centres taught trades such as carpentry and tailoring, creating employment opportunities and reducing dependence on colonial structures. Example: Hope Waddell Institute in Calabar.

Christian advocacy promoted justice and human rights, challenged exploitation and discrimination, and inspired nationalist movements. Example: Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther's campaigns against racial discrimination.

The legacy of Christian community development includes enduring institutions such as schools and hospitals, which continue to serve Nigeria. Modern churches build on this legacy by addressing poverty, inequality, and conflict. Example: Catholic Church's Veritas University in Abuja.

Answers 5.2 – Health and Social Welfare Contributions

True

Public health



Malaria, smallpox, or leprosy.

Orphans, widows, and people with disabilities.

Social welfare refers to organised efforts to support vulnerable individuals and communities.

Answers 5.3 – Economic Empowerment and Skills Training

Cooperatives

True

Vocational training is education that prepares individuals for specific trades or occupations.

Carpentry, tailoring, masonry, or printing.

Honesty, diligence, and responsibility.

Answers 5.4 – Civic Engagement and Social Reform

Civic engagement is active participation in public life to improve communities.

Human rights are the basic freedoms and protections owed to all people.

True

By resisting slavery, organising anti-colonial movements, or advocating for freedom.

Peace and reconciliation.

Answers 5.5 – Legacy and Contemporary Relevance

Legacy is the lasting impact of past actions, such as enduring institutions.

True

Education, health, or social services.

Compassion, service, and justice.

Conflict

References and Attributions 5

This section compiles all references, suggested open educational resources (OERs), and illustration prompts used in Series 5: Community Development Contributions of Nigerian Christianity. Entries are presented in a clear and consistent format, following institutional referencing style.

References (APA Style)

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Oduyoye, M. A. (2001). The church in African Christianity: Innovative and indigenous. Nairobi: Acton Publishers.

Sanneh, L. (1989). Translating the message: The missionary impact on culture. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.



Falola, T. (1998). Violence in Nigeria: The crisis of religious politics and secular ideologies. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.

Open Educational Resources (OER) Attributions

Figure 5.1: Mission school classroom structure (OER prompt).

Plate 5.1: Bible translation work in Nigeria (OER prompt).

Plate 5.2: Missionary hospital in Nigeria (OER prompt).

Figure 5.2: Missionary public health initiatives (OER prompt).

Box 5.2: Examples of missionary care for vulnerable groups (OER prompt).

Plate 5.3: Agricultural and vocational training in a missionary centre (OER prompt).

Box 5.3: Christian values influencing work ethics (OER prompt).

Figure 5.4: Christian advocacy for justice and human rights (OER prompt).

Plate 5.4: Christian involvement in anti-colonial movements (OER prompt).

Box 5.4: Christian promotion of peace and reconciliation (OER prompt).

Figure 5.5: Enduring impact of Christian institutions (OER prompt).

Plate 5.5: Modern Nigerian church-run university (OER prompt).

Box 5.5: Lessons from Christian community development for present-day Nigeria (OER prompt).

