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Course: Name (EDLS 5015)

## Educational Reform in Africa Colonial Rule and Its Educational Legacy

Institute of Educational Leadership  
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**The influence of religious education models**

Both Christian and Islamic missionaries placed great value on education to support their evangelistic activities.

Islamic training emphasized knowledge of the Qur'an (Koran), the holy Islamic scriptures, the traditions of the Prophet (Hadith) and the canon law of Islam (Shari'a). Children memorized and recited verses from the Qur'an, learned the Arabic alphabet of 26 letters. Later on they studied the meaning of memorized verses and still later grammar. At university they could qualify as teachers. Qur'anic schools were more varied and less formal than Christian schools.



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**The influence of religious education models (continued)**

The aim of Christian missionary schools was to develop skills necessary to read the Bible and further education aimed to train teachers and pastors. Morality and standards of behaviour was heavily emphasized and obedience, order, honesty and sobriety received more stress than academic skills.

Teaching methods were authoritarian and obedience and passivity were required. Punishment was normally harsh and classrooms were highly structured and children were grouped by age levels. The curriculum was disconnected from village life and often alienated children from their cultures and value systems.

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**Unknown features of religion in Africa to Christianity and Islam**

1. Religion is not a discreet human activity separate from other aspects of living.
2. The landscape is a source of spiritual contemplation and worship.
3. Ancestors mediate between this world and the spirit world.
4. In illness the physical and spiritual meet – leading to a holistic approach to healing.
5. There is still a belief in witchcraft.
6. Birth is a time of great rejoicing, starting a number of days after the actual birth of the child.
7. African names have clear meanings and huge significance. They are often influenced by the circumstances of the birth – for instance rain.
8. The move from childhood to adulthood is carefully marked and charted often involving elements of withdrawing and elements of endurance and physical ordeals such as circumcision.
9. Many customs are associated with the death of a person and funerals will often be attended by people unrelated to the deceased.



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