Religion and technology: ethical implications of integrating artificial intelligence into religious practice and experience

Chanda Armstrong
Mpika College of Education and The University of Zambia, Zambia
Chandarmstrong@yahoo.com

Abstract

Integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) into religious practices offers both significant opportunities and ethical challenges that need to be carefully considered. As AI technologies become more embedded in daily life, their application within spiritual contexts, including Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam, raises critical questions about privacy, data security, authenticity, and the commodification of sacred experiences. This study examines the ethical issues raised by AI in religious settings and explores ways to address them. The goal is to create a balanced approach that takes advantage of technology's benefits while respecting religious beliefs. Guided by the ethical framework of Principlism theory, including not harming (non-maleficence), doing good (beneficence), fairness (justice), and freedom (autonomy), the research employs qualitative document analysis and case studies from China, India, and Japan, to explore AI's role in virtual worship, digital religious education, and personalised spiritual guidance. AI allows for virtual worship services, breaking down physical boundaries as witnessed globally. Its algorithms can analyse religious texts, leading to deeper comprehension. Additionally, it provides tailored guidance, which can enrich spiritual paths. By utilising AI, religious practices can become more engaging and inclusive, especially for diverse populations. The paper concludes that while AI holds transformative potential for enriching religious life, its implementation must be carefully aligned with

ethical principles and cultural sensitivities to preserve the integrity and authenticity of diverse religious traditions. Future research should focus on developing ethical AI frameworks through collaboration among theologians, ethicists, and AI developers, and assess their impact on community engagement and spiritual authenticity.

Integrasi Kecerdasan Buatan (AI) ke dalam praktik keagamaan menawarkan peluang yang signifikan sekaligus tantangan etis yang perlu dipertimbangkan secara cermat. Dengan semakin melekatnya teknologi AI dalam kehidupan sehari-hari, penerapannya dalam konteks spiritual, termasuk dalam agama Kristen, Buddha, Hindu, dan Islam menimbulkan pertanyaan penting terkait privasi, keamanan data, keaslian, dan komodifikasi pengalaman yang dianggap sakral. Studi ini mengkaji isu-isu etis yang muncul dari penggunaan AI dalam lingkungan keagamaan serta penyikapannya. Tujuan utamanya adalah menciptakan pendekatan yang seimbang dalam pemanfaatan teknologi tanpa mengabaikan nilai-nilai keagamaan. Penelitian ini berpijak pada kerangka etika teori *Principlism* yang mencakup prinsip tidak membahayakan (*non-maleficence*), berbuat baik (*beneficence*), keadilan (*justice*), dan kebebasan (*autonomy*). Metode analisis dokumen kualitatif dan studi kasus dari Tiongkok, India, dan Jepang digunakan untuk menelaah peran AI dalam ibadah virtual, pendidikan agama digital, dan bimbingan spiritual yang dipersonalisasi. AI memungkinkan pelaksanaan ibadah secara virtual yang melampaui batasan geografis, seperti yang telah terjadi di berbagai negara. Algoritma AI juga dapat menganalisis teks-teks keagamaan secara mendalam, sehingga meningkatkan pemahaman spiritual. Selain itu, AI memungkinkan bimbingan yang dipersonalisasi untuk memperkaya perjalanan spiritual seseorang. Dengan pemanfaatan AI, praktik keagamaan dapat menjadi lebih inklusif dan menarik, terutama dalam populasi yang beragam. Artikel ini menyimpulkan bahwa meskipun AI memiliki potensi transformatif dalam memperkaya kehidupan beragama, penerapannya harus selaras dengan prinsip-prinsip etis dan kepekaan budaya untuk menjaga integritas dan keaslian tradisi keagamaan yang beragam. Penelitian selanjutnya disarankan untuk fokus pada pengembangan kerangka etika AI melalui kolaborasi antara teolog, ahli etika, dan pengembang AI, serta mengevaluasi dampaknya terhadap keterlibatan komunitas dan keaslian spiritual.

Keywords: *Artificial intelligence, Religious practice, Religious experience, Ethics, Principlism, Integration.*

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Introduction

The presence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in religious practices and experiences can completely change how we worship, learn, and stay in touch with our communities. However, this convergence of innovation and tradition also raises crucial ethical considerations. As AI begins to shape the spiritual landscape, questions arise regarding the potential impact on the human experience, the role of algorithms in sacred spaces, and the responsibility of creating technology that influences our deepest beliefs and values. AI is transforming the makeup of our lives and its presence is increasingly palpable in religious practices. Computer systems now carry out activities usually done by human intelligence, including learning, solving problems and making decisions (Hastuti, *et al.,* 2023). Recently, there has been a growing trend of incorporating AI into religious communities and practices (Samarpita, 2023). AI-powered tools and platforms change how people connect with and experience their faith. One prominent example of AI integration in religion is the development of AI-powered religious apps. Certain prayer apps gather personal data, sparking worries over privacy and potential misuse. This emphasises the need for clear data management practices and strong privacy protocols in app design. Incorporating AI into religious rituals offers promising possibilities but raises ethical issues (Firnando, 2024). While AI presents exciting opportunities for enriching religious education, fostering interfaith conversation, and safeguarding cultural heritage raises ethical issues and potential risks associated with its utilisation (Shehu, 2024). Including AI in religious rituals raises important ethical issues that need thoughtful deliberation (AI for Social Good, 2024; Alkhouri, 2024).

This study is based on the theory of Principlism introduced in the "Belmont Report," a document proposed by a national commission tasked with safeguarding participants in biomedical and behavioural research. The concept was later expanded upon in the 1979 publication "Principles of Biomedical Ethics" by Tom Beauchamp and James Childress (OHRP-Office for Human

Research Protections, 2022). The theory has received support from Raanan Gillon, who stated that the four principles could clarify and validate all the significant moral claims in medical ethics (Wikipedia Contributors, 2015). AI systems must avoid any actions that could cause harm to individuals or communities physically, emotionally, or spiritually. Instead, they should prioritise the well-being of users, promoting spiritual development, understanding, and a sense of community. By doing so, AI systems can boost religious experiences and promote a positive environment for the practice of faith.

To ensure fair distribution of benefits and risks associated with AI integration in religious practices and address potential biases and disparities, AI systems must be designed to respect autonomy, avoid harm, promote well-being and ensure justice in religious contexts. They should engage users in ways that respect their autonomy, provide benefits, and avoid harm. AI systems are regularly evaluated to ensure they remain aligned with these principles, addressing potential ethical issues.

The theoretical application of the theory of Principlism provides a comprehensive framework for understanding and addressing the ethical issues and solutions related to incorporating AI into religious practices and experiences. The four ethical principles of Principlism, autonomy, non-beneficence, maleficence and justice, offer a structured approach to evaluating the influence of AI technologies on individuals and communities within religious contexts. Respecting the autonomy of individuals is a core principle when assimilating AI into religious practice systems should empower freedom of choices about their religious beliefs and practices without coercion or manipulation. AI systems should be constructed to avoid causing physical, emotional, or spiritual harm. This aligns with the ethical principle of "non-maleficence," which emphasises the importance of avoiding causing harm (Akbarighatar, 2024). They should prioritise the well-being of users by helping them grow spiritually, understand their faith better, and foster a sense of community. Addressing biases, differences,

and ethical issues in AI can reduce social inequalities, increase diversity, and protect justice in religious communities. By prioritizing fairness and equity in AI systems, we can ensure that AI is integrated into religious contexts in an inclusive, fair way, prioritizing human values and well-being, and promoting responsible AI development and use.

This study uses a qualitative document analysis method that analyses documents and content from multiple case studies. The case studies examine how AI is used in religious practices and experiences from different religions and pay specific attention to Asian countries such as Japan, China and India. The study made use of a range of sources, including, among others, academic articles and literature reviews, case studies, and diverse retrieval methods on AI, religion, and spirituality. The value of the academic articles was both in empirical data and theory, whereas case studies, like similar reports identified in literature, validated real-world relevance by displaying application cases of AI technologies within the religious and spiritual practices. To achieve comprehensiveness, a wide variety of research sources were consulted. Among the methods of data collection were a search in journals with credible indexing, Google Scholar, and keyword searches on reference mining. Triangulation methods enhanced reliability of results. The varied sources and retrieval strategies contributed toward a credible and well-rounded analysis of AI's role in religious practices and experience as regards ethical considerations, as well as addressing issues the efforts to fill the existing gaps.

This review study analysed academic articles and documents through a three-phase analytical framework. The initial phase employed sentiment analysis to grasp the emotions and tones conveyed in the texts, providing insights into individuals' feelings about AI in religious environments. The second phase utilised text mining to uncover themes and trends within the texts, aiding in understanding how AI is viewed and applied in various religious contexts. To organise the findings, the study used text categorisation to group similar ideas

(Bowen, 2009; Chanda, 2021). This helped the study better understand ways AI affects religious beliefs and practices. The study examined the ethical issues of using AI in religious settings. These issues were explored using the Principlism approach, which focuses on ethical values such as autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice.

The interplays between religious practice and experience

Religious practice refers to structured rituals, ceremonies, and actions such as prayer, meditation, fasting, and communal worship that signify devotion and support spiritual development both individually and collectively (Salasiah & Nadhirah, 2015; Sviridova, 2018). These practices differ in form and frequency, influenced by habit, spontaneity, personal choice, and broader social dynamics (Wuthnow, 2020; Anthony et al., 2007). In parallel, religious experience involves deeply personal encounters with the divine or transcendent, often perceived as meaningful and transformative within specific religious frameworks (Akudolu, 2020; Yamada, 2023). Such experiences may be emotional or mystical in nature and remain a subject of ongoing interdisciplinary debate due to their subjective but significant impact on individual worldviews (Azari et al., 2001; Amatuzzi, 1998).

Investigating religious practice with religious experience and its integration with AI is essential because engaging in consistent religious rituals and observances often leads to profound and meaningful personal experiences. For instance, regularly engaging in meditation or prayer can cultivate a feeling of tranquillity and union with the divine. These practices aid in internalising and embodying religious beliefs. Engaging in communal practices fortifies social ties and a sense of belonging, which may enrich personal religious experiences. Religious practices often involve physical actions that can shape and reinforce beliefs.

Personal experiences can influence and change religious practices. For example, a significant spiritual encounter might prompt someone to adopt or modify new rituals (Taves, 2022). However, religious practice and experience are interconnected, as former can inform a spiritual experience and vice versa (Hollywood, 2010). The cultural and social environment of individuals greatly influences the practice of religion. These practices, in turn, can shape their religious experiences. For example, communal worship can strengthen feelings of belonging and spiritual connection (Kupari, 2016). This interaction highlights how religion is a personal journey and a communal activity, constantly evolving the interplay of practice and experience.

Examining the interaction between technological advancement and tradition, we uncover the possibilities and challenges that arise when AI meets faith and forge a path forward that honours the sacred while embracing the potential of technology to enrich our spiritual lives. This investigation seeks to highlight the significance of ethical aspects when incorporating AI into religious rituals, ascertaining the advantages of technology utilised while upholding the authenticity and core of belief ethically. As AI becomes increasingly widespread in religious customs, it is vital to examine the ethical consequences that arise when technology and belief intersect. With AI's potential to shape beliefs, influence spiritual experiences, and impact community dynamics, we must examine the implications of this convergence on the human experience, individual agency, and the very nature of religion itself. In this context, we therefore investigate the intersection of technology and faith, benefits, limitations, ethical issues and considerations in incorporating AI into religious practices and experiences in contexts of China, India and Japan. This bridges the ethical gap and promotes ethical co-existence between faith, spirituality and technology in the digital era.

The benefits of the integration of AI into religious practice and experience

AI has been making its way into religious activities and groups. AI tools and platforms are changing how people connect with their beliefs. They help people connect with others who share their faith and learn more about their religion. AI in religious practice and experience has great potential to improve accessibility, understanding, and engagement. AI-driven tools can help people access religious resources, conduct in-depth textual analysis, customise learning experiences, safeguard cultural heritage, and build virtual communities.

Digitalised sacred scriptures and personalised guidance and support

Digitalised sacred scriptures and texts enable individuals to engage in personalised study and contemplation by offering search functionality, bookmarking and annotation (Alkhouri, 2024). They enhance religious experiences by overcoming physical barriers and geographic distances, encouraging a sense of community among followers. This user-centric approach offers convenient and accessible support, providing insights and encouragement aligned with your spiritual journey (Hamjah & Muhamad, 2015). AI helps people participate in religious rituals with clear instructions or reciting the necessary passages. This is particularly useful for those new to a particular practice or who cannot attend religious gatherings in person (Alkhouri, 2024). Using AI, people of different faiths can now connect in digital communities.

AI-based notifiers and analytics

Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism and many other religions have developed AI apps to remind individuals of prayer times, fasting schedules, and religious events, aiding them in maintaining their religious obligations. AI translation tools facilitate the real-time translation of religious materials. This helps break down language barriers and allows users to engage with teachings in their preferred language (Alkhouri, 2024). AI's analytical tools let scholars study religious texts

deeply, finding patterns and themes. It helps them process vast amounts of data to get insights into religious teachings. AI-based apps also help build communities through forums, discussion boards, and social media links. This strengthens the religious group's feeling of belonging and connection (Alkhouri, 2024). This tailored approach boosts engagement and understanding, making religious classes more accessible and enjoyable for students from all walks of life and at all levels of learning.

Enhanced accessibility to religious resources and deeper textual analysis

AI integration improves access to religious resources and information by reducing geographical and linguistic barriers. AI-powered tools make accessing sacred texts, translations, commentaries, and other religious materials much easier. Using AI, translation services can make religious texts more widely accessible by translating them into people's native languages (Dimitra, 2024; Firnando, 2024). With the rise of AI, religious teachings have become more accessible and easier to comprehend. This enhanced accessibility allows individuals to explore their faith more thoroughly and meaningfully. AI's ability to analyse massive data and detect patterns is invaluable for scholars and individuals seeking a deeper understanding of religious texts. AI algorithms can analyse these texts, uncovering themes, patterns, and linguistic subtleties that might be missed by conventional interpretation methods (Popova, 2024). Scholars gain new insights into beliefs and doctrines through advanced analysis of religious texts. This expanded knowledge enriches our understanding of the faith, uncovering its complexities and subtleties.

Individual-tailored learning and interactive education

AI customises religious education, adjusting learning experiences to cater to individual needs and preferences. This personalised approach enhances participation and motivation, leading to a deeper comprehension of religious

concepts and principles (Oseremi Onesi-Ozigagun, 2024). AI also generates interactive educational experiences, utilising virtual or augmented reality to bring religious narratives and teachings to reality (Hamdi, 2024). Arguably, using these engaging experiences, people can gain a deeper and more personal connection to religious beliefs. AI advancements bring a fresh and inventive dimension to religious practices, making them more accessible and providing each user with a personalised spiritual path, especially in the muslim world (Arifianto, 2021). AI technologies create customised spiritual experiences by analysing personal preferences, beliefs, and practices. Beyond personalised prayer experiences, AI empowers tools that enable deeper engagement with sacred texts. The Quranic Arabic Corpus, for instance, uses AI to assist people in studying and understanding the Quran (Arifianto, 2021). Thus enhancing their spiritual enlightenment. Additionally, AI enables the creation of cyber communities where people can connect, share their beliefs, engage in discussions, and support each other's spiritual journeys, overcoming geographical barriers.

AI-powered religious applications (App) and virtual communities

Religious apps powered by AI offer personalised spiritual guidance, reminders for prayer and access to online communities (Alkhouri, 2024). The emergence of virtual religious communities has overcome geographical hurdles, permitting individuals to engage with faith communities and take part in religious activities, regardless of their physical location (Alkhouri, 2024). The revolutionising power of AI has also extended to religious tourism by bridging physical distances through virtual tours of significant religious sites (Arifianto, 2021). With AI technology, we can now build digital worship spaces that allow people who cannot go to religious services in person to join online with other believers. While, virtual religious leaders provide guidance and religious instruction to individuals, particularly those unable to access physical places of worship (Alkhouri, 2024). There are numerous benefits of incorporating AI into religious

practices, including enhanced accessibility, personalised spiritual experiences, deeper engagement with sacred texts, and the facilitation of global religious dialogue and understanding (Arifianto, 2021; Alkhouri, 2024).

AI and religious teachings and spiritual counselling

The AI revolution has continued to exert influence on religious practices and experiences in Africa, with innovative solutions and ethical challenges. AI and spirituality generate interesting questions around inclusiveness, authenticity, and the preservation of traditional religious values. AI tools, such as ChatGPT, offer easier access to religious teachings and spiritual counselling, and thus are most beneficial to the younger, more tech-savvy generation of Africa (Oyasor, 2024). AI tools are helping improve accessibility in religious teachings and counselling acts to ensure more inclusivity in spirituality, especially in favour of the young (Oyasor, 2024). The increasing availability of online clerics may further enhance the empowerment of religious learners in the future (Berger and Golan, 2023). Discussions of the moral implications of the application of machine intelligence in African Christian theology and its potential contribution to the enrichment of spiritual practices are emerging (Awasthi & Okumu, 2025).

Digital preservation project protects

Safeguarding and preserving historical documents and artefacts to protect and promote our cultural legacy and ensure future generations can access our rich past. AI tools like image recognition and machine learning can digitise and analyse historical documents. This ensures that future generations can still read and use these documents (Moh, 2024). This digital preservation project protects religious texts, art, and cultural artefacts from decay and loss, keeping them accessible for study and enjoyment. AI aids in preserving religious cultural heritage by digitising and archiving religious items, texts, ceremonies, and traditions for posterity. For instance, Allal-Chérif's (2022) study on using AI in conserving cathedrals in Paris,

France, indicates the potential of immersive technologies, enabling individuals to explore inaccessible areas from their residences, fulfilling their wishes, even those deemed impossible or prohibited.

Specific cases in Asia

China

An example of AI integration in religious practice and experience can be observed in Buddhism in China. Buddhist robotic agents use digital devices for communication. They help followers find and share information and broadcast spiritual hymns and mantras. Understanding these communication abilities helps religious leaders and followers decide if robots like XE can be useful in their organisations or daily lives (Cheong, 2020). These robotic monks are designed to perform rituals, provide spiritual guidance, and facilitate meditation practices. The robot itself canonically incorporates Buddhist teachings and aims to attract the younger generation into Buddhism, with technology engaging those already tech-savvy (Cheong, 2020). Geraci's (2021) research on the relationship between religion and robotics emphasises the historical links between AI and religious practices like Judaism and Buddhism. Robotics can be seen as a type of spiritual representation, drawing comparisons to the stories of Golems in medieval Judaism and the Buddhist and Shinto customs associated with robotics. This viewpoint underscores the capability for AI to question and reshape traditional religious concepts concerning human nature and divine abilities.

There arises a great conflict in the role AI plays in the religious practice of Buddhism in China concerning authenticity, spiritual experience, and possible ramifications of replacing human beings with robotic entities in roles traditionally exclusive to humans. The idea of robotic monks is to attract an audience of younger, more tech-savvy individuals, as noted (Cheong, 2020), but this may come at the expense of experiential depth and spiritual connection that only traditional practices can afford. Robots performing rituals and providing spiritual

guidance might lack that human touch, which is essential for experiencing genuine spiritual purification. According to Geraci (2021), how technology will shift people's ideas of faith will lead to a discussion of the roles of machines in spirituality and, ultimately, ethical dilemmas in the materialisation of spirituality and dependency on AI. The consideration of innovation with reverence for ancient practices is indeed a challenge for the changing environment.

India

In India, a technology company introduced a robotic arm in 2017 to perform the age-old ritual of "aarti," where typically a follower presents an oil lamp as an offering to a deity. This was demonstrated at the Ganpati festival, during which an effigy of Ganesha is immersed in the river at Pune; thus began the journey of the robotic aarti arm that has inspired further prototypes still performing in India, and several other religious robots in East Asia and South Asia. An example includes an animatronic elephant in a temple in Kerala, in the southern tip of India (Walters, 2023). Such AI technologies support people's religious practices by providing step-by-step guidance for rituals and prayers, automatically generating prayers or assisting in prayer writing, reminding individuals of important religious obligations, and encouraging adherence to religious rules and practices.

This robotic arm, designed to carry out the "aarti" ritual in India, poses questions regarding the marriage between technology and culture. This advancement challenges traditional definitions of worship and community participation in religious rituals. Whereas technology may help promote accessibility, it may also commodify spirituality and weaken cultural traditions. Acceptance of robotic technology into religious settings varies, thus initiating discussions about authenticity, tradition, and modernisation. Essential considerations are how technology affects spiritual experiences, community involvement, and how AI translates into religious practices. As technology

becomes firmly entrenched in religious practices around the world, understanding how one culture accepts while another resists the same innovational force would provide a useful lens through which to view the changing landscape of faith and technology.

Japan

According to Tan (2020), Confucianism has a hypothetical AI teacher, "Digital Confucius." This assists in knowledge sharing and spiritual education and provides ethical guidance. Tan's (2020) investigates the capability of AI to support or replace human teachers in spiritual education, particularly in Confucianism, by comparing Confucius with a hypothetical AI teacher. He argues that while Digital Confucius could assist in knowledge sharing, it would struggle to personalise teaching and provide ethical guidance. AI can complement information transfer but cannot replace the essential role of human teachers in moral education, and the limitations of AI in Confucian teaching underscore the constant significance of spiritual development for humanity. AI-powered chatbots and assistants offer personalised guidance, addressing questions and supporting religious practices, beliefs, and rituals, enhancing the worship experience. AI chatbots are designed to provide spiritual guidance and counselling tailored to your individual beliefs and preferences. These chatbots use natural language processing to understand your spiritual needs and provide personalised responses.

Kodaiji temple in Japan introduced technologically effective and AI-enabled android named Mindar for delivering Buddhist teachings. Mindar combines both modern technology and traditional religious practices to answer visitors' inquiries and teaches temple visitors according to their specific needs. The temple was built by Kita no Mandokoro (1548-1624), a warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598) widow, in honour of her late husband. Can AI give ethical guidance and a personal connection in moral education? These questions

demonstrate many of the limitations of technological aids as compared to real teachers. AI has the potential to help share information, but empathy and emotional intelligence necessary for moral development, are missing from AI capabilities. AI chatbots and assistants can give personalised guidance, but their algorithmic biases and potential for an over-reliance on technology are of concern. The case of Mindar, which is an AI-enabled android in Kodaiji temple, demonstrates that the attempt to blend tradition with technology forces one to question the authenticity and the depth of spiritual teachings conveyed using machines.

Limitations of integrating religious practice and experience with AI

Based on the cases investigated, religious experiences frequently evoke feelings of holiness, the unknown, and a connection beyond oneself (Yamada, 2023). AI systems, solely based on technology and algorithms, face challenges in understanding or imitating these facets of religious experiences. Religious practices often rely on human emotions, intuition, and personal experiences (Yamada, 2023). AI may struggle to fully understand the deep cultural, historical, and social contexts of religious practices and experiences. The lack of grasp of AI's potential impact on religious domains could result in its use in ways that are unsuitable or lack sensitivity. Ethical issues may arise with the inclusion of AI in religious rituals, including prejudiced outcomes of AI-based judgments, necessitating the treatment of spiritual experiences as commodities. AI might lack the human touch and personal connection often essential to religious experiences and community building. Human interaction and connection are critical aspects of religious life (Tan, 2020).

AI-driven religious experiences may lead to the homogenisation of diverse religious traditions and practices, potentially erasing unique cultural and religious identities (Berger and Golan, 2023). AI might disrupt conventional ideas about human control and independence in religious rituals and encounters. While some

see AI as a useful tool, others worry about its impact on spiritual experiences. Incorporating AI into religious practices may have unintended consequences, such as: reinforcing existing biases or prejudices, creating new forms of spiritual distraction or addiction and disrupting traditional religious authority structures. We can approach the incorporation of AI in religious practices and experiences with sensitivity, respect, and a critical eye by understanding these challenges and limitations. Similarly, enterprises integrating AI technologies witness a reduction in religious association.

Despite notable advancements in AI-powered translation tools, they have not yet attained the capacity to entirely supplant human expertise, particularly in the case of intricate and culturally enriched texts. Human translators remain extremely rudimental in transmitting intricate concepts and preserving linguistic and cultural richness (Zaid and Bennoudi, 2023). In the pursuit of dependable answers and the quest for personal religious experiences, many individuals opt to conduct their research rather than seek counsel from a rabbi. Religious leaders believe education is essential for their spiritual growth and connection to God. However, the spread of technology has changed how clerics are seen, reducing their influence. Clerics now specialise in specific facets of religious practice, while traditional leaders still address broader existential inquiries.

Ethical considerations and implications

The cases studied have shown that AI in religious traditions has potential benefits, like improving religious education and promoting dialogue between different faiths. However, it also raises ethical concerns that need careful consideration.

Concerns about the accuracy and reliability of AI-generated religious content are particularly relevant for chatbots that educate people about religion. When AI is used to share religious ideas, it makes us wonder if the information is true. There is a chance that AI could say things that are wrong or misleading.

This could damage our understanding of religion and make us believe things that aren't true, which could be dangerous (Marlina, 2024). Moreover, amalgamating AI into religious practices presents concerns about preserving traditional values and authenticity. Some argue that using AI may dilute the essence of traditional religious practices and rituals, potentially dehumanising religious experiences (Rozaanah, 2024). Another significant ethical challenge is the potential for misinformation and manipulation. AI algorithms can be exploited to spread biased or false information, potentially influencing individuals' religious beliefs and practices. The use of AI in shaping religious narratives and guiding comprehension of religious writings creates ethical dilemmas (Marlina, 2024). Excessive use of AI in religious rituals can weaken our ability to think critically and engage spiritually. This is because we may rely too deeply on AI for direction and decision-making, instead of using our thoughts and beliefs. AI systems that make complex decisions that are hard to understand or explain may not be clear or responsible enough. This can impede people from trusting the results and methods of AI-based religious programs.

Digital divide and access to AI-powered religious services

Not everyone possesses equal technology access or the required digital skills to interact with AI technologies. This digital gap poses a considerable challenge to ensuring fair access to AI-driven religious services. AI integration in religious practice and experience raises worries about inclusivity and the likelihood of AI widening social disparities within religious groups (Marlina, 2024). While AI-powered technologies can enhance accessibility and convenience, there are concerns that they may not be capable of capturing the depth and richness of in-person religious engagement. Maintaining the essence of religious rituals and practices when using technology to enhance them is important. This delicate balance ensures that technology does not overshadow or replace the traditional spiritual practices that form the core of religious experiences (Alkhouri, 2024).

AI in religious practices can prompt questions about how real and sacred they are. After all, technology can change the traditional and spiritual parts of worship and rituals. AI profoundly shapes societal dynamics, influencing both ethical considerations and spiritual convictions. While presenting numerous advantages, it also engenders ethical dilemmas concerning privacy, transparency, and accountability. The spiritual ramifications of AI are still unfolding, giving rise to inquiries about its overarching impact (Yogita and Gulia, 2023).

Erosion of human autonomy

Another major ethical concern is the implications for autonomy and human agency (Alkhouri, 2024; Sterling, 2023). Assimilating AI into religious experience and practice raises concerns about the erosion of individual freedom. AI systems could compromise personal interpretation and decision-making by providing personalised recommendations and dictating religious rituals (Alkhouri, 2024). The increasing use of AI in religious settings elevates concerns about who is responsible for the actions and choices made by these systems. This is especially relevant in contexts where religious beliefs and values are involved (Sterling, 2023). Using AI systems to gather and store personal information can raise privacy concerns, emphasising the need for robust data protection measures and clarity in data handling processes to safeguard individuals' rights.

Algorithm bias and discrimination

Using AI algorithms in religious communities can lead to the continuation of existing biases and discrimination. For example, AI systems used for decision-making in religious organisations might unintentionally treat certain people or groups differently based on race, gender, or financial status (Hana, 2024). AI algorithms can introduce bias and discrimination into religious practices, making it critical to address ethical concerns. These algorithms may unintentionally perpetuate biases, leading to discriminatory outcomes. To reduce these risks,

openness and responsibility in developing and implementing AI systems are essential (Alkhouri, 2024). AI systems can perpetuate unfairness in society by using biased data to train. This creates biased outcomes, which can worsen existing biases and discrimination. Also, giving AI systems too much power to make decisions without human involvement raises ethical concerns, since AI might make decisions that go against human values or ethics. Finally, AI systems trained on biased data might spread those biases, unfairly affecting certain groups or strengthening religious stereotypes.

Data privacy and security

Gathering and utilising personal data in religious settings raises concerns regarding privacy and security. AI systems necessitate access to extensive data, including sensitive details about individuals' religious convictions and rituals, ensuring the responsible and ethical handling of this data is essential to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of individuals within religious communities (Restu, 2024). Data privacy and security are essential concerns when using AI in religious practices. Collecting and using personal data for AI models poses privacy risks. To protect people's privacy and sensitive information, it is crucial to implement strong data protection measures, obtain informed consent before collecting data, and transparently handle data (Alkhouri, 2024). AI systems collecting personal religious data pose risks due to potential unauthorised access or misuse, leading to privacy violations and security threats.

AI systems capitalising on religious experiences may prioritise profit over spiritual growth, potentially commercialising sacred practices into products or services. AI systems imposing a standardised approach may erode religious diversity, diminishing the value and uniqueness of distinct beliefs and practices. AI systems extracting data from religious texts may raise issues of cultural appropriation and intellectual property rights, highlighting the need for ethical data collection practices. While incorporating AI into religious practices offers

benefits, it's crucial to acknowledge and address the ethical concerns and obstacles associated with it. Ensuring data privacy, avoiding biases in algorithms, and safeguarding against potential manipulation or distortion of religious beliefs by AI requires thorough investigation. (Dimitra, 2024; Firnando, 2024). Finding a middle ground between utilising AI's potential and preserving the essential elements of spirituality and human connection is crucial (Alkhouri, 2024).

Bridging the ethical gap

Based on the ethical issues that arise with the integration of AI in religious practice and experience, a wide range of stakeholders must be involved to create ethical AI systems. This ensures transparency and robust data protection. Regular audits, establishing ethical frameworks aligned with religious values, and collaborating with religious authorities must be implemented. Moreover, obtaining permission from users, providing education on AI-driven religious practices, and assessing the influence of AI on religious practice and experience are a must. Encouraging dialogue between religious communities, technologists, and ethicists is equally fundamental.

Developing ethical guidelines and regulatory frameworks

It is essential to set clear ethical principles for the advancement and application of AI within religious settings. These AI systems must have transparency and clarity to establish trust and understanding among users (Rey, 2023). Individuals can better comprehend how AI-driven decisions are made, fostering accountability and mitigating concerns about opaque or biased outcomes by creating algorithms that provide clear decision-making processes. The proposition involves utilising general systems theory to structure human experience models, yielding valuable insights into morality and spirituality for AI development. This community potentially gives rise to an Interpreter-Spirit entity, which would influence the continuous evolution of human and AI

morality (Graves, 2021). To tackle ethical challenges, collaboration among religious leaders, scholars, ethicists, technologists and policymakers is crucial to establish ethical guidelines and regulatory frameworks to steer the responsible advancement and implementation of AI technologies in religious settings (Alkhouri, 2024; Sterling, 2023). To ensure that the AI incorporation into religious practice and experience aligns with religious beliefs, values, and practices, it is vital to engage in ongoing dialogue, careful reflection, and transparent decision-making processes (Alkhouri, 2024; Sterling, 2023).

When using AI tools in religious contexts, it's crucial to establish who is responsible if AI systems cause harm or make mistakes. This requires clear guidelines, ethical frameworks, and mechanisms for accountability. AI in religious practices elicits ethical dilemmas that must be thoughtfully handled to protect the authenticity, integrity, and human-centred aspect of religious experiences. Collaboration between stakeholders, ethical oversight, and a dedication to ethical AI development is essential for addressing the complexities of AI implementation in religious settings (Alkhouri, 2024). Integrating AI in religious practices may impact traditional structures of religious authority and challenge established traditions, requiring careful consideration of how technology influences the interpretation and transmission of religious teachings and values.

Upholding data privacy and security standards

Collecting and using personal data for AI models poses privacy risks. Therefore, data privacy and security are essential concerns of AI use in religious practices. To protect people's privacy and sensitive information, it's crucial to implement strong data protection measures, obtain informed consent before collecting data, and transparently handle data. AI developers can detect and rectify biases that impact decision-making processes by systematically evaluating algorithms, ensuring fair and equitable outcomes for all users (Ryan and Stahl, 2020). The relationship between the Internet and human rights has brought opportunities

and challenges, especially in the context of religion and belief. The Internet has significantly impacted religious practices, leading to growth, transformation, and the appearance of innovative religious expressions. Integrating AI into the online space raises concerns about human rights beyond freedom of expression and privacy (Ashraf, 2021).

While AI can potentially enhance human rights, including freedom of religion online, there are worries about biases in AI development and their effects on human rights. Measures such as establishing AI ethics boards and conducting more research on AI's implications for human rights are positive steps, however, there is a need for increased advocacy for human rights in AI analysis. All stakeholders must collaborate to guarantee that AI promotes and protects all human rights, particularly freedom of religion and belief in the digital age (Ashraf, 2021). Educating religious groups about AI technologies and their potential effects may encourage informed and responsible use. This involves advocating for digital literacy skills and increasing awareness of the ethical issues related to AI (Marlina, 2024).

Aligning technological advancements with religious and ethical principles

AI tools must be used responsibly and ethically to align them with our values and avoid potential harm (Umbrello, 2023). It is imperative to align technological advancements with religious values and ethical principles. To responsibly advance AI development, developers must prioritise ethics. They must integrate ethical principles into AI design and implementation. This means defining frameworks that guide AI development practices, ensuring AI systems align with religious values and promoting responsible innovation. Organisations should also establish clear roles and responsibilities for managing AI systems. We can mitigate potential risks and legal liabilities by implementing ethical frameworks and oversight mechanisms, They can foster ethical behaviour, promote transparency, and hold individuals and organisations accountable for the

consequences of AI technologies. This will lead to responsible AI development that respects societal values and norms (Ryan and Stahl, 2020).

Elmahjub (2023) examined the ethical implications of AI from an Islamic viewpoint. The study argues for the diverse collection of ethical standards when developing and deploying AI to challenge the prevailing influence of Western perspectives in the field. It uses Islamic ethical backgrounds to present a framework for global discussions on AI development ethical standards. The significance of integrating written and unwritten Islamic references to address ethical uncertainties, utility-based, and duty-based, is shown. This demonstrates how Islamic jurisprudence supports ethical arguments that prioritise utility maximisation through AI infrastructure while also considering ethical choices beyond utility calculations in response to AI advancements.

Collaboration between AI experts and religious scholars

Collaboration between experts in AI and religious scholars is essential to guarantee the development and implementation of AI technologies in a manner that honours religious values and principles (Marlina, 2024). Collaborating with religious authorities can ensure that AI integration aligns with religious teachings and values. Consultation with religious leaders and experts is vital for developers to navigate complex ethical considerations, address theological concerns, and warrant AI technologies' compatibility with religious doctrines and practices. Informed consent must be obtained from users of AI, and education on AI-driven religious practices must be provided for the promotion of transparency and empowerment of individual freedom of choice. Organisations can foster trust, encourage participation, and respect individuals' autonomy in engaging with AI-driven religious apps by educating users about the capabilities and implications of AI technologies (Ryan and Stahl, 2020).

To ensure responsible AI practices for businesses, customers, and stakeholders should acknowledge that we are still in the early stages where

vulnerabilities can be addressed. As we progress in merging AI into religious practices, it becomes clear that AI cannot replicate human or emotional intelligence in the online economy. Since research on AI bias is in its latency across all management domains, there are numerous opportunities for businesses to innovate new research and policies can be developed to reduce bias and improve the effectiveness of AI (Varsha, 2023). The Vatican's initiative to bring together AI developers, philosophers and spiritual leaders to attend to ethical issues related to robotics in society's cultural contexts is considered a significant moment of Christian witness (Abramov, 2020). This partnership is critical for developing AI systems that are both technically proficient and in line with societal norms and ethical standards (Gabriel, 2020).

Conclusion

Assessed through the theory of Principlism, integrating spirituality and AI presents both obstacles and opportunities that deserve attention as issues of beneficence and non-maleficence arise. AI in sacred practices presents significant ethical challenges that need meticulous consideration. A primary concern is the potential impact on the authenticity and significance of religious experiences, as AI may struggle to replicate the depth of in-person interactions. AI systems may influence decisions and actions within religious contexts. AI systems collect sensitive personal data, raising privacy concerns. Addressing these ethical concerns requires collaboration between religious leaders, ethicists, and technology experts. It is necessary to approach the moral considerations of artificial intelligence in spiritual rituals with sensitivity to preserve the authenticity and human-centred essence of these experiences. combining AI and religious practices creates unique chances for interfaith talks and cooperative efforts in technological development. Cooperative ventures involving experts from many religious traditions, technologists, and ethicists can foster reciprocal understanding, respect cultural diversity, and uphold shared beliefs regarding AI

apps. We can create culturally sensitive technology that satisfies various religious beliefs and customs, nurtures cross-cultural communication, and promotes unity among faith communities by developing AI with input from numerous faith traditions. Future research can focus on developing a framework for ethical AI applications in spirituality. This could involve discussions among theologians, ethicists, and AI developers to establish principles that ensure spiritual experiences remain authentic while leveraging the benefits of technology. Finally, research can examine specific cases that involve AI use in religious practices, assess their impacts on community engagement, individual spiritual journeys, and overall authenticity of the experiences.

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