

Article

Transformation Of Christian Religious Education With Artificial Intelligence: Building A Spiritual Future In The Digital World

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Abstract: Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be a transformational tool in Christian Religious Education in the digital era. Technological advancements bring significant changes to the way we learn and teach, including religious education, which demands innovative methods to remain relevant to the younger generation increasingly connected to technology. AI offers various opportunities to enrich the learning experience and deepen the understanding of Christian values through a more personal and interactive approach. This article discusses several AI applications in Christian religious education, such as virtual assistants for spiritual guidance, in-depth Bible text analysis, and adaptive learning platforms that can tailor materials to the needs of learners. With AI technology, Christian religious education can provide more interactive and responsive modules, allowing learners to delve into religious teachings both individually and in groups. Additionally, the use of AI in analyzing learning behavior allows for more effective curriculum personalization according to the spiritual needs of each individual. This approach can address the challenge of maintaining the relevance of religious values amidst the rapid influx of digital information. This article also examines the potential of AI in aiding faith development, for example through spiritual reflection applications tailored to the user's spiritual growth. This transformation is expected to prepare a generation of Christians who are not only technologically savvy but also spiritually strong, and empowered to face moral and ethical challenges in the future. Thus, AI-based Christian Religious Education can be a pathway to building a relevant and dynamic spiritual future in the digital era.

Keywords: Transformation, Christian Religious Education, Artificial Intelligence

1. Introduction

In the ever-evolving digital era, technology has become an integral part of human life. Digital technology influences the way humans learn, work, and communicate, as well as creating new opportunities in various fields, including education. Amid these changes, Christian Religious Education, as an important foundation in character and spirituality formation, also needs to adapt to remain relevant and effective in educating the current generation. Christian Religious Education not only aims to provide knowledge about religious teachings but also aims to shape a person's character and spiritual integrity. (Wenas & Verana, 2024) However, the challenges faced by Christian Religious Education today are becoming increasingly complex, especially in conveying religious messages to the younger generation who are more familiar with technology than with conventional learning methods. These challenges include the lack of interest among the younger generation in studying religion through traditional methods, the limitations of teachers in providing relevant and interactive materials, and the difficulty in reaching students who are dispersed across various locations.

In this context, AI can be an innovative and strategic solution for Christian Religious Education. AI technology has the potential to provide a new approach to learning, allowing for more personal and dynamic interactions between learners and educational materials. AI also enables religious education to be more widely accessible, cross-border, and tailored to individual needs more specifically. Through AI technology, learners can study Christian

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values through interactive applications, such as virtual guidance, adaptive learning, and in-depth analytical programs for biblical texts.(Papakostas, 2024) AI-based learning platforms also enable the development of engaging and relevant modules for the digital generation, thereby increasing interest and involvement in religious education.

As AI technology advances, various applications have shown positive results in improving the quality and efficiency of the learning process.(Chen et al., 2020) In many countries, the application of AI in general education has been able to improve learning outcomes by providing more personalized methods that cater to the abilities of each individual.(Tapalova & Zhiyenbayeva, 2022) This opens up opportunities for religious education to also utilize AI, not only to deliver content but also to create deeper and more contextual spiritual experiences. For example, AI can be used to develop daily reflection applications, providing Bible verses relevant to the user's emotional and spiritual conditions, and encouraging active engagement through daily reminders for reflection.

However, the application of AI in Christian Religious Education is not without challenges. There are concerns regarding the negative impact of this technology, including the risk of displacing the role of teachers as primary educators, as well as concerns about the privacy and security of students' data. Therefore, this transformation needs to be designed with consideration of ethical values and boundaries that support spiritual growth without diminishing the essence of religious teachings. The development of AI for religious education needs to be carried out carefully, ensuring that this technology remains a supportive tool that assists educators, rather than replacing them. With the various potentials and challenges present, the use of AI in Christian Religious Education can be a significant step forward in maintaining the relevance and effectiveness of religious education in the modern era. This transformation offers opportunities to build a stronger spiritual future, support deep and interactive religious learning, and prepare a generation capable of facing spiritual, moral, and ethical challenges amidst changing times.

2. Methods

The research method used in this article is a qualitative method with a literature study approach. Namely, a research approach aimed at exploring, understanding, and analyzing information in depth based on relevant literature or written sources.(Fidel, 1993) In this method, data is collected from various written documents, such as scientific journals, books, research reports, articles, and other written sources.(Brundage, 2017) This method was chosen to provide an in-depth understanding of the potential transformation of Christian Religious Education (CRE) through the utilization of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in building a spiritual future in the digital world. The qualitative approach allows researchers to conduct an in-depth exploration of the concepts and implications of applying AI in religious education, which includes changes in the delivery of teachings, its influence on learners, and its impact on spiritual values.(Barrows, 2024) Literature study allows researchers to collect, review, and analyze various academic sources that have discussed the relationship between AI technology and education, particularly religious education. By using this method, the research is expected to provide comprehensive insights that not only describe the potential and opportunities of AI in Christian Religious Education but also offer practical guidance on its ethical and responsible application in the ever-evolving digital education landscape.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1.The Potential and Benefits of Artificial Intelligence in Christian Religious Education

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a rapidly developing technological innovation that has shown significant impact in various fields of life, including education. In the context of Christian religious education, AI has the potential to enhance teaching effectiveness, create more personalized learning experiences, and provide broader access to students. As technology advances, Christian religious education now has the opportunity to adopt this technology, leveraging its potential to deepen students' understanding of faith values. However, the implementation of AI in this field also presents ethical challenges that need to be considered.

One of the great potentials of AI in Christian religious education is its ability to create personalized learning experiences for each student. In traditional education systems, educators usually face time constraints and a large number of students, making it difficult to tailor teaching methods to the needs of each individual.(Tomlinson, 2014) With AI, the learning process can be automatically adjusted based on the needs of the students. AI algorithms are capable of identifying learning patterns, preferences, and student abilities through comprehensive data analysis.(Ahmad et al., 2023) For example, a student who has difficulty understanding certain theological concepts or biblical interpretations can be provided with appropriate additional materials or a different teaching approach. With this personalization, the learning process becomes more effective, as each student can understand the material according to their own learning style and pace.

On the other hand, AI also opens up opportunities to create more interactive and immersive learning experiences, something rarely found in traditional religious education. Technologies such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), when combined with AI, can create a learning environment that allows students to "experience" events in the Bible.(Martin, 2019) For example, they can virtually "visit" Jerusalem during biblical times or witness important moments such as Jesus' journey, the crucifixion, or the resurrection. This more immersive learning experience can help students better understand the history, culture, and theological context behind biblical stories. This approach not only makes learning more engaging but also enables students to understand the content of the Bible in a more profound and contextual manner.

In addition, AI has the ability to provide a wider and richer range of teaching materials and references for educators. The sophistication of search algorithms and data analysis enables AI to efficiently access thousands of theological literature, documents, and articles. AI can help compile teaching materials based on relevant and up-to-date information, allowing educators to obtain quality content without having to go through time-consuming manual research.(Liu et al., 2023) For example, if a teacher needs references on the different interpretations of a particular verse in the Bible, AI can help present various perspectives from different Christian denominations. Thus, educators can provide a more comprehensive and richly nuanced Christian education, helping students understand the complexities and diversity of Christian theology.

The presence of AI also introduces new learning aids that can support the teaching and learning process. Chatbots or AI-based virtual assistants, for example, can answer simple questions from students about theology or biblical interpretation in real-time.(Maniyakupara, 2024) This tool provides convenience for students to learn independently, without having to wait for direct guidance from the instructor. In addition, AI can create interactive quizzes or simulations that allow students to test their understanding independently. With the presence of these tools, students not only learn more effectively but are also encouraged to develop independent learning habits and take responsibility for their own education.

Another benefit of implementing AI in Christian religious education is the ability to expand access to religious education. Through AI-based online learning platforms, individuals in remote areas or those who have difficulty accessing religious education institutions directly can still learn. For example, AI enables a curriculum and teaching tailored to the needs of students without relying on the physical presence of a teacher or educational institution facilities. This presents a great opportunity for more people to learn about Christianity and understand its spiritual values without being limited by geographical location.(Tuegeh & Majesty, 2025)

AI can also contribute to spiritual guidance and counseling. AI-based guidance programs can detect a person's emotional and spiritual needs through data analysis of user behavior patterns. For example, AI-based chatbots can offer initial support to those experiencing a crisis of faith, anxiety, or sadness by providing Bible verses, prayers, or spiritual advice. Although AI cannot replace the role of a counselor or pastor, its presence can provide initial support that is accessible anytime and anywhere. This can complement spiritual guidance by providing comfort to those who might hesitate to seek help directly. In addition, AI has analytical capabilities that can assist in understanding biblical texts and other theological

literature.(Jackson III, 2023) With the ability to analyze large amounts of data, AI can help identify specific patterns or themes in the Bible as well as provide in-depth hermeneutical analysis. For example, AI can help compare the diverse interpretations from various Christian denominations. This provides convenience for students and teachers to understand various perspectives within the Christian faith, making religious education more inclusive and rich in perspectives.

With the right approach, artificial intelligence can become a highly valuable tool in supporting Christian religious education. This technology enables a more inclusive, interactive, and relevant learning process for students from various backgrounds.(Navas-Bonilla et al., 2025) Although AI cannot replace the important roles of educators or spiritual counselors, its presence can enrich the learning process and make Christian education more adaptive to the times. In its application, educational institutions and Christian communities need to consider ethical boundaries and religious values so that the use of AI remains within a meaningful framework and aligns with spiritual principles. Thus, AI is not just a technological tool, but can also serve as a means to enrich faith and spirituality in Christian religious education in this digital era.

3.2. Challenges and Ethical Constraints in the Use of AI for Christian Religious Education

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in various fields of modern life has created a range of new opportunities, including in the field of education.(Roll & Wylie, 2016) Not to be excluded, Christian religious education now faces great potential to utilize AI to enrich students' learning experiences, enhance access to theological literature, and personalize teaching. However, like the application of technology in other aspects of life, the use of AI in Christian religious education is not free from ethical challenges and constraints. Some of these challenges arise from the nature of AI itself, which on one hand is capable of processing information efficiently, but on the other hand often fails to capture and consider the spiritual and human nuances that are at the core of religious education.

One of the main challenges in applying AI in Christian religious education is the issue of accurately interpreting teachings and sacred texts. The Bible, as the holy scripture in Christianity, is full of symbolism, allegory, and complex historical context, all of which require deep understanding and often contextual interpretation.(Corley et al., 2002) AI, despite having high data analysis capabilities, still cannot fully understand the context, nuances, and depth of this transcendent religious text. With algorithms that are fundamentally logical and mathematical, AI might offer interpretations based on statistical data or general patterns, but it cannot capture the deeper spiritual meanings. This becomes an ethical issue when the interpretation provided by AI might be incorrect or diverge from the theological understanding held by certain Christian communities.

For example, AI designed to analyze and explain Bible verses might produce results that do not align with the views of a particular Christian denomination. This could create confusion, even division among students or congregants with differing views. Christian religious education has a mission to teach the values and teachings of Christ with sincerity, something that is difficult for AI to convey, which lacks spiritual capacity or awareness of religious values themselves. Therefore, the first ethical challenge is about how to maintain the integrity of Christian teachings so that they are not distorted by "interpretations" produced by AI, which is essentially just a machine without the ability to perceive sacred and spiritual values.(Youvan, 2024)

Moreover, there are concerns that AI might disrupt the role of spiritual authority in Christian religious education. As part of the faith community, pastors or Christian religious teachers not only function as educators but also as spiritual guides. They do not merely impart knowledge, but also inspire and set an example in living a life in accordance with the teachings of Christ. The use of AI as a teaching aid has the potential to make students more dependent on quick answers provided by machines, and less appreciative of the process of seeking deep and reflective meaning, which is usually guided by a pastor or teacher. This can diminish the

important role of teachers as spiritual guides and reduce the religious dimension to merely a collection of information generated by machines.

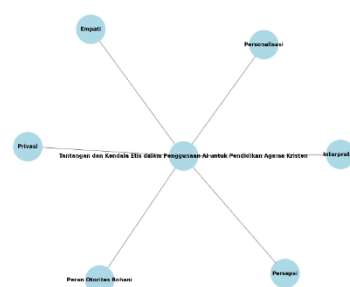
The next equally important ethical challenge is the issue of privacy and personal data security. In the process, AI works by using user data to identify patterns, adjust materials, and provide appropriate responses. In the context of religious education, the data used may include sensitive information, such as students' understanding of faith, spiritual experiences, or even doubts they have regarding religious teachings. (Stern, 2018) Educators or religious educational institutions that use AI need to ensure that this data is stored securely and not misused. If this highly personal data falls into the wrong hands or is misused by irresponsible parties, the impact could be very detrimental, especially for students who might feel anxious or vulnerable about sharing their spiritual experiences.

In addition to privacy, there are also challenges related to personalization carried out by AI. One of the potentials of AI in education is its ability to provide learning experiences tailored to individual needs. However, in religious education, the personalization carried out by AI can become an ethical issue when the algorithms used end up directing students towards certain views or understandings that may not align with their church's teachings. For example, AI designed with certain algorithms might emphasize specific aspects of Christian teachings (such as love, forgiveness, or justice) while downplaying others. This could lead to an imbalance in students' understanding of their faith, because AI, in essence, does not have the authority to determine which aspects of religious teachings are more important than others.

Furthermore, although AI can serve as an efficient teaching aid, its limitations in terms of empathy and human values also pose a significant challenge in Christian religious education. Religious education, especially those related to faith and spirituality, is not just about transferring knowledge, but also touching the hearts and souls of students. (Erricker & Erricker, 2000) Pastors or religious teachers have the capacity to provide empathy, compassion, and moral support that students desperately need, especially those who are experiencing struggles or crises of faith. AI does not have the emotional capacity to understand and support students in the same way. Even though AI might be able to offer advice or Bible quotes based on algorithms, it still cannot replace the value and depth of guidance from a true spiritual mentor.

Another challenge that also needs to be considered is how AI can shape the younger generation's perception of religion and spiritual authority. Young people who grow up with AI technology may tend to rely more on machines to answer their theological questions, rather than seeking guidance from pastors or church communities. This can shift their perspective on religion to be more individualistic and less appreciative of the role of the faith community. Christian religious education, which ideally is also education within the context of a community, can lose its social value and sense of togetherness if AI is overly relied upon. (Kia & Majesty, 2025) This challenge brings us to an important question about how to maintain a balance between using AI as an auxiliary tool and preserving a learning experience that prioritizes collective values and human interaction.

Picture 1



In the end, the use of AI in Christian religious education offers great opportunities, but it also brings challenges and ethical constraints that must be seriously considered. AI technology, although highly advanced, remains a tool that operates based on algorithms and

does not possess a deep understanding of spiritual and humanitarian values. (Raikov & Pirani, 2022) Therefore, in implementing AI in Christian religious education, educators and religious institutions need to be careful not to rely too heavily on this technology, and always consider the ethical impact and the values they wish to teach. AI should be seen as an auxiliary tool, not as a replacement for pastors or teachers who play a crucial role in guiding students on their spiritual journeys. Through a wise approach, AI can serve as a complement that enriches students' learning experiences in Christian religious education. However, strict boundaries and clear ethics are still necessary to ensure that AI is used in a way that respects the values of faith, maintains privacy, and supports the formation of a complete character. Thus, the existing ethical challenges and constraints can be overcome, ensuring that the use of AI truly provides benefits without sacrificing important aspects of Christian religious education.

3.3. The Application of AI in Christian Religious Education Learning Methods

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly advancing and becoming an important part of various fields, including education. In Christian religious education, AI offers various opportunities to enrich the learning process through personalization, accessibility, and creating a more interactive and immersive learning experience. (Tran & Nguyen, 2021) The application of AI in Christian religious education can provide more relevant and engaging teaching methods, especially for the generation that grows up with technology. One of the main applications of AI in Christian religious education is personalized learning. Through AI, the material presented can be tailored to the understanding level, interests, and learning styles of each student. AI is capable of analyzing data on students' learning patterns to recommend appropriate readings, videos, or activities. This is very beneficial, especially in the context of Christian religious education, which covers various complex topics, from the basics of faith to more in-depth theology. With this personalization, students have the opportunity to learn at their own pace and according to their needs, allowing them to gain a deeper and more personal understanding of the Christian faith. (Majesty & Juaniva Sidharta, 2025)

In addition, AI enables a more interactive and immersive learning experience. With the help of technologies such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), students can "experience" events in the Bible virtually. (Allal-Chérif, 2022) For example, they can feel as if they are in the midst of Jerusalem during the time of Jesus or witness important events such as the Last Supper and the resurrection of Jesus. This approach makes learning more engaging and relevant, as students not only read texts or listen to stories, but also see and feel the historical and cultural context surrounding those teachings. This immersive experience can enhance students' understanding and engagement in studying the Christian faith. Another application of AI is through the development of chatbots or virtual assistants that can answer students' basic questions about the Bible and theology. With AI-based chatbots, students can ask questions anytime and receive immediate answers, without having to wait for direct explanations from a pastor or teacher. This chatbot is not intended to replace the role of teachers, but rather as a complement that helps students learn about Christianity independently.

Although AI offers many benefits, its application in Christian religious education also faces challenges. One of the main concerns is the integrity of sacred text interpretation. Because AI lacks spiritual understanding, there is a risk that the interpretations provided could deviate from the true theological meaning. Moreover, the role of human interaction in religious education remains very important, especially in terms of spiritual guidance and character formation. Overall, the application of AI in Christian religious education methods brings significant benefits in terms of personalization, interactivity, and accessibility. With the right approach, AI can become an effective tool to support a more dynamic and relevant learning process for the younger generation, without diminishing the core values and spiritual meaning of Christian religious education itself.

3.4. The Impact of Digital Transformation on the Development of Spirituality

In the era of digital transformation, various aspects of life are undergoing significant changes, including spirituality. The continuously evolving digitalization has changed the way humans communicate, learn, and even worship. Through the internet, social media,

applications, and other digital devices, spirituality can now be accessed, explored, and expressed in ways that have never existed before. The impact of digital transformation on spirituality is very complex; on one hand, digitalization opens up broader opportunities to deepen and spread spirituality, while on the other hand, it poses challenges in maintaining the authenticity and depth of spiritual experiences.(Tosun, 2023)

One of the positive impacts of digital transformation on the development of spirituality is broader access to spiritual resources. The internet provides a wide variety of content, ranging from religious texts, sermons, guided meditations, to online spiritual classes that can be accessed anytime and anywhere. For example, someone who wants to study the scriptures more deeply or listen to sermons from a particular religious leader can now do so with just a few clicks. This provides extraordinary convenience, especially for individuals in remote areas or those with mobility limitations. Digital transformation allows anyone with internet access to develop their spirituality in a more independent and flexible way.(Dutton, 2004)

Moreover, digital transformation also facilitates the creation of global spiritual communities. Social media and other digital platforms allow individuals with different religious backgrounds or beliefs to connect and discuss directly. This greatly influences the way people view spirituality; they not only interact with local communities or the same religion but also with people from various spiritual backgrounds. These communities allow for the exchange of thoughts and practices that enrich the perspectives of each member, as well as open opportunities to learn about more universal and inclusive spirituality. Additionally, these virtual groups allow individuals to stay connected with their spiritual communities despite being separated by distance, thus continuing to feel supported in their spiritual journeys.

However, behind its positive impact, digital transformation also presents challenges for the development of spirituality. One of the main challenges is the emergence of "instant spirituality" or superficial spiritual seeking. In the fast-paced digital world, spiritual information is often presented in short and easily digestible forms, such as inspirational quotes, short videos, or daily reflections.(Rinpoche, 2024) Although such content can provide inspiration, there is a risk that people only consume spirituality in the form of "snapshots" or small pieces without delving into the core of the teachings or the spiritual experience itself. When spirituality is summarized into quotes or viral content, there is concern that the meaning and depth of spirituality are lost, and people become more interested in surface aspects rather than the deeper process of reflection and contemplation.

In addition, the presence of social media in digital transformation can give rise to the phenomenon of "spirituality as image." In an effort to showcase their spirituality, many people share their spiritual moments on social media. This is often done to showcase spiritual identity or to inspire others. Although there is nothing wrong with sharing a spiritual journey, there is a risk that spirituality can become part of an image or content driven by the desire for social appreciation. This phenomenon has the potential to diminish the authenticity of spiritual experiences, turning them into mere displays in the public eye, thereby shifting the meaning of spirituality from something very personal and sacred to something consumptive and superficial.

Another challenge is how to maintain focus and attention in a digital world full of distractions. Spirituality, whether through meditation, prayer, or reflection, usually requires quiet time and deep focus.(Carroll, 2005) However, in the digital era, various distractions and notifications from digital devices often make it difficult for people to truly focus on their spiritual moments. Someone might have the intention to pray or meditate, but notifications from social media or instant messages can disrupt their focus. This situation creates new challenges for those who are trying to cultivate spiritual depth amidst a fast-paced and distraction-filled digital lifestyle.

Moreover, in the digital world, a person's spiritual identity can become more complex. On online platforms, individuals can access various practices and teachings from different spiritual traditions, allowing them to weave a more open and diverse spiritual identity. However, this also poses a challenge in maintaining consistency and sincerity in their spiritual quest. Many people feel drawn to explore various spiritual traditions and teachings, but on

the other hand, they feel confused or tossed between one practice and another. This raises questions about the depth of commitment in practicing spirituality, as digitalization often accelerates the exploration process without providing enough space to fully experience, appreciate, and delve into each spiritual step.

Overall, digital transformation has a complex impact on the development of spirituality. On one hand, it opens access to spiritual resources, creates global communities, and enables a more inclusive spiritual quest. However, on the other hand, it also brings challenges in maintaining the depth and authenticity of spiritual experiences amidst the rapid and easily accessible flow of information. In this digital era, the main challenge in developing spirituality is finding a balance between the ease of access offered by technology and the need for depth and silence in every spiritual journey. Spirituality in the digital era may take on different forms and dynamics, but at its core, it still requires sincere reflection, depth of experience, and a commitment to seeking greater meaning in life.

4. Conclusions

Building a Spiritual Future in the Digital World is that the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Christian Religious Education (CRE) offers great opportunities to update learning methods that are relevant to the needs of the digital generation. Through AI, Christian Religious Education can provide a more interactive, adaptive, and personalized learning experience. This technology enables the delivery of material that adapts to individual needs, provides spiritual reflection, and offers broader and more flexible accessibility. However, this transformation also brings a number of challenges, particularly related to data privacy, the integrity of spiritual values, and the central role of teachers as spiritual guides. Although AI can be a powerful supporting tool, the role of educators as carriers of authentic religious values remains irreplaceable. Thus, the application of AI in Christian Religious Education must consider ethical and moral boundaries, ensuring that technology remains a tool to strengthen spirituality without diminishing the fundamental values taught by Christianity. Overall, the utilization of AI in Christian Religious Education has the potential to build a strong and relevant spiritual future, enabling the digital generation to remain connected with religious teachings and spiritual values, while preparing them to face moral and spiritual challenges in the modern era.

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