
Assessing Role of Artificial Intelligence in Religion and Spiritual Wellbeing: A Narrative Review

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Received: 08 November 2025, Accepted: 20 November 2025, Published online: 30 November 2025

Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has transformed almost all aspects of human life with rapid advancements, from business to healthcare to creative expression and interpersonal relationships. Currently, influence of AI has gone beyond applications, being in the realm of existential crisis and spiritual existence. Influence of AI has expanded over the years beyond just apps, being in the realm of spirituality. AI is constantly working on spirituality, providing new paths to seek guidance, discover faith, and engage in excellent experiences. AI tools like meditation apps, chatbots, and religious text analysis have become the marker to raise significant questions around the role of technology and nature of spiritual experiences. Some people say that connecting with AI makes them feel more connected and comfortable, while others wonder if AI can mediate spirituality or simply replicates human needs and beliefs. This study looks into the potential of AI as a channel for spirituality, its applications, theological implications, and the future of AI as a spiritual guide. This study will look into whether AI may increase spiritual experiences or if there is a risk of automating or changing very personal journeys. The evolution of AI and its incorporation into spirituality signals both excitement and caution for those on spiritual journeys.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, spiritual wellbeing, religion, spirituality, spiritual experience, religious text, meditation/consciousness, spiritual coaching and communities.

Introduction

The convergence of artificial intelligence and spirituality is an intriguing frontier in which cutting-edge technology meets age-old issues about consciousness, meaning of life and the nature of existence. It travels through the junction of technology and a non-rational set of ideas. Throughout history, people have utilised dominating technology as metaphors to comprehend consciousness and spiritual conceptions. The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) is no longer limited to industry, finance, and entertainment; it is now spreading to the very personal fields of spirituality, psycho-spiritual healing, and mental health. The growth of AI into these fields is more than just a technological revolution; it is also a psychological and existential one, addressing the multifaceted nature of the self and the complicated interplay of intellect, emotion, and spiritual experience.

Historically, technological improvements have influenced religious and spiritual practices, ranging from the printing press, which revolutionised scripture dissemination, to the internet, which allows for virtual worship. AI offers digital platforms for religious material and spiritual direction, as well as therapeutic applications based on trauma-sensitive frameworks (Gruchoła, Sławek-Czochra, & Zieliński, 2024). These AI-powered platforms, which take the shape of meditation and wellbeing applications, virtual religious services, or digital rituals, serve as both mirrors and mediators, reflecting interior feelings while encouraging deeper integration and healing.

The word 'artificial' intelligence implies a detachment from human awareness, but AI is becoming increasingly integrated into the fundamental fabric of our mind. AI expands human awareness beyond the ordinary by

processing huge amounts of data and providing real-time feedback, allowing access to previously unreachable aspects of cognition and perception. This change enables us to perceive AI as an 'organic' extension of human intelligence, allowing for deeper connection with both our inner and outer worlds.

Spiritual well-being does not refer to any specific religious or spiritual practice or belief, but rather to the human desire for meaning, purpose, and connection to something larger than ourselves. It is sometimes misinterpreted, yet this part of our well-being can be satisfied by the practice of a religious faith, which involves a strongly felt relationship. It is a broad and frequently personalised facet of health that provides context and meaning to all other aspects of ourselves and our life experiences. In other words, spiritual wellness is connecting with our inner world to discover meaning and purpose in life.

Although sometimes used interchangeably with religion, spirituality refers to a personal search for meaning, purpose, and connection with oneself and others. It is empirical and includes activities such as meditation, mindfulness, and self-reflection. Religion, on the other hand, is defined by structured beliefs and communal rituals within an organised religion system. Participating in religious rites, following sacred texts, and adhering to moral principles established by religious organisations.

AI is increasingly being deployed as a companion for people's spiritual experiences, whether through online spiritual counsellors, AI-based meditation apps, or chatbots that engage in hypothetical debate. This growth in interaction raises many concerns about consciousness and spirituality, as well as whether AI may serve as a conduit for non-material, deeper parts of human life. The human experience has been inextricably linked to fundamental issues about purpose, perfection, and meaning. In the past, people sought spiritual guidance through personal reflection, sacred books, and religious institutions (Okoronkwo and Dike, 2025).

Studies on Artificial Intelligence and Spirituality/Religiosity-

When it comes to AI-based spirituality, one of the most serious philosophical concerns is whether AI can enhance spiritual experiences or create an illusion of meaning and depth. AI is heavily integrated into spiritual activities, many people have claimed extraordinary experiences when interacting with AI-powered gadgets. These experiences range from feelings of guidance and comfort to apparent divine encounters and profound reflection. Overall, spiritual experiences are highly personal, subjective, cultural, and predicated on personal beliefs. Integrating AI into this personal area introduces a new dimension in which personalised algorithms and human perception interact in surprising and novel ways. Spirituality consists of a sense of connection to something more than the self, be it the universe, the God, or a higher being (Delgado, 2005). Spiritual experiences are typically characterised by a sense of connection to the divine and personal transformation. Many individuals think that these attributes are beyond the capabilities of an artificial body. Advocates of AI-based spirituality believe that if a person derives knowledge, comfort, or renewed sense of purpose by having a dialogue with AI, the experience would be subjective, irrespective of whether AI has divine knowledge or consciousness (Hutson and McMaken, 2025).

Over the past 200 years, there has been a complex link between technology and religious/spiritual life. Here are a few significant ways technology has influenced religion and spirituality:

- Mass printing made religious texts more accessible, empowering individuals to engage with scriptures.
- Radio, television, and the internet helped religious leaders reach wider audiences.
- Digital platforms have enabled virtual religious communities that transcend geographical boundaries.
- Anyone with internet access has quick access to sacred texts, commentaries, and theological conversations.

In both spiritual and psychological contexts, AI-generated guidance often falls short in providing the depth and empathy necessary to address individual needs, tending instead towards a more generalised approach that may overlook the nuances of personal experience. This is particularly concerning in the realm of psychological healing, where AI may struggle to fully grasp the emotional complexities inherent in a person's mental health challenges. Despite several challenges, AI offers significant opportunities for spiritual and psychological growth. It can serve as a bridge to traditional spiritual spaces, creating virtual communities that provide comfort and connection for those who might otherwise feel isolated (Alkhouri, 2024).

Religious traditions have long adapted to technological advancements, and in recent years, AI has become another transformative force, helping religious leaders craft sermons, analyse scripture, and provide pastoral guidance (Frackiewicz, 2023). These tools augment traditional practices, enabling clergy and believers to interact with religious teachings in new and innovative ways. Digital avatars and AI-driven chatbots have begun to provide 24/7 spiritual counselling, bridging gaps for those seeking religious engagement in increasingly secularised societies (Allen and ChatGPT, 2023). Additionally, virtual and augmented reality are creating immersive worship experiences, enabling believers to participate in rituals no matter where they are. These developments democratise religious engagement, making spirituality more accessible to diverse communities (Trotta, Iannotti and Rähme, 2024). AI also holds promise for preserving and passing on religious heritage, with digital archives and machine learning models making centuries of theological knowledge available to future generations.

Grinfeder et al. (2025) examine the key ways in which the metaverse is altering the human experience of space, community, and spirituality, as well as its components of artificial intelligence and virtual reality. Then, using evidence from diverse sources, they examined how students use these tools to create new spiritual and social experiences by establishing sacred spaces and rituals in the metaverse in the age of AI. They proposed new technologies to enable and develop novel educational practices, creative expressions, and forms of community, spirituality, and space.

AI has also begun to influence larger spirituality, bridging ethnic, religious, and philosophical barriers and frequently incorporating practices such as meditation, mindfulness, and the pursuit of inner peace. For many people, spirituality is a path of personal development, connection to something higher, and understanding one's role in the cosmos. Deepak Chopra, a contemporary spiritual leader, investigates how artificial intelligence might help people evolve. He contends that, when used carefully, AI can connect with the concept of Dharma, which guides people towards enlightenment and fulfilment through conscious contact with technology. In *Digital Dharma*, Chopra (2024) cites four essential ways in which AI might support individuals on their spiritual journey:

1. Research assistant: Assisting users with gathering and synthesising information relevant to their spiritual and philosophical inquiries.
2. Personal confidant: Providing emotional support, fostering introspection, and maintaining confidentiality in a non-judgmental manner.
3. Therapist/healer: Offering guided meditations, mindfulness exercises, and psychological insights that support emotional resilience and balance.
4. Guru: Encouraging self-awareness and growth by offering tailored insights and teachings from spiritual traditions.

AI-powered spiritual tools are dynamic, adapting to the user's emotional and cognitive states to provide tailored sessions that follow the practitioner's path (Nguyen, Fdez, & Witkowski, 2024). At the heart of these developments is a basic intention: to support the individual's spiritual journey in a fluid and non-invasive manner. The idea is to avoid imposing a strict path, instead cultivating an ongoing, exploratory relationship with one's feeling of purpose and belonging. These digital tools, ideally, serve not as replacements for sacred practices or substitutes for human connection, but as aids to deepen engagement—reminding individuals of key themes, offering scriptural insights, and posing reflective questions to encourage contemplation.

Kovalenko (2024) explored the potential threats and challenges posed by AI to human spirituality. They characterised spirituality as a significant part of people's life that shapes their views, values, and behaviours, provides a framework for understanding their relationship with the cosmos, and provides solace in times of crisis as well as a sense of belonging, purpose, and inner peace. They identified four significant issues associated with AI in spirituality: fading selflessness, decreased attention and concentration, a sense of compassion and devotion, and a lack of understanding about analysis and self-awareness. This study highlights significant distinctions and parallels between spiritual beings and AI systems. Finally, it is concluded that one should be responsible for themselves and respond well to what happens to not enabling AI to guide their spiritual experiences and lives.

AI Tools for Transforming Spiritual Growth

Artificial intelligence (AI) is stepping up as a revolutionary force in sectors far and wide—including the sacred halls of our churches. For some, AI and religion couldn't be further apart, but they are rapidly intertwining, becoming a linchpin in transforming spiritual guidance. AI tools are making spiritual guidance more personalized, simplifying curriculum delivery for today's tech-savvy spiritual leaders.

AI-Powered Meditation and Mindfulness Apps

Spirituality is another emerging field of AI in the realm of mindfulness and meditation. AI apps like Headspace, Calm and others use smart models for tailoring spiritual assertions, meditation sessions, and breathing techniques to meet specific needs of individual and progress. They analyze preference, behavior, and physiological data of the user to suggest personalized spiritual journeys, building deep connection to self-awareness and inner peace (Zeitlin-Wu, 2023). AI-enabled applications like Headspace, Calm, and Insight Timer use ML to make personalized meditative session recommendations based on user behavior. Over the long term, these platforms will evolve to help users through stress, anxiety, and self-awareness exercises. In data analysis, sleep, heart rate, and mood are integrated into AI to assist in a deeper understanding of mindfulness practice.

AI-Guided Therapy and Emotional Well-Being

AI can act as a guide for people during fasting, helping in preparing for holy holidays, and adhere to ritual purity laws by offering guidance (Wang and Ma, 2025). Applications like Woebot and Wysa use AI for cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) for mental health. These bots allow users to indulge in meaningful conversations with them, offering them techniques for coping and emotional or internal insight. Such AI tools help users reflect upon and reframe thoughts to help them face personal life challenges without human therapists.

AI in Personalized Spiritual Coaching

AI in spiritual coaching is also expanding into voice assistants that offer meditative affirmations or prayer reminders. Some apps integrate astrology, breathwork, and journaling prompts based on user data to align

guidance with emotional states. These increasingly interactive tools allow users to engage in dynamic spiritual dialogues with AI that feel conversational and thoughtful. AI devices can guide users with daily rituals, suggest prayers for gratitude, healing, guidance or specific life events, and remind them of time for prayer (Gruchola et al, 2024).

Virtual Spiritual Communities

Online communities around AI in spirituality are forging a new global connection based on shared spiritual values. Whether through Discord servers, Reddit threads, or metaverse temples, people connect with others like them. AI moderates discussions, suggests content, and even generates meditative environments in virtual reality (VR) and, thus, brings about such inclusive spiritual ecosystems.

AI in Religious Text Analysis

AI is also redefining the way religious texts are analyzed and studied. With the power of “natural language processing (NLP),” AI can analyze holy texts like the Quran, Bible, etc. with depth and unexpected speed. AI tools can detect cross-reference texts and patterns across various traditions and languages, and even offer cultural and historical context to develop knowledge (Alpaslan and Mitroff, 2024). Theologians and religious researchers are utilising AI to discover new information about historical writings, linguistic structures, contemporary themes, and authorship patterns that may have gone unnoticed throughout time.

AI and Consciousness

Consciousness research in AI explores the boundaries between machine cognition and human awareness. Studies are being conducted to simulate introspective reasoning and subjective experience in AI systems, although no artificial system has yet achieved true self-awareness. The philosophical implications of such research challenge our understanding of what it means to be sentient, urging deeper inquiry into the nature of mind and existence.

Conclusion:

AI's increasing presence challenges us to reflect on its impact on consciousness, selfhood, and spiritual authority, but it also presents an opportunity to explore new pathways for healing and meaning making. If engaged with intention and care, AI can serve as a catalyst for deeper engagement with the self, the sacred, and the broader human experience. The integration of AI into spiritual, religious, and psycho-spiritual healing practices offers both profound opportunities and significant ethical considerations. When developed with inclusivity, accessibility, and ethical integrity in mind, AI-driven platforms can foster global connections, facilitate deep reflection, and provide resources for both individual and collective transformation. These technologies have the potential to create spaces where people from diverse backgrounds come together, strengthening communal bonds and reinforcing shared values (Brown and Taylor, 2021). However, this potential can only be realised if AI is designed to support rather than supplant human wisdom, ensuring that technology serves as a bridge to deeper connection rather than an obstacle to authentic experience.

Ultimately, the role of AI in these spaces should not be dictated solely by technological advancement but by a commitment to ethical responsibility and human-centred values. Spiritual and psychological traditions must take an active role in shaping how AI intersects with their practices, ensuring that its development aligns with the principles of mutual care, respect, and authenticity. As these technologies continue to evolve, they must remain in service to human connection and redirect individuals towards their own inner wisdom and the collective wisdom of their communities. By embracing AI's potential while remaining vigilant to its

limitations, we can ensure that technology remains a means of enrichment rather than a substitute for genuine presence and understanding.

However, there is a lack of consciousness, complete understanding, and divine connection which is inherent in authentic experiences in AI. At its core, AI has no soul. It is a pattern-detection system, amplifying and reflecting the biases, beliefs, and spiritual inclinations of the ones engaged with it. Though powerful, this mirroring effect raises major questions about dependency and authenticity. Spirituality has the qualities AI may find it hard to provide due to its programming.

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