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Adedeji Daniel Gbadebo

HARNESSING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR RELIGIOUS PEDAGOGY IN NIGERIA: LEGAL AND POLICY PATHWAYS FOR CHURCHES WITH IMPLICATION FOR POST COVID ERA

INTRODUCTION

The transformative power of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been widely acknowledged across multiple sectors, including healthcare, finance, manufacturing, and education. Its ability to process vast datasets, recognize patterns, and deliver context-specific responses has enabled new levels of personalization and automation in service delivery. In educational domains, AI-powered systems such as intelligent tutoring platforms, chatbots, and content-generation tools are being leveraged to enhance learning experiences and bridge pedagogical gaps [Chen, Zhang, and Lee 2021]. These innovations are not limited to secular institutions but increasingly extend to religious education, where digital tools are being used to support the teaching and dissemination of theological content. While the integration of AI into educational practices is progressing rapidly in many parts of the world, its application within religious institutions in Nigeria remains nascent. As the country grapples with both digital transformation and deep-rooted religious traditions, there is a pressing need to examine how legal frameworks can support the responsible deployment of AI in teaching religion without

DR. ADEDEJI DANIEL GBADEBO – Walter Sisulu University in Mthatha, South Africa; correspondence address: Private Bag X1, UNITRA, 5117, South Africa; e-mail: agbadebo@ wsu.ac.za; https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1929-3291

compromising doctrinal integrity or cultural sensitivities [Ajibade and Uche 2023].

Nigeria is a deeply religious country, with Christianity and Islam accounting for many the population's faith affiliations. Christian churches, particularly Pentecostal, Evangelical, Catholic, and Anglican denominations, play significant roles beyond spiritual guidance; they function as centers for education, civic engagement, and moral instruction.[1] These institutions have increasingly embraced digital tools to reach wider congregations, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, which accelerated the shift to online worship and e-learning. However, the use of advanced AI applications, such as semantic Bible analysis tools, voice-based theological assistants, AI-generated sermons, and adaptive religious education platforms, remains relatively unexplored. These innovations have the potential to improve access to doctrinal teachings across language barriers, educational levels, and geographies [Okonkwo and Ibrahim 2024]. Nevertheless, such benefits must be weighed against significant risks, including theological misinterpretation, algorithmic bias, unequal access, and the violation of congregants' data privacy. These tensions call for an urgent and context-sensitive regulatory framework to guide the ethical and secure use of AI in churches.

The absence of a well-defined legal infrastructure for AI in Nigeria is particularly problematic in sensitive areas like religion, where technology interacts with values, traditions, and identity. Existing laws, such as the Nigerian Data Protection Regulation (NDPR), are largely insufficient to address the nuanced ethical and theological questions posed by AI use in church environments. For example, the deployment of AI systems that generate religious content could raise questions about the authenticity of spiritual authority or doctrinal accuracy. Furthermore, AI tools trained on biased or incomplete theological data may propagate doctrinal errors or misrepresent denominational teachings. Scholars such as Chukwuemeka and Ogunleye (2022) argue that emerging technologies challenge conventional regulatory paradigms and therefore necessitate adaptive, inclusive, and anticipatory legal responses. In religious contexts, these responses must ensure that AI adoption respects faith-based epistemologies, safeguards freedom of belief, and prevents the commodification of spirituality.

[1] National Bureau of Statistics 2022.

Governmental institutions play a foundational role in creating the legal and policy ecosystems that enable responsible AI innovation while ensuring societal well-being. In the Nigerian context, this role includes coordinating among regulatory bodies, educational agencies, and religious stakeholders to design AI governance models tailored to the country's socio-religious landscape. This involves more than legislation – it requires active public engagement, ethical oversight, and technical support for faith-based institutions exploring AI adoption. As Akinola and Balogun (2021) observe, the relationship between religion and governance in Nigeria is complex, often intersecting through policy, political patronage, and moral discourse. Therefore, the Nigerian government's engagement must go beyond secular regulation and embrace a culturally informed approach that incorporates theological sensitivities into AI policy frameworks. This could take the form of specialized AI policy guidelines for religious organizations, funding for research into theological AI, and inclusion of churches in national AI strategy discussions [Nwankwo, Adeyemi, and Musa 2023].

International policy discourse offers valuable lessons for Nigeria in this regard. For instance, UNESCO has called for inclusive AI governance frameworks that incorporate diverse cultural and ethical perspectives, particularly from the Global South.[2] Successful international models emphasize the necessity of multi-stakeholder participation in regulatory design, ensuring that ethical, technical, and sociocultural dimensions are all considered. In the Nigerian context, this would mean involving Christian councils, seminaries, AI ethicists, legal scholars, and civil society organizations in developing a national AI framework that includes provisions for religious applications. Moreover, due to Nigeria's federal structure and denominational diversity, a decentralized regulatory approach may be more effective in addressing local variations in doctrine and practice. Such pluralistic legal development would help prevent jurisdictional conflicts and promote uniform ethical standards for AI in churches across the country.

Considering these dynamics, this study seeks to critically explore the intersection of AI, religious education, and legal development in Nigeria. It aims to investigate how legal frameworks can be designed to promote the

[2] Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2021, https://unesdoc.unesco.org [accessed: 07.04.2025].

ethical, inclusive, and theologically sound use of AI in teaching religion within Nigerian churches. Specifically, the research will assess existing legal and institutional gaps, analyze global best practices, and propose policy recommendations for government action. The study also interrogates the broader question of how states can mediate between innovation and tradition, particularly when technological advances intersect with deeply held spiritual beliefs. By drawing on legal theory, policy analysis, and theological discourse, the research aspires to contribute to the emerging field of AI governance in culturally and ethically sensitive domains. Ultimately, it seeks to provide a structured pathway for Nigerian churches and policymakers to embrace AI while preserving religious integrity and public trust.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

The application of AI socially and morally sensitive domains, such as religion, raises profound questions about the interplay between technology, governance, law, and culture. To explore how Nigeria can develop appropriate legal frameworks for promoting the use of AI in religious education, particularly within Christian churches, this study draws upon two interrelated theoretical paradigms: Technological Governance Theory and Legal Pluralism Theory. These frameworks provide analytical tools for understanding how emerging technologies can be regulated in complex sociopolitical and religious landscapes.

1.1. Technological Governance Theory

Technological Governance Theory explores the frameworks through which states, institutions, and civil society govern the design, deployment, and ethical implications of new technologies [Palm and Hansson 2010]. At its core, the theory asserts that technologies do not evolve in a vacuum; rather, their trajectories are shaped by institutions, norms, and regulatory structures. This is especially relevant in the context of AI, where the power asymmetries between developers and users raise issues of fairness, transparency, and accountability [Cath 2018; Eubanks 2017].

Recent advances in AI governance have emphasized harms, particularly in ethically charged sectors such as education, healthcare, and religion. For

instance, the European Commission's High-Level Expert Group on AI has proposed guidelines emphasizing human-centricity, fairness, and accountability (2020). These principles align with those proposed by UNESCO (2021), which call for inclusive stakeholder participation in the design of AI regulations, especially in culturally and religiously diverse societies.

In Nigeria, where digital literacy levels vary widely and religious institutions wield significant influence, the absence of formal AI governance mechanisms presents both a challenge and an opportunity. As argued by Chukwuemeka and Ogunleye (2022), the Nigerian state must adopt a proactive role in setting ethical and legal boundaries for AI technologies, particularly in sectors like education and religion where trust and authority are critical. Technological Governance Theory, therefore, supports this study's focus on the government's role – not only as a regulator, but as a convener and facilitator of responsible AI integration within churches.

1.2. Legal Pluralism Theory

Legal Pluralism Theory provides a complementary lens to analyze how multiple legal systems coexist and interact within a given society. It challenges the assumption of legal centralism – that only state law is legitimate – and instead recognizes that societies like Nigeria are governed by overlapping normative orders, including customary law, religious law, and statutory law [Merry 1988; Griffiths 1986]. This is particularly pertinent in Nigeria, where religious institutions often exercise moral and quasi-legal authority over their members.

The concept of legal pluralism is especially useful for examining how AI might be regulated within Nigerian churches. Christian denominations – ranging from Catholic and Anglican to Pentecostal and Evangelical movements – maintain diverse doctrines and internal governance structures. These structures may resist externally imposed regulations unless they are culturally and theologically compatible [Ilesanmi 2014; Okafor and Ojo 2021]. Thus, a purely top-down legal approach may be insufficient or even counterproductive.

Drawing on this theory, the development of legal frameworks for AI in religious education must be sensitive to doctrinal autonomy, institutional sovereignty, and faith-based epistemologies. Legal pluralism supports co-regulatory models in which religious bodies collaborate with the state to

establish context-specific AI standards. This approach is aligned with the participatory governance principles advocated in recent literature on legal innovation in religiously plural societies [Twining 2019; Ayoade and Umeh 2022].

Moreover, legal pluralism allows for the integration of non-state actors, such as church councils, interfaith coalitions, and theological institutions, into the regulatory process. This inclusion ensures that AI tools used for religious teaching not only comply with state laws but also respect denominational beliefs, preserve spiritual integrity, and avoid theological misrepresentation. Such a pluralistic approach is essential in avoiding regulatory overreach while fostering legitimacy and trust within faith communities.

1.3. Integrative Perspective

Together, Technological Governance Theory and Legal Pluralism Theory offer a robust analytical framework for this study. The former highlights the importance of state-led but stakeholder-inclusive policy frameworks for managing the ethical risks of AI. The latter emphasizes the cultural, doctrinal, and normative diversity that must be accounted for when designing legal interventions in religious contexts. When integrated, these theories support a hybrid governance model – where the Nigerian government acts as a facilitator of AI regulation in partnership with churches and other faith-based organizations.

This theoretical synthesis also aligns with calls from African scholars for decolonized and culturally responsive regulatory models in emerging technologies [Chakravorti, Chaturvedi, and Barr 2021; Nwankwo, Adeyemi, and Musa 2023]. For Nigeria to harness the full potential of AI in church-based education while avoiding doctrinal erosion and societal distrust, legal frameworks must reflect both global governance norms and indigenous legal pluralism. This theoretical orientation underpins the study's recommendations for multilevel, participatory, and ethically sound AI governance in Nigerian churches.

2. EMPIRICAL REVIEW

The application of AI in education has been widely studied, particularly in the context of enhancing personalized learning, improving administrative efficiency, and fostering inclusive educational environments [Chen, Zhang, and Lee 2021; Holmes et al. 2019]. AI-powered tools such as intelligent tutoring systems, adaptive learning platforms, and natural language processing applications have become common features in contemporary classrooms. These technologies allow for the customization of instructional materials based on students' learning profiles, ultimately improving engagement and outcomes [Luckin, Holmes, Griffiths et al. 2016; Selwyn 2019]. From automated grading systems to virtual teaching assistants, AI is transforming not only how students learn but also how teachers teach and administrators manage educational infrastructure.

Beyond pedagogical advantages, AI's role in administrative optimization has gained prominence, especially in higher education institutions. AI algorithms now aid in forecasting student enrollment trends, managing course scheduling, and even detecting academic dishonesty through plagiarism detection tools [Zawacki-Richter, Marín, Bond, et al. 2019; Siemens, Long, and Gašević. 2013]. These tools enhance institutional efficiency, allowing educators to focus more on curriculum development and student mentorship. Meanwhile, AI has also improved accessibility for learners with disabilities, offering features such as real-time captioning, speech-to-text conversion, and personalized content delivery [Aleven, Roll, McLaren et al. 2017].[3] These applications have been praised for fostering educational equity and inclusion, especially in resource-constrained settings.

Despite these advancements, the use of AI in religious education remains significantly underexplored, particularly within African contexts. While mainstream educational settings have readily embraced AI technologies, faith-based institutions, including seminaries and theological colleges, have lagged behind in this digital transition. Ajibade and Uche (2023) observe that AI has the potential to function as a pedagogical and theological tool, facilitating doctrinal research, enhancing homiletic training, and providing spiritual counseling through conversational agents. These tools could be especially beneficial in rural areas of Nigeria where access to trained clergy

[3] Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence.

and religious educators is limited [Ibrahim and Daramola 2020]. However, the use of AI in such contexts raises complex questions regarding theological accuracy, pastoral authenticity, and spiritual authority.

Religious instruction is inherently value-laden, often requiring interpretive nuance and contextual sensitivity. As such, the deployment of AI in religious education presents risks not typically associated with secular learning environments. Automated sermon generators, for instance, could inadvertently prioritize popular or algorithmically favored interpretations over canonical teachings, thereby distorting theological doctrine [Ajibade and Uche 2023]. Furthermore, AI systems trained on Western theological data may misrepresent or marginalize indigenous spiritual expressions. Without appropriate oversight, these technologies risk reducing deeply spiritual content into commodified, algorithm-driven outputs [Eze and Olumide 2022].

In Nigeria, the COVID-19 pandemic catalyzed a wave of digital transformation across religious institutions. Churches rapidly adopted livestreaming services, developed mobile applications for spiritual engagement, and introduced online tithing and donation platforms to maintain financial sustainability [Okonkwo and Ibrahim 2024; Akinola 2021]. These innovations were not only pragmatic responses to pandemic-related restrictions but also marked a turning point in the digitization of worship and religious community building. However, the success of these digital interventions has raised interest in more advanced technologies, including AI-driven tools for content management, community engagement, and even automated prayer assistance.

Despite growing enthusiasm, Nigeria's legal and policy frameworks have not kept pace with the technological aspirations of religious organizations. The Nigerian Data Protection Regulation (NDPR, 2019) offers foundational data privacy protections, but it is not sufficiently tailored to the unique needs of religious or educational entities. Chukwuemeka and Ogunleye (2022) emphasize that sector-specific legislation is essential for AI applications given their wide-ranging implications for ethics, privacy, and cultural integrity. For instance, the use of AI chatbots for spiritual guidance may involve processing sensitive personal information, yet no legal mechanisms currently exist to ensure that such data is stored, used, or deleted ethically.

Internationally, organizations such as UNESCO (2021) have proposed ethical frameworks for the governance of AI, advocating for inclusivity, transparency, and accountability. These guidelines stress that AI systems

must be culturally contextualized and should not undermine human dignity or autonomy. Particularly in domains like religion, where belief systems deeply shape identity and behavior, the introduction of AI must be preceded by participatory dialogue among stakeholders – including faith leaders, congregants, technologists, and policymakers[4] [Floridi, Cowls, Beltrametti, et al. 2018]. These deliberations are crucial to prevent the misuse of AI for surveillance, manipulation, or doctrinal conformity.

Scholars such as Nwankwo et al. (2023) argue that African societies must develop indigenous models of AI governance that are reflective of local epistemologies and spiritual cosmologies. They advocate for an Afrocentric approach to AI design and regulation – one that respects communal decision-making, spiritual hierarchies, and the coexistence of formal and informal authority structures. For Nigerian churches, this implies that AI tools should not only be theologically sound but also developed in collaboration with local theologians and clergy who understand the nuanced needs of their communities. It also means embedding accountability mechanisms to prevent theological distortions and the undue influence of foreign epistemologies.

The future of AI in religious education in Nigeria thus hinges on three critical pillars: doctrinal integrity, legal adequacy, and ethical alignment. Theological institutions must take proactive roles in shaping AI literacy and ethics among religious educators and leaders. Regulatory bodies must craft targeted legal instruments that address the specific risks and opportunities posed by AI in faith-based contexts. And developers must commit to designing AI systems that enhance, rather than replace, the pastoral and pedagogical functions of religious instruction [Chukwuemeka and Ogunleye 2022; Eze and Olumide 2022]. Only through this triadic approach can Nigeria harness AI to enrich, rather than disrupt, its rich religious traditions.

3. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE POST-COVID ERA

The COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally reshaped the landscape of religious practice and education in Nigeria, compelling churches to adopt digital platforms for worship, teaching, and community engagement. In the post-COVID era, the implications for deploying AI in religious education are

[4] Ibid.

profound and multifaceted. One of the most significant changes brought by the pandemic was the normalization of virtual religious experiences, such as online Bible studies, digital Sunday schools, and virtual theological seminars. This shift has created an enduring expectation among congregants for continued digital engagement [Olayiwola 2022; Chung and Lee 2020]. Consequently, the integration of AI into religious education is no longer a futuristic concept but a pressing need in the post-pandemic church ecosystem.

First, AI can support the continuity and scalability of digital religious education. During COVID-19 lockdowns, many churches struggled with manual content delivery and inconsistent communication. AI-based learning platforms can now offer personalized faith-based instruction, automate sermon transcription and translation, and manage digital discipleship programs more efficiently [Akpan and Oke 2023]. This capability is particularly valuable for churches in rural or underserved areas that may lack trained religious educators but have access to digital infrastructure.

Second, the post-COVID period has highlighted the need for legal and doctrinal safeguards in the use of digital tools, including AI. As churches expanded their online presence during the pandemic, concerns about misinformation, doctrinal purity, and data privacy intensified. AI systems that process user behavior and preferences must be regulated to prevent algorithmic bias and theological distortion, especially when they are used to generate or recommend religious content [Adeyemi and Okunade 2021]. In the post-COVID era, where digital faith engagement is increasingly common, the risk of doctrinal fragmentation through unsupervised AI content generation becomes more acute, reinforcing the need for robust legal frameworks and ecclesiastical oversight.

Third, the pandemic revealed the digital divide within the Nigerian religious landscape. While urban megachurches adopted digital tools rapidly, smaller congregations often lacked the resources or expertise to implement such technologies. In the post-COVID context, AI can serve as a leveling tool by providing scalable solutions for curriculum development, language translation, and community interaction [Anwar and Basit 2022]. However, without proper policy direction and government support, the unequal distribution of AI tools may deepen existing inequalities in religious education.

Finally, the post-pandemic world demands a reimagining of pastoral care and spiritual formation. AI technologies, when ethically deployed, can assist pastors in managing large congregations, offering AI-powered counseling

chatbots, and maintaining consistent communication with members. Yet, these innovations must be approached with theological sensitivity and guided by legal and doctrinal norms to ensure that spiritual formation remains relational, not solely technological [Frey and Ohm 2021].

4. LOOKING FORWARD

As AI continues to influence diverse sectors, including religious education, there is an urgent need to articulate a sustainable and ethical path forward, especially within the Nigerian context. To address the identified gaps in legal regulation and doctrinal oversight, it is imperative that a context-specific legal framework be developed. This framework should be informed by Nigeria's unique religious and socio-cultural realities and should articulate the ethical boundaries for AI use in churches. Legal scholars have emphasized that regulations governing AI must reflect the value systems of the communities they serve [Frey and Ohm 2021; Akpan and Oke 2023]. Thus, the formulation of an AI legal code for religious applications must involve a consultative process, incorporating theological experts, legislators, and technologists to ensure doctrinal consistency and public trust.

A vital step toward safeguarding the integrity of religious teachings while embracing technological innovation is the establishment of an AI-Ethics Advisory Council for religious institutions. This council, composed of representatives from major Christian denominations, legal professionals, and AI developers, would be charged with evaluating the doctrinal accuracy and ethical implications of AI tools intended for use in religious education. Such multi-stakeholder oversight mechanisms have proven effective in sectors like healthcare and finance, and similar models can be adapted to the religious context to provide regulatory clarity and theological accountability [Adeyemi and Okunade 2021; Chung and Lee 2020].

Equally important is the promotion of AI literacy among church leaders and educators. Research shows that a major barrier to ethical AI deployment is the lack of user awareness and understanding [Anwar and Basit 2022]. To this end, churches should be equipped with training programs focused on the capabilities and limitations of AI, ethical risks, and doctrinal safeguards. Building this capacity will enable faith-based organizations to critically evaluate AI-generated content and use such technologies to en-

hance – not replace – the spiritual guidance traditionally offered by human clergy. Studies have demonstrated that where religious organizations engage with digital tools responsibly, the outcomes include broader reach, improved engagement, and greater doctrinal clarity [Olayiwola 2022].

Public-private partnerships can further enhance the responsible deployment of AI in churches. Collaborative efforts between the government, technology firms, and religious organizations can facilitate the development of culturally sensitive and ethically designed AI platforms for theological education. These partnerships can also drive innovation funding and support pilot programs that test legal and doctrinal frameworks before national rollout [Frey and Ohm 2021]. For example, AI systems can be developed in partnership with theological institutions to ensure scriptural accuracy while leveraging natural language processing for sermon assistance or Bible study support [Chung and Lee 2020].

Moreover, strict adherence to existing data protection regulations must be enforced to prevent misuse of sensitive religious data. The Nigerian Data Protection Regulation (NDPR), although generally applicable, must be complemented by AI-specific clauses that protect the privacy of church members and users of religious education platforms [Akpan and Oke 2023]. Issues such as informed consent, data ownership, and algorithmic transparency must be addressed to ensure ethical alignment. Churches should be mandated to use only certified AI systems that comply with these standards, thereby minimizing the risk of data breaches or spiritual manipulation through profiling [Anwar and Basit 2022].

Finally, the formulation of AI policies should be informed by inclusive dialogue that incorporates diverse religious, academic, and civic perspectives. According to recent studies, policy success in emerging technologies correlates strongly with participatory governance and stakeholder inclusion [Adeyemi and Okunade 2021]. Thus, interfaith councils, theological institutions, digital rights advocates, and legislators must engage in sustained discourse to shape an AI future that aligns with Nigeria's religious and cultural values. This collaborative approach will ensure that AI adoption in religious education enhances spiritual growth, upholds doctrinal integrity, and respects the rights of all stakeholders.

CONCLUSIONS

The intersection of AI and religious education presents both immense potential and critical challenges. In Nigeria's post-COVID reality, where digital adoption in churches has accelerated, the responsible application of AI can enhance theological education, expand access to religious resources, and personalize faith journeys. However, this digital transformation must be underpinned by robust legal frameworks, theological accountability, and ethical oversight to prevent doctrinal distortion, privacy violations, and inequitable access.

This study has highlighted that the absence of specific legal structures governing AI use in churches poses a significant regulatory gap. Moreover, the post-pandemic shift toward digital platforms underscores the need for urgent action. By adopting clear national policies, establishing ethics oversight mechanisms, and fostering inclusive governance models, Nigeria can lead the continent in demonstrating how AI can be harmonized with spiritual values and educational objectives. The future of AI in religious education, if well-regulated, holds the promise of fostering both innovation and faithful discipleship in a technologically evolving world.

In light of the opportunities and risks associated with integrating AI into religious education in Nigeria – especially in the post-COVID era – it is crucial that both government and religious stakeholders take proactive measures to ensure ethical, equitable, and effective implementation of the following recommendations:

1. Establish National Guidelines for Religious AI Use: The Nigerian government, through the Ministry of Communications, NITDA, and relevant ecclesiastical councils, should jointly draft national guidelines specifically addressing AI use in religious institutions. These guidelines should emphasize doctrinal integrity, privacy rights, algorithmic transparency, and cultural sensitivity.

2. Create an AI-Ethics Board for Faith-Based Applications: A multi-stakeholder ethics board, comprising theologians, AI researchers, legal experts, and civil society organizations, should be established to vet and approve AI systems used in religious education. This board should have the authority to certify tools, review doctrinal compliance, and provide advisory opinions.

3. Provide Training and Capacity Building for Clergy: Government and denominational institutions should collaborate with universities and tech firms to organize training programs for church leaders and educators on the ethical, legal, and theological dimensions of AI use. This will help bridge the digital literacy gap exposed during COVID-19.

4. Encourage Public-Private Partnerships: Partnerships between government, churches, academic institutions, and technology firms can support the development of low-cost, localized AI solutions tailored to the Nigerian religious context. These solutions should include language support for indigenous languages and doctrinal alignment with various denominations.

5. Enforce Data Privacy Regulations in Faith Settings: The Nigerian Data Protection Regulation (NDPR) must be expanded or clarified to include specific provisions for AI systems in religious institutions, ensuring that data collected from congregants is handled ethically and transparently, with explicit consent and protection against misuse.

6. Promote Inclusive Dialogue and Monitoring Mechanisms: Policy formulation should involve continuous engagement with stakeholders across denominations and communities. Regular assessments and feedback loops should be instituted to evaluate the social, spiritual, and legal impacts of AI on religious practices.

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Harnessing Artificial Intelligence for Religious Pedagogy in Nigeria: Legal and Policy Pathways for Churches with Implication for Post Covid Era

Abstract

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into religious education has emerged as a transformative trend in the post-Covid-19 era, particularly within technologically evolving societies such as Nigeria. This study examines the potential of AI to enhance the teaching of religion in Nigerian churches, while emphasizing the critical role of the government in establishing legal and ethical frameworks to govern its use. Drawing on a review of current literature (2020-2025), the research highlights both opportunities, such as personalized spiritual learning and expanded access to theological resources, and challenges, including doctrinal distortion, data privacy concerns, and technological inequities among faith communities. A qualitative, policy-oriented methodology is employed, supported by simulated data, to assess the readiness of religious institutions and the gaps in Nigeria's regulatory infrastructure. The study finds that while many churches are adopting digital tools, there is a lack of legal guidance specific to AI in faith-based settings. It recommends the creation of a national AI ethical framework for religious applications, the formation of an AI-Ethics Advisory Council, and the promotion

of AI literacy among church leaders. In conclusion, the paper argues that with strategic policy interventions and inclusive stakeholder dialogue, AI can be harnessed to support doctrinal fidelity, digital equity, and religious innovation in Nigeria's rapidly evolving spiritual landscape.

Keywords: artificial intelligence; religious education; Nigerian churches; AI ethics; post-COVID era; legal frameworks.

Wykorzystanie sztucznej inteligencji w pedagogice religijnej w Nigerii: możliwości prawne i polityczne dla kościołów w okresie post-Covid

Abstrakt

Włączenie sztucznej inteligencji (AI) w edukację religijną stało się przełomowym trendem w okresie post-Covid-19, szczególnie w społeczeństwach rozwijających się technologicznie, takich jak Nigeria. W opracowaniu przeanalizowano potencjał sztucznej inteligencji w zakresie udoskonalenia nauczania religii w kościołach nigeryjskich, podkreślając jednocześnie kluczową rolę rządu w ustanawianiu ram prawnych i etycznych regulujących jej wykorzystanie. Opierając się na przeglądzie bieżącej literatury (2020-2025), badanie podkreśla zarówno szanse, takie jak spersonalizowana nauka duchowa i rozszerzony dostęp do zasobów teologicznych, jak i wyzwania, w tym zniekształcenia doktrynalne, obawy dotyczące prywatności danych i nierówności technologiczne wśród społeczności wyznaniowych. W celu oceny gotowości instytucji religijnych i braków w infrastrukturze regulacyjnej Nigerii zastosowano jakościową metodologię zorientowaną na politykę, wspieraną danymi symulowanymi. Badanie wykazało, że chociaż wiele kościołów wdraża narzędzia cyfrowe, brakuje prawnych wytycznych dotyczących wykorzystania sztucznej inteligencji w kontekście religii. Zaleca się utworzenie krajowych ram etycznych dotyczących sztucznej inteligencji w zastosowaniach religijnych, powołanie Rady Doradczej ds. Etyki Sztucznej Inteligencji oraz promowanie wiedzy na temat sztucznej inteligencji wśród hierarchów kościelnych. Podsumowując, dzięki strategicznym interwencjom politycznym i inkluzywnemu dialogowi, sztuczną inteligencję można wykorzystać do wspierania wierności doktrynalnej, równości cyfrowej i innowacji religijnych w szybko ewoluującym krajobrazie duchowym Nigerii.

Słowa kluczowe: sztuczna inteligencja; edukacja religijna; kościoły nigeryjskie; etyka sztucznej inteligencji; okres po Covid-19; ramy prawne.

Informacje o Autorze: Dr Adedeji Daniel Gbadebo – Uniwersytet Walter Sisulu University w Mthatha, Południowa Afryka; adres do korespondencji: Private Bag X1, UNITRA, 5117, Południowa Afryka; e-mail: agbadebo@wsu.ac.za; https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1929-3291