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# The Impact of Digitalization on Religious Practices and Community Dynamics Following the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Systematic Review

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**Abstract:** *The present study aimed to examine the impact of digitalization on religious practices and community dynamics through a systematic review of the literature published after the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2024). This general aim was two-fold: first, we aimed to examine the digital shift in religious practices. Second, we aimed to understand the role of technology in religious communities. One hundred fifteen publications were identified in four databases, and 40 were included in the final analysis. Results indicated that digital religion integrates technology into faith, transforming education through online platforms, gamification, and multimedia. Also, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the digitalization of religion, redefining religious communities and practices. While these innovations enhance engagement and accessibility, the current challenges include discrimination, privacy concerns, and religious authenticity. The evolving digital religious landscape requires responsible oversight, interdisciplinary collaboration, and further research to understand its long-term implications on faith, authority, and spiritual engagement in an increasingly technology-driven world.*

**Keywords:** *religion; digital; online; religious practices; religious experiences.*

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## Introduction

The advent of digital platforms and the widespread availability of religious content on the Internet have led to profound transformations in religious education and practice (Ergen, 2023). Traditionally, religious knowledge was primarily controlled by institutional authorities, such as the Church, which monopolized access to sacred texts, religious artifacts, and theological interpretation (Wohlrab-Sahr et al., 2024). Participation in religious life necessitated physical presence in places of worship and direct engagement with clerical authorities. However, with the rise of digital technology, these historical dynamics have undergone significant changes, reshaping the epistemology of religious knowledge and the modes of interaction with it (Barlas, 2024).

One of the most striking shifts has been the transition of religious knowledge into the digital domain, especially following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. This transition offers a new epistemological framework that allows for broader engagement (Baker et al., 2020). Online platforms enable individuals to access religious content, participate in discussions, and challenge or redefine traditional religious authorities. This interactivity has opened avenues for diverse perspectives, empowering individuals to interpret religious teachings outside the confines of institutionalized control.

Also, religious participation has evolved significantly in the digital age. Unlike traditional believers who practice their faith within the boundaries of a specific physical community, online users engage with religion more fluidly and interactively. Digital platforms facilitate forming religious communities that transcend geographical, cultural, and even doctrinal boundaries. Integrating digital media into religious experiences has further reshaped contemporary faith practices. Scholars such as Hutchings (2016) detailed how digital platforms, through hypermediation and hybrid spaces, transformed religious experiences, creating new avenues for believers to engage with their faith. This integration diversifies religious participation and enriches how individuals experience spirituality in the digital realm.

The impact of technology on religious formation is another critical development in this digital transformation. The accessibility of diverse religious perspectives through online platforms has significantly influenced young people's belief systems. Many now seek spiritual guidance from social media sources, shifting religious authority's locus from traditional institutions to decentralized, user-generated interpretations. This trend underscores the increasing contestation of religious authority in the digital age, as individuals navigate a multitude of theological perspectives without necessarily adhering to a singular doctrine.

Moreover, the Internet has revolutionized the study of religion by altering how sacred texts and religious knowledge are accessed and interpreted. In contrast to traditional textual research methods, the digital age emphasizes visual and interactive approaches, making religious education more engaging and accessible to a broader audience. This shift has also contributed to diversifying religious learning experiences, allowing individuals to explore faith innovatively and personally.

Despite these advancements, the digitalization of religion also presents significant challenges. Ethical, social, and theological concerns arise regarding the authenticity of online religious practices, the reliability of digital sources, and the nature of virtual religious communities. Questions regarding religious authority, community cohesion, and the legitimacy of digital sacraments remain debated among scholars and religious leaders alike. The rapid proliferation of online religious movements further complicates traditional understandings of faith and spiritual authority, necessitating ongoing scholarly inquiry into the implications of these transformations. Furthermore, emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, have introduced new forms of religious participation, particularly among younger generations. AI-driven religious applications, virtual congregations, and automated theological discussions illustrate how technology continues to reshape faith-based experiences. These innovations highlight the evolving nature of spirituality in the digital era, where faith practices are increasingly mediated through technology. Nevertheless, the available literature on these topics, particularly following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, must be systematically reviewed to understand the profound changes better.

## The digital world and religious education

Traditionally, religious education has been primarily studied within confessional contexts, receiving limited attention as a field of study and research in secular educational spaces. In Romania, few studies within the education sciences explore religion's academic potential in fostering transversal competencies, character formation, or supporting mental health. Instead, religion has often been at the center of educational policy controversies, particularly regarding its inclusion in the standard curriculum or designation as an optional subject. Additionally, numerous debates have emerged concerning the content of religious education, ranging from a strictly confessional approach to an interfaith presentation of religious concepts.

The current global context underscores an urgent need to investigate and understand religious education within a new framework compared to previous discussions, i.e., the digital environment. One of the most significant

contexts in this regard is the COVID-19 pandemic and the global lockdown, which served as catalysts for digital transformation, including within the religious sphere (Dzirasa-Payne, 2023; Kołodziejska et al., 2024). Millions of individuals were compelled to access religious content and participate in online rituals, accelerating a developing trend.

This abrupt transition has raised some important questions: How has the online environment influenced religious education? How have religious authorities adapted to the digital landscape? What new forms of religious community and belonging have emerged in virtual spaces? Without rigorous research, we risk overlooking profound transformations within the contemporary religious landscape. A deeper examination of this phenomenon is necessary to understand digital religious education's implications on individual faith development and communal religious experiences. The shift to online religious engagement has introduced new dynamics in learning, interaction, and authority structures within faith communities. Virtual platforms have facilitated access to religious knowledge and redefined how individuals connect with their faith, religious leaders, and fellow believers.

Moreover, integrating technology into religious education presents opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, digital tools can enhance accessibility, allowing individuals from diverse backgrounds to engage with religious teachings flexibly and interactively. Online resources, virtual classrooms, and digital theological discussions provide new avenues for exploring faith-related topics beyond traditional institutional settings. On the other hand, concerns about authenticity, doctrinal accuracy, and the depth of spiritual engagement in digital contexts necessitate careful examination. The role of religious educators, the credibility of digital religious sources, and the potential for misinformation are critical aspects that must be addressed in ongoing research.

## The present study

The present study aimed to examine the impact of digitalization on religious practices and community dynamics through a systematic review of the literature published after the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2024). This general aim was two-fold: first, we aimed to examine the digital shift in religious practices, more specifically to (1) Identify how religious rituals, worship, and community gatherings are adapted to digital and virtual platforms; (2) Explore changes in religious observance due to the use of online tools, social media, live streaming, and virtual reality, and (3) Investigate the role of digitalization in facilitating or hindering traditional religious practices. Second, we aimed to understand the role of technology in religious communities, more specifically to (4) Examine how digital platforms influence

religious socialization, community building, and interfaith interactions; (5) Analyze the role of digitalization in religious education; and (6) Investigate the ethical and theological implications of digital religious participation. The primary research question was: *How do digitalization and virtual environments transform religious practices and experiences?*

## Methodology

Our research methodology uses a systematic literature review following the PRISMA-ScR guidelines (Liberati et. al 2009). This methodology is appropriate for synthesizing existing knowledge on the relationship between digitalization, online environments, religious practices, and community dynamics. It allows us to identify key trends, gaps in the literature, and potential areas for future research.

## Data analysis

This review adhered to the PRISMA-ScR guidelines. We limited our search to peer-reviewed studies published in English that addressed our research topic within a four-year period (2020-2024), coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic. Grey literature was excluded. In February 2025, we searched ERIC, JSTOR, Web of Science, and Scopus, refining our search strategy through collaborative discussions. Relevant articles were then exported to Google Sheets, where duplicates were removed.

We used the following keywords from the available literature to refine our search strategy: ("religion" OR "religiousness" OR "religiosity") AND ("digital" OR "digitalization" OR" virtual" OR" online") AND "religious practices" AND "religious experiences". The search strategy was then applied to all the databases, and the authors evaluated titles, abstracts, and full articles for relevant publications according to the eligibility criteria. Disputes regarding the selection of publications were resolved through discussions and consensus.

## Data collection and data analysis methods

A total of 115 articles were initially identified through a systematic search across the four databases (see Fig.1). Specifically, six articles were retrieved from ERIC, 25 from JSTOR, 42 from Web of Science (WOS), and 43 from SCOPUS. Following the initial collection, the next crucial step involved eliminating duplicate records to ensure each article was unique and not counted multiple times across databases. After this refinement, the number of articles remaining for further analysis was reduced to 100. The distribution after deduplication was as follows: 6 articles from ERIC, 25 from

JSTOR, 40 from WOS, and 29 from SCOPUS. This step was essential to avoid redundancy and maintain the integrity of the literature review. The PRISMA Statement comprises an item checklist and a four-phase flow diagram. The checklist contains items considered vital for the transparent reporting of a review. The diagram paper elucidates the significance and justification for each checklist item. For each item, we provide an exemplar of proficient reporting.

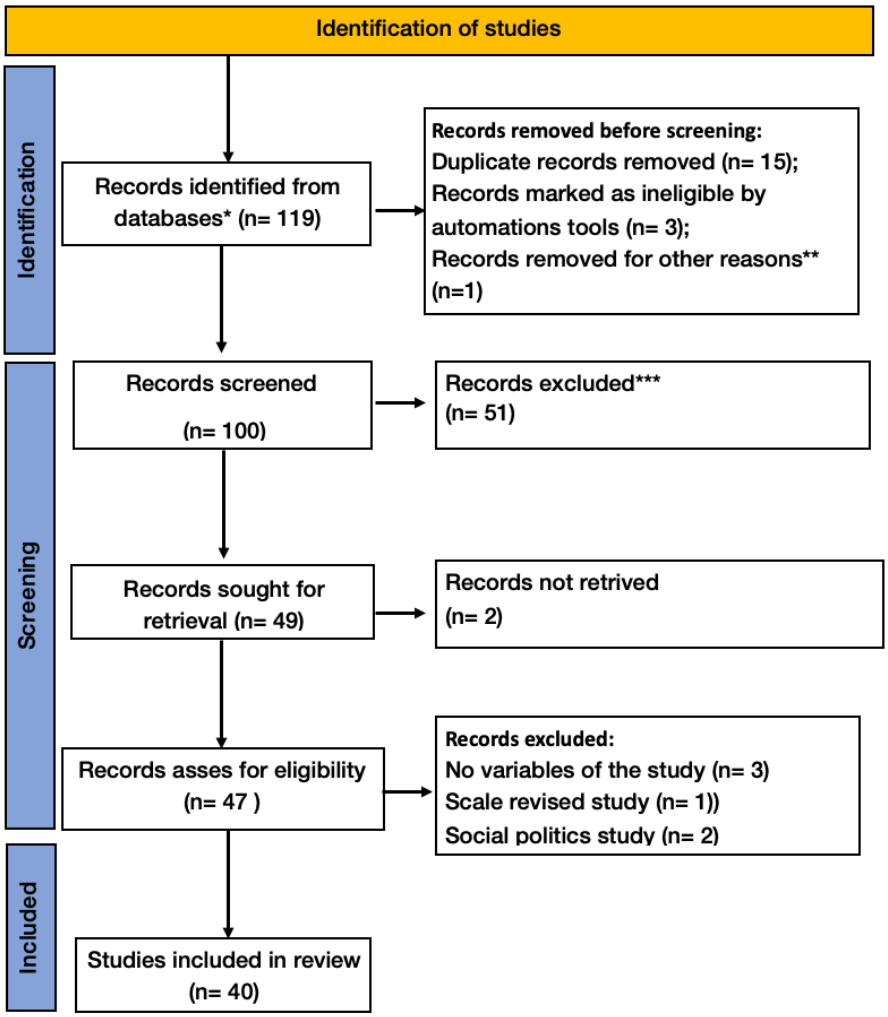



**Figure 1.** PRISMA flowchart selection process

Notes:
** WOS, Scopus, JSTOR, Eric- databases*
*** Only Journals and domains of interest were included*
****Records were excluded after studies of abstracts were screened*

Once duplicates were removed, a more focused screening process was conducted by analyzing the titles and keywords of the remaining articles. Based on this preliminary assessment, the pool of articles was further narrowed down to 49, with three articles retained from ERIC, four from JSTOR, 31 from WOS, and 11 from SCOPUS. Subsequently, an abstract-level review was carried out to refine the selection further. By carefully evaluating the abstracts, 47 articles met the inclusion criteria and were deemed suitable for an in-depth investigation. This stage was particularly important in determining whether each study's scope, methodology, and findings aligned with the research objectives. Finally, the most important step involved a full-text review of the selected studies to assess the quality of research, depth of analysis, and relevance to the study. After this comprehensive evaluation, 40 articles were included in the final analysis (see Table 1). These articles formed the foundation of the literature review, providing valuable insights and supporting the development of a robust research framework. Each author independently conducted the scoring process. The results of each independent search were then discussed and combined, while the data scoring forms were regularly updated. The studies were grouped based on their objectives and then summarized according to the data collection type.

**Table 1.** Articles included in the review (n = 40)

| | Article title | Authors | Journal | Main idea | Main subject |
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| 1 | A practitioner action research approach to learning outside the classroom in religious education: developing a dialogical model through reflection by teachers and faith field visitors | Lundie et al. (2021) | British Journal of Religious Education | The proposed model aims to enhance religious education by connecting schools with religious institutions and clergy through an online portal. It emphasizes the importance of the learning environment, promotes practical experiences, facilitates discussions on challenging issues in the field, and supports the sharing of learning objectives. | Religious education; access portal for clerical space and personnel. |
| 2 | Enhancing learners' motivation and engagement in religious education classes at elementary levels | Aseery (2024) | Journal of Religious Education | Examines the factors that enhance motivation and engagement in learning, including transforming learning into an enjoyable activity, breaking tasks into manageable steps, providing positive feedback, promoting equality, personalizing the learning environment, fostering a positive attitude, integrating physical activities, mastering facts, and utilizing storytelling. Specifically, in religious education, teachers can use computer-based iterative teaching, applications, and storytelling with digital animation, modeling through online video examples, and online recitation and preaching. | Religious education; motivation and engagement through digital means. |

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| 3 | Social media as online archives: inserting religious identities within educational spaces in India | Bhatia (2021) | Contemporary South Asia | The study explores how students, teachers, and parents in India use social media to integrate religious identities into education. It examines the role of parents and teachers in the religious socialization of students and how social media can reactivate discriminatory practices within India's political context. Individuals widely use social media platforms to reinforce existing discriminatory discursive practices, which already saturate the highly dense and politicized media landscapes of Indian cities. | Religious socialization through gaming. |
| 4 | A Semiotic Analysis of Digital Educational Games with Religious Themes for Children | Aygül & Gürbüz (2021) | Eğitimde Nitel Araştırmalar Dergisi | The study examines how educational digital games with religious themes can contribute to children's religious socialization, emphasizing the importance of pedagogical control over symbols and content and the need for parental supervision. Educational games can enhance learning progress, motivate students, and provide opportunities to access and evaluate information. However, ensuring that these games are fair and non-discriminatory toward any religion or belief system is essential. | Online games with religious educational content. |

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| 5 | Divine play: Religious interpretation of play philosophy | Han (2024) | HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies | This paper examines the evolution of religious play interpretations from ancient philosophy to their influence in modern digital environments. It argues that play, as conceptualized by various philosophers, plays a crucial role in shaping religious experience and that digital media offers new ways to explore spiritual dimensions and the relationship between divinity and humanity. | Online games with religious educational content. |
| 6 | Mediatization of religion and its impact on youth identity formation in contemporary China | Wei (2024) | Religions | Explores how Chinese animated films such as *Ne Zha* and *New Gods: Yang Jian* mediate religion in contemporary China, transforming it into a form of "Religion 2.0." This form is characterized by an interaction between the real and virtual worlds, influencing the identity of young fans. To gain acceptance, religion adapts to the ideological requirements of the state, contributing to the revitalization of the national spirit. At the same time, fans adopt an individualistic religious perspective, focusing more on divine characters than doctrines. | Online games with religious educational content. |

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| 7 | I would rather be informed than misinformed": critical conversations supporting transnational religious identity across time and space | Deroo & Mohamud (2022) | English Teaching: Practice & Critique | This article examines how a young Muslim woman built her online identity while challenging negative attitudes toward Islam. It highlights the role of social media in supporting critical thinking and media literacy, offering insight into how religiously affiliated youth navigate and express their identity in diverse social contexts. | Religious identity on social media. |
| 8 | Between Online Autonomy and Local Constraints: Spaces of Roman Catholic Women's Activity in Poland | Szwed (2022) | Sociology of Religion | This paper highlights how digital media can provide women in conservative religious communities with a space of semi-autonomy, where they can renegotiate roles and power relationships while still maintaining connections with the religious institution. However, this autonomy is limited by offline life constraints and the influence of the local Church. | Gender differences in online religious practices (women). |
| 9 | Likes, comments, and follow requests: the Instagram user experiences of young Muslim women in the Netherlands | Mahmudova& Evolvi (2021) | Journal of Religion, Media and Digital Culture | This study examines how young Dutch Muslim women use Instagram to navigate cultural and religious expectations, both within and outside their communities. Instagram provides a space for identity expression but also presents challenges related to privacy and surveillance. The study emphasizes the importance of avoiding generalizations and recognizing the diversity of experiences among Muslim women. | Religious identity on social media: women |

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| 10 | "Assalamu ʿAlaykum, Can We Add This Sister?": WhatsApp Group Chat as a Homemaking Practice among Dutch-speaking Muhajirat in Morocco | ter Laan (2023) | Religion and Gender | This paper examines how Dutch and Belgian Muslim women use WhatsApp to facilitate and narrate their religious migration (hijra) to Morocco. WhatsApp provides a support network and a sense of belonging, helping to create a feeling of "home" and alleviating migration challenges. Online and offline interactions are closely linked, fostering a trans-local Muslim sisterhood. | Religious identity on social media: women and communication |
| 11 | Selfish or Substituting Spirituality? Clarifying the Relationship between Spiritual Practice and Political Engagement | Kucinskas & Stewart (2022) | American Sociological Review | It suggests that spiritual practices can replace religious engagement, especially for groups alienated from religious institutions, such as people of color or LGBTQ+ individuals. It posits that mindfulness or other forms of individual meditation (online) can substitute traditional churches as spaces and institutions. | Online religious minorities. |
| 12 | (Techno)Paganism: An Exploration of Animistic Relations with the Digital | Dos Santos (2023) | Religions | This paper explores how neopaganism, with its animistic ontology, enables bodily and sensory interactions with virtual worlds. It explains how neopagans use technology to experience the online space as an environment where actual religious practices can occur. | Technopaganism. |

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| 13 | The revival of spiritual practices: factors influencing the "seeking deities and offering prayers" behavior of China's Generation Z on social media in an atheistic context | Wang et al. (2025) | Frontiers in Psychology | This paper explores the digital religious behavior of Chinese Gen Z youth in a country with an atheist ideology. The findings show that attitudes, perceived behavioral control, social identity, and empathy influence digital religious intentions and predict behavior on online platforms. Digital religion is a coping mechanism for social and economic pressures, offering emotional comfort and a release valve for tension for young people. | Online paganism can express its religiosity when the physical environment prohibits it. |
| 14 | Homes Becoming Religious Transnational Spaces: The Impact of COVID-19 Immobility on the Religious Activities of Migrant Muslim Women | Ince-Beqo (2024) | Italian Sociological Review | The research examines the impact of the COVID-19 "stay-at-home" period on the religious lives of Muslim migrant women in northern Italy. It analyzes how virtual participation in religious events transformed the home into a transnational space, offering opportunities for identity reinvention and connection with other communities from their home country and the diaspora. | The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic - religious participation from home. |
| 15 | The politics of pulpit religiosity in the era of Covid-19 in Kenya | Kilonzo & Omwalo (2021) | Frontiers in Communication | The analysis examines the role of religion in the COVID-19 era. Social media and religious practices are combined to challenge traditional pulpit-based religion, deconstructing myths and misconceptions surrounding spirituality during the | The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic challenges the necessity of the existence of the traditional Church. |

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| | | | | pandemic. It highlights the transformation of worship from physical places, especially churches, to virtual engagements via social media platforms. The pandemic experience, mainly through social media, which has revolutionized the exchange of ideas, sermons, prayers, and music, challenges the notion of pulpit-based religiosity and the myths and misconceptions that religion cannot exist without physical communities. | |
| 16 | Spiritual awakening among church members during the pandemic: An empirical study in England and Wales | Francis et al. (2022) | Journal of Empirical Theology | It shows that during the early months of the pandemic, many worshipers experienced a spiritual awakening linked to personal, psychological, and religious factors, as well as active involvement in online services. Thus, the pandemic became an opportunity for many to redefine or deepen their faith. | The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic = spiritual awakening |
| 17 | When the waves roll high': Religious coping among the Amish and Mennonites during the COVID-19 pandemic | DiGregorio et al. (2021) | Religions | The research examines Amish and Mennonite communities, which faced restrictions on physical gatherings and the use of technology, adapted by focusing on traditional religious values and practices such as family, faith, and simple household activities. The pandemic was seen as an opportunity to return to a slower pace of life and emphasize what truly matters. | The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic – emphasis on individual traditions. |

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| 18 | Connect and Celebrate the Great Mother Online: The Ritual Creativity of Contemporary Pagans in Portugal and the United Kingdom during the COVID-19 Restrictions. | Martins (2023) | Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions | The study explores how contemporary pagans in Portugal and the United Kingdom adapted their ritual practices to the online environment during the COVID-19 pandemic. Faced with isolation and restrictions, they found ways to maintain connection and provide emotional and spiritual support through online rituals, compensating for the lack of physical experiences with digital connectivity. The research examines the implications of these transformations for the academic understanding of contemporary paganism. | The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic: Pagans sought online rituals (thus, the lack of traditional religiosity/non-religiosity leads to online explorations). |
| 19 | COVID-19 and its Impact on Religiosity: Reflections on Religious Life and Practice in Uganda | Isiko (2022) | Journal for the Study of Religion | Uganda is the example provided, as it is a very religious country. The pandemic led to those who were already religious becoming more steadfast and dedicated, while those who were less enthusiastic about religion abandoned their religious practices. The isolation measures during the pandemic revolutionized long-standing religious practices and traditions, making it necessary to adopt and adapt to new forms of expressing faith. | Online religious expression during the pandemic; the growth and expansion of online religiosity |

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| 20 | Spiritual and Religious Information Practices: Lessons from the Field | Caidi et al. (2023) | Proceedings of the Association for Information Science and Technology | The discussion centers on the role of spiritual and religious experiences in understanding post-pandemic informational worlds within a context of uncertainty. It explores spiritual and religious adaptation strategies to enrich understanding of the intersections between health, technology, and informational practices. The ultimate goal is to develop a research agenda in this field, addressing questions related to theoretical contextualization, appropriate research approaches, and ethical challenges. | Debates on post-pandemic religiosity; post-pandemic ecumenism. |
| 21 | The Body-Mind Practices and New Media Technologies: Two Taiwanese Walking Pilgrimages | Chang (2021) | Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie | The paper examines bodily techniques and material technologies that generate a sense of sacredness through physical experience during a walking pilgrimage. "Bodily techniques" include physical actions, walking meditation, mental focus, reducing logical thinking and discrimination, sharpening the senses, and mental resetting. "Material technologies" encompass public transportation, infrastructure, printing methods, and digital media technologies. While technologies do not prevent the emergence of a sense of sacredness, bodily techniques generally play a more significant role in generating this sense of sacredness than media technologies. | Pilgrimage with technical/digital means. |

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| 22 | Sacred Sites for Global Publics: New Media Strategies for the Re-Enchantment of the Holy Land | Golan & Martini (2020) | International Journal of Communication | The article examines how online videos promote holy sites and religious faith, particularly in the context of Catholic pilgrimages to the Holy Land. It shows that these videos supplement the spiritual experience and re-engage users with the historical foundations of the faith. Online audiovisual communication has become a key medium for circulating religious content, and platforms like YouTube enable access to sermons and religious studies anytime and anywhere. | Virtual pilgrimage tours |
| 23 | Lived religion in a digital age: technology, affect and the pervasive space-times of 'new' religious praxis | Gao et. al. (2024) | Social & Cultural Geography | The analysis examines how digital technologies reshape Christian prayer practices in Singapore, creating new spaces and religious experiences. It explores how "digital prayer" blurs institutional boundaries, influences the affectivity of believers, and connects faith with daily life, with the potential to create integrative yet sometimes ambiguous or politically tense religious experiences. | Online prayer |
| 24 | Musicalizing the Heart Sutra: Buddhism, Sound, and Media in Contemporary Japan | Reehl (2021) | Religions | The paper explores the musical adaptations of the Heart Sutra in Japan, revealing how these arrangements blend traditional Buddhist practices with modern technologies and musical sensibilities. This fusion shapes new expressions and understandings of Buddhist religiosity within a contemporary secular context. | Online prayer (music) |

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| 25 | Commerce Religioso: Facebook Como Alternativa Comercial Y De Promoción Em Las Religiones Afro | Fernández Malváez & Barba González (2024) | Journal for the Study of Religion | The paper addresses how the commercial, religious component has gained new dimensions through online commerce and social media platforms. Social networks have become spaces where religious traditions (such as Orisha) are marketed and practiced in Mexico's virtual environment. This transformation has created a "virtual marketplace" that mimics physical markets but with new forms of interaction. | Online religious commerce |
| 26 | The holy light of cyberspace: Spiritual experience in a virtual church | Mansour (2022) | Religions | The paper addresses the lack of empirical research on spiritual experiences in the context of digital religion, explicitly focusing on the impact of lighting in virtual churches. Using a social sciences approach, the study examines emotional responses to virtual sacred architecture, highlighting the potential of cyberspace to facilitate spiritual experiences. The research offers insights into how virtual spaces can be designed to evoke spirituality and proposes a methodology for the empirical exploration of digital religion. | Online digital space: the sacred light |

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| 27 | Holy Selfie as the channel of media memory in the digital world | Artamonov et al (2021) | Galactica Media: Journal of Media Studies | The analysis explores how Catholics and Orthodox Christians use "holy selfies" to express their religious identity and connect with others. It examines religious selfies' memorial and communicative functions and how they contribute to forming virtual communities. Selfies allow users to relate to sacred places and events, and they have the potential to transform individual experiences by making them publicly shared and spiritually meaningful. | Holy selfies |
| 28 | Anonymity and digital islamic authority | Astor et al. (2024) | Religions | The focus shifts from spiritual influencers to anonymous religious websites and social media pages, arguing that anonymity can be a strategic advantage in building authority and influence online by projecting neutrality and universality. This is especially relevant in providing Islamic guidance to Spanish-speaking audiences. Anonymity allows these platforms to avoid personal biases and to present a more inclusive, accessible form of religious leadership, appealing to a broader and more diverse audience. | The authority of a religious website |

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| 29 | The sanctuary of the spectacle: Megachurches and the production of Christian celebrities and consumers | Kidwell & Borer (2021) | Journal of Media and Religion | The analysis highlights how a megachurch in Las Vegas integrates celebrity culture and technology into religious practices, creating a syncretic form of worship that blurs the boundaries between the sacred and the secular. By incorporating celebrity appeal, media, and modern technology elements, the church creates an engaging environment that attracts a broad audience while offering a spiritual experience that resonates with contemporary cultural trends. This fusion of sacred and secular aspects allows for more accessible and relatable worship in a high-energy, entertainment-driven city. | A case study: syncretic mega-church in Las Vegas (e.g., regarding marriages). |
| 30 | Online You Will Never Get the Same Experience, Never": Minority Perspectives on (Digital) Religious Practice and Embodiment during the COVID-19 Outbreak | Isetti (2022) | Religions | The study examines the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the developing digital religion and religious experience field, analyzed from a minority perspective—specifically, the minority Russian Orthodox community in Tirol. These individuals deliberately chose not to use technology for religious participation during the pandemic restrictions, arguing that it does not offer the same (true) experience as in-person worship. This decision highlights the tension between | Opposition to online religious expression; conservatism; traditionalism (Russian Orthodox) |

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| | | | | traditional religious practices, the increasing shift towards digital platforms in the context of a global health crisis, and the community's commitment to preserving authentic religious experiences. | |
| 31 | "The Orișa Have No Color": Black Gods, Social Media, and Racial and Ethnic Difference in Lucumí Religion | Britton (2024) | Transforming Anthropology | The paper examines the debate within an Afro-American community of practitioners of the Afro-Cuban Lucumí faith, as well as the digital ethnography of Facebook groups dedicated to the worship of Orishas. A process called "diaspora in motion" is highlighted, which represents the clarification and resolution of differences to maintain the diasporic community, particularly the religious one. The argument is made that race and ethnicity are often points of contention where the assumption of communal connection and unity is not taken for granted and is hard-won. It concludes that, through this challenging process of diaspora in motion, the sensitive issues of race and ethnicity in the Lucumí tradition are addressed and, eventually, healed. | Online religious disputes |

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| 32 | Do I pray when listening to a recorded prayer?': Approval and critique of digital practices in the Russian Orthodox Church | Grishaeva & Busygin (2024) | Convergence | The analysis examines attitudes toward digital practices within the Russian Orthodox Church, showing that acceptance and criticism are interconnected and influenced by the perceived advantages offered by digital media. Orthodox transformations in the digital society are an area of interest for researchers. The Russian Orthodox Church has had a mixed attitude toward the internet, with some believers arguing that digitalization weakens the connection with institutional religion. However, acceptance and criticism are not mutually exclusive, as both types of arguments are intertwined, reflecting the complexity of navigating religious practices in a digital age. | Intertwining of acceptance and rejection of religious practices in the traditional church; prayer (Russian) |

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| 33 | An authentic feeling? Religious experience through Q&A websites | Scardigno & Mininni (2020) | Archive for the Psychology of Religion | The study highlights the importance of exploring the interaction between traditional religion and social practices online, particularly on question-and-answer websites. It underscores the need for enhanced social research regarding the authenticity of religious feelings expressed online and the responsibility of these platforms in building a common knowledge base. The study analyzes how these sites function as supplementary interpretative resources for various forms of religious life, revealing a dialectical trend between offering additional religious experiences and expanding existing ones. | Online religious communication |
| 34 | Internet of Bodies, datafied embodiment and our quantified religious future | Liu (2023) | HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies | The paper delves into the profound implications of the Internet of Bodies (IoB) on human identity, religious experiences, and the future of society. It emphasizes the need for a responsible approach in designing and utilizing these technologies to mitigate risks associated with losing control over personal data and the homogenization of religious experiences. As IoB technologies intertwine human bodies with the digital world, they can redefine how individuals experience spirituality, altering how religious practices are | AI in online religious practices - digital embodiment |

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| | | | | conducted and experienced. However, without careful management, such technologies could lead to privacy violations, manipulation of personal beliefs, and a loss of diversity in religious expressions, integral to preserving authentic and individualized spiritual experiences. Therefore, navigating these advancements with ethical considerations is essential, ensuring they enhance rather than limit personal autonomy and the richness of religious traditions. | |
| 35 | The role of artificial intelligence in the study of the psychology of religion | Alkhouri (2024) | Religions | Integrating AI into spiritual contexts may influence how people perceive and practice religion, potentially transforming traditional rituals and the role of human practitioners. As AI becomes more advanced, some individuals express concern that robots or automated systems might replace religious practitioners, creating a disconnect from the deeply human aspects of faith and spirituality. Ethically, the rise of AI in religious spaces calls for reflection on the nature of spirituality, belief formation, and the human experience. How can we ensure that AI enhances, rather than diminishes, the authenticity of religious experiences? Can it provide meaningful connections that lead to | AI in religious practices |

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| | | | | personal growth and a more profound sense of community, or will it reduce the essential human elements that allow for transformative spiritual experiences?<br>The challenge is balancing technological progress and preserving the fundamental values of spirituality, personal development, and authentic human connection. | |
| 36 | Islam in the digital infrastructure: the rise of Islamic cyber practices in Northern Nigeria | Ibrahim (2024) | Religion, State & Society | The term "cyber imams" refers to a group of Salafi scholars who use digital infrastructure to engage in digital da'wah (propagation of Islam), attract followers, and cultivate online religious authority. The *cyber ummah* is a dynamic group of different social media formations that have become a tangible and palpable community of believers through online interactivity and the experience of presence. Algorithmic religiosity results in the ability of social media algorithms to be used to shape specific religious subjectivities, build religious collectivity, and cultivate a discreet religious authority. These tropes are activated and provided by the emergence of Islamic digital infrastructure. | Cyber-clerical terminology to designate online religious practice |

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| 37 | Dynamics of Digital Media Use in Religious Communities—A Theoretical Model | Müller & Friemel (2024) | Religions | The authors discuss media and digitalization as trends that increasingly impact religious communities and their communication practices. The religious functions of meaning-making and social connection are considered important factors in how individuals interact with others. Media selection theories help us understand the acceptance and domestication of new technologies and selective exposure to specific content. Combined, the model connects individuals to the social context of their religious communities and vice versa. | The mediatization of religion / meaning-making in addition to communication |
| 38 | Beyond migration? Alternative articulations of transnational religious networks | Chen et al. (2023) | Global Networks | It explores transnational religious networks, moving beyond the traditional focus on migration and highlighting the role of ideas, institutions, and digital technologies. It analyzes how these factors, together with actors and alternative channels, contribute to the (re)production of religion in a transnational world, emphasizing the creativity of Asian religions in the context of modernity. | Transnational, universal digital religion. |

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| | Digital media, ageing, and faith: Older Sri Lankan migrants in Australia and their digital articulations of transnational religion | Gamage et al. (2023) | Global networks | It examines how elderly Sinhalese Buddhist migrants in Melbourne use digital media to express their transnational religion. The study shows that contrary to stereotypes, these older adults use technology to accumulate religious merits, transforming their religious imaginations and practices. | Transnational, universal digital religion. |
| 39 | The Cosmopolitan Vernacular: Korean Shamans (Mudang) in the Global Spirituality Market | Sarfati (2023) | Religions | It analyzes how Korean shamanism (musok), a vernacular religious tradition, has transcended local boundaries and become a global practice. Due to modern cultural and technological conditions, Korean shamans (mudang) interact with clients worldwide, using mass media to promote their practice and adapting rituals to different cultural contexts. Musok's flexibility and oral nature allow for continuous reinterpretations and transformations, thus facilitating its global spread. | The impact of digitalization brings global, transnational religiosity. |
| 40 | Digital Religion, Modern Society and the Construction of Digital Theology | Zaluchu (2024) | Transformation | It argues that digital religion is not just a phenomenon of online religious practice with spiritual purposes but rather an extension of traditional religion into a new culture due to the digitalization of society. The findings of this study call for further research to explore to what extent people construct their faith when spiritual experiences transform into digital forms. | The expansion of online religiosity. |

## Results

### Online practices for religious education

Digital religion is advancing as technology becomes more integrated into religious traditions. This shift offers both opportunities and challenges for religious institutions and individuals. Lundie et al. (2021) proposed a paradigm that improves religious education by establishing online platforms that link schools with religious organizations and clergy, highlighting interactive learning and cooperative goal-setting. Further, Aseery (2024) suggested that gamification, individualized learning, and affirmative feedback methodologies might enhance participation and motivation in religious education. Nonetheless, some important obstacles seem to emerge. For instance, Bhatia (2021) examined how students, educators, and parents use social media to incorporate religious identities into schooling, highlighting – in addition to the intuitive benefits - the risks involved regarding potential discriminatory behaviors.

On the same note, Aygül and Gürbüz (2021) underscored the necessity of pedagogical oversight and parental supervision of digital educational games featuring religious themes to guarantee equity and avert discrimination. Moreover, digital media seems to impact individuals' interpretation and experience of religion significantly. Han (2024) analyzed the changing religious meanings of play, proposing that digital platforms provide novel opportunities for exploring spirituality. Interestingly, Wei (2024) examined how Chinese animated films mediatize religion, suggesting that it may have been transformed into "Religion 2.0," which engages with both the tangible and digital realms, impacting youthful enthusiasts while conforming to societal and ideological demands.

Nevertheless, the growing impact of digital technologies on religious activities needs a comprehensive grasp of their complex dynamics. Incorporating online platforms, gamification, and personalized learning has considerable opportunities for enhancing religious education. However, we must be cautious of the risks of prejudice on social media and the imperative for responsible oversight in digital gaming. The changing interpretations of religious notions and the evolution of religion via digital media underscore the intricacy of this developing terrain. Therefore, we believe it is essential for educators, religious leaders, and scholars to collaborate to address these opportunities and difficulties, promoting inclusive and egalitarian engagement with faith in the digital era.

## Digital religious identities: navigating faith in the online world

Our review also highlighted that the emergence of digital religion has profoundly influenced how individuals formulate and articulate their religious identities. This seems to be especially apparent in the experiences of Muslim women, who are effectively engaging with online platforms to negotiate cultural expectations, confront stereotypes, and cultivate communities. For instance, Deroo and Mohamud (2022) research delves into how young Muslim women shape their online identities in the face of adverse perceptions of Islam, emphasizing the significance of social media in promoting analytical thought and media comprehension. Szwed (2022) suggested that digital media may provide women within conservative religious communities a platform for semi-autonomy, enabling them to reevaluate roles and power dynamics while preserving connections to their religious institutions. However, this autonomy is constrained by offline limitations and the influence of local church authorities. Further, Mahmudova and Evolvi (2021) investigated how Dutch Muslim women engage with Instagram to negotiate cultural and religious norms, uncovering a realm for personal expression while simultaneously confronting privacy and surveillance issues. Their research underscored the need to avoid generalizations and acknowledge the varied experiences of Muslim women. On the same note, Ter Laan (2023) research examined the experiences of Dutch and Belgian Muslim women who utilize WhatsApp to facilitate and articulate their religious migration (hijra) to Morocco. This process fosters a trans-local Muslim sisterhood, offering support, a sense of belonging, and an idea of "home" while simultaneously merging online and offline interactions (Aygül & Gürbüz, 2020).

These studies together illustrate the intricate and evolving characteristics of digital religious identities. Digital platforms provide avenues for individual expression, forming communities, and questioning established norms; however, they also introduce complex issues concerning privacy, surveillance, and the interplay between virtual and physical realities. Grasping these dynamics is essential for a nuanced understanding of the evolving interplay between religion and technology in the 21st century (Zaluchu, 2024).

## Exploring online religion for outcasts

Results were also concentrated on the idea that digital platforms are increasingly essential venues for religious and spiritual expression, especially for marginalized individuals or those seeking alternatives to conventional religious institutions. Kucinskas and Stewart (2022) emphasized that spiritual activities, such as online mindfulness and meditation, can

supplant conventional religious participation, particularly for LGBTQ+ individuals and people of color, providing accessible and personalized alternatives to traditional churches. Dos Santos (2023) examines Neopaganism's utilization of virtual worlds for embodied and sensory religious experiences, legitimizing the online environment as a forum for religious practice and knowledge dissemination. Further, Wang et al. (2025) suggested that, within China's atheistic milieu, Generation Z's digital religious practices are motivated by a need for emotional solace and a strategy to navigate socio-economic challenges, illustrating the adaptive role of digital religion in adverse contexts.

These results illustrate the changing dynamics of religious expression, wherein internet platforms provide fellowship, solace, and the liberty to investigate faith beyond conventional limitations. This transition is especially important for marginalized communities, like LGBTQ+ folks and people of color, who may perceive conventional religious institutions as uninviting or discriminatory. Digital platforms offer alternate means for spiritual study, community formation, and the reinforcement of religious identity.

## The COVID-19 pandemic's impact on religion

Most of the studies in our review indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic brought significant changes in religious practices, with various faith communities having to adjust and innovate in reaction to unprecedented restrictions. This period prompted challenges to established norms, created opportunities for spiritual development, and redefined community involvement. Integrating social media with religious practices has become more evident as religious institutions and individuals adopt digital platforms for worship, community engagement, and connection maintenance. Kilonzo and Omwalo (2021) examined the challenge posed to traditional pulpit religiosity, questioning the necessity of physical communion for spiritual connection. According to Francis et al. (2022), online services have facilitated a spiritual awakening among numerous churchgoers, influenced by a blend of personal, psychological, and religious factors. Next, Ince-Beqo (2024) noted that for migrant Muslim women in Northern Italy, virtual engagement in religious events converted homes into transnational spaces, facilitating identity reconstruction and reinforcing connections with communities in their homeland and diaspora.

Further, the results presented by DiGregorio et al. (2021) suggested that some specific religious communities, including the Amish and Mennonites, reacted to pandemic restrictions by strengthening traditional religious values and

practices, perceiving the crisis as a chance to simplify life and emphasize core values. In the same context, Martins (2023) examined the adaptation of ritual practices by contemporary Pagans in Portugal and the UK to the online environment, highlighting this transformation's emotional, sensorial, and political aspects. Further, Isiko (2022) highlighted that in Uganda, a predominantly religious nation, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in contrasting outcomes, with specific individuals deepening their religious commitment while others forsook religious practices, prompting the emergence of new forms of faith expression. Finally, Caidi et al. (2023) highlighted the significance of comprehending the role of spiritual and religious experiences in navigating information landscapes following the pandemic. They advocated for a thorough research agenda encompassing ethical considerations, theoretical contextualization, and suitable research methodologies.

Overall, the examined studies suggested that the COVID-19 pandemic catalyzed religious landscapes, leading to increased technological integration and a renewed focus on traditional values. This, in turn, highlighted the adaptability and resilience of faith communities amid global challenges.

## Online religious practices

The digital era has significantly transformed religious practices, leading experts to explore the diverse methods by which individuals and societies interact with faith online. Researchers have investigated the relationship between embodiment and technology in creating sacred experiences. Other studies suggested that, although corporeal procedures are pivotal in experiencing sanctity during activities such as walking pilgrimages, material technologies also contribute significantly. Further, Mansour (2022) examined the influence of light in virtual churches, employing a social sciences framework to assess emotional reactions to virtual sacred architecture, and suggested a methodology for additional empirical investigation.

Results also suggested that digital technology provided novel opportunities for augmenting religious encounters. Golan and Martini (2020) illustrated how online videos can highlight important sites and reconnect consumers with religious history, especially Catholic pilgrimages to the Holy Land (Berger & Golan, 2023). Furthermore, Gao et al. (2024) highlighted that digital technologies are transforming Christian prayer practices in Singapore, establishing novel religious spaces and experiences by eroding institutional boundaries, affecting believers' emotions, and linking faith to quotidian life. Next, Reehl (2021) analyzed the integration of traditional Buddhist practices with contemporary musical technology in Japanese adaptations of the Heart

Sutra, appealing to younger audiences and providing novel interpretations of ancient teachings (Scardigno & Mininni, 2020).

Conclusions from the reviewed studies emphasized that the Internet has created a virtual marketplace for religious expression, where visual culture and anonymous forums influence religious identity and instruction. For instance, Fernández Malváez and Barba González (2024) detailed the proliferation of the commercial dimension of religion via online commerce and social media, where religious traditions such as Orisha are practiced and commodified in novel manners. Artamonov et al. (2021) emphasized the use of "holy selfies" by Christians to articulate religious identity, foster connections, establish virtual communities, and engage with hallowed locations and activities (Artamonov et al., 2021). On the same note, Astor et al. (2024) redirected our attention to anonymous religious websites and social media platforms, highlighting anonymity as a tactical asset for establishing authority and influence online, especially in providing Islamic guidance to Spanish-speaking individuals.

Interestingly, the data on the reviewed studies have also highlighted that *Mega-churches* amalgamate technology and celebrity culture, obscuring the distinction between the sacred and the secular (Kidwell & Borer, 2021). Their case study illustrates how a Las Vegas mega-church amalgamates celebrity culture and technology into religious activities, resulting in a syncretic form of worship that obscures the distinctions between the holy and the profane (Kidwell & Borer (2021). Next, Grishaeva and Busygin (2024) investigated attitudes toward digital practices in the Russian Orthodox Church, suggesting that acceptance and criticism are interrelated and shaped by the perceived advantages of digital media. Finally, Scardigno and Mininni (2020) underscored the need to investigate the genuineness of online religious sentiments and the platforms' contribution to the construction of collective knowledge, providing supplemental and enhanced religious experiences. Thus, the amalgamation of online and offline actions reconstitutes modern religious existence.

Also, Isetti (2022) noted that during the COVID-19 epidemic, Russian Orthodox minorities in Tyrol opted against utilizing technology for religious involvement, citing its inability to mimic the genuine experience. Britton (2024) analyzed the discourse among African-American practitioners of the Afro-Cuban Lucumí religion and the digital ethnography of Facebook groups focused on Orisha veneration, emphasizing a phenomenon termed diaspora in motion, wherein race and ethnicity are confronted and potentially reconciled to sustain the diasporic religious community. Thus, online religious activities seem to represent a dynamic and developing domain influenced by

the interaction of technology, tradition, and personal experiences. However, additional research is required to comprehensively comprehend the enduring effects of these shifts on religious communities and personal spirituality.

## AI in religious online practices

Artificial intelligence (AI) progressively impacts online religious practices, and the analyzed studies revealed both benefits and concerns. To begin with, Liu (2023) observed that "Internet of Bodies" technologies provoke inquiries over human identity and religious experience, highlighting the necessity for responsible design to alleviate hazards. Next, Alkhouri (2024) emphasized that AI transformed religious activities and prompted ethical inquiries, necessitating a balance between technological advancements and spiritual principles. Further, Ibrahim (2024) explored how digital Islamic infrastructure cultivates online communities and authority via "cyber imams" and "algorithmic religiosity."

On the same note, the research conducted by Müller and Friemel (2024) suggested that mediatization and digitalization influence religious societies, with media selection theories elucidating technology uptake and involvement. Media selection theories elucidate how individuals embrace new technology and interact with particular information selectively. The approach links individuals to the social setting of their religious communities and vice versa. Thus, as AI progresses, we believe it is important to thoughtfully assess its effects on religious communities and personal spirituality to guarantee that technology enhances rather than undermines the fundamental tenets of faith (Alkhouri, 2024).

## Transnational digital spirituality

Another interesting theme from the reviewed studies is related to transnational online religiosity, a developing domain influenced by digital media and globalization. For instance, Gamage et al. (2023) suggested that senior Sri Lankan migrants in Melbourne employ digital media to articulate their transnational faith, accrue religious merit, and modify religious behaviors. Next, Sarfati (2023) emphasized the globalization of Korean shamanism (musok), facilitated by contemporary cultural and technological circumstances. On the same note, Zaluchu (2024) suggested that digital religion transforms conventional religious activities within a digitized culture, necessitating greater exploration of how individuals formulate faith in digital contexts.

Overall, the reviewed studies detail how religion evolves and changes in the digital realm, influencing personal and collective religious experiences. Transnational online religiosity is not simply a digital reflection of conventional rituals but a vibrant arena where novel expressions of faith and community emerge. This evolution is propelled by technical advancements and the shifting social context, notably the growing interconnection of the world. The digital domain offers individuals innovative avenues to engage with their faith, surpassing geographical limitations and cultivating a sense of community among global religious networks.

## Discussion

This study explored the impact of digitalization on religious practices and community dynamics through a systematic review of literature from 2020 to 2024. It focused on two main aspects: (1) the digital shift in religious practices, including adaptations of rituals and worship to online platforms, changes in observance due to digital tools, and the effects on traditional practices; and (2) the role of technology in religious communities, examining its influence on socialization, education, and theological implications.

Our findings suggested that integrating digital technology into religious practices presents significant opportunities and challenges for religious education and identity. While innovative approaches such as online platforms, gamification, and personalized learning may enhance engagement and understanding, there are also risks of discrimination and the need for careful oversight. The evolving nature of religious interpretation through digital media further complicates this landscape. Therefore, educators, religious leaders, and researchers must work together to navigate these complexities, ensuring that the benefits of digital religion are maximized while minimizing potential harms, ultimately fostering an inclusive and equitable environment for spiritual exploration in the digital age.

Some findings also highlighted the transformative impact of digital platforms on the religious identities of Muslim women, showcasing their ability to navigate cultural expectations and foster community connections. While these online spaces offer opportunities for self-expression and critical engagement with traditional norms, they also present challenges related to privacy and the influence of offline authorities. Also, the rise of digital platforms has significantly transformed the landscape of religious and spiritual expression, particularly for marginalized groups such as LGBTQ+ individuals and people of color. The reviewed research highlights how these platforms provide accessible and personalized alternatives to traditional religious institutions, facilitating spiritual practices like mindfulness and meditation.

Additionally, the use of virtual environments by movements such as Neopaganism underscores the legitimacy of online spaces for religious engagement. Furthermore, Generation Z's digital religious practices in contexts like China reflect a search for emotional support amid socio-economic challenges. Overall, the majority of the studies suggested that digital platforms foster community and identity and empower individuals to explore and express their spirituality beyond conventional boundaries, marking a pivotal shift in how faith is experienced and practiced in contemporary society.

Our research was also focused on the potential transformations brought by the pandemic. Results suggested that, indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly transformed religious practices, compelling faith communities to adapt and innovate in response to unprecedented challenges. Integrating digital platforms for worship and community engagement has reshaped spiritual connections, allowing for new forms of expression and identity reconstruction, particularly among marginalized groups. While some communities embraced these changes, reinforcing traditional values, others have experienced a decline in religious commitment. Overall, the pandemic has underscored the resilience and adaptability of faith communities, prompting a reevaluation of spiritual practices and the role of technology in fostering connections during times of crisis. Future research should continue to explore these dynamics, considering ethical and methodological implications in understanding the evolving religious landscape.

Further, regarding religious habits, the digital era has profoundly reshaped religious practices (particularly after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic), creating a complex interplay between technology, tradition, and individual experiences. As researchers continue to explore how online platforms facilitate new forms of worship and community engagement, it becomes clear that digital technologies are not merely supplementary but transformative. They offer innovative ways for believers to connect with their faith, navigate religious identity, and engage with sacred experiences. However, the acceptance and effectiveness of these digital practices vary across different religious contexts, highlighting the need for further investigation into their implications for spirituality and community dynamics. Understanding these evolving interactions will be crucial for grasping the future landscape of religious expression in an increasingly digital world.

A distinct theme in the analysis of online religious practices was the influence of AI. Integrating artificial intelligence into online religious practices presents opportunities and challenges. While AI has the potential to enhance community building and engagement within religious contexts, it also raises

significant ethical concerns regarding human identity and the essence of spiritual experiences. As highlighted by some of the studies, there is a pressing need for responsible design and a careful balance between technological advancements and spiritual values. The ongoing evolution of digital religious infrastructure necessitates a thoughtful examination of how these technologies impact personal spirituality and the broader religious community, ensuring that they enrich rather than detract from the core principles of faith.

Finally, the studies about transnational digital spirituality highlighted the dynamic nature of transnational online religiosity, showcasing how digital media and globalization are reshaping religious practices and experiences. As individuals navigate their faith in digital contexts, traditional rituals are not merely replicated but transformed into new expressions of belief and community. This evolution, driven by technological advancements and an increasingly interconnected world, provides unique opportunities for individuals to engage with their spirituality beyond geographical constraints, fostering a sense of belonging within global religious networks. The ongoing exploration of these phenomena is essential to understanding the future of faith in a digital age.

## Conclusions

Digital religion is evolving as technology becomes more incorporated into religious traditions. As technology increasingly integrates into religious traditions, digital religion continues evolving, presenting opportunities and challenges for religious institutions and individuals. On the one hand, digital platforms can significantly enhance religious education through gamification, personalized learning, and interactive content, making teachings more engaging and accessible. On the other hand, concerns regarding discrimination, pedagogical oversight, and parental control remain critical to ensuring fairness and preventing adverse outcomes. A particularly noteworthy development is the role of digital platforms in shaping the religious identities of Muslim women. These platforms offer spaces for self-expression, community-building, and negotiating personal identities in ways that were previously constrained by offline structures. While digital participation fosters empowerment and agency, it also raises issues related to privacy and the influence of offline authorities.

Furthermore, digital platforms have significantly transformed spiritual expression, especially among marginalized communities. These spaces provide alternative avenues for religious engagement, offering personalized and accessible options beyond traditional institutions. Practices such as

mindfulness and meditation have flourished in these digital environments, fostering community and a sense of belonging. The increasing digitalization of faith highlights a broader shift toward individualized and self-directed spiritual exploration, where individuals curate their spiritual journeys and connect with like-minded communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated these transformations, compelling religious communities to innovate and adapt in unprecedented ways. Adopting digital platforms for worship and community engagement has reshaped spiritual connections, facilitating new forms of expression and identity construction, particularly among marginalized groups. While some communities embraced these digital practices to reinforce traditional values, others experienced declining religious participation. The pandemic ultimately underscored the resilience and adaptability of faith communities, prompting a reassessment of spiritual practices and the role of technology in fostering connections during crises. Future research should continue to explore these dynamics, considering ethical and methodological implications for understanding the evolving religious landscape.

The intersection of technology and spirituality will likely continue evolving as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and other emerging technologies reshape religious experiences. Scholars, religious leaders, and technology developers must navigate this transformation responsibly, ensuring digital innovations enhance rather than undermine faith traditions. Future advancements can contribute to a more interconnected and spiritually enriched global society by fostering inclusive and ethically sound digital religious environments.

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