

Transforming Sikh Spirituality with AI : Opportunities and Challenges

Dr. Devinder Pal Singh (Canada) and Dr. Bhai Harbans Lal (USA)

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping numerous aspects of human life, including healthcare, education, and entertainment. In Spirituality and religion, AI holds transformative potential. Like printing press and digital platforms, AI revolutionized dissemination of religious teachings in new ways to enhance engagement.



This article explores the intersection of AI, spirituality, and Sikhism, focusing on the opportunities, challenges, and ethical considerations involved.

Can AI genuinely embody divine wisdom, or does it merely mimic human interpretations? Furthermore, the risk of AI “hallucinations”—generating inaccurate or misleading content—poses significant challenges, particularly in faith contexts where doctrinal accuracy is essential.

AI in Contemporary Spirituality

Sikhism and Technology

Religious leaders and communities across traditions are leveraging AI to enrich spiritual experiences. Innovations such as Rabbi Josh Fixler’s “Rabbi Bot” provide sermons, answer theological queries, and offer spiritual counselling. Christian pastors use AI to streamline services, engage youngsters, and address complex questions. While these advancements are promising, they raise critical ethical and theological issues.

Sikhism, founded by Guru Nanak Dev Ji in the 15th century. He emphasized equality, selfless service, and spiritual enlightenment. Guru Granth Sahib Ji, the eternal Sikh scripture, is a repository of divine wisdom and spiritual guidance of the Sikh Gururs and other Saints.

Historically, Sikhism has embraced technology to spread its teachings, from printed scriptures to digital platforms broadcasting Gurbani (sacred hymns) globally.

AI introduces new possibilities for Sikh spirituality, enabling innovative approaches to preserving, interpreting, and sharing *Gurbani*. For instance, AI-powered algorithms can assist in translating and contextualizing Gurbani for diverse audiences. Real-time translation systems could make the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib accessible to non-Punjabi speakers, fostering inclusivity and interfaith dialogue.

Transformative Applications of AI in Sikh Practices

AI can analyze and categorize Gurbani, aiding scholars and practitioners. Digital archives powered by AI ensure the longevity and integrity of sacred texts. Guru Granth Sahib incorporates Punjabi, Sanskrit, Persian, and Braj. AI-driven tools can bridge linguistic gaps, allowing global audiences to engage with Sikh teachings and reconnect diaspora with their heritage. They create global sangats, facilitating participation in kirtan (devotional singing) and discussions.

These platforms can personalize spiritual content and foster meaningful connections. AI can optimize seva (selfless service) initiatives.

These include *langars* (community kitchens) or disaster relief. Predictive analytics can improve resource allocation, ensuring aid reaches those in need. AI can enhance Sikh education through interactive modules, including virtual reality (VR) experiences of historical sites and AI tutors teaching Punjabi and Sikh history.

Ethical and Theological Considerations

Integrating AI into Sikh practices raises questions about its alignment with Sikh principles, such as submission to divine will (*Hukam*). AI's role must complement, not overshadow, spiritual traditions. Ensuring doctrinal accuracy is critical, requiring collaboration with knowledgeable Sikh scholars.

Authenticity and sanctity must be preserved, especially when AI tools interpret *Gurbani*. Ethical guidelines and oversight by Sikh institutions are essential to maintain these standards.

As Sikhism embraces AI, balancing technological innovation with spiritual tradition is crucial. AI-generated translations should enhance, not replace, the experience of reciting and contemplating *Gurbani*. Similarly, while virtual *sangats* connect global communities, they cannot replicate the spiritual ambiance of a Gurdwara.

The Path Forward

AI offers exciting possibilities for Sikhism, from personalized spiritual assistants to immersive VR experiences of Sikh landmarks. However, realizing this potential requires careful planning, collaboration, and ethical oversight. Sikh institutions must actively shape AI's development to align with the faith's values and principles.

By thoughtfully integrating AI, Sikh communities can deepen spiritual engagement, foster inclusivity, and advance their mission of service and equality. AI should remain a tool for enhancing understanding, compassion, and collective growth, ensuring Sikhism thrives as a timeless tradition in the modern world.

About the Authors :

Dr. Devinder Pal Singh is Director, Center for Understanding Sikhism, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada.

Web :

<https://philpeople.org/profiles/devinder-pal-singh>

<https://c4usikhism.com>

E-mail : c4usikhism@gmail.com

Dr. Bhai Harbans Lal, PhD; D.Litt. (Hons) is Professor Emeritus and Chairman, the Department of Pharmacology & Neurosciences, University of North Texas Health Science Research Center. He is Professor Emeritus, at Guru Nanak Dev University and President of the Academy of Guru Granth Studies.

Web:

<https://seekingwisdomblog.wordpress.com>

E-mail: Japji2050@gmail.com

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