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Generative artificial intelligence in Christian parenting education: the Polish context

Generatywna sztuczna inteligencja w chrześcijańskiej pedagogizacji rodziców: kontekst polski

Abstract

Given the dynamic development of information and communication technologies, including systems based on artificial intelligence, the research objective was to analyse the possibilities and limitations of using generative artificial intelligence in the process of supporting parents in their Christian educational mission. The analysis was based on a review of the literature on the subject. The Polish context was taken into account, especially the rapid secularisation, which significantly determines the quality of parents' involvement in the integral upbringing of their children and creates a need to seek new ways of reaching parents. The method of critical analysis of the literature on the subject allowed us to prove that GenAI can enrich the methodological tools of those conducting meetings with parents, help in the creation of applications, presentations, and educational materials, facilitate parents' access to pedagogical and religious knowledge, and contribute to the promotion of good practices. The research concludes that it is necessary to value the personalistic dimension and ethical principles in the education of parents. GenAI will never replace humans and direct interpersonal relationships. Its proper and responsible use in the Christian education

of parents requires respect for the dignity of every human being and concern for the integral development of the person.

Keywords: generative artificial intelligence, pedagogy, parents, family, Christian upbringing.

Abstrakt

Biorąc pod uwagę dynamiczny rozwój technologii informacyjno-komunikacyjnych, w tym systemów opartych na sztucznej inteligencji, celem badawczym stało się przeanalizowanie możliwości i ograniczeń zastosowania generatywnej sztucznej inteligencji w procesie wspierania rodziców w ich chrześcijańskiej misji wychowawczej. Podstawę analizy stanowił przegląd literatury przedmiotu. Uwzględniono przy tym kontekst polski, zwłaszcza galopującą sekularyzację, która w znacznym stopniu warunkuje jakość zaangażowania rodziców w integralne wychowanie potomstwa i rodzi potrzebę poszukiwania nowych sposobów dotarcia do rodziców. Zastosowana metoda krytycznej analizy literatury przedmiotu pozwoliła dowieść, że GenAI może wzbogacać warsztat pracy metodycznej osób prowadzących spotkania z udziałem rodziców, pomagać w tworzeniu aplikacji, prezentacji, materiałów edukacyjnych, ułatwiać rodzicom dostęp do wiedzy pedagogicznej i religijnej, przyczyniać się do promocji dobrych praktyk. Wnioskiem z badań jest konieczność dowartościowania wymiaru personalistycznego i zasad etycznych w pedagogizacji rodziców. GenAI nigdy nie zastąpi człowieka i bezpośrednich relacji interpersonalnych. Jej właściwe i odpowiedzialne wykorzystanie w chrześcijańskiej pedagogizacji rodziców wymaga poszanowania godności każdego człowieka i troski o integralny rozwój osoby.

Słowa kluczowe: generatywna sztuczna inteligencja, pedagogizacja, rodzice, rodzina, wychowanie chrześcijańskie.

Introduction

In recent decades, the role of information and communication technologies in individual and social life has grown significantly. This is directly related to dynamic changes in the IT industry. One of the groundbreaking manifestations of these changes is the development of artificial intelligence (AI). This technology is increasingly entering various spheres of human life. It is present, among others, in the economy, medicine, and education. It affects the quality of individual and social life, and this impact is constantly growing. On the one hand, AI facilitates professional, educational, and social activity, raising hopes

for an improvement in the quality of life, but on the other hand, it raises several ethical and practical concerns. Researchers are trying to identify the areas of influence of artificial intelligence on humans (Jarocki, 2024, pp. 561–571; Zalewska-Bochenko, 2024, pp. 194–220). In doing so, they draw attention to various spheres of human life, including the physical, spiritual, religious, social, and health spheres (Przygoda 2024, p. 52). They are looking for answers to questions such as: Does artificial intelligence strengthen or weaken various economic, educational, and social processes? Will humans and their work be replaced by artificial intelligence algorithms? What role will humans play in various forms of professional, educational, and social activity? Will artificial intelligence ever develop ethical responsibility for its decisions, and if so, who would decide which ethical algorithms to implement in the artificial intelligence system? (Oberg, 2023, pp. 1–16; Przygoda, 2024, pp. 52–54). Another key question seems to be the place and role of generative artificial intelligence in Christian parenting. In the era of artificial intelligence development, parents face new educational challenges that require both in-depth ethical reflection and access to reliable technological tools adapted to Christian values, which support them in carrying out their educational tasks. They are looking for answers to questions such as: Does artificial intelligence strengthen or weaken various economic, educational, and social processes? Will humans and their work be replaced by artificial intelligence algorithms? What role will humans play in various forms of professional, educational, and social activity? Will artificial intelligence ever learn ethical responsibility for its decisions, and if so, who would decide what ethical algorithms would be implemented into the artificial intelligence system? (Oberg, 2023, pp. 1–16; Przygoda, 2024, pp. 52–54). Another key question seems to be the place and role of generative artificial intelligence in Christian parenting. In the era of artificial intelligence development, parents face new educational challenges that require both in-depth ethical reflection and access to reliable technological tools adapted to Christian values, which support them in carrying out their educational tasks.

The analyses undertaken in this study aim to find answers to the key research question posed above. They only take into account the Polish context, especially the rapid secularisation. They contribute to the discussion focused on the possibilities and limitations of using generative artificial intelligence in Christian parenting education in Poland. They do not claim to provide an exhaustive presentation of the analysed issues. They require answers to the following questions: How can generative artificial intelligence be used to support parents in their Christian educational mission? What are the ethical principles for using this tool in the process of educating parents?

The above-mentioned research objective was achieved using the method of literature analysis. On this basis, the concept of 'parent education' will first be defined from a Christian perspective. In this context, generative artificial intelligence will be characterised, and its potential applications in the education of Christian parents will be presented. Particular attention will be paid to ethical issues, including educational and pastoral risks arising from the use of generative artificial intelligence in the pedagogisation of parents.

1. Understanding Christian parental education

Contemporary analyses of the pedagogical culture of parents in Poland often raise questions about the proper understanding of basic pedagogical categories. These questions spark lively discussion among researchers, as they can be presented from different research perspectives. The diversity of positions is based on different understandings of key pedagogical categories. This is conditioned by both the philosophical assumptions of researchers and their worldview, practical experience, and the context of the issues analysed. Therefore, the literature on the subject often contains different reflections by individual researchers on the broadly understood pedagogisation of parents (Błasiak, 2019, pp. 83–101; Skreczko, 2020, pp. 99–113). However, no study addresses this issue about artificial intelligence. The authors analyse artificial intelligence mainly in the context of the education of children and young people. They draw attention to specific issues related to its use in the implementation of specific educational activities. On the other hand, they usually consider the education of parents in connection with educational activities aimed at familiarising parents with the problems of raising children and young people in the family and at school (Błasiak, 2019, pp. 83–101; Skreczko, 2020, pp. 99–113; Wojcieszak, 2020, pp. 39–48). They draw attention to its fundamental goal. This is to improve the pedagogical culture of parents, understood as a special ability to respond in educational situations by the needs of the child, and determined by the knowledge, system of values, norms and behaviours of parents, their educational awareness and ability to establish an educational relationship and take educational action using appropriate methods and educational measures (Frączek, 2013, pp. 187–198; Musiał, 2016, pp. 173–181; Tokarska, 2006, pp. 123–135).

In this study, the assumptions of pedagogy inspired by Christian values were considered important. Hence, the understanding of 'parent education' is present in the scientific research of authors such as Marian Nowak, Piotr Poręba, and Adam Skreczko (Nowak, 1998, 2001; Poręba, 1969; Skreczko, 2020). Their propos-

als correspond perfectly with the Church's teaching on the role of parents in the holistic upbringing of their children (Francis, 2016, no. 80, 274–279; John Paul II, no. 36–38), in which, alongside physical, intellectual, emotional and social development, the spiritual, moral and religious development of the child occupies an important place. According to P. Poręba, the education of parents includes: 1) the transfer of basic knowledge in the field of child development psychology and family pedagogy, including the role of parents in holistic child development psychology and family pedagogy, including the role of parents in holistic upbringing using appropriately selected methods and techniques of upbringing; 2) supporting parents in the development of the personality of the educator; 3) providing parents with professional, institutional support in a family counselling centre. The aim of such activities is both to convey information and to shape educational attitudes and practical skills inspired by current professional knowledge, Christian values, and faith (Poręba, 1969). A. Skreczko defines the education of parents in a similar way. In his opinion, the education of parents is an activity aimed at constantly enriching the common pedagogical knowledge possessed by parents with elements of scientific knowledge about the holistic upbringing of children (Skreczko, 2001). It aims to directly and indirectly help parents in raising their children by supporting them in developing reflectiveness and educational awareness (Skreczko, 2004, 2020). M. Nowak also draws attention to the role of parental education in increasing parenting skills, which are key in the process of holistic child-rearing. These activities are based on Christian values (Nowak, 1998, 2001).

With this in mind, this study assumes that Christian parenting education is a process of systematically supporting parents in fulfilling their educational role towards their children, inspired by the values and principles derived from the Gospel and the teachings of the Church. It includes not only the transfer of knowledge in the field of pedagogy and developmental and educational psychology, but also family catechesis (in the family, with the family and of the family), in which a key role is played by supporting parents in bringing their child to full and harmonious physical, moral and spiritual development and in educating them to love and holiness (John Paul II, no. 38; Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelisation, nos. 226–231).

2. General characteristics of generative artificial intelligence

Dynamically developing solutions based on artificial intelligence methods are dedicated, among others, to people involved in education and science. One

such modern technological solution is generative artificial intelligence (GenAI). Its purpose is to create new output data (e.g., texts, images, sounds, video recordings, or 3D models) based on patterns recognised in existing training data. Unlike classic AI systems, which are mainly used for classification, prediction, or anomaly detection, GenAI is more creative. It constructs new content or new forms of presentation based on available data obtained from various databases (Kalota, 2024, pp. 1–14).

An important stage in the development of GenAI was the development of GPT (Generative Pre-trained Transformer). This model is based on technology that uses advanced (deep) machine learning models, and in particular relies on neural networks capable of processing various data sets and detecting linguistic, visual, or audio patterns in them. GenAI is capable of creating new text data, images, and music based on patterns it has learned from previously available data (Strannegård, 2023). Unlike classic AI systems, which analyse data and make decisions based on fixed algorithms, GenAI can process large amounts of information and use it to create new content (text, images, sounds, film material) based on patterns observed in training data (Bender and Friedman, 2018).

Various GenAI tools have appeared in the virtual space that support work with both quantitative and qualitative data, including text, sound, and images. These tools allow the creation of new, unique content in the form of text, images, videos, and music. Alongside ChatGPT (OpenAI), systems such as Claude (Anthropic), Gemini (formerly Bard, Google), DALL·E (OpenAI), Midjourney, Stable Diffusion, Adobe Firefly, Sora (OpenAI) Runway ML, Pika, Suno AI, Tome AI, Canva Magic Write, and Gamma are developing very quickly (Lampart, 2023; Musiol, 2024; Terry, 2023).

It is widely accepted that GenAI systems are characterised by their ability to synthesise. They generate new data (responses, images) based on probabilities, which makes them variable and flexible (Jarocki, 2024; Perifanou and Economides, 2025). By processing available data, GenAI systems are able to make generalisations and generate coherent responses using text, images, and sound. In doing so, they take into account the context of the task (command) that has been specified for execution. Thus, they create content, images and music that are appropriate to the given topic or style, e.g. scientific, popular science, pastoral (Jarocki, 2024; Kuruliszwili, 2024; Perifanou and Economides, 2025).

Thanks to these capabilities, GenAI is attracting the interest of people who need help in creating texts, generating images, and composing music. It has applications in science and education. It is also increasingly used in pastoral

practice, e.g., in preparing homilies, designing pastoral initiatives, constructing religious education lesson plans, and creating pastoral materials (Przygoda, 2024).

3. The social and religious context of Christian parenting education

Christian parenting education, understood as the process of supporting parents in fulfilling their educational role in the spirit of Christian values, takes place in a specific social and religious context, which has a significant impact on educational influences within the family. Cultural and social changes in Poland (including the individualisation of lifestyles, axiological relativism, consumerism, an increase in the number of informal relationships, changes in the family model, instability in relationships, and a reversal of parental roles) have a significant impact on the way parents perceive and perform their educational functions and tasks (Czupryński, 2019; Zellma and Czupryński, 2020). In addition to parents' involvement in developing parenting skills or seeking various effective forms of support in raising children, various related deficits can also be observed (Mazurkiewicz, 2020; Ryś, 2017). Parents encounter difficulties in raising their children, resulting, among other things, from a lack of stable role models and the excessive influence of new information and communication technologies (NASK, 2023). Many of them do not have sufficient parenting skills (CBOS, 2022b; NASK, 2023). In order to meet socio-cultural challenges, they are increasingly guided by fashion and popularity, abandoning traditional forms of support for children's development (Zellma, 2016). Therefore, they often choose modern options that are advertised on social media (Jasielska and Maksymiuk, 2018).

Research by CBOS (2025) shows that although family remains a fundamental value for Poles, at the same time, there is a clear weakening of the stability of marital relationships and a loosening of intergenerational ties in Polish society. There is an increase in ideological pluralism and a decline in regular religious practices. The authority of religious institutions is also declining, which is directly related to rapid secularisation (Mariański, 2021; Mąkosa and Adamczyk, 2024). Parents increasingly declare faith to be an element of cultural tradition rather than personal religious commitment. According to ISKK research (2021), only about 23% of families in Poland pray together or participate in liturgy regularly. The number of practising Catholics is also declining, from 45.7% in 2002 to 28.6% in 2021 (ISKK, 2021). On the other hand, those who have undergone religious formation themselves (e.g. in Catholic movements

and communities, family ministries) are more aware of their educational role and are more likely to take actions that support the spiritual development of children (Mariański, 2021; Mąkosa and Adamczyk, 2024).

4. Possibilities for using GenAI in Christian parenting education

As noted above, the development of GenAI creates new perspectives and challenges for Christian parenting education. This technology can become a helpful tool in the professional organisation and implementation of courses, training sessions, workshops, formation meetings, and family counselling. The intensity of its use depends on the objectives, content, participants, and instructors. Parents can be involved in the organisation and implementation of some educational and formation meetings, using artificial intelligence (chatbots) to obtain specific information and prepare specific tasks (e.g., as part of project work), which they then present in an engaging way to the other participants. Virtual advisors can assist in the process of finding answers to pressing questions about raising children or offer spiritual reflections and prayers.

GenAI tools also play an important role in the work of people who conduct various forms of Christian education for parents. They can be used by catechists, pastors, educators, psychologists, and others to develop short multimedia presentations, spots, films, graphics, and audio recordings that enrich the content, or to create basic diagnostic tools for self-awareness and the development of parenting skills. GenAI helps to create interactive educational materials (parenting guides) that respond to the specific needs of parents at different stages of family life. Examples include interactive parenting guides, biblical meditations, reminders of liturgical events, and scenarios for educational and formative meetings, generated based on the preferences of the person leading the meeting. The development of an educational app for parents is noteworthy. Such an app, based on GenAI, can offer parents materials for conversations with their children. However, it always requires personal assessment and decision-making, as well as the parents' involvement in dialogue with the child and building a bond.

Thanks to the above-mentioned proposals for the use of GenAI, it is possible to enrich traditional forms with modern ones – developed in the form of e-books and e-materials, designing newsletters as part of family ministry, which are accessible to parents who cannot directly participate in meetings. This requires cooperation between those involved in Christian education for parents and software developers to ensure that tools dedicated to parents are consistent with Christian faith and ethics.

GenAI is a good aid in inspiring parents to broaden and deepen their knowledge of the religious upbringing of children and young people. It helps to quickly find answers to pressing questions about faith and morality. It can also support parents in their search for ideas for celebrating the liturgical year in the family. Thus, it is an easily accessible tool that supports both the process of Christian education and adult formation, as well as the implementation of basic tasks in the field of integral upbringing of children. Familiarisation with these tools is particularly helpful in increasing the competitiveness of parental education. Thanks to GenAI, it is possible to achieve the desired results in terms of knowledge transfer and the development of parenting skills more quickly.

It is also worth noting the organisation of training courses aimed at supporting parents in acquiring the skills to critically analyse content generated by GenAI. This involves teaching how to filter content generated by GenAI and identifying valuable materials or possible effects and limitations. Parents should always be active participants, capable of making responsible choices and critically analysing the educational aids available to them. Knowledge of how algorithms work plays an important role in protecting children from undesirable content. It is a starting point for discussion.

5. Ethical issues

In order for GenAI to serve Christian parenting, it is necessary to respect basic ethical principles. Pope Francis reminded us of this in his Message for the World Day of Peace 2024 Artificial Intelligence and Peace (Francis, 2024a). He emphasised that the development of artificial intelligence must go hand in hand with moral responsibility. Algorithms are only a tool that serves and supports all those involved in education. They can never replace parents and educators, including their human capacity for moral judgement (Francis, 2024b). Furthermore, they cannot reduce human dignity to data and statistics (Francis, 2024b).

Particular attention should be paid to the six ethical principles relating to artificial intelligence, so that it is credible, safe, and transparent, including in the Christian education of parents. These principles are set out in the document Antiqua et Nova, issued by the Dicastery for Doctrine of the Faith and the Dicastery for Culture and Education, and approved by Pope Francis. According to these principles, GenAI should be treated as a tool that 'remains at the service of human intelligence' (Dicastery for Doctrine of the Faith and Dicastery for Culture and Education, 2025, no. 4). It can never replace parents and educators. This

means that in the process of educating parents, GenAI is a source of educational information that allows for the analysis of families' needs or suggests biblical and catechetical content. However, educational decisions and moral judgements always belong to the parent, educator, catechist or pastor. Importantly, 'human beings are always responsible for the use of the tools they create' (Dicastery for Science and Faith and Dicastery for Culture and Education, 2025, no. 7). A person (e.g., a parent, teacher, catechist) is responsible for every educational decision. It is the person who should evaluate GenAI's advice (e.g., to what extent it is consistent with Christian ethics, what consequences it has) and decide whether to use it in the upbringing of their children. This is also linked to another principle concerning the protection of personal relationships. 'No machine is capable of experiencing relationships' (Dicastery for Doctrine of the Faith and Dicastery for Culture and Education, 2025, no. 6). GenAI cannot replace direct spiritual guidance or the parent-child, parent-teacher, or parent-pastor relationship. Properly understood Christian pedagogy has a clear anthropological and existential dimension. It is realised in encounters between people, not in interactions with algorithms. Therefore, when organising workshops for parents, it is worth using, for example, presentations generated by GenAI, but one cannot limit oneself to this type of solution alone. Dialogue, including empathetic listening and negotiating meanings, plays an important role. Hence, the next principle reminds us that 'there are areas where the decision must belong to the human being' (Dicastery for Science and Faith and Dicastery for Culture and Education, 2025, no. 10). Concerning the education of parents, this mainly concerns sensitive issues related to the upbringing of children (e.g. in the field of sex education, diagnosis of developmental and educational problems). Therefore, caution should be exercised when using GenAi suggestions. The protection of personal data is also an ethical necessity (Dicastery for Science and Faith and Dicastery for Culture and Education, 2025, no. 12). Parents who participate in various forms of Christian education and provide their data (e.g., in a survey) for interpretation using GenAI should be guaranteed confidentiality. In this context, concern for sustainable development is also considered important. 'Technological development must take into account the common good, including the natural environment' (Dicastery for Science and Faith and Dicastery for Culture and Education, 2025, no. 14; Francis, 2020, nos. 107–110, 114). The use of GenAI cannot ignore its ecological impact (e.g., energy consumption). Therefore, Christian education of parents should promote the responsible use of new technologies. In practice, for example, when organising online workshops for parents, it is worth choosing educational platforms with low resource consumption and promoting digital materials instead of printed ones.

Pope Leo XIV also drew attention to ethical issues. He considered GenAI to be a key contemporary social and moral challenge (Leo XIV, 2025a, 2025b). The Pope warns against equating access to data generated by GenAI with true intelligence. Leo XIV emphasised that true wisdom requires openness to questions about the meaning of life, truth, and goodness. The Pope expressed particular concern for children and young people, pointing to the possible negative effects of GenAI on their intellectual, neurological and moral development. Furthermore, Leo XIV encouraged educators to engage in ethical reflection and responsible use of GenAI (Leo XIV, 2025a; 2025b).

With this in mind, it should be emphasised that anthropological and existential issues play an important role in Christian parenting using GenAI. It is essential to preserve the central role of parents as moral guides, free individuals capable of making independent choices and responsible for raising their children. Furthermore, GenAI should serve to deepen family relationships, including teaching direct communication with children and openness.

6. Summary

Christian education of parents seems to be an indispensable element of the pastoral activity of the Church in Poland. It responds to the 'signs of the times.' It also provides an opportunity to improve forms of evangelisation, religious education, and catechesis for parents, especially those whose thinking, values, and attitudes reveal characteristics typical of secularised people. Following the principle of fidelity to God and man, Christian education of parents requires not only traditional forms of educational, evangelisation, and catechetical activity, but also the use of new information and communication technologies, including GenAI. The introduction and application of this tool facilitate access to current pedagogical and catechetical knowledge. It enriches traditional forms and methods of pedagogical and religious education. It can be used to increase the scope of knowledge and improve the skills necessary to perform basic educational functions in the family.

It provides a unique opportunity to access pedagogical and catechetical knowledge from various sources. It can also strengthen formation activities in the parish (e.g., meetings for parents of children preparing for the sacraments of Christian initiation). However, GenAI can never replace direct interpersonal relationships. Therefore, its use in Christian education of parents should be treated as a tool supporting educational, evangelising, catechetical, formative, and educational activities. At the same time, attention should be paid to basic

ethical principles, including respect for human dignity and the relational dimension of Christian education. It is also worth creating applications, advisory systems, and educational platforms based on artificial intelligence that are consistent with the Christian view of man and the family. This, in turn, creates a need to educate parents on the responsible use of GenAI.

Supporting parents in raising their pedagogical awareness, strengthening their responsibility for raising their children, and developing their parenting skills with the use of GenAI is intended to serve the good of each person and build community. It requires links with other educational, evangelisation, catechetical, and formation initiatives in the parish. Personalised pastoral activities with the active participation of parents seem to be important in this regard, as they serve to experience faith, deepen spiritual life, form conscience, and shape Christian identity.

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