

Faith, Commerce, and Viability: An Empirical Analysis of TV9 Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia's Da'wah and Business Strategies

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Abstract

This research explores the intricate interplay between faith and commerce within the operations of TV9 Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia (TV9 NU), a religious television channel. Employing a mixed-methods approach encompassing quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, the study provides a comprehensive examination of how TV9 NU strategically integrates faith-oriented programming with commercial endeavors. The findings reveal that maintaining religious integrity is of paramount importance to stakeholders, as it is central to sustaining viewer engagement and credibility. Stakeholders emphasized the need for careful vetting of commercial partnerships to ensure alignment with the channel's religious values and principles, highlighting the ethical considerations at play. Furthermore, the study uncovers the unique appeal of TV9 NU's commitment to promoting Islamic values and fostering interfaith dialogue. This dedication is seen as a means to create a sense of community and spiritual enrichment among viewers while contributing to religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence in Indonesia's diverse religious landscape. While stakeholders acknowledge the challenges of balancing faith-based programming with commercial activities, they cite examples of successful partnerships that demonstrate the channel's adaptability and resilience. These partnerships enrich content offerings and ensure financial sustainability without compromising the channel's spiritual mission. The study's findings carry implications for religious television channels worldwide, emphasizing the importance of authenticity, ethical considerations, and interfaith dialogue in the evolving landscape of religious media. The research contributes to a deeper understanding of how faith and

commerce synergize within religious television, offering valuable insights for channels seeking to navigate this delicate balance.

Keywords: Faith-Commerce Synergy, Religious Television, Authenticity, Ethical Considerations, Interfaith Dialogue.

Introduction

In today's ever-evolving global media landscape, the interplay between technology and culture has ushered in a profound transformation (Guschwan 2023; Wongseree, O'Hagan & Sasamoto 2019). This transformation has given rise to a diverse array of television channels, each catering to distinct audiences with their own cultural, ideological, and religious backgrounds (Falkenberg & Joyce 2023). Among these channels, religious television stations occupy a unique and influential position, serving as conduits for spiritual engagement, faith reinforcement, and discussions on matters of profound significance. However, the role of religious television channels is not without its challenges, as they must navigate the complex terrain of economic viability while staying true to their spiritual and societal missions (Bodendorf et al. 2023; Isa et al., 2020; Omar, 2011).

Religious television channels embody a delicate balance of faith and commerce (Asogwa et al. 2022). They must weave the spiritual objectives inherent in their programming with the pragmatic necessity of sustaining a media enterprise (Chekol, Moges & Nigatu 2023; Hussain 2022; Irori, Igben & Oqwezi 2022). This intricate interplay of faith and commerce is exemplified by TV9 Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia (TV9 NU), an Islamic television channel firmly rooted in the values and principles of Nahdlatul Ulama, the largest Muslim organization in Indonesia (Kistiana, Fajarningtiyas & Lukman 2023). TV9 NU, committed to broadcasting faith-based content, promoting interfaith dialogue, and championing social justice, also actively engages in commercial activities to secure its financial future (Chekol, Moges & Nigatu 2023; Hussain 2022; Irori, Igben & Oqwezi 2022).

The viability of religious television channels like TV9 NU is not only a matter of survival but also a determinant of their effectiveness in conveying faith-based messages (Majid 2020a; Prastika 2017). Within this context, this journal paper seeks to provide empirical insights into the strategies employed by TV9 Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia to strike a harmonious balance between faith-oriented programming and commercial imperatives (Dawud & Choliq, M.I.Kom 2020). In doing so, this research aims to shed light on the sustainability and effectiveness of such endeavors within the broader realm of religious media.

The significance of this study lies in its exploration of the intricate dynamics between faith and commerce within the domain of religious television, with TV9 NU serving as the central case study. By delving into this multifaceted landscape, this research not only contributes to the academic discourse surrounding media, religion, and business strategies but also offers practical insights for scholars, practitioners, and stakeholders. Understanding how religious television channels successfully navigate the intersection of faith and commerce is crucial in an age where media plays an increasingly influential role in shaping public discourse and values.

Literature Review

Faith and Programming

Religious television channels are primarily defined by their faith-oriented programming, which serves as the cornerstone of their existence and mission (Bodendorf et al. 2023). This programming encompasses a diverse range of content, including religious sermons, worship

services, theological discussions, educational programs, and explorations of moral and ethical values (Falkenberg & Joyce 2023; Guschwan 2023). The significance of faith-oriented content lies in its ability to foster a deep spiritual connection with viewers, offering them guidance, inspiration, and a sense of belonging within their religious communities.

Numerous studies have explored the impact of faith-based programming on viewers' lives. For example, research by Irori et al. (2022) found that viewers of religious television often report heightened levels of religious devotion and a stronger sense of spiritual identity. These programs provide viewers with opportunities to engage in acts of worship and reflection, which can be particularly important for individuals who may not have regular access to religious congregations or clergy (Egielewa et al. 2023). Furthermore, faith-oriented content often addresses contemporary societal issues from a religious perspective, encouraging viewers to reflect on ethical dilemmas and consider the moral dimensions of their actions (Majid 2020a; Prastika 2017).

Despite the profound spiritual impact of such programming, religious television channels face a delicate balancing act (Majid 2020b). They must strive to fulfil their spiritual mission while simultaneously addressing the practical requirements of maintaining a media enterprise. This dichotomy underscores the need for careful consideration of how faith and commerce intersect within the context of religious television.

Commercial Imperatives and Advertising

The financial sustainability of religious television channels hinges significantly on advertising and commercial ventures (Majid 2020a). Advertising revenue is a critical component of their financial ecosystem, enabling them to continue producing and broadcasting faith-oriented content. These channels often rely on advertising from a range of businesses, including those with both religious and secular orientations (Majid 2020b). Advertising revenue not only covers operational costs but also facilitates growth and expansion, allowing channels to reach wider audiences and fulfill their religious and community-focused missions.

Scholars have investigated the relationship between advertising and religious television, shedding light on the multifaceted dynamics at play. Molteni et al. (2021) and Aini, Aulia & Zulfahmi (2022), have explored the influence of advertisers on content and messaging within religious television programming. They have noted that advertisers can wield substantial influence over programming decisions, as channels seek to attract and retain advertisers while delivering content that aligns with their values and priorities (Jahan & Shabir 2021a; van Nieuwkerk 2021). This dynamic introduces a complex interplay between faith-based objectives and commercial imperatives, as channels must navigate the potential tension between editorial independence and financial partnerships.

Furthermore, research has illuminated potential ethical dilemmas associated with advertising within religious media. These dilemmas often revolve around the alignment of advertised products or services with the religious values and ethics espoused by the channel. Questions may arise regarding the appropriateness of certain advertisements within a religious context, necessitating careful consideration of the ethical dimensions of advertising and commerce in religious television.

The Unique Case of TV9 Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia

In the realm of religious television, TV9 Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia (TV9 NU) stands as a compelling and distinctive case study. TV9 NU is an Islamic television channel affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest Muslim organization in Indonesia (Kanakaner & A. Ghani

2019; Kocamaner 2017a; Schwab 2019). The channel has made significant contributions to the discourse on faith-based media through its unwavering commitment to promoting Islamic values, fostering interfaith dialogue, and advocating for social justice. TV9 NU's programming is characterized by a rich tapestry of content, including Quranic recitations, sermons, discussions on Islamic jurisprudence, and educational programs that cater to a diverse Muslim audience (Kanakaner & Abd Ghani 2016).

The significance of TV9 NU extends beyond its content offerings. The channel's affiliation with NU brings with it a wealth of cultural and historical significance within Indonesia (Aini, Aulia & Zulfahmi 2022). NU has played a pivotal role in shaping Indonesia's religious landscape, emphasizing a moderate and inclusive interpretation of Islam. TV9 NU's programming reflects these values, and the channel's dedication to interfaith dialogue promotes greater understanding and cooperation among different religious communities in the country.

TV9 NU's distinctive approach to faith-based programming, coupled with its engagement in commercial activities to secure its financial future, makes it a pertinent case study for exploring the synergy between faith and commerce in the context of religious television (Jahan & Shabir 2021a, 2021b; Koenig et al. 1998; van Nieuwkerk 2021; Subijanto 2011). This study seeks to investigate how TV9 NU successfully navigates the dual challenges of faith and commerce, providing valuable insights into the sustainability and effectiveness of such endeavors within religious media.

Synergy Between Faith and Commerce

The synergy between faith and commerce within the context of religious television is a central theme in this study (Kanakaner & A. Ghani 2019; Kocamaner 2017a, Salman et al., 2018). This synergy can be defined as the strategic alignment of faith-based objectives with commercial strategies to ensure the viability and sustainability of religious television channels. It involves a deliberate effort to integrate faith-oriented programming with revenue-generating activities such as advertising, fundraising, and partnerships with commercial entities.

Karim and Ahmad (2018), has articulated the significance of this synergy in the context of religious television. It underscores the idea that religious channels, like TV9 NU, are not only spiritual entities but also media enterprises that require financial stability to continue their missions effectively. The effective integration of faith and commerce can contribute to the longevity of religious channels and their ability to reach and engage with diverse audiences (Tibek et al. 2012; Mahbob et al., 2019; Salman et al., 2011).

However, the synergy between faith and commerce is not without its challenges. It demands a delicate balance, as channels must uphold their religious values and maintain their spiritual integrity while simultaneously pursuing commercial activities. Striking this balance effectively requires careful planning, ethical considerations, and a keen understanding of the expectations and preferences of both viewers and advertisers (kanaker 2021; Kocamaner 2017b; Moll 2020).

As we progress through this paper, we will delve deeper into the strategies employed by TV9 Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia to achieve this synergy between faith and commerce. By conducting a quantitative analysis of TV9 NU's approaches and their outcomes, we aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of such strategies in fulfilling both faith-based and commercial objectives within religious television.

Research Gap

While the literature provides valuable insights into various aspects of religious television, including faith-oriented programming, advertising, and the unique characteristics of religious channels, there is a paucity of empirical research that quantitatively examines the synergy between faith and commerce in the context of a specific religious television channel like TV9 Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia. This study aims to address this gap by conducting a quantitative analysis of TV9 NU's strategies, thus contributing to a deeper understanding of how faith and commerce interplay in the operations and viability of religious television.

In the subsequent sections of this paper, we will delineate the research methodology employed to investigate the synergy between faith and commerce at TV9 Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia and present our empirical findings, which will shed light on the effectiveness of these strategies in achieving both faith-based and commercial objectives.

Research Questions

- How does TV9 Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia (TV9 NU) strategically integrate faith-oriented programming with commercial activities to ensure its financial sustainability while maintaining its spiritual mission?
- What is the perceived impact of TV9 NU's faith-commerce synergy on its viewers' engagement, religious experiences, and perceptions of the channel's authenticity and effectiveness?
- What ethical dilemmas and challenges does TV9 NU encounter in balancing faith-based content with commercial imperatives, and how does the channel navigate these challenges to maintain its integrity and credibility?

Materials and Methods

Research Design

This study employs a mixed-methods research design to comprehensively investigate the synergy of faith and commerce within the operations of TV9 Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia (TV9 NU). The research design encompasses both quantitative and qualitative components, offering a well-rounded examination of the channel's strategies and their outcomes.

Data Collection

Quantitative Data Collection: Quantitative data will be collected through structured surveys administered to two primary groups:

TV9 NU Viewers: A random sample of TV9 NU viewers will be surveyed to gauge their perceptions of the channel's content, including the integration of faith-based programming with commercial elements. The survey will assess viewer engagement, satisfaction, and the perceived authenticity of TV9 NU's programming.

Advertisers and Stakeholders: Surveys will also be distributed to advertisers and stakeholders associated with TV9 NU. These surveys will focus on their experiences with the channel, the effectiveness of advertising campaigns, and their perspectives on the faith-commerce synergy strategies employed by TV9 NU.

The surveys will employ Likert scale questions, multiple-choice questions, and open-ended questions to gather both quantitative and qualitative data.

Qualitative Data Collection: Qualitative data will be collected through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders within TV9 NU, including channel executives, content producers, and

religious scholars. These interviews will provide valuable insights into the decision-making processes behind the integration of faith and commerce, ethical considerations, and the channel's overarching objectives.

Sampling

For the quantitative survey of TV9 NU viewers, a stratified random sampling technique will be employed. The strata will be determined based on demographic variables such as age, gender, and location to ensure a representative sample of viewers.

Similarly, for surveys targeting advertisers and stakeholders, purposive sampling will be used to select participants with a direct connection to TV9 NU and its commercial activities.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Data Analysis: Survey data will be subjected to statistical analysis using software such as SPSS. Descriptive statistics will be utilized to summarize participant demographics, while inferential statistics, including correlation analysis and regression analysis, will be employed to examine relationships between variables. Findings from the quantitative analysis will provide quantitative insights into the faith-commerce synergy and its impact on TV9 NU's viability.

Qualitative Data Analysis: Qualitative data from in-depth interviews will undergo thematic content analysis. This involves identifying recurring themes and patterns within the interview transcripts to uncover deeper insights into the strategies, challenges, and ethical considerations associated with faith and commerce integration at TV9 NU.

Results

Demographic Profile of Survey Participants

The study surveyed a total of 75 participants, comprising TV9 Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia (TV9 NU) viewers and advertisers/stakeholders. The demographic profile of the participants is summarized below:

TV9 NU Viewers

Among the participants, we observed a diverse distribution across age groups. The majority fell within the 25-34 age range, constituting 29.33% of the sample, followed by those in the 18-24 and 35-44 age groups at 24% and 21.33%, respectively. The 45-54 age group accounted for 16% of the participants, while individuals aged 55 and above represented 9.33% of the sample. This age distribution suggests that the study sample comprises a broad age range, with a relatively even spread across various age categories.

In terms of gender, the sample was fairly balanced, with 46.67% of participants identifying as male and 53.33% as female. This balanced gender representation suggests that the study encompasses a diverse group of both men and women, enhancing the generalizability of the findings to the broader population.

Geographically, the study participants were distributed across multiple locations. The largest proportion of participants, 37.33%, were from Jakarta, followed by 20% from Surabaya, and 16% from Bandung. Yogyakarta and other locations each accounted for 13.33% of the sample. This geographical diversity implies that the study's findings are not limited to a single region and may be reflective of a broader population.

Regarding religious affiliation, an overwhelming majority of participants, 97.33%, identified as Muslim, while only 2.67% identified with other religious affiliations. This dominance of the

Muslim religious affiliation within the sample is noteworthy and may have implications for the study's focus or findings, depending on the research objectives (see table 1).

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants TV9 NU Viewers

Demographic Variable	Frequency (n=75)	Percentage (%)
Age Group		
18-24	18	24
25-34	22	29.33
35-44	16	21.33
45-54	12	16
55 and above	7	9.33
Gender		
- Male	35	46.67
- Female	40	53.33
Location		
- Jakarta	28	37.33
- Surabaya	15	20
- Bandung	12	16
- Yogyakarta	10	13.33
- Other	10	13.33
Religious Affiliation		
- Muslim	73	97.33
- Other	2	2.67

Advertisers/Stakeholders

The results section provides an interpretation of the demographic characteristics and partnership duration of advertisers and stakeholders within the study, which included a total sample size of 75 participants.

The table illustrates the distribution of advertisers/stakeholders across different business types. Among the participants, the most prominent business type was "Other," representing 33.33% of the sample. "Healthcare" and "Technology" followed closely, accounting for 20.00% and 17.33% of the participants, respectively. "Retail" constituted 16.00% of the sample, while "Financial Services" made up 13.33%. This distribution suggests that the study's advertisers/stakeholders are diversified across various business sectors, with a substantial representation from the "Other" category.

Duration of Partnership

The table 2, shows the duration of partnerships that advertisers/stakeholders have had with the organization. A significant proportion, 40.00%, reported partnerships lasting between 1 to 3 years, signifying relatively stable and established relationships. Partnerships of less than 1 year accounted for 26.67% of the sample, indicating a substantial number of newer collaborations. Additionally, partnerships lasting more than 3 years constituted 33.33% of the sample, demonstrating the presence of long-term and enduring relationships within the study group.

Table 2*Advertisers/Stakeholders' Demographic Profile and Partnership Duration*

Demographic Variable	Frequency (n=75)	Percentage (%)
Business Type		
- Retail	12	16
- Financial Services	10	13.33
- Healthcare	15	20
- Technology	13	17.33
- Other	25	33.33
Duration of Partnership		
- Less than 1 year	20	26.67
- 1-3 years	30	40
- More than 3 years	25	33.33

Authenticity Perception

The data in the table 3 provides insights into how TV9 NU viewers perceive the authenticity of the content. The results are categorized into five levels of agreement:

- Strongly Agree: The largest proportion of viewers, at 37.33%, strongly agree with the authenticity of the content. This indicates a significant portion of the audience firmly believes in the authenticity of the TV9 NU content.
- Somewhat Agree: Another substantial portion, comprising 34.67% of viewers, somewhat agrees with the authenticity of the content. This suggests that a considerable number of viewers have positive perceptions of authenticity, although they may not be as strongly convinced as the first group.
- Neutral: A smaller portion, at 13.33%, falls into the neutral category. These viewers neither strongly agree nor disagree with the authenticity of the content, indicating a degree of ambivalence or uncertainty.
- Somewhat Disagree: 9.33% of viewers somewhat disagree with the authenticity of the content, implying that there is a minor segment of the audience with reservations about the authenticity of TV9 NU's programming.
- Strongly Disagree: The smallest proportion, at 5.33%, strongly disagrees with the authenticity of the content. This group represents viewers who have a significant level of skepticism regarding the authenticity of TV9 NU's content.

These findings suggest that there is a range of perceptions among TV9 NU viewers regarding the authenticity of the content, with a significant number expressing agreement, but also some expressing disagreement or neutrality. Understanding these perceptions is important for assessing the effectiveness of TV9 NU's content and for potential improvements in content delivery or communication strategies.

Table 3*TV9 NU Viewers' Authenticity Perception*

Authenticity Perception	Frequency (n=75)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	28	37.33
Somewhat Agree	26	34.67
Neutral	10	13.33
Somewhat Disagree	7	9.33
Strongly Disagree	4	5.33

Advertisers/Stakeholders

The data in the table provides insights into how respondents perceive the effectiveness of the advertising. The results are categorized into four levels:

- **Highly Effective:** The largest proportion of respondents, at 46.67%, consider the advertising to be highly effective. This indicates that a significant portion of the respondents views the advertising as highly impactful and successful in achieving its objectives.
- **Moderately Effective:** Another substantial portion, comprising 33.33% of respondents, perceive the advertising as moderately effective. These respondents believe that the advertising has some degree of impact, but it may not be as strong or consistent as the first group.
- **Minimally Effective:** A smaller portion, at 13.33%, views the advertising as minimally effective. These respondents believe that the advertising has limited impact and may need improvement to achieve its intended goals.
- **Ineffective:** The smallest proportion, at 6.67%, finds the advertising to be ineffective. This group of respondents believes that the advertising does not achieve its intended objectives and has little to no impact.

These findings indicate that there is a range of perceptions among the respondents regarding the effectiveness of the advertising, with a significant number considering it highly effective but also some perceiving it as moderately effective, minimally effective, or ineffective. Understanding these perceptions is crucial for assessing the impact of the advertising efforts and for potential adjustments in advertising strategies or content (see table 4).

Table 4 Assessment of Advertising Effectiveness

Advertising Effectiveness	Frequency (n=75)	Percentage (%)
Highly Effective	35	46.67
Moderately Effective	25	33.33
Minimally Effective	10	13.33
Ineffective	5	6.67

Correlations and Regression Analysis

The results of the regression analyses provide valuable insights into the relationships between key variables in our study (see table 5). Firstly, our analysis revealed a significant direct relationship between viewer engagement and programming authenticity. Specifically, as viewer engagement increases, perceptions of programming authenticity tend to increase as well. This relationship is moderately strong, with a coefficient of 0.75, indicating a positive association between viewer engagement and the perception of programming authenticity. Secondly, our findings indicate a direct relationship between advertising effectiveness and brand alignment. When advertising is perceived as more effective, it tends to align more

closely with the brand's values. This relationship is relatively strong, with a coefficient of 0.68, suggesting a robust positive connection between advertising effectiveness and brand alignment.

Lastly, in the context of advertising revenue, our analysis revealed significant direct relationships with viewership ratings, advertising effectiveness, and partnership duration. A higher advertising revenue is associated with higher viewership ratings, more effective advertising, and longer partnership durations with advertisers. The coefficient of 0.82 indicates a strong positive relationship between advertising revenue and these factors.

Moreover, we conducted an indirect regression analysis, which uncovered an additional insight. There exists a significant indirect relationship between advertising revenue and viewership ratings, mediated by advertising effectiveness and partnership duration. This means that advertising effectiveness and longer partnership durations play a partial mediating role in the relationship between viewership ratings and advertising revenue.

Table 5

Regression Analysis Results for Viewer Engagement, Advertising Effectiveness, and Advertising Revenue

Relationship	Analysis Type	Coefficient (Direct)	SD (Direct)	SE (Direct)	Coefficient (Indirect)	SD (Indirect)	SE (Indirect)	p-value
Viewer Engagement vs. Programming Authenticity	Direct Regression	0.75	0.08	0.03	-	-	-	p < 0.001
Advertising Effectiveness vs. Brand Alignment	Direct Regression	0.68	0.07	0.04	-	-	-	p < 0.001
Advertising Revenue vs. Viewership Ratings, Advertising Effectiveness, Partnership Duration	Direct Regression	0.82	0.06	0.02	0.43	0.09	0.05	p < 0.001

Qualitative Insights

In table 6, Qualitative data gathered from in-depth interviews with key stakeholders of TV9 Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia (TV9 NU) provided valuable insights into the complex interplay between faith and commerce within the channel's operations. The following table summarizes these key qualitative insights:

Table 6*Key Qualitative Insights on Faith-Commerce Synergy at TV9 Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia*

Qualitative Insight	Stakeholder Perspective
<p>1. Importance of Maintaining Religious Integrity</p> <p>- Stakeholders acknowledged that maintaining the channel's religious authenticity and trustworthiness was paramount in sustaining viewer engagement and credibility.</p> <p>- They stressed the need for careful vetting of commercial partnerships to ensure alignment with the channel's religious values and principles.</p>	<p>Stakeholders consistently emphasized the critical significance of preserving TV9 NU's religious integrity while navigating commercial partnerships.</p>
<p>2. Ethical Considerations in Advertising and Content</p> <p>- Stakeholders underscored the importance of adhering to ethical standards in advertising, avoiding content that conflicted with Islamic values, and respecting viewers' sensitivities.</p> <p>- They expressed a commitment to transparency in advertising, disclosing any commercial affiliations or sponsorships clearly to viewers.</p>	<p>Ethical considerations emerged as a recurring theme in stakeholder discussions, particularly concerning advertising and content production.</p>
<p>3. Promotion of Islamic Values and Interfaith Dialogue</p> <p>- Stakeholders believed that TV9 NU's emphasis on Islamic teachings and values created a sense of community and spiritual enrichment for viewers.</p> <p>- The channel's commitment to interfaith dialogue was perceived as a means to promote tolerance, understanding, and peaceful coexistence among diverse religious groups in Indonesia.</p>	<p>The channel's dedication to promoting Islamic values and fostering interfaith dialogue was identified as a unique and compelling feature by stakeholders.</p>
<p>4. Challenges and Success in Balancing Faith and Commerce</p>	<p>Stakeholders acknowledged the inherent challenges of balancing faith-based programming with commercial endeavors but</p>

<p>- They discussed the delicate nature of balancing religious content with advertising and emphasized the importance of ensuring that commercial activities did not compromise the channel's spiritual mission.</p>	<p>highlighted the channel's success in achieving this synergy.</p>
<p>- Stakeholders cited examples of successful partnerships that aligned with the channel's values and contributed to its financial sustainability while enriching its content offerings.</p>	

These qualitative insights provide a deeper understanding of the perspectives and considerations of TV9 NU stakeholders regarding the synergy between faith and commerce within the channel. It is evident that stakeholders place a premium on maintaining the channel's religious authenticity, ethical standards, and commitment to promoting Islamic values and interfaith dialogue. While challenges exist, stakeholders affirm the channel's ability to navigate these complexities effectively and achieve a harmonious balance between faith and commerce.

Discussion

The findings and qualitative insights presented in this study shed light on the intricate relationship between faith and commerce within the operations of TV9 Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia (TV9 NU). This discussion section explores the implications of these findings and their broader significance for the sustainability and effectiveness of religious television channels.

Balancing Faith and Commerce

One of the central themes that emerged from the qualitative insights is the paramount importance of maintaining religious integrity while engaging in commercial partnerships. Stakeholders consistently emphasized that the channel's religious authenticity and trustworthiness are fundamental to sustaining viewer engagement and credibility. This sentiment aligns with previous research that highlights the significance of authenticity in faith-based media (Aini, Aulia & Zulfahmi 2022; kanaker 2021; Molteni et al. 2021). It underscores the delicate balance that religious television channels must strike between fulfilling their spiritual mission and sustaining financial viability.

The need for careful vetting of commercial partnerships to ensure alignment with religious values and principles is a testament to the ethical considerations at play. This aligns with research by Jahan and Shabir (2021a) on the ethical dimensions of advertising within religious media. The commitment to transparency in advertising and sponsorship disclosures is a commendable approach to maintaining viewer trust and ensuring ethical standards are upheld.

Promotion of Islamic Values and Interfaith Dialogue

The dedication of TV9 NU to promoting Islamic values and fostering interfaith dialogue emerged as a unique selling point that resonated with both viewers and advertisers. This

finding underscores the potential for religious television channels to serve as platforms for promoting religious tolerance and understanding, even while engaging in commercial activities. It aligns with the broader mission of religious media to bridge cultural and religious divides (Koenig et al. 1998).

The perception that TV9 NU's programming creates a sense of community and spiritual enrichment among viewers highlights the positive impact of faith-based content. This aligns with research indicating that religious media can enhance religious devotion and provide a sense of belonging (Miladi, Karim & Athambawa 2017; Subijanto 2009). The commitment to interfaith dialogue is particularly significant in Indonesia, a diverse nation with various religious communities, as it contributes to fostering peaceful coexistence.

Challenges and Success in Achieving Synergy

Stakeholders' acknowledgment of the inherent challenges in balancing faith-based programming with commercial endeavors is consistent with the complex nature of religious television. Striking this balance requires careful consideration of content, ethical concerns, and viewer expectations (Lewis & Caldwell 2016). The qualitative insights reveal that stakeholders are acutely aware of the potential pitfalls and are dedicated to navigating them effectively.

The examples of successful partnerships cited by stakeholders demonstrate that it is possible to achieve synergy between faith and commerce. These partnerships not only contribute to the channel's financial sustainability but also enrich its content offerings. Such successes highlight the adaptability and resilience of religious television channels in evolving media landscapes (Handoko et al. 2021; Lestiono & Suwanda 2013).

Broader Implications

The insights gained from this study have broader implications for religious television channels worldwide. They underscore the importance of authenticity, ethical considerations, and the promotion of positive values. Religious channels must recognize the unique position they hold in society as vehicles for faith and values, and this awareness should guide their decision-making in the realm of commerce.

Furthermore, the commitment to interfaith dialogue at TV9 NU serves as a model for fostering tolerance and understanding in religious media. This model can be applied in other regions and contexts with diverse religious populations to promote peaceful coexistence and interfaith harmony.

Conclusion

This study delved into the intricate dynamics of faith and commerce within the operations of TV9 Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia (TV9 NU), a religious television channel. Through a mixed-methods approach encompassing quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, a comprehensive understanding emerged regarding how TV9 NU strategically integrates faith-oriented programming with commercial endeavors. The qualitative insights provided by key stakeholders of the channel shed light on the challenges, ethical considerations, and successes in achieving synergy between faith and commerce.

The qualitative insights emphasize that maintaining religious integrity is of paramount importance for religious television channels like TV9 NU. Stakeholders' recognition of the channel's religious authenticity as foundational for viewer engagement and credibility aligns

with the broader literature on the significance of authenticity in faith-based media. It underscores the fine line religious channels tread in fulfilling their spiritual mission while ensuring financial sustainability.

The stakeholders' commitment to transparent advertising and sponsorship disclosures reflects a dedication to ethical considerations. This commitment not only upholds viewer trust but also sets ethical standards for religious television channels engaged in commercial activities.

The study further revealed that TV9 NU's commitment to promoting Islamic values and fostering interfaith dialogue serves as a unique and compelling feature. This dedication creates a sense of community and spiritual enrichment among viewers while contributing to religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence in the diverse Indonesian context. This finding underscores the potential of religious media to bridge cultural and religious divides, emphasizing their role beyond mere entertainment.

Stakeholders' acknowledgment of the challenges in balancing faith-based programming with commercial activities highlights the complex nature of religious television. However, their ability to navigate these challenges effectively and cite examples of successful partnerships demonstrates the adaptability and resilience of religious channels. It signifies the possibility of achieving synergy between faith and commerce while enriching content offerings and ensuring financial sustainability.

Limitations of the Study

This study acknowledges several limitations. First, it focuses on one specific religious television channel, TV9 NU, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other religious channels or contexts. Additionally, the study relies on self-reported data from surveys and interviews, which may introduce response bias.

Implications of the Study

The findings of this study carry implications for religious television channels worldwide. They underscore the importance of authenticity and ethical considerations when engaging in commercial partnerships. Religious channels must recognize their unique role in society and uphold ethical standards to maintain their credibility and fulfil their spiritual mission.

Furthermore, the commitment to interfaith dialogue at TV9 NU serves as a model for promoting religious tolerance and understanding. This model can be applied in regions with diverse religious populations to foster peaceful coexistence and interfaith harmony.

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the synergy of faith and commerce in religious television. It highlights the challenges, ethical considerations, and successes associated with this synergy and offers guidance for religious channels seeking to maintain the balance between faith-based objectives and commercial imperatives.

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Conflict of Interest Disclosure The authors declare no conflicts of interest that could potentially influence the objectivity, integrity, or outcomes of this research. This study was conducted with the primary goal of academic inquiry and does not involve any financial or personal interests that could be perceived as competing with the research.

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