

Audience Perception of the Influence of *Abrahamic Mission* Programme of Radio Nigerian Network on Religious Intolerance



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Abstract

This study applies Habermas's Communicative Action Theory, which emphasises achieving mutual understanding through dialogue, to examine the influence of the *Abrahamic Mission* programme of Radio Nigeria Network on religious intolerance in Nigeria. The study investigates how the programme is perceived by its audience, the extent to which it shapes attitudes toward other faiths, and the factors that affect its effectiveness in promoting tolerance. Specifically, it explores the role of content type, narrative strategies, and the endorsement of religious leaders in influencing audience reception and behaviour. The study adopts a quantitative research design, employing a survey method to gather data from the population of Nigeria. Using Taro Yamane's formula, a sample size of 400 respondents was drawn, and a simple random sampling technique was applied to ensure representativeness. Findings reveal that the *Abrahamic Mission* programme significantly enhances audience awareness of other religions and promotes harmonious coexistence. Survey results indicate that 64% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the programme increased their awareness of religious happenings, and another 64% reported that it influenced their decision to live in harmony with people of other faiths. The programme's storytelling and relatable content emerged as major drivers of engagement, with 48% affirming that the type of content influenced their interest in accommodating other religions and 36% crediting storytelling specifically. Despite these gains, challenges remain: 56% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the programme made other religions more desirable than their own, and 40% stated that it does not influence their love for other religions, suggesting that its effects are cognitive rather than emotional. Furthermore, the use of religious leaders and sacred texts was met with mixed responses, with a substantial proportion remaining neutral, indicating that narrative and discussion-oriented strategies are more effective in shaping attitudes. The results emphasise potential as a strategic platform for fostering interfaith dialogue, reducing prejudice, and advancing social integration. By creating a communicative space grounded in Habermas' theory of communicative action,

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the *Abrahamic Mission* demonstrates how media can promote mutual understanding and counteract religious intolerance in pluralistic societies. The study concludes that sustained and continuous media programming, emphasising dialogue, education, and mutual understanding, is essential to mitigating religious intolerance. Accordingly, it recommends the expansion of mass media campaigns aimed at educating individuals with intolerant views, promoting discussion-based engagement, and fostering a culture of peaceful coexistence among Nigeria's diverse religious communities. This research contributes to media and communication scholarship by highlighting the role of radio programming in shaping social attitudes and offers practical insights for policymakers, religious organisations, and media practitioners seeking to leverage mass media for social cohesion.

Keywords: *Abrahamic Mission, Audience, Religious Intolerance, Nigerian Network of Radio.*

Introduction

Effective communication is essential for society to progress toward social cohesion and solidarity. Communication is the transmission of information through channels known as the media. Thus, when people connect with the media, they begin to construct their identities. According to Ngonso and Uchenunu (2021), due to the media's importance in creating an agenda for public consumption, media framing of topics has dominated media discourses over the years. The media have historically been a key tool for moulding our conceptions of the world (Olley, Akpor, & Chukwu, 2021). The media is considered the fourth estate of the realm; it is an important tool that influences its audience (Iguoba, Olley, & Akpor, 2023). Perhaps the radio medium influences its audience more because, despite doing different chores, the audience can still listen.

Moreover, the radio as a medium plays an important function in society through entertaining (it provides a platform for creativity, fantasy, and escapism), informing, educating, functioning as an avenue for discussion, and acting as a watchdog (Ngonso & Chukwu, 2021). Through its role, the radio also promotes ideas, concepts, or values that, if not challenged, become the norm or culture in society and, if subsequently challenged, have the potential for modification (Jenkins, 2025).

Radio is a powerful medium that significantly influences language, cultural practices, and societal norms. It shapes greeting patterns, facilitates technical innovations, and fosters a collective mental image of events and occurrences. Its auditory nature allows it to reach audiences during various activities, making it a versatile tool for education, information dissemination, and entertainment (Zhang et al., 2023). However, radio's influence is not without its complexities. While it has the potential to promote unity and understanding, it can also perpetuate societal issues, including religious intolerance. Religious intolerance remains a persistent challenge, leading to the destruction of lives and properties. The media, particularly radio, plays a crucial role in either exacerbating or mitigating such issues. As an electronic medium, radio appeals to the hearing and imagination of its listeners, offering a unique advantage over other forms of media by allowing audiences to engage while attending to other tasks (Ranasuriya, 2015). This ability to create vivid imagery supports the transmission of ideas and can influence public perceptions and behaviours. Therefore, radio holds significant potential as a tool for addressing and reducing religious intolerance through thoughtful and inclusive programming.

One of the radio programmes that fights against the menace of religious intolerance is the *Abrahamic Mission* Programme, which is broadcast on both NTAi international television and the Radio Nigeria network.

Statement of Problem

Religion is a form of culture. It typically refers to and explains the human relationship with a supernatural force, either through ritual or continuous practices, and explains the time and period of events from the world's beginning to its end. Religion to African society is an indispensable form; as a result of the mythical belief of the world of the unborn, the living, and the dead. Scholarly, in philosophy, psychology, communications and other social sciences fields, there is always a place for the metaphysical, but many persons have indoctrinated it to bring confusion to society through intolerance, as well lack of peaceful co-existence.

Moreover, the radio has been a good medium for disseminating information which enlightens, educates, and informs a large, heterogeneous and anonymous audience. After the print media, it is the most reliable. However, the radio does not appeal to the sight of the listener; they may form a wrong image of any programme, and it can lead to negative effects of the programme. This study thus seeks to reveal the perception of the audience of radio programmes (*Abrahamic Mission*) and how the programme has impacted on them, negatively or positively.

Objectives of the Study

This study investigates audience perception of the *Abrahamic Mission* programme on religious intolerance. The following are the objectives: to

- i. To find out how the audience of Radio Nigeria Network perceives the *Abrahamic Mission* on account of religious intolerance.
- ii. Determine the extent to which the *Abrahamic Mission* influences its audience on religious intolerance, measured by changes in attitudes towards another faith.
- iii. To find out the factors that influence the effectiveness of the *Abrahamic Mission* in countering religious intolerance

Research Questions

- i. How does the audience of Radio Nigeria Network perceive the *Abrahamic Mission* on account of religious intolerance?
- ii. To what extent does the *Abrahamic mission* influence its audience's attitudes towards another faith?
- iii. What are the factors that influence the effectiveness of the *Abrahamic Mission* in countering religious intolerance?

Scope of the Study

Since Radio Nigeria Network has a wide reach, its information gets to everybody in Nigeria with a radio or through its online platform; therefore, the country of Nigeria will be serving as the study population. The study's focus is limited to the programme *Abrahamic Mission* on Radio Nigeria Network and the audience perception, whether or not it will eradicate religious intolerance.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are relevant to religious organisations such as the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN), international

bodies including the United Nations Organisation (UNO) and the World Council of Churches, as well as government agencies involved in promoting peace and social cohesion. The study provides evidence-based insights that can inform policies and initiatives aimed at reducing religious intolerance in Nigeria. Additionally, it offers media practitioners, content creators, and communication specialists guidance on designing programmes that effectively promote interfaith understanding and tolerance. Religious leaders, including pastors, imams, and priests, can also benefit from the study by incorporating its findings into their teachings to encourage congregants to embrace humanity, respect diversity, and foster peaceful coexistence. Furthermore, this research contributes to the academic discourse on media and religion and serves as a reference point for future scholars and researchers interested in exploring the relationship between media programming and religious tolerance. Its findings have enduring relevance, highlighting the potential of media as a tool for social transformation and sustainable development.

Literature Review

Conceptual Framework

Impact of Radio on its Listeners

Radio is defined by the Oxford Learners Dictionary as the transmission and reception of electromagnetic waves carrying sound signals. From this perspective, radio utilizes both sound and electrical energy. According to Joshua (2023), radio functions as a signalling and communication system employing radio waves, which are electromagnetic waves ranging in frequency from 30 hertz (Hz) to 300 gigahertz (GHz). Abbas (2022) describes radio as an electronic, wave-based medium for transmitting and receiving communications over the air, referring both to the act of broadcasting programmes and to the distribution of programming for public consumption. Similarly, the BBC English Dictionary notes that radio conveys sound over vast distances via electrical signals. Britannica (2025) defines radio as sound communication over radio waves, typically through broadcasting music, news, and other programming from a single station to a large audience of individual radio listeners. In line with The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica (2025), Hari and Chittibabu (2024) emphasise that radio is a uniquely personal medium based on the human voice, invoking the listener's imagination to create mental images around the broadcast sounds. More than any other medium, radio can relax listeners through soothing discourse or background music, or it can alert them with breaking news and polemics (Nzekwe *et al.*, 2017).

As a form of auditory communication, radio is an intimate medium akin to television, capable of entering homes, offices, and even accompanying people during transportation. Ngonso and Chukwu (2021) assert that "it has the capability of reaching people and areas otherwise thought inaccessible." Despite its purely aural nature, Ngonso and Nworisa (2021) highlight its benefits as a medium with limitless reach and penetration, employing relatively simple broadcasting techniques to reach diverse audiences, including both the blind and sighted. Baba (2014) adds that radio is an intensive informant, capable of expanding a person's perception beyond local surroundings and providing rapid access to national and international events. Stories of communities adopting new methods or achieving shared accomplishments can inspire audiences elsewhere.

Therefore, radio informs, influences, and stimulates the listener's mental faculties, engaging their imagination directly. As a non-visual medium, radio exists in the mind of its audience, producing effects and insights that rely on the listener's interpretation and imagination.

Religion

Religion is the foundation of culture and beliefs in various communities and around the world. Human religions, according to Dawes and McLaren (2012), can be examined in the same way as any other component of human civilisation, as the result of natural rather than supernatural factors. Beginning with Edward Tylor's work on what he (and other pioneers of that discipline) referred to as "primitive" societies. However, it also finds a slightly more ambiguous expression in the English-speaking work known as "comparative religion" or "religious studies."

Religion is a necessary component of human existence. Hundreds of research studies have been conducted to investigate how religious beliefs shape an individual's sociology and psychology. In particular, research has looked into how a person's religion is related to their cultural views and upbringing (Croucher, 2017). However, Religion is considered culture, but when it comes to its metaphysical standpoint in academia, it goes beyond societal norms and ideals because it is governed by something other than the physical. Religious activities and practices outnumber ideologies and intelligence quotients. Pioneering sociologist Emile Durkheim, according to Flannelly, Ellison, Silton, and Jankowski (2015), said that religion consists of "things that exceed the limits of our knowledge." He described religion as "a cohesive system of beliefs and actions about sacred objects, that is to say, set apart and banned, beliefs and practices which combine into one single moral society termed a church, "all those who adhere to them."

Religion Intolerance and its Effect on Society

Religious intolerance, according to *encyclopedia.uia.com*, refers to actions that deprive members of other religious faiths of the freedom to exercise and express their beliefs. Religious intolerance manifests itself through discrimination, repression, and religious rivalry, and it leads to or results in persecution. It leads to violence and chronic animosity between and within nations (UIA Authors, 2023). Religion is the "final frontier" of human prejudice, with religious sentiments influencing negative perceptions more than ethnicity or nationality. Religious intolerance is a more significant cause of discrimination than race (Sherwood, 2020). In spite of this, religious intolerance, such as anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and other religious hostility, has developed in recent years (Scheitle, 2020). Religious intolerance has the potential to spark conflict, crises, and war. It also causes loss of life and property destruction. It either slows or inhibits societal growth. It stifles peaceful coexistence. It also breeds animosity and a lack of cooperation. It leads to socioeconomic marginalisation and prejudice (Ojumu, 2016). Religious intolerance has caused more harm than good, leading to destruction of lives and property, so it is worth researching.

Abrahamic Mission Programme

Abrahamic Mission is an NTAi international television and Radio Nigeria Network programme. It is normally broadcast during the station's network hour when all of the branch stations are connected for the show. The programme features representatives

from Nigeria's two major religious groups, as well as their spokespersons, who sometimes live on air alongside the programme's presenters. The programme is always concerned with national concerns and how religious tolerance might help to promote Nigerian unification. The program, which airs every Thursday evening, lasts an hour on air and includes certainly interested viewers calling for life suggestions on ways out of the religious dispute that has plagued the nation's unity and growth for years. This programme was named after the two most vibrant religious organisations in Nigeria, Abrahamic to represent Christians and Muslims. The programme is appropriate and worthy of investigation because it includes teachers from other religions who come to the station regularly to share their experiences and teachings with people who have not been exposed to their beliefs and worship routines. These visitors are all knowledgeable about their respective faiths and are concerned about the Supreme Being, and they all share the same viewpoint on the screen (Ikegbunam & Ekweonu, 2020).

Theoretical Framework

Habermas Communicative Action Theory

The profounder of this theory is Jurgen Habermas. He established the theory of communicative action because he was looking for a way to narrow the study of human behaviour culturally or socially within a theory of language (Iguoba, 2024). It was published in a two-volume book, though written in German. According to Bolton (2005), the term communicative action serves to transmit cultural knowledge, renew it, and that process creates a possibility of achieving mutual understanding. As the communication action progresses, it can coordinate toward camaraderie and social integration. It is through this process that individuals begin to form their own identities. However, Bohman and William (2017), examine that, the foundation of Habermas' theory of communicative action is the premise that social order ultimately depends on actors' abilities to perceive the inter-subjective validity of various assertions that underpin social cooperation. According to Faza *et al* (2025), a shared sense of reality between two or more people is referred to as inter-subjectivity. The phrase implies that we as humans can only understand reality through our own senses, which include sight, hearing, smell, taste, and tactile feeling (sensation produced by pressure receptors in the skin).

In the theory of communicative action, that means only spontaneous actions that are beyond the influence of steering media would have any value. For Habermas, that meant concepts of love, creativity, and charisma. The theory argues that power and dominance are directly related to communication found among social systems on the macro level and their interaction with more locally-based systems such as communities and groups (Philip & Pitman, 2009). Therefore, discussion programmes like *Abrahamic Mission* on the radio can help aid the creation of mutual understanding among all religions, and it will foster peaceful coexistence.

Empirical Review

Drawing on a body of literature on ethno religious crises and the use of media in managing or encouraging ethno religious and political crises in Nigeria, Ikegbunam and Ekweonu's (2020) study aimed to highlight Nigerian citizens' reactions to media attempts to instill religious tolerance as the attitude for a better Nigeria; the study was based on an inter-religious tolerance media programme implemented through the use of a survey

and interviews with 300 respondents. They anchored on social responsibility and social exchange theories of mass communication. They found out the programme has little effect on citizens' attitudes since political leaders' modes of power and resource distribution do not signal that Nigeria is on the right track.

Oluwafunmilayo and Awofadeju (2022) use Rhema Express Radio to investigate audience perception of Christian internet radio stations in Nigeria. They used the purposive sampling strategy for the survey. The study's findings revealed that the majority of respondents are unconcerned about the position that they could readily relate to programmes broadcast on Rhema Express Radio. Furthermore, the data revealed that the majority of respondents disagreed with the statement that Rhema Express Radio programmes are presented professionally. The data study shows that respondents are agnostic about the schedule of Rhema Express Radio programmes. However, the findings revealed that respondents were unconcerned with the purity of the audio transmission from the online radio station.

Methodology

To accomplish its set objectives, this study employed the quantitative research method. The research anchors on the survey method in which the population of the study is Nigeria since Radio Nigeria Network covers the whole population of Nigeria. The survey method is best designed for this research as it has to do with a large number of people and their perception toward religious intolerance via the *Abrahamic Mission* programme. According to Sasu (2023), the size of the population of Nigeria is two hundred and fifteen million people (215,000,000) (Sasu, 2023).

However, the research used the Taro Yamane method in drawing 400 sample sizes from the population. This research also used a simple random sampling technique in which everybody will have an equivalent chance of answering the survey.

Data Presentation, Interpretation and Analysis

The data analysis was interpreted with the use of a percentage score and statistical description. A total of 400 respondents in the population of the study were assigned questionnaire.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------|------------|-------------|
| Age | | |
| 18-25 | 196 | 49% |
| 26-35 | 128 | 32% |
| 36-45 | 44 | 11% |
| 46 & Above | 32 | 8% |
| Total | 400 | 100% |
| Religion | | |
| Christianity | 296 | 74% |
| Islam | 88 | 22% |
| Traditional | 16 | 4% |
| Total | 400 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The responses shown in the above table 1 reveal the demographics of the respondents:

On account of the respondents' age bracket, 18–25 years of age have the highest number of respondents at 196 (49%), followed by 26–35 years of age, which has 128 (32%), 36–45 years of age, 44 (11%), and 46 and above, which has 32 (8%) respondents.

For the religion of the respondents, 296 (74%) are Christians, 88 (22%) are Muslims, and 16 (4%) are traditional worshippers. Thus, based on the research, Christians were the largest group of respondents, followed by Muslims and then traditional worshippers.

Presentation of Findings on Research Questions

This section focuses on the analysis and interpretation of the research questions

Research Question One: How does the audience of Radio Nigeria Network perceive Abrahamic Mission on account of religious intolerance?

Table 2: The Abrahamic Mission increases your awareness of the happenings in different religions.

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage % |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 48 | 12% |
| Disagree | 48 | 12% |
| Neutral | 48 | 12% |
| Agree | 224 | 56% |
| Strongly Agree | 32 | 8% |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 2 above indicates that 224 (56%) of the respondents agree that the *Abrahamic Mission* raises their awareness of different religions. Meanwhile, 48 (12%) strongly disagree, another 48 (12%) disagree, 48 (12%) remain neutral, and 32 (8%) strongly agree. As a result, the majority of the participants concur with this statement.

Table 3: Abrahamic Mission makes other religions appealing to you.

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage % |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 48 | 12% |
| Disagree | 64 | 16% |
| Neutral | 112 | 28% |
| Agree | 160 | 40% |
| Strongly Agree | 16 | 4% |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

According to Table 3, 12% of the respondents strongly disagree, 16% disagree, 28% neither agree nor disagree, 40% agree, and 4% strongly agree with the statement that the *Abrahamic Mission* makes other religions more appealing to them. Therefore, the majority of respondents agree that the *Abrahamic Mission* has a positive impact on their perception of other religions.

Table 4: Abrahamic Mission influences your decision to live in harmony with people of other religions.

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage % |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| Strongly Agree | 112 | 28% |
| Agree | 144 | 36% |
| Neutral | 108 | 27% |
| Disagree | 20 | 5% |
| Strongly Disagree | 16 | 4% |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Above Table 4 shows that 112 (28%) of the respondents strongly agree, 144 (36%) agree, 108 (27%) are neutral, 20 (5%) disagree, and 16 (4%) strongly disagree that *Abrahamic Mission* influences their decision to live in harmony with people of other religions. Thus, the majority of the respondents agree with the fact.

Research Question Two: To what extent does *Abrahamic Mission* influence its audience attitudes towards another faith?

Table 5: The *Abrahamic Mission* makes other religions seem more desirable to you as your religion.

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage % |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| Strongly Agree | 8 | 2% |
| Agree | 96 | 24% |
| Neutral | 72 | 18% |
| Disagree | 160 | 40% |
| Strongly Disagree | 64 | 16% |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

According to Table 5, out of the total respondents, 8 (2%) strongly agree, 96 (24%) agree, 72 (18%) remain neutral, 160 (40%) disagree, and 64 (16%) strongly disagree with the idea that the *Abrahamic Mission* makes other religions more appealing than their own. Therefore, it can be inferred that most respondents do not agree with this notion.

Table 6: The *Abrahamic Mission* encourages you to tolerate other religions.

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage % |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| Strongly Agree | 64 | 16% |
| Agree | 144 | 36% |
| Neutral | 96 | 24% |
| Disagree | 80 | 20% |
| Strongly Disagree | 16 | 4% |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

According to Table 6, out of the total respondents, 16% strongly agree, 36% agree, 24% are neutral, 20% disagree, and 4% strongly disagree. This indicates that a larger

percentage of respondents hold the belief that the *Abrahamic Mission* promotes tolerance towards other religions.

Table 7: Do you think that the *Abrahamic Mission* programme creates a positive impression of other religions in your mind?

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|------------|----------------|
| Yes | 176 | 44% |
| No | 32 | 8% |
| Maybe | 192 | 48% |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

According to the table provided above, 176 respondents (44%) answered "yes", 32 (8%) answered "no", and 192 (48%) answered "maybe". This suggests that most respondents are undecided about whether the *Abrahamic Mission* programme portrays other religions positively.

Table 8: Do you think that the *Abrahamic Mission* influences your love for other religions?

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|------------|----------------|
| Yes | 144 | 36% |
| No | 160 | 40% |
| Maybe | 96 | 24% |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

According to the data presented in Table 8, 144 respondents (36%) responded with "yes," 160 (40%) responded with "no," and 96 (24%) responded with "maybe." As a result, the majority of respondents do not believe that the *Abrahamic Mission* impacts their love for other religions.

Research Question Three: What are the factors that influence the effectiveness of Abrahamic mission in countering religious intolerance?

Table 9: The type of content used by the *Abrahamic Mission* programme affects my interest in accommodating other religions.

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage % |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 48 | 12% |
| Disagree | 48 | 12% |
| Neutral | 112 | 28% |
| Agree | 176 | 44% |
| Strongly Agree | 16 | 4% |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Based on the data presented in Table 9, it can be seen that 12% of the respondents strongly disagree while another 12% simply disagree. A significant portion, 28%, neither

agree nor disagree, while 44% agree and only 4% strongly agree with the statement that the content used in the *Abrahamic Mission* programme affects their interest in accommodating other religions. In summary, the majority of respondents believe that the *Abrahamic mission* programme has a positive impact on their ability to accommodate other religions.

Table 10: The use of a Pastor, Imam, and Judaist as interviewees in the *Abrahamic Mission* programme affects my interest in accommodating other religions.

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage % |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 36 | 9% |
| Disagree | 80 | 20% |
| Neutral | 156 | 39% |
| Agree | 88 | 22% |
| Strongly Agree | 40 | 10% |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

According to Table 10, 9% of the respondents strongly disagree, 20% disagree, 39% neither agree nor disagree, 22% agree, and 10% strongly agree with the statement that the use of a Pastor, Imam, and Judaist as interviewees in the *Abrahamic Mission* programme affects their interest in accommodating other religions. Therefore, the majority of respondents are neutral on the use of religious influencers.

Table 11: The use of the Holy Bible, Quran, and other religious books as reference points in Abrahamic missions influences my interest in other religions.

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage % |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 48 | 12% |
| Disagree | 160 | 40% |
| Neutral | 80 | 20% |
| Agree | 104 | 26% |
| Strongly Agree | 8 | 2% |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 11 shows that 48 (12%) strongly disagree, 160 (40%) disagree, 80 (20%) are neutral, 104 (26%) agree, and 8 (2%) strongly agree that the use of the Holy Bible, Quran, and other religious books as reference points in *Abrahamic mission* influences their interest in other religions. Thus, this means that the use of reference books in *Abrahamic Mission* does not make the respondents have an interest in other religions.

Table 12: The relevance of radio in broadcasting Abrahamic missions influences my interest in another religion.

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage % |
|----------------|-----------|--------------|
| Strongly Agree | 32 | 8% |
| Agree | 96 | 24% |
| Neutral | 120 | 30% |
| Disagree | 128 | 32% |

| | | |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 24 | 6% |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Above Table 12 shows that 32 (8%) of the respondents strongly agree, 96 (24%) agree, 120 (30%) are neutral, 128 (32%) disagree, and 24 (6%) strongly disagree that the relevance of radio in broadcasting Abrahamic missions influences my interest in another religion. Thus, the majority of the respondents disagree with the fact.

Table 13: The use of storytelling in *Abrahamic Mission* affects my interest in another religion.

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage % |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 32 | 8% |
| Disagree | 128 | 32% |
| Neutral | 88 | 22% |
| Agree | 144 | 36% |
| Strongly Agree | 8 | 2% |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 13 shows that 32 (8%) strongly disagree, 128 (32%) disagree, 88 (22%) are neutral, 144 (36%) agree, and 8 (2%) strongly agree that the use of the storytelling in *Abrahamic Mission* affects their interest in other religions. Therefore, the use of storytelling makes the respondents have interest in other religions.

Table 14: The use of interactive elements (e.g. call-in) in *Abrahamic Mission* affects my interest in countering religious intolerance.

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage % |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 16 | 4% |
| Disagree | 64 | 16% |
| Neutral | 172 | 43% |
| Agree | 144 | 36% |
| Strongly Agree | 4 | 1% |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

According to Table 14. 4% of the respondents strongly disagree, 16% disagree, 43% neither agree nor disagree, 36% agree, and 1% strongly agree that the use of interactive elements (e.g. call-in) affects their interest in countering religious intolerance. Therefore, the majority of respondents are neutral on this fact.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study align with Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action, which emphasises the importance of dialogue in fostering mutual understanding and social integration (Bohman & Williams, 2017; Iguoba, 2024). The data indicate that the audience of Radio Nigeria Network generally holds a positive perception of the *Abrahamic Mission*, recognizing its role in raising awareness about diverse religions and encouraging peaceful coexistence. This supports the findings of Faza et al. (2025), who

found that communicative action in religious programming can promote moderation and mutual respect in pluralistic societies. As illustrated in Table 2, 56% of respondents agree, and 8% strongly agree, that the *Abrahamic Mission* enhances their awareness of events in different religions, while only 24% express disagreement or neutrality. This confirms that the program serves an educational purpose, consistent with the views of Abbas (2022) and Baba (2014), who emphasize radio's unique ability to disseminate knowledge and stimulate reflective listening among diverse audiences. Table 3 further reveals that 40% agree and 4% strongly agree that the *Abrahamic Mission* makes other religions more appealing, while only 28% remain neutral and another 28% express disagreement. This finding is significant, as it suggests that the programme may be reducing stereotypes and prejudices. Dawes and Maclaurin (2012) argue that understanding religious concepts is crucial to preventing sectarian conflict, supporting this conclusion. Similarly, Croucher (2017) notes that religion and culture are powerful forces shaping human communication, and programming that promotes interfaith dialogue helps foster tolerance. Moreover, Table 4 shows that 36% agree and 28% strongly agree that the program influences their decision to live harmoniously with people of other faiths, compared to just 9% who disagree or strongly disagree. This reinforces the findings of Ikegbunam and Ekweonu (2020), which suggest that faith-based programmes like *Abrahamic Mission* can positively influence public attitudes toward tolerance and coexistence. Additionally, it aligns with Nda (2009) and Joshua (2023), who highlight the potential of radio drama and talk formats to address societal challenges. Tables 1-4 reflect Habermas' (1984) notion of communicative action, where the transmission of cultural knowledge through open dialogue fosters intersubjective understanding and strengthens social cohesion. By providing a discursive space for discussion and reflection, the *Abrahamic Mission* enables listeners to critically engage with religious diversity, addressing the communicative deficits that often underlie intolerance and conflict. In this way, the programme fulfils the social responsibility role of radio, as described by Ngonso and Nworisa (2021), who stress the importance of public broadcasting in fostering national unity and promoting behavioural change.

In terms of influencing audience attitudes toward other faiths, the findings indicate that the *Abrahamic Mission* has a complex impact on its audience's attitudes toward other faiths. While it does not necessarily make other religions seem more appealing than the respondents' own beliefs, it plays a significant role in promoting tolerance, respect, and coexistence. This distinction aligns with Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action, which differentiates between genuine communicative understanding and instrumental persuasion. As shown in Table 5, a majority of respondents – 160 (40%) disagreed and 64 (16%) strongly disagreed indicating that the programme makes other religions seem more desirable than their own. In contrast, only 2% strongly agreed, and 24% agreed with this statement. This suggests that while the programme increases awareness of other faiths, it does not undermine the respondents' attachment to their own faith identity. This outcome is consistent with Dawes and Maclaurin (2012), who argue that understanding different religions does not necessarily lead to conversion but rather expands cognitive awareness of various belief systems. Conversely, Table 6 reveals that a clear majority of 36% agreeing and 16% strongly agreeing believe the *Abrahamic Mission* encourages tolerance toward other religions. Only 24% remained neutral, while a total of 24% disagreed. This supports Ikegbunam and Ekweonu's (2020) observation that interfaith programs can foster positive behavioural change by promoting coexistence

rather than competition. Radio, due to its widespread reach, is an effective medium for this purpose, as highlighted by Abbas (2022) and Baba (2014), who note its capacity to deliver messages that foster dialogue and reflective thinking among diverse audiences. Table 7 adds further nuance, showing that 44% of respondents agreed the program creates a positive impression of other religions, while nearly half (48%) chose “maybe,” indicating ambivalence. This finding illustrates the gradual nature of attitudinal change and underscores the need for sustained communicative interventions to deepen interfaith understanding (Croucher, 2017; Faza *et al.*, 2025). Similarly, Table 8 indicates that 36% of respondents believe the program influences their affection for other religions, while 40% reject this idea, and 24% remain undecided. This reinforces the conclusion that the *Abrahamic Mission* is more effective in cultivating respect and tolerance than in fostering emotional attachment or conversion. As noted by Bolton (2005) and Iguoba (2024), the success of communicative action is not solely measured by consensus, but by its ability to facilitate rational-critical debate and diminish coercive power dynamics. These results demonstrate that the *Abrahamic Mission* primarily serves as a platform for dialogue, encouraging listeners to respect religious differences without pressuring them to adopt new religious beliefs. This supports the social responsibility role of public broadcasting (Ngonso & Nworisa, 2021), as it helps reduce prejudice, mitigate conflict, and strengthen social cohesion. Furthermore, it underscores Hari and Chittibabu’s (2024) argument that radio storytelling can humanize “the other” and shift public discourse toward coexistence. The programme’s influence lies not in reshaping faith identities but in fostering mutual recognition and tolerance. This aligns with Habermas’ (1984) assertion that communicative rationality enables individuals to coordinate actions based on shared understanding, thus promoting integration without suppressing differences.

The effectiveness of the *Abrahamic Mission* in countering religious intolerance appears to be driven primarily by the nature and style of its content, as well as its ability to present complex interfaith issues in a relatable and engaging manner. Table 9 shows that a majority of respondents (44% agree, 4% strongly agree) believe that the type of content used in the programme affects their willingness to accommodate other religions, while only 24% express disagreement. This finding suggests that content curation plays a critical role in shaping audience reception, consistent with Abbas (2022) and Baba (2014), who highlight the importance of programme format and message design in sustaining audience interest and achieving educational outcomes. Table 13 further strengthens this conclusion by showing that 36% agree and 2% strongly agree that storytelling affects their interest in other religions, compared to 40% who disagree. This aligns with Hari and Chittibabu’s (2024) argument that storytelling remains a powerful journalistic and pedagogical tool for engaging audiences emotionally and cognitively. By embedding lessons on tolerance within narratives, the *Abrahamic Mission* makes abstract interfaith values more concrete and memorable. In contrast, Table 10 reveals a more neutral audience response to the presence of religious leaders (Pastor, Imam, Judaist) as interviewees: 39% are neutral, 29% agree or strongly agree, and 29% disagree or strongly disagree. This implies that while religious leaders bring authority and credibility to the discussion, they are not the main drivers of attitude change for most listeners. Similarly, Table 11 shows that 52% of respondents either disagree or strongly disagree that referencing the Bible, Quran, or other sacred texts influences their interest in other religions. This indicates that appeals to textual authority may not be as persuasive as participatory or narrative-based approaches. The medium of broadcast itself also appears

to be less influential than expected. Table 12 shows that 32% disagree and 6% strongly disagree that the relevance of radio influences their interest in other religions, whereas only 32% agree or strongly agree. This suggests that while radio remains an important channel, its mere presence is insufficient to guarantee effectiveness; it is the quality of the programming that matters most (Ngonso & Nworisa, 2021). Finally, Table 14 indicates that 43% of respondents are neutral about whether interactive elements such as call-ins influence their interest in countering religious intolerance, although 36% agree. This mixed response points to the potential for more active audience participation strategies to deepen engagement and foster collective dialogue, echoing Habermas' (1984) emphasis on participatory communication as a pathway to intersubjective understanding. These findings support the view that the Abrahamic Mission's effectiveness relies less on traditional religious authority and more on its ability to facilitate dialogue, present relatable stories, and sustain cognitive engagement. This aligns with Habermas' theory of communicative action, which privileges shared meaning-making over hierarchical persuasion (Bolton, 2005; Iguoba, 2024). By using storytelling and well-crafted content, the programme creates a platform where listeners can reflect, question, and ultimately internalise values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence which is a crucial step toward social integration and reducing prejudice (Faza *et al.*, 2025; Croucher, 2017).

Furthermore, the *Abrahamic Mission* demonstrates the practical application of communicative action theory in media programming. By creating spaces where diverse religious perspectives are presented respectfully and thoughtfully, the programme fosters dialogue, awareness, and attitudinal change among its audience. These findings suggest that media interventions designed around principles of mutual understanding and inter-subjective communication can be a powerful tool in reducing religious intolerance, aligning with Habermas' vision of communication as central to the maintenance of social cohesion.

Conclusion

The radio remains a powerful medium for transmitting information directly to audiences, offering the unique advantage of accessibility and versatility, as it can be listened to while performing other tasks. It serves as a tool for educating, informing, enlightening, and entertaining, yet it also carries the potential to influence society positively or negatively. Religious intolerance continues to cause significant social, economic, and developmental setbacks in Nigeria, and programmes like the *Abrahamic Mission* on Radio Nigeria Network have sought to address this challenge by fostering understanding among the three major Abrahamic religions. While the programme has successfully increased awareness and promoted tolerance, it has not fully eradicated religious intolerance, largely because deeply ingrained religious beliefs and fundamental teachings remain influential. Guided by Habermas' Communicative Action Theory, it is evident that sustained, inclusive, and dialogue-centered programming is crucial for fostering mutual understanding. Continuous discussions and engagement through radio platforms can therefore play a pivotal role in gradually reducing religious intolerance and promoting peaceful coexistence in Nigeria.

Recommendations

The study's findings and conclusion suggest the following recommendations:

1. Additional mass media campaigns to educate individuals who are intolerant towards other religions on the importance of having discussions to establish mutual understanding prior to forming opinions about other religions.
2. Religious organisations play a significant role in addressing religious intolerance by forming joint groups and holding meetings to offer solutions.
3. It is important to encourage media programmes like *Abrahamic Mission* to educate the public about the dangers of religious intolerance and increase their awareness and understanding.
4. Equal promotion of all religions in broadcast media to promote tolerance. This promotes tolerance and educates the audience on the importance of accepting all religions.

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