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SUITABILITY OF AIOU TELEVISION AND ITS IMPACT ON STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

The requirement of television for educational purposes arises when specific educational objectives are not achieved through traditional way of teaching. There are a number of things television can do better than the average teacher and traditional educational institutions, but situations where both teacher and educational institutions are not available, television is the answer to obtain educational objectives, Lochte, (1993). This research paper investigates relationship between TV broadcast time, day and duration and student achievement. Data was collected from 197 from urban and rural, male and female students of the Allama Iqbal Open University, enrolled in the spring 2006 Semester in the selected courses. No strong relationship was found between Learning from TV and academic achievement in the AIOU situation. Use of television in the AIOU Situation will be more effective if transmission day, time and duration are adjusted according to the students' demand and when students' assignments are based on both textbook and TV programs.

Keywords: AIOU, distance education, television, students' achievement

BASIC PHILOSOPHY OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

According to Waniewicz (1972) in distance education, education has to be beamed at different target audiences: illiterates and school drop-outs; those who have not yet found their place in the productive life of the society, and those who are looking for improvement of already obtained qualifications; people wanting to complete primary, secondary or higher education, and those who wish to supplement their university degrees with new knowledge; those who live in underdeveloped areas which have to catch up on decades of economic and cultural development, and those of the affluent societies looking for fulfilling use of their leisure. Waniewicz (1972) explains that adult education has to be made available to people of urban and rural areas, to people living dispersed over vast territories, to men and women of different ages, races, traditions, beliefs, cultural backgrounds, and walks of life.

USE OF TELEVISION IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

Television has been characterized as being significant throughout the educational process, NIMH, 1982. It has been dubbed as "a unique potent teacher" (Liebert & Sprafkin, 1988) and identified as an educational curriculum in itself, Barry, 1993.

Many scholars recognize television as a component to formal schooling. Television can be used to facilitate the development of academic and cognitive skills.

A number of studies concluded that under certain circumstances television can increase the likelihood of subsequent social desirable behavior and the likelihood of cognitive learning occurring, NIMH, 1982; Sprafkin et al., 1975.

Television influences social behavior not only by teaching new behavior but also by contributing to children's definition of what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate behavior, Robert, 1987. Yuki Fujioka (1999) indicates that the frequency of television viewing stresses the importance of viewers' cognitive activities when consuming television messages.

Television has proved more useful in distance education by bringing academic material to the students in a more direct and personal way as compared to the radio and printed material. Moreover, it gives a sense of association to the students who are widely scattered. Television is very useful where students are largely scattered in the country, Khan, (1989). Television produces better results if integrated with print and other source of information of distance education.

When television teaching was tried out at the Akita University in Japan, the result showed that the students could attend the television lecture classes at ease with little physical fatigue, Khan, (1989). Television brings the best teachers close to the students. Khan reveals that the use of television has been successful, particularly, in the distance-learning environment, where a large students' enrollment takes place from different parts of the country. A well thought out TV programme can present the message in a way that evokes and maintains interest, stimulates effort in learning, and affects emotions and attitudes. This gives television an enormous potentiality for motivating fewer captive audiences, for evoking and sustaining interest in learning. Hornik, R.C. (1978), Television is a good medium for demonstrations since the camera can look in a microscope, peer into corners and give close-ups of things which could never be so closely or accurately observed in a normal class room situation. Egan (1991), Television appeals to the eye and ear. Therefore, a much wider range of subject can be used.

AN OVERVIEW OF AIOU AS A DISTANCE TEACHING INSTITUTION

The Allama Iqbal Open University was established under an Act of Parliament 1974 to provide part-time educational facilities through correspondence courses, tutorials, seminars, workshops, television and other mass communication media to a large section of the population who cannot leave their homes or jobs and who wish to upgrade their education or acquire knowledge for professional advancement. According to the Vice Chancellor's Annual Report (2005-06) The University Faculty of Education, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Faculty of Sciences and the Institute of Mass Education offer over 1000 courses in 98 programs ranging from basic to doctorate and research level. Course-wise enrolments in these programs are 584404 students.

The ratio of male and female students' enrolment is 47 and 53 percent respectively. 63% of the enrolments are coming from the province of Punjab.

The number of full-time academic staff is about 250 and part-time tutors are 17228 who meet student fortnightly in 682 study centers through out the country. The recurring and development budget of the University for the Year 2005-06 was 1134.650 million. Instructional materials are sent to the students at their home addresses or places of work. The study package includes printed materials/textbooks, audio cassettes (if available), radio and TV schedule (if applicable), tutorials, assignments question and assignments schedule, name and address of the tutor and the study center address. 682 study centers are spread throughout the country where fortnightly tutorials are arranged for the academic guidance of students. The number of full-time academic staff is about 250 and part-time tutors are 17228. The students are assessed by tutor marked assignments and final examination. The passing ratio in each component is 30% and 70% respectively. The aggregate passing percentage is 40 % (Vice Chancellor's Annual Report, 2005-06).

STATEMENT of THE PROBLEM

This research study investigates the impact of AIOU Television on students' performance in distance education through a relationship between broadcast day, time, and duration. The Exposure and performance relationship was determined through the hypothesis: Higher the perceived suitability of day, airing-time and duration of TV programs, better the performance

UNIVERSE/POPULATION

In this study the universe is the AIOU bachelor level students enrolled in Spring 2003 Semester for the courses "Economics" code No. 402, "Islamiyat" code No. 416, "Health and Nutrition" code No. 484 and "Food and Nutrition" code No.485. Students of these courses were selected as units of analysis for the study because these were credit courses and had the support of TV programs. Total number of students enrolled in these courses was about 7000, who were heterogeneously scattered in almost all part of the country.

Table: 1
Sample characteristics

<i>Residences</i>	<i>N & %</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Rural	N %	68 75.6%	22 24.4%	90
Urban	N %	79 73.8%	28 26.2%	107
Less than 25 years	N %	40 71.4%	17 29.6%	56
26 to 36 years	N %	87 76.3%	27 23.7%	114
37 to 45 years	N %	17 70.8%	6 28.2%	24
46 to 55 years	N %	3		3
Total	N %	147 74.6%	50 25.4%	197

Data was collected from 197 urban and rural, male and female students of AIOU, enrolled in the spring 2003 Semester in the selected courses from the whole country. Stratified random method of sampling was adopted.

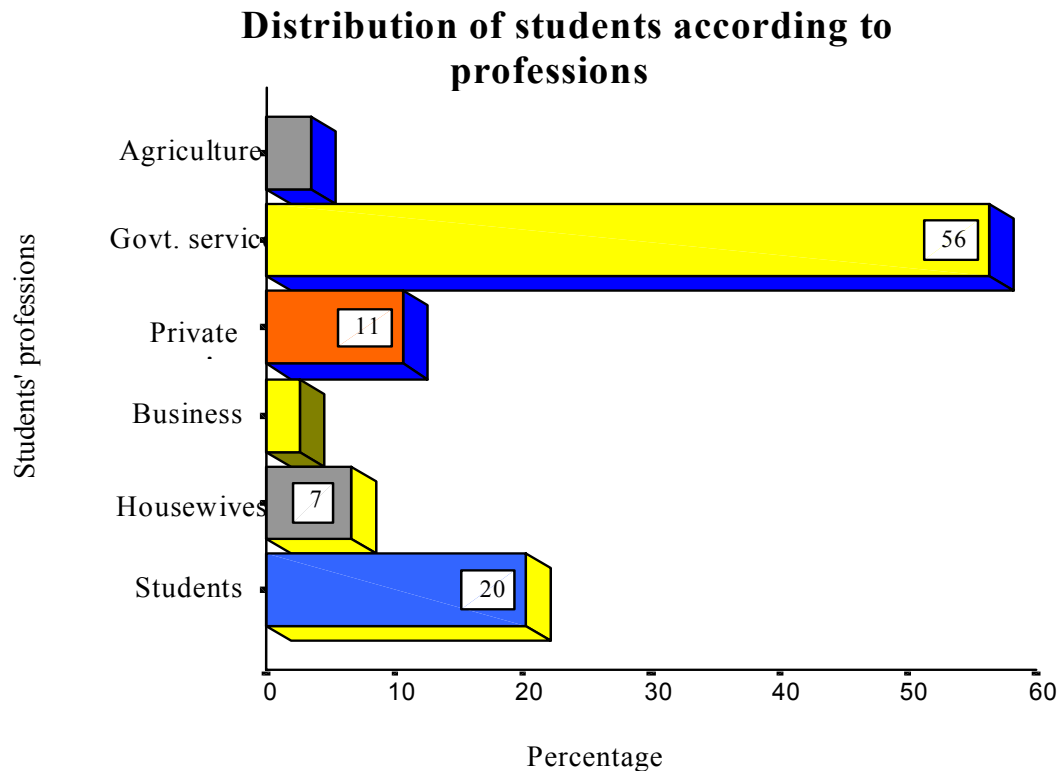


Figure: 1
Profession of students/sample

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION ON THE RESULTS

Univariate analysis was used to explain the phenomena through percentage. However, the researcher concentrated to use correlation coefficient statistical procedure applying "product movement Pearson" formula to investigate the relationship on zero order "rs". Moreover, partial correlation statistical analysis was applied to understand the influence of control variable on the zero order relationship. In this regard elaboration model of analysis procedure of Lazarsfeld and Morris Rosenberg in 1968 was used to examine the zero order and partial correlations in the total samples as well as between gender groups and rural urban residence of students in order to elaborate the relationship; that is, replicate, explain, interpret, and specify it (Baby 1986, pp. 385-404).

COMPARISON of THE TEACHING MODES OF AIOU

AIOU imparts education to its BA level students through various teaching modes; viz, Textbook, TV programs, Tutorials, and Radio programs.

Textbook in Distance Educating system the world over is the main stay, which plays an important role in students' performance in assignments and examination.

AIOU provides textbooks to students at the start of the semester, which are available with them all the time except during final examination. Television programs supplement student's study.

Generally, there are five TV programs for each course at the BA level available to students only once at about 1.00 p.m. to 2.00 p.m. on different days of the week during the semester.

Students learn about schedule of TV programs from the study package. Siraj (2003) in his PhD thesis highlights that 60 % students like to watch AIOU TV programs alone and majority of them want to submit their assignments after watching the programs. He further reveals that students find it easy to write assignments after watching TV programs.

It is quite understandable that AIOU TV programs provide better insight into the subject therefore; they not only find it easy but also prefer to write assignments after watching TV programs.

It is evident from Siraj thesis that 40 % students are interested to watch TV programs at the beginning of semester and want to have re-telecast of the program after a one-week gap.

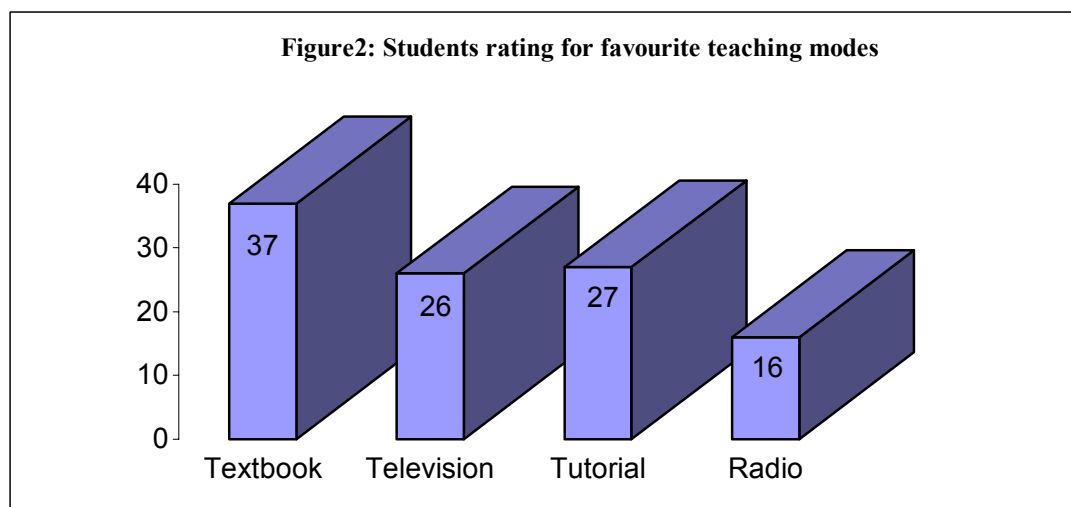
Tutorial is a supplementary teaching support for which the University appoints relevant qualified part-time teacher (tutor) fortnightly for one and an half hour within the jurisdiction of the regional directorate after the office hours. Venue of the tutorial meeting is usually schools or colleges. Students' attendance in the tutorial is not mandatory.

Those students who are living in the far-flung areas and who cannot attend tutorial meeting, remain in touch with the tutor through correspondence. Siraj (2003) documents that 53 percent of the AIOU students attend tutorial meetings during the semester and they occasionally discuss TV programs in the tutorials. 44% AIOU students view TV programs in order to make up deficiency for the missed tutorials (Siraj 2003).

Figure: 2 give an overall comparison of different teaching modes, i.e. textbook, TV, Tutorial and radio. Students were asked to choose the teaching mode they liked most. As evident from the Figure, (37 %) liked textbook, 27 % chose tutorial, 26 % liked TV programs, and 16 % students (only for Islamiyat course 416) favored radio programs.

These percentages confirm that textbook in the AIOU teaching system is the main source of learning. In the AIOU, textbook is the base for all examination system such as assignments and final examinations.

Television as being the third choice seems probably not coming to the expectations of students as a supplementary source of learning.



NUMBER of TV PROGRAMS WATCHED BY STUDENTS IN THE BA COURSES

Figure 2 reports percentages distribution of students' responses regarding number of TV programs watched by them during the Semester, Spring 2003 in the BA courses; viz, "Economics" code 402, "Islamiyat" code 416, "Health and Nutrition" code 484, and "Food and Nutrition" code 485.

As evident from the figure, it is concluded that most of the students on average watched 2 to 3 TV programs in each of the four BA courses during the semester. Reasons for not watching maximum TV programs are the unsuitability of time and broadcast day being discussed in the following.

SUITABILITY OF AIOU TV BROADCAST DAY, TIME, AND DURATION

Students' responses for suitability of TV broadcast day, time and duration reveal that majority of students (82 %) wanted to watch AIOU TV programs on Sunday. So watching TV programs on Sunday is obvious from the fact that all the working students (who are in majority) have their holiday on Sunday. Karim, et al (2001) argues that students of the Bangladesh Open University like to watch TV programs on Fridays (an official holiday in Bangladesh).

Regarding suitable of time for TV broadcast, majority of the students wanted to watch AIOU TV programs between 6 to 7 p.m. It is quite obvious that most of the students at these times return home from their offices and may find ample time to watch TV programs. Karim et al (2001) indicate that the suitable airtime for TV programs at the Open University in Bangladesh is from 4.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. On the contrary, AIOU TV programs are aired from PTV between 2 to 3 p.m.—the only time slot that PTV has allocated for AIOU. Whereas, PTV in its routine schedule allocates rest of the broadcast time to regional programs, commercials, news, dramas, prime time programs, and late night English or Urdu movies. Regarding the suitability of duration of AIOU TV programs majority of students responded in favour of one-hour. At present, duration of almost all the AIOU TV programs is about 30 minute. Therefore, the present duration of the TV programs is also not suitable, as it does not satisfy students' needs for their study.

EXPOSURE-PERFORMANCE RELATIONSHIP, CONTROLLING FOR PERCEIVED SUITABILITY OF TRANSMISSION DAY, TIME AND DURATION

Exposure of students to AIOU TV programs and its relationship with the performance in assignments and final examination is the central theme of this research study. TV transmission day, time, and duration are the main dimensions of students' exposure to AIOU TV programs. Majority of the students of AIOU are working people as shown in the figure 2, therefore, a very large number of students 83% have opined that Sunday is a suitable day for them to watch AIOU TV programs. Regarding airing-time, 41.1% students wanted to watch TV between 6.00 to 7.00 p.m. whereas, university airing time is between 2.00 to 3.00 p.m. During this time, majority of the students are busy at their job places. So far as duration of the TV programs is concerned, 29.4% opined that TV programs should be of one-hour duration each. (At present, duration of the TV programs ranges from 25 to 30 minutes.

Perceived suitability of TV transmission day, time, and duration were entered in that order as control variables to partial out their influence on zero order "rs" of exposure and performance. As evident from the table 2, relationship was replicated with both the performance dimensions i.e., assignments and final examination of the course Health and Nutrition code 484 and with the performance in the assignments for the course " Food and Nutrition" code 485 after the 3rd order partial. That is, higher the exposure to TV programmes, better the performance

Table: 2
Zero order "rs" of exposure to AIOU TV programs and performance in the Bachelor's courses, controlling for perceived suitability of TV broadcast air day, time, and duration

Criterion Variables	Zero order "rs" ¹	Partial "rs" controlling for		
		Day ²	Time ³	Duration ⁴
Assignment 402	.16	.19	.04	.06
N	62	57	56	56
Exams score 402	.02	.04	.05	-.04
N	62	57	56	56
Assignment 416	.14*	.17*	..10	.08
N	144	138	134	134
Exams score 416	.01	.03	-.04	-.04
N	144	138	134	134
Assignment 484	.29*	.30*	.40**	.39**
N	49	42	40	40
Exams score 484	.30*	.38**	.33*	.34*
N	49	42	40	40
Assignment 485	.39**	.45**	.41**	.41**
N	42	39	38	38
Exams score 485	.07	.07	.04	.01
N	42	39	38	38

Coefficients are significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).
Coefficients are significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Notes:

1. Zero order "rs" of exposure to TV programmes in the courses 402, 416, 484, and 485 as 1st block.
2. First order control with control being perceived suitability of transmission day as 2nd block.
3. 2nd order control with control being perceived suitability of transmission time as 3rd block.
- 4 3rd order control with control being perceived suitability of transmission duration as 4th block.

Key:

Assignments 402: Assignments score in BA economics course
Examination 402: Examination score in BA Economics course
Assignments 416: Assignments score in BA Islamiyat course
Examination 416: Examination score in BA Islamiyat course
Assignments 484: Assignments score in BA Food and Nutrition course
Examination 484: Examination score in BA Food and Nutrition course
Assignments 485: Assignments score in BA Health and Nutrition course
Examination 485: Examination score in BA Health and Nutrition course

. However, relationship between exposure to TV programs and performance in the assignments for the course "Islamiyat" code 416 was explained away by the perceived suitability of TV transmission time. Specifically, the zero order "rs" between exposures to TV programs and performance in the assignments score of the course 416, though withstanding the perceived suitability of TV transmission day control, did not remain statistically significant after controlling for the perceived suitability of TV transmission time as being the antecedent variable.

It means that the perceived suitability of TV transmission time was an antecedent test variable that may have been causing exposure to TV program on the one hand and performance in the assignments of course 416 on the other hand

Table: 3 specify exposure-performance relationship between gender groups. Variables of perceived suitability of TV broadcast day, time, and duration were partial out.

As evident from the table, the relationship was replicated with in the assignments score of female students in the courses "Health and Nutrition" 484 and "Food and Nutrition" 485. That is, higher the exposure, better the performance of female students in the assignments scores of the courses 484 and 485.

However, exposure-performance relationship was suppressed by the broadcast airtime and duration and by all the control variables in the assignments score of male students for the courses 484 and 485 respectively (exposure leads to performance in the assignments score of male students in the course 484 in the absence of broadcast airtime and duration, and higher the exposure, better the performance in assignments score of male students in the course 485 in the absence of broadcast day, time and duration).

Whereas, the relationship was explained away with the assignment score in the course 416 and in the examination score for the course 485 of male students by the perceived suitability of airtime and by the perceived suitability of TV broadcast day respectively.

Specifically, the zero order "rs" between exposures to TV programs and performance in the assignments score of the male students in the course 416, though withstanding the perceived suitability of TV transmission day control, did not remain

Table: 3
Zero order and partial "rs" of exposure to AIOU TV programs and performance
in the Bachelor's courses specified for sex.

Criterion Variables	Sex ¹	Zero Order 'rs' ²	Day ³	Partial "rs" controlling for Time ⁴ Duration ⁵	
Assignments 402	Male	.24	.21	-.07	-.05
	Female	.05	.16	.14	.19
Examination 402	Male	.04	-.01	-.07	-.17
	Female	.01	.15	.22	.13
Assignments 416	Male	.20*	.23*	.14	.10
	Female	.08	.08	.09	.09
Examination 416	Male	.10	.15	.04	.03
	Female	-.15	-.18	-.18	-.15
Assignments 484	Male	.18	.18	.54**	.56**
	Female	.38*	.43*	.43*	.45*
Examination 484	Male	.25	.38*	.24	.43*
	Female	.40*	.32	.34	.43*
Assignments 485	Male	.34	.52*	.56*	.51*
	Female	.41*	.57**	.56**	.52**
Examination 485	Male	.48*	.33	.32	.18
	Female	-.07	-.11	-.13	-.06

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

Sample size

Zero rs n: for 402 Male 35 female 27, for 416 male 93 female 51, for 484 male 25 female 24, for 485 male 20 female 22

Partial 'rs': for 402 male 30, female 24, for 416 male 87 female 48, for 484 male 21 female 23, and for 485 male 18 female 20

Notes:

1. Sex: Specification for gender groups—male and female as 1st block.
2. Zero order "rs" of exposure to TV programmes in the courses 402, 416, 484, and 485 as 2nd block.
3. First order control with control being perceived suitability of transmission day as 3rd block.
4. 2nd order control with control being perceived suitability of transmission time as 4th block.
5. 3rd order control with control being perceived suitability of transmission duration as 5th block.

Key:

Assignments 402:	Assignments score in BA economics course
Examination 402:	Examination score in BA Economics course
Assignments 416:	Assignments score in BA Islamiyat course
Examination 416:	Examination score in BA Islamiyat course
Assignments 484:	Assignments score in BA Food and Nutrition course
Examination 484:	Examination score in BA Food and Nutrition course
Assignments 485:	Assignments score in BA Health and Nutrition course
Examination 485:	Examination score in BA Health and Nutrition course

Statistically significant after controlling for perceived suitability of TV transmission time as being the antecedent variables.

Whereas, the zero order "rs" of the examination score in the course 485 of male students did not remain statistically significant after controlling for perceived suitability of TV broadcast air day, time, and duration as being the antecedent variables.

Table: 4
Zero order and partial "rs" of exposure to AIOU TV programs and performance in the Bachelor's courses specified for residence.

Criterion Variables	Residence ¹	Zero Order "rs" ²	Partial "rs" controlling for Day ³	Time ⁴	Duration ⁵
Assignments 402	Rural	.20	.21	.07	.01
	Urban	.13	.13	.05	.12
Examination 402	Rural	-.11	-.12	-.11	-.16
	Urban	.20	.20	.19	.21
Assignments 416	Rural	.16	.18	.04	.04
	Urban	.13	.13	.16	.13
Examination 416	Rural	-.14	-.13	-.19	-.20
	Urban	.15	.18*	.10	.13
Assignments 484	Rural	.41*	.41*	.41*	.42*
	Urban	.25	.29	.51**	.49*
Examination 484	Rural	.45*	.48*	.41*	.44*
	Urban	.21	.38*	.25	.26
Assignments 485	Rural	.43*	.54*	.50*	.51*
	Urban	.51**	.53**	.39	.34
Examination 485	Rural	.04	.04	.00	.05
	Urban	-.00	-.00	-.07	-.04

****Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)**

***Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)**

Sample size

Zero rs n: For 402 rural 25 urban 37, for 416 rural 57 urban 87, for 484 rural 22 urban 27, for 485 rural 20 urban 22

Partial 'rs' n: For 402 rural 22 urban 34, for 416 rural 51 urban 84, for 484 rural 20 urban 22, and for 485 rural 19 urban 21

Notes:

1. Residence: Specification for residence—rural and urban as 1st block.
2. Zero order "rs" of exposure to TV programmes in the courses 402, 416, 484, and 485 as 2nd block.
3. First order control with control being perceived suitability of transmission day as 3rd block.
4. 2nd order control with control being perceived suitability of transmission time as 4th block.
5. 3rd order control with control being perceived suitability of transmission duration as 5th block.

Similarly, exposure and performance relationship in the examination score of the male students in the course 484 was suppressed by the perceived suitability of TV program duration variable, that is, higher the exposure, better the performance of male students in the examination score of the course 484 in the absence of perceived suitability of TV program duration.

While the relationship in the examination score of female students was explained away by the perceived suitability of TV program day and even later on it was suppressed by the duration variable (exposure leads to performance in the examination score of female students in the course 484 in the presence of broadcast day and time and in the absence of TV program duration).

Table 4 specifies the relationship between students' residence. Variables of perceived suitability of TV broadcast day, time, and duration were entered in that order to partial out their influence on the zero order "rs". As evident from the table, relationship was replicated with three of the performance criteria; viz, assignments score and examination score of rural students in the course 484, and assignments score in the course 485. That is, higher the exposure better the performance in the assignments and examination score of rural students in the course of 484 and assignment score of rural students in the course 485. However, the relationship was suppressed by the perceived suitability of TV broadcast airtime and duration in the assignment score of urban students in the course 484 (exposure leads to performance in the assignments score of urban students in the courses 484 in the absence of perceived suitability of TV program airtime and duration). Similarly, performance-exposure relationship was explained away by the perceived suitability of TV program airtime variable. Specifically, the zero order "rs" between exposures to TV programs and performance in the assignments score of the urban students in the course 484, though withstanding the perceived suitability of TV transmission day control, did not remain statistically significant after controlling for perceived suitability of TV transmission time as being the antecedent variables.

CONCLUSION

Partial "rs":

After controlling for partial "rs" of TV transmission day, time and duration, exposure—performance relationship was replicated and found in the hypothetical direction in both the performance criteria; viz, Assignment and examination of the course 484 and in assignments score for the course "Food and Nutrition" 485. However, performance in assignments of the course "Islamiyat" code 416 was explained away by the perceived suitability of TV transmission time.

Specification for gender group

Exposure—performance relationship was replicated and found in the hypothetical direction in both the performance criteria of female students in the courses 484 and in the assignments score of 485. However, Positive relationship was appeared in the assignments score of male students in the courses 484 and 485 after controlling for the broadcast day, airtime and duration.

Whereas, the relationship with the assignment score in the course 416 and with examination score in the course 485 of male students was explained away by the perceived suitability of airtime and by the perceived suitability of TV broadcast day respectively.

Specification for students' residence

After controlling for the partial "rs" the specified relationship for students' residence was replicated and significantly positive correlated in both the performance criteria of rural students in the course 484 and in assignments score for the course 485.

Similarly, exposure-performance relationship was found in the hypothetical direction in the assignments score of urban students in the courses 484 in the absence of perceived suitability of TV program airtime and duration. Moreover, the relationship was explained away by the perceived suitability of TV program airtime variable. AIOU TV programs are not fully utilized by the students. The programs are being broadcast between 2 to 3 p.m. These times do not suit to AIOU students, as majority of them during these times, remain at offices. Again, 82 % of the students wanted to watch TV programs for their course on Sunday, being the holiday.

To sum up, AIOU is expending on all direction, particularly, in terms of programs, courses and students, however, its TV programs require to be thoroughly trashed out so that it may contribute effectively to the educational needs of students. The reasons for ineffectiveness of AIOU television have already been explained. It is suggested that AIOU TV may be made effective, if aired between 5.00 to 7.00 p.m. and preferable on Sunday and Friday being holiday and half day in Pakistan. Duration of the programs should be of one-hour. Student can be made mandatory to watch TV programs of their courses, if some of the course assignments are based on TV programs' information.

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