

Effectiveness of Educational TV in Pakistan: A Case Study of Students of AIOU

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Abstract

The research has been conducted to find out the role of TV in promoting distance education in Pakistan. The objectives of the study were a) to analyze the usefulness of educational TV for students in Pakistan b) to explore effectiveness of educational TV for students in Pakistan c) to determine access of students to educational TV in Pakistan d) to find out the problems faced by the students to use educational TV in Pakistan. Survey method of research has been employed. Questionnaire was used as a tool of research. Sample of the study included 200 students of Department of Mass Communication and Distance Education Department of AIOU. Mean score and percentages have been used for the analysis of the data. The study is significant and beneficial for the faculty members, students of Department of Mass Communication, the policy makers, curriculum developers, media professionals and NGOs working for on education.

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Introduction

In today's world TV has become a need of our homes, offices, public places because it updates us about the surroundings, gives entertainment, information and education. Education is the basis for the development. It is the TV that is crucially playing its role in flourishing of education by directly participating in the process of development. Before TV, education and entertainment was given through face-to-face interaction, correspondence & Radio. With the advancement in technology, TV came and dominated as it has more qualities than radio & correspondence method of education. Hence, it is preferred globally for the purpose of education and entertainment. With the passage of time it became the best educator of the society and thus it was openly acknowledged, "The scale of learning through TV was large & effective" (Piddock, 2011) as compared to other media of communication. For instance; in books students take a little interest because books cannot effectively drag them into another world but TV does.

They feel themselves thousands miles away in different world if TV is showing it. It takes students to new environments (the moon, a foreign country etc). Now due to TV, it is not difficult for a person living in dense forests of Africa or deserts of Asia to know about other parts of the world. TV is not limited to surface of the earth but it has given the knowledge about what is inside the earth, oceans or in the space (EDC's Center for Children and Technology, 2004). Now TV is being properly used for education. TV has become an essential component or student support service in distance education. Distance education system fulfills the educational needs of people who are from far-flung or backward or rural areas that had the least facilities to get education. In this way, TV has now become integral part of the entire education process (Xureb, 2006). Thus, television is used for educational purposes and considered the best for the education of early childhood particularly (Wood, 2003).

Literature Review

TV & Education

Aletha C. Huston (1994) of the University of Texas in Austin contributed much about effectiveness of TV. He conducted the research over 3 years on effects of TV on 200 children of 2-7 years. Children were assessed keeping in view their reading skill, math & vocabulary skills. It was found by the researcher that younger children, especially

those aged 2 and 3, who watched educational programs for a few hours a week had the best score in academic tests 3 years later than those children who did not watch the programs. It was noted that the watching educational television may be an important vehicle for children to get some early learning that can really make a positive contribution. Influences such as the family's level of education and socioeconomic factors were taken into account by Huston. Another important thing was also drawn by her from the research was 'Use TV intelligently & don't ignore what your kids are watching' (Husen, 1994).

Akhter (2011) conducted a study to evaluate the effectiveness of educational television programs in distance learning system. Study indicated that ETV programs were very useful for students & majority of students get benefit of it but there were some problems as well. For example majority of students don't get the broadcasts schedule of ETV programs because of which they miss the ETV programs & approximately half of the students who view the program cannot note down the important features of program because of slow writing speed and non availability of recording facilities.

Shear (2010) found that in order to make educational television program a successful tool, activities must be planned around the program. If students are only told to watch the program, they will not get the most out of the program. For example: by asking questions, taking notes, and discussing a program. Educational television programs succeed when engagement relevant to the unit is done (Shear, 2010).

Dabaj (2011) has also done extensive work about the usefulness/advantage of TV in education. According to Dabaj (2011), due to absence of face to face communication between teachers and the students in distance education because of physical and time separation, video tapes, printed material, cassettes and instructional television are very useful in delivering instructions from tutor to students.

Advantages of Educational TV / Distance Education

1. It is helpful for the early class students who are unable to continue regular study.
2. No need of formal location in distance education.
3. In distance education system material is open for revision.
4. It is the education with minimum cost.
5. This system is not a barrier to education.
6. Distance education system is easy in access.
7. No time restriction.

8. Even, medicine and surgery is now a Distance Education course in advanced countries' universities as in British Open University.
9. Faster and the least expensive method of education even educating to much large number of people at same time (Rashid, 1998, pp. 11-13).

AIOU: A Short Background

In Pakistan, there are two distance education universities; Virtual University and Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad. Virtual University has its own TV channels which can be watched through digital and AIOU broadcasts its programs from PTV-2, a terrestrial channel. AIOU was established in 1974 for non-formal and distance education in Pakistan. It became second largest Open University of the world. In AIOU, the period for completing degrees/course depends upon the potential of students. The university along with TV utilizes other media for education such as correspondence materials, Radio and TV, satellite transmission, online teaching, non-broadcast media, tutorial instruction and group training workshops etc. To facilitate its students, AIOU broadcast TV has produced almost four hundred programs on various subjects such as science, technical, vocational subjects and other subjects (Haider,2010).

Education Policy (1972, p. 22) resulted in establishment of Open University in Pakistan as People Open University in 1974. The Policy suggested:

1. Provision of facilitate to those who cannot leave their homes for education and to those who cannot find jobs.
2. To uplift education.
3. To train teachers.
4. To give instruction and research methods for the dissemination of knowledge.
5. The University will conduct examination, award degrees, diplomas, certificates, and other academic distinctions (Allana, 1985, p.3).

Statement of the Problem

TV is considered an effective medium of distance education. AIOU has been using TV for distance education from Matric to PhD as a secondary medium. Primary medium of education in the university is books and assignments. Therefore the study was conducted to investigate impacts of TV on the students, problems faced by the students and how it can be improved.

Objectives of the Study

Objectives of this research paper are:

1. To find out the usefulness of educational TV for students in Pakistan
2. To explore effectiveness of educational TV for students in Pakistan
3. To determine access of students to educational TV in Pakistan
4. To find out the problems faced by the students to use educational TV in Pakistan

Research Questions

1. How much useful is AIOU educational TV for students?
2. How much effective is AIOU educational TV for students?
3. What is access level of AIOU educational TV by the students?
4. What are the problems to AIOU students in using TV?

Significance of the Study

This study highlights the importance of TV as a medium of education. The authorities and teachers of not only AIOU, but other distance education institutions in Pakistan or abroad will be able to sketch new policies with the help of this research. This study creates awareness about the role of AIOU TV in distance education also. The paper is important to review the teaching-learning process of AIOU TV keeping in view the findings and conclusion.

Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited only to the students of AIOU due to time and money restrictions. Following students were selected for this study:

1. Students of M.sc Department of Mass Communication at AIOU.
2. Students of M.A Distance Education at AIOU.

Research Methodology

Research Design

Survey method was used for this study. Questionnaire was developed to conduct the research.

Population of the Study

Population for the research was students enrolled in MA Media & Communication Department and MA Distance Education at AIOU.

Sample of the Study

Sample of the study consisted of 200 students enrolled in M.Sc Department of Mass Communication and students enrolled in MA Distance Education Department at AIOU.

Sampling Technique

Convenient sampling technique was used for the research.

Data Collection

A questionnaire on five point Likert's scale was used to collect the data from targeted sample. The data were collected through above mention questionnaire from responded. The researchers personally administered the questionnaire and collect the questionnaire from responded.

Table 1
Sample and Rate of Returned Questionnaires

Category	Sample Size	Returns	Percentage
Students	200	200	100%

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Collected data were scored and tabulated. Percentage was used for analysis of the data. The analyzed data were presented through tables and charts. For the analysis of the data obtained on five point Likert's scale, each category was allotted numerical value from -2 to +2. The response Strongly agree was allotted +2, Agree +1, Undecided 0, Disagree -1 and Strongly Disagree -2. For the calculation of average the numerical values of undecided were excluded.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from 200 students on questionnaire have been analyzed in this section, and findings are presented in the form of tables and descriptions below every table.

Table 2
Usefulness of AIOU TV programs in the eyes of students

No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
1.	AIOU TV programs are helpful in preparation of examination	SA	43	21.5	+ 0.90
		A	125	62.5	
		UNC	3	1.5	
		DA	24	12	
		SDA	5	2.5	
2.	The recorded AIOU TV programs are also included in the study material sent by the University	SA	6	3	-1.03
		A	22	11	
		UNC	6	3	
		DA	98	49	
		SDA	68	34	
3.	Every student can easily record AIOU TV programs and watch later on	SA	8	4	-0.83
		A	23	11.5	
		UNC	21	10.5	
		DA	109	54.5	
		SDA	39	19.5	
4.	AIOU TV Programs are facilitating students in learning process	SA	47	23.5	+ 0.80
		A	109	54	
		UNC	8	4	
		DA	26	13	
		SDA	11	5.5	
5.	AIOU TV programs decrease the dependency of students upon teachers	SA	57	28.5	+ 0.80
		A	82	41	
		UNC	17	8.5	
		DA	39	19.5	
		SDA	5	2.5	
6.	AIOU TV Programs can replace the tutors	SA	8	4	-0.74
		A	37	18.5	
		UNC	11	5.5	
		DA	95	47.5	
		SDA	49	24.5	

As far as usefulness of AIOU TV programs is concerned, the mean score of the students is +0.90, -1.03 are the students who disagreed that recorded material is sent by the university with study material to students. -0.83 disagreed that they record the program of the university easily. While +0.80 agreed that the TV programs help them in learning process. And there is a same mean score of the students (+0.80) who agree that the TV programs decrease the dependency of students upon teachers but -0.74 disagreed that the TV can replace the tutors completely.

Table 3
Effectiveness of AIOU TV programs in the eyes of students

No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
1.	Over-all quality of education is improved through AIOU TV programs	SA	67	33.5	+ 0.85
		A	84	42	
		UNC	4	2	
		DA	39	19.5	
		SDA	6	3	
2.	AIOU TV programs are not interesting	SA	11	5.5	-0.93
		A	27	13.5	
		UNC	15	4	
		DA	80	40	
		SDA	67	60.5	
3.	AIOU TV programs are presented by the experts of field	SA	27	13.5	+ 0.95
		A	142	71	
		UNC	14	7	
		DA	15	7.5	
		SDA	2	1	
5.	Summaries are given at the end of the lecture by AIOU broadcast TV	SA	64	32	+ 1.02
		A	98	49	
		UNC	9	4.5	
		DA	26	13	
		SDA	3	1.5	
6.	The presenters use language appropriate to the grade level of students	SA	88	44	+ 1.33
		A	96	48	
		UNC	5	2.5	
		DA	9	4.5	
		SDA	2	1	
7.	AIOU TV programs are friendly to students	SA	64	32	+ 0.97
		A	95	47.5	
		UNC	7	3.5	
		DA	33	16.5	
		SDA	1	0.5	
8.	AIOU TV programs are better than the radio programs	SA	60	30	+0.99
		A	108	54	
		UNC	4	2	
		DA	22	11	
		SDA	6	3	
9.	AIOU TV programs are better than the tutorial meetings by the tutor	SA	43	21.5	+ 0.63
		A	89	44.5	

UNC	17	8.5
DA	42	21
SDA	9	4.5

Mean score +0.85 showed that quality of education is improved through AIOU TV programs. -0.93 students are of the view that AIOU TV programs are 'not' interesting. +0.95 students agreed that AIOU TV programs are presented by experts of field. Mean score of +1.02 shows that summaries are presented in AIOU TV programs, in the end. +1.33 agreed that there is a proper usage of language in the programs AIOU TV and these programs are friendly to students (it was agreed by +0.97). +0.99 agreed that these programs are better than radio programs and tutorials meetings by tutors (+0.63).

Table 4

Problems of AIOU TV programs in the eyes of AIOU TV programs

No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
1.	The schedule of TV programs is not sent to the students	SA	39	19.5	+ 0.89
		A	124	62	
		UNC	8	4	
		DA	26	13	
		SDA	3	1.5	
2.	The duration of AIOU TV programs is less	SA	46	23	+ 0.80
		A	104	52	
		UNC	12	6	
		DA	31	15.5	
		SDA	7	3.5	
3.	AIOU TV programs do not cover the whole course	SA	54	27	+ 1.09
		A	124	62	
		UNC	6	3	
		DA	12	6	
		SDA	4	2	
4.	All the students of AIOU can easily access AIOU TV programs	SA	18	9	-0.69
		A	26	13	
		UNC	13	6.5	
		DA	95	47.5	
		SDA	48	24	
5.	Timing schedule of AIOU TV programs is suitable for students	SA	10	5	-0.76
		A	27	13.5	
		UNC	9	4.5	
		DA	115	57	
		SDA	39	19.5	
6.	AIOU TV programs are	SA	9	4.5	

not aired at spare time of the students	A	28	14	-0.90
	UNC	15	7.5	
	DA	84	42	
	SDA	64	32	

Mean score of the students who agreed on the statement that the schedule is not sent to them by the university is +0.89. And +0.80 agreed that time duration of the AIOU TV programs are less. In same way +1.09 students agreed that AIOU TV programs do not cover the whole course. -0.69 are of the view that they do not have easy access to TV programs. -0.76 were of the view that the timing schedule of the TV programs is suitable.

Conclusions & Discussion

The findings show that the students take AIOU TV programs as useful and informative. Moreover, the students also clearly admitted that TV programs help them in learning process and these programs decrease the dependency of students upon tutors and printed materials. On the basis of findings, following conclusions may be drawn:

1. AIOU TV programs facilitate students in learning process.
2. AIOU TV programs are helpful in preparation of examination.
3. Over-all quality of education is improved through AIOU TV programs.
4. Students take interest to AIOU TV programs.
5. AIOU TV programs are prepared by the experts of field.
6. Summaries are given at the end of the lecture by AIOU broadcast TV.
7. The presenters use language appropriate to the grade level of students.
8. AIOU TV programs are friendly to students.
9. Time duration of AIOU TV is not sufficient for students.
10. AIOU TV programs are better than the tutorial meetings by the tutor.
11. AIOU TV programs decrease the dependency of students upon teachers.
12. AIOU TV programs are better than the radio programs.
13. All the students of AIOU cannot easily access AIOU TV programs.
14. Every student cannot easily record AIOU TV programs and watch later on.

Most of the conclusions are in agreement with the previous studies conducted in some other context. For example, Naseem (2011), in his study about ETV (Pakistani terrestrial Channel), found that 58% of the

students in distance learning program watched educational TV programs and they found them interesting. Naseem (2011) also found that 62% audiences said these programs increased in their knowledge, for 55% those programs are very helpful for preparation of course assignments and examination, and 75% said they cannot record the program due to various reasons.

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