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Everyday Life Information Seeking Patterns of Resident Female University Students in Pakistan

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Abstract: Purpose: Everyday life information seeking (ELIS) is essential for the mastery of life and plays a central role in the daily problem-solving activities of all human beings. This study aimed to investigate the everyday life information seeking of female university students residing at hostels in Lahore, Pakistan. Design/methodology/approach: A quantitative research approach using a survey method was adopted to identify the dimensions of ELIS and to fill the paucity of research on the topic. Two-hundred and forty-eight female students living in various university and private hostels in Lahore, Pakistan, were surveyed, and the collected data was analyzed using Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. Findings: Results of the study revealed that hostel living expanded the social circle of students, as it offered exposure to diverse multicultural social groups. Female students living in hostels required information related to their academic needs, safety concerns, social life, and self-help issues. They relied mainly on mobiles phones, the internet, social media, and inter-personal relationships for everyday information. Cultural differences, natural hesitation, language barriers, time concerns, and difficulty in identifying reliable information were the primary obstacles in meeting everyday life information needs. Originality/value: The findings of this study can be used as a premise for developing interventions and information services for female students that allow them to live comfortably in a safe environment in hostels and achieve their educational goals. The study results may also provide useful insights for university administrations to establish libraries in hostels to better cater to their female residents' information needs.

Keywords: everyday life; information seeking; information behaviour; hostel; female; students

1. Introduction

An understanding of people's information behaviour is essential before designing a needs-based information delivery system for them [1–7]. This perception resulted in a great amount of research focusing on individuals from various contexts, e.g., academia, workplace, and everyday life [8]. Everyday life information seeking (ELIS) has been investigated using individuals and groups from different fields (e.g., investors, historians, grocery shoppers). Likewise, a number of inquiries have examined the ELIS of students [8–12]. A perusal of published ELIS research indicated that only a few studies [8] appeared to have been conducted so far investigating the ELIS of students moving from either small cities or rural areas to large cities.

According to the UNESCO Science Report: towards 2030, the number of international students living worldwide for education has increased from 2.8 million to 4.1 million (Facts

and figures: Mobility in higher education, n.d.) [13]. A large number of individuals in developing countries migrate from rural areas to big cities for higher education and better socio-economic opportunities (World Migration Report, 2018) [14]. In Pakistan, a significant number of students come to famous universities from a wide geographical area lacking access to higher education. These students usually have limited exposure to big city life and face difficulties in making adjustments in the urban context. These students reside either in university hostels or private residences for accommodation and encounter a number of socio-economic problems in adjusting to new situations [15,16]. These students have an acute need for comfortable accommodation with a conducive environment that allows them to fulfill their primary objectives of research and education [17]. Living away from their families for a long period of time is a challenging experience for female students [18]. Their successful adjustment in their new environment can contribute towards their overall quality of life, quality of education, and productivity at university. However, the cultural and language barriers, as well as one's own natural hesitation in a new place, can hinder the facts and figures pursuing behaviour of individuals in a foreign environment [19]. Recent advances in information and communication technologies have helped overcome these hurdles and facilitated the data-seeking process for these students. They can now access multiple information resources from the comfort of their own homes [11]. The network of exploration instruments, societal interaction platforms, printed resources, acquaintances, and outmoded broadcasting channels are the top most sources for hunting routine life data, while the lack of credibility and relevance of the information available via these sources present as major challenges for ELIS [11]. Furthermore, students are unable to effectively evaluate the quality of accessed information due to poor information literacy (IL) skills [20]; it is also more challenging for international students to evaluate ELIS information sources than academic sources [20].

Student hostel accommodations have never received much attention in Pakistan, even though the higher education institutions in the country face an annual challenge of trying to arrange accommodation for the high numbers of students admitted to universities, and to maintain their hostel facilities according to reasonable standards. The number of students entering higher education has steadily increased over the years; therefore, the demand for hostel accommodation for university students has also gradually increased. The *Express Tribune* [21] reported on the pros and cons of the hostel facilities provided by higher education institutes in Pakistan. The public higher education institutes in Lahore, Pakistan, such as the University of the Punjab and the Government College University have an intake of thousands of students annually, of which a large number are females. However, there is a shortage of student accommodation for these female students in Lahore. Furthermore, students enrolled in evening programs are generally excluded from university housing and have to resort to living in private hostels in the city. Other major cities of Pakistan, such as Islamabad, Karachi, and Peshawar have similar situations, where hostel facilities for female students are overcrowded and in short supply. Factors such as a lack of proper accommodation, roommate selection, food facilities, library facilities, medical facilities, sports facilities, as well as the location of the hostels and safety and security situations at these premises can significantly affect the academic performance of students living in these hostels [22]. These factors need to be addressed to improve the academic performance of hostel students in the future [22].

In view of the above, resident university students need everyday life information for proper assimilation into university and urban life [23]. Savolainen [24] discussed the everyday life information seeking (ELIS) in the context of the "way of life and mastery of life" in 1995. The way of life and mastery of life concepts introduce the role of information seeking in the everyday problem-solving activities of an individual and how it helps one master one's life. An understanding of the ELIS experiences of students in hostel residences, especially females during their stays at hostels in larger cities, would be of great interest to the library and information science professionals considering the nature of male-dominant and culturally sensitive societies. Therefore, the present research aimed to

investigate the ELIS of female university students residing either on campus residence or in private hostels in Lahore. The ELIS of resident university female students with either a rural background or from small urban cities refers here to non-work information seeking. The Savolainen framework is important in getting a pragmatic insight into individuals' ELIS activities and providing a more structured way to present information-seeking results (Given, 2002). This helps not only to gain an understanding of the information needs related to the issue of primary, secondary, and marginal interests, but also to identify the information sources in order of their importance i.e., primary, secondary, and marginal. The identification of the critical everyday life information needs of female students along with the key information sources contributing to the mastery of life would be helpful in empowering female students with the provision of everyday information. Furthermore, removing barriers restricting resident female university students' ELIS would also empower females personally, academically, and professionally to solve their socioeconomic problems independently in a male-dominant and culturally sensitive society like Pakistan. These results would be useful for university and library administrations in designing a needs-based information infrastructure addressing the everyday life information needs of resident university students, which would ultimately bring sustainability in their personal and academic development, and prepare them for effective professional and societal roles in the sustainable national development of Pakistan.

2. Research Questions

This study addressed specifically the following research questions. Although these questions are stated practically, they also have a theoretical relevance to ELIS. Addressing the first two questions brings insight into the critical everyday life information needs of female students along with the key information sources, as there is little research on the ELIS of female students so far. However, answering question three would expand Savolainen's framework.

- What type of information do resident female university students need related to their everyday life?
- What sources of information do resident female university students approach in accessing everyday life information?
- What obstacles do these female students face in seeking information associated with everyday life?

3. Literature Review

3.1. Overview of Everyday Life Information Seeking Research

There is a sizeable amount of literature focusing on everyday life information seeking (ELIS) of individuals and groups from different contexts (e.g., investors, historians, grocery shoppers). Similarly, several studies have investigated the ELIS of students [9,10,12]. Some studies have focused on the role of the internet, news, and social media in the ELIS of students [9,11,12,25], while others focused theoretically on ELIS [24,26–28]. Savolainen [24] approached ELIS more broadly and argued that work and non-work (job related) information seeking overlapped and could not be separated. Given [27] identified an overlap between academic and everyday information needs and reported that students' everyday experiences also informed their academic activities (students' chosen assignment topics related to their part time occupation), which reinforced Savolainen's framework. More broadly, Savolainen [26] discussed two approaches to ELIS: seeking orienting information and seeking problem-specific information. Problem-solving information refers to information needed for solving a problem or completing a task whereas orienting information relates to information about everyday events. Savolainen [26] also developed a framework by combining concepts of regions of relevance [29] and information source horizon [30], and added a third component of source preference criteria to examine the seeking of orienting information of environmental activists (Figure 1). According to Schutz and Luckman [29], there are four major regions of relevance: the world within our reach is

the primary region of relevance, the world within our potential reach is the second region of relevance, relatively irrelevant regions, and irrelevant regions. They were of the view that people structure their everyday life based on their interests. Sonnenwald [30] introduced the concept of an information horizon that can consist of a variety of information sources with which all of us can interact.
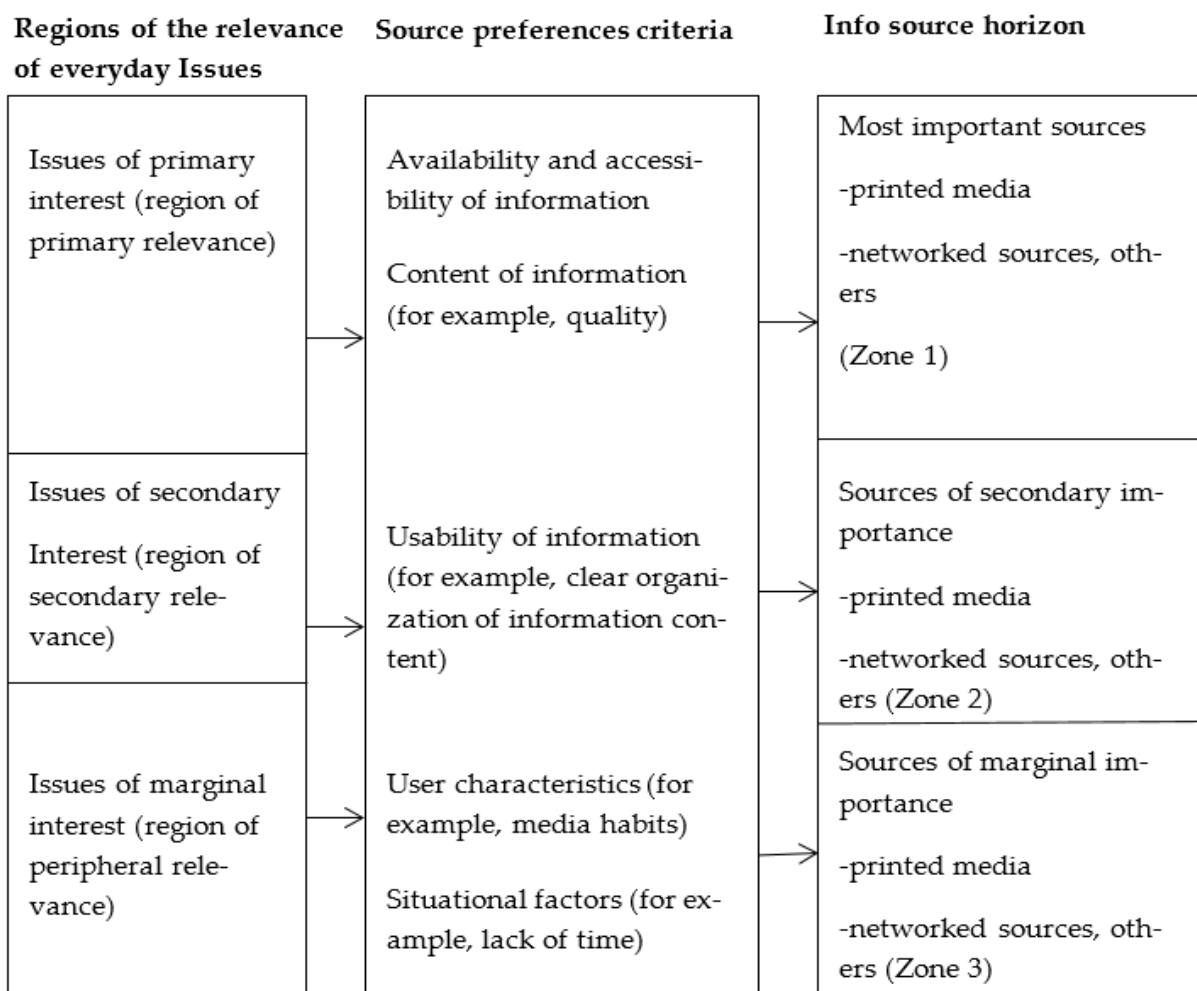
Regions of the relevance of everyday Issues	Source preferences criteria	Info source horizon
Issues of primary interest (region of primary relevance)	Availability and accessibility of information Content of information (for example, quality)	Most important sources -printed media -networked sources, others (Zone 1)
Issues of secondary Interest (region of secondary relevance)	Usability of information (for example, clear organization of information content)	Sources of secondary importance -printed media -networked sources, others (Zone 2)
Issues of marginal interest (region of peripheral relevance)	User characteristics (for example, media habits) Situational factors (for example, lack of time)	Sources of marginal importance -printed media -networked sources, others (Zone 3)

Figure 1. Information source horizons and source preferences in the context of seeking orienting information. (Adapted from Savolainen [26], p. 1712).

3.2. Everyday Life Information Needs

According to Sin and Kim [11], the everyday life information needs of international students, both males and females, were centered on finance, wellness, home country news, housing, and entertainment. Waiyahong [31] performed a survey to investigate the ELIS activities of students at Mahasarakham University, Thailand, and the obstacles faced by them when searching for information relevant to their everyday life problems. It was found that the students searched for current news, and work-, health-, and travel-related information that they needed for their daily routines. They utilised search engines such as Google, Yahoo, and Bing as well as Wikipedia for this purpose. The study of Yoon and Chung [32] reported the daily information needs of foreign students from diverse backgrounds centred on their financial matters, health and fitness, country of residence, accommodation, entertainment, food/drink, transportation, interpersonal connections, and their self-identities, and was deemed essential for their knowledge needs. Generally, specific attributes as well as socio-cultural expectations and convictions decide how female graduates embrace challenges and whether certain knowledge needs arising from regular

challenges, in comparison to others, promote certain searching behaviours [33]. This has been extensively discussed in literature by Barahmand et al. [33], who opined that the difficulty in accessing information regarding advanced knowledge domains for ELIS university students is one of the areas that was not previously studied. A comprehensive analysis of the challenges of ELIS faced by international students showed that students had difficulty in finding knowledge relevant to their personal growth, interpersonal relationships, culture, and customs [20].

3.3. Everyday Life Information Sources

Agosto and Hassell [9] explored the urban young students' ELIS behaviour with the supposition that the avenues employed by young students for pursuing daily data gathering were determined by the societal beliefs that had surrounded them during their lives. They discovered that first-year students considered their human contacts such as friends and family members as reliable sources of ELIS as compared to libraries and books. They also used electronic media such as telephones, computers, radio, and television as sources for everyday information seeking [32]. Another study was carried out by Mawby, Foster, and Ellis [34] on the everyday life information seeking behaviour of students in relation to their environment in the context of family and social networks, with a primary focus on "disposable information". They concluded that the participants chose to expend their efforts only to obtain quality information according to their needs. Furthermore, they opted to continue receiving information from a given source only if they perceived the information to be valuable; otherwise they readily disposed of it. They often searched for information on Facebook pages to complete their academic tasks, especially for examination purposes. Most of the studies conducted on ELIS have shown that students use social networking sites (SNSs) for everyday information seeking [11,32].

Williamson et al. [12] investigated the effect of information on the daily lives of young students (aged 18 to 25) in Australian universities. They also looked at the role played by media in presenting information to these young adults. They noticed that while the participants used social media to connect with their peers, they seemed to rely on conventional print media for obtaining access to information related to real life issues. The researchers also explored the role of news media in their participants' lives while engaging in daily information seeking. Contrary to expectations, the results revealed that print media still played an important role in the lives of young students on a daily basis. On the other hand, the various social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc.) were perceived to be important for staying in touch with friends.

Similarly, Yoon, J., and Chung, E. [32] conducted a study on international students to determine their everyday information seeking behaviour and the role of social networking sites in their lives. They reported that international students found the process of adjusting in a foreign country to be very stressful. Consequently, most international students and extroverts were heavily dependent on social networking sites, such as Facebook, for fulfilling their everyday information needs [32]. It has been found that social networking sites could be positive predictors of perceived effectiveness of acquired information for daily information needs. They contribute towards the satisfaction of the daily information needs of their users, and also help them in simplifying the information seeking method, enabling them to embrace the different ethos of a foreign land [11].

3.4. Obstacles Faced in Seeking Everyday Information

It has been pointed out by Barahmand et al. [33] that the transition to university life is a stressful time for most students as it is an occasion to overcome multiple challenges on a daily basis. Many new college students seek a large amount of everyday life information in adjusting to new situations and roles. A perusal of published material indicated that the successful acquisition of day-to-day relevant knowledge is essential for students' smooth transition to university life [35]. Only a few studies have examined the different aspects of ELIS among university students, especially temporary migrants who migrate from small

cities to big cities for higher education [33]. It has been pointed out that students face obstacles in finding specific and updated information because searching multiple databases as part of a daily routine is difficult, and the reliability of information sources is occasionally not known [36]. The obstacles to everyday life information seeking have nothing to do with the Savolainen's framework, and are based on the general information seeking research expanding Savolainen's framework.

Jeong [37] has reported that Korean undergraduate students, both males and females, suffered from language issues when communicating with their American peers in English. As a result of this language barrier, they were limited to seeking everyday information from within their ethnic community, such as the Korean church, etc. Consequently, the local ethnic community maintained strong bonds with these students to help them survive in American society. A further investigation was conducted to investigate the different types of information needs of these students. It revealed that everyday life information seeking was more challenging for the participants of the study as compared to seeking information for educational purposes. The students accessed the information and its related sources according to their respective personality traits, and consulted selective online resources through social networking sites. International students also faced many challenges while trying to obtain information related to their work/careers, finances, legal, and health issues [38]. Furthermore, these study-related and daily information requisites last for an extended duration for these foreign students [36].

3.5. Everyday Life Information Seeking Research in Pakistan

In Pakistan, there was a dearth of studies focusing on everyday life information seeing. Of these studies, Memon, Solangi, and Abro [39] analysed the level of students' satisfaction with the available facilities in their hostels. Findings indicated the existence of strong significant relationships between the various parameters investigated i.e., food quality, cleanliness, water supply, and first aid, for students living in hostels. Furthermore, it was highlighted that hostel and university management needed to improve the quality of services provided in university hostels in order to facilitate the students living there. Similarly, Iftikhar and Ajmal [40] conducted a qualitative study to investigate the effects of hostel life on students' personalities and behaviours. They found that hostel life had a beneficial impact on the students' educational journey as well as their personalities. Students who became part of multicultural social groups during their hostel lives became more confident, punctual, adaptable, realistic, and social individuals who did not shy away from new challenges. Students' satisfaction with their lives was found to play a very important role in helping them reach their educational goals. Shakeel, Shakeel, and Fatima [41] also found that the day scholar students were more satisfied with their lives as compared to the students who were living in hostel accommodations. The recent qualitative study by Naveed et al. [8] explored the everyday life information seeking (ELIS) of postgraduate students living in the residence halls of the University of the Punjab, Lahore, using a critical incident technique. The results revealed that the students' everyday life information needs were centered on health, socio-economic, cultural, technological, and legal issues. Inter-personal relationships, mass-media, and social media were the most reliable sources for everyday life information. Some students distrusted the quality and scope of information received from news and social media.

It is evident from the literature review that students need current information regarding the academic-, health-, and travel-related issues in their daily lives. They also appear to be heavy users of social networking sites in order to stay in touch with their friends and families and to seek everyday life information to survive away from home. However, they have to face multiple obstacles in their everyday life information seeking (ELIS). It has been found that there is a significant gap in the literature on everyday life information seeking (ELIS) from the perspective of national and international students who live in hostel accommodation. This study substantially fills this gap and strengthens the existing literature on ELIS.

4. Methodology

The study employed a quantitative research design similar to the previous research studies [12,39] conducted on the topic. The study population comprised female students who were enrolled in public sector universities at any academic level (undergraduate, graduate, and post graduate) and were either living in university or private hostels in Lahore, Pakistan. The researchers purposively selected four of the oldest public sector universities in Lahore, namely, University of the Punjab, King Edward Medical University, University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, and Government College University Lahore, as it was possible for the researchers to obtain access to survey participants for data collection. The recruitment of the survey participants was made using a convenience sampling technique as a list of students enrolled in these universities was not available for random selection. To increase the generalisation of this study, the researchers tried to select a balanced sample from the four universities. The four selected universities are degree-awarding institutions located in Lahore, Pakistan, and have a long history of awarding world-recognised degrees in medical sciences, animal sciences, social sciences, and other disciplines. The researchers were not able to obtain the official numbers of female students residing in the selected universities' hostels, but were able to come to an approximation via unofficial channels such as personal contact and internet searches, etc. There were approximately 3633 female students enrolled in the selected public sector universities and residing either at university or private hostels. A sample size of 348 students was calculated with a 5% margin of error and 95% confidence interval using an online sample size calculator.

The study population was surveyed using a questionnaire as a data collection instrument to meet the objectives of the study. The questionnaire was developed based on an extensive review of the related literature on everyday life information seeking. The initial draft of the questionnaire was submitted to a panel of experts in the field of information management for review/content validation, and revised accordingly. The revised questionnaire was then pre-tested among the female students residing in GC University hostels and was revised based on the feedback gained after the pilot testing. The participants were requested to participate in the survey on a volunteer basis. There were three sections of the questionnaire. Th first section introduced the research topic, its significance, value of participation in the survey, confidentiality, and anonymity statement. The second section comprised the questions related to everyday life information needs, information sources, and obstacles faced in information seeking. The participants were asked to express their level of agreements on a five-point Likert scale, such as strongly agree = 5, agree = 4, neutral = 3, disagree = 2, and strongly disagree = 1. The last section included questions regarding personal information. The duration required to fill the survey was approximately 10–15 min. The questionnaire was distributed personally by one of the researchers, who made multiple visits to the female hostels to collect the filled responses. Consequently, 248 usable questionnaires (71% of the sample) were collected. It is worth mentioning here that the data were collected from first-year students both from undergraduate and postgraduate programs. The survey data was analyzed by using the Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version-21).

5. Results

This section is stuructured as follows. First, the demographic characteristics of the survey sample are described. Second, the results regarding everyday life information seeking are presented, which include the answers to first two research questions. Lastly, the results concerning the obstacles that resident students faced in seeking everyday life information are presented, which include the answer to third research qestion.

5.1. Demographic Characteristics

An analysis of the data showed that a slightly higher number of female students (n = 132; 53.2%) resided in private hostels as compared to those who lived in university

hostels (*n* = 116; 46.8%). Respondents were asked about their contemporaries, because different hypothetical disciplines had enrolled them. The largest age group was 21 to 30 years of age (*n* = 239; 96.4%), with six (2.4%) aged between 31–40 years, and only three (1.2%) over 40 years of age. With regard to academics, almost half of the respondents (51.2%) were studying for an undergraduate degree, 33.5% for a graduate degree, and only 15.3% were enrolled in a post-graduate program. As for their academic disciplines, most of the respondents belonged to the discipline of science and technology (45.1%), followed by allied and health sciences (25.8%), social sciences and humanities (23.4%), and management sciences (5.7%). As for their native province, a significant number of respondents (87.1%) belonged to the province of Punjab, followed by Sindh (5.2%), KPK (4%), and Baluchistan (3.6%). Table 1 presents the demographic data of the respondents according to their type of hostel, age, education, discipline, and province of residence. It is worth mentioning here that the survey participants were newcomers to universities and were in their first semester when data was gathered for this research.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics.

Characteristics	Frequency	(%)
Hostel		
University	116	46.8
Private	132	53.2
Age (years old)		
21–30 years	239	96.4
31–40 years	6	2.4
Over 40	3	1.2
Education		
Under-graduation	127	51.2
Graduation	83	33.5
Post-graduation	38	15.3
Disciplines		
Faculty of science and technology	112	45.1
Faculty of allied and health sciences	64	25.8
Faculty of social sciences and humanities	58	23.4
Faculty of management sciences	14	5.7
Province of residence		
Sindh	13	5.2
Punjab	216	87.1
Baluchistan	9	3.6
KPK	10	4.0

5.2. Everyday Life Informaiton Seeking

5.2.1. Research Question 1: Everyday Life Information Needs

Respondents were asked about the different types of everyday life information needs they considered were necessary for their survival in the dormitories/hostels. A predetermined list of 15 different types of everyday life information needs was given in the questionnaire and the respondents were asked to rank them on a five-point scale, such as strongly agree = 5, agree = 4, neutral = 3, disagree = 2, and strongly disagree = 1. The list of everyday life information needs was drafted based on an extensive literature review, expert review, and polit testing. The results revealed that the everyday life information needs of the resident female university students were centered primarily on academic institutions, safety, and self-help information, as these categories achieved mean scores of 3.93 and above. The information needs related to culture, social life, personal development, entertainment, legal issues, shopping places, finance, current affairs, and transportation were perceived by these female students as secondary interests as these categories achieved mean scores of 3.73 and above. However, these respondents seemed to have marginal interest in information related to music, weather, and meal selection, as these categories were ranked at the bottom of the list (see Table 2).

Table 2. Types of everyday life information needs.

Types	Mean	SD
Academic institutions	4.21	0.82
Safety needs	4.02	1.02
Self-help information	3.93	0.91
Cultural information	3.85	0.92
Social life/leisure activities	3.84	0.90
Personal development	3.84	1.07
Entertainment/Recreational places	3.83	1.05
Legal information	3.79	0.99
Information regarding shopping centres/malls etc.	3.77	0.95
Personal finance	3.77	1.04
Current events	3.75	1.02
Transportation	3.73	0.90
Music	3.67	1.12
Weather	3.64	0.92
Meal selection/Hotels	3.58	1.08

Note. 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

5.2.2. Research Question 2: Everyday Life Information Sources

The respondents were asked about the sources that they used to seek everyday life information. A list of 13 sources was provided and the respondents were asked to rank them on a five-point scale as per their preferences. Results presented in Table 3 indicate that respondents strongly agreed that mobile phones were their main source of everyday life information while living in hostels (mean value 4.19). The second source of everyday information was identified as the internet i.e., web search engines (mean value 4.18), followed by friends/seniors/classmates and family members/relatives (mean scores of 4.17 and 4.14 respectively), social networking sites (mean scores of 4.0), and teachers (mean scores of 4.0). Books/magazines, newspapers, libraries, and television were sources of secondary importance for these female university students, as the mean scores of these sources ranged between 3.63 and 3.81. However, female hostel residents ranked maps, hostel staff, and radio as information sources of marginal importance (mean 3.31, 3.25, and 3.05).

Table 3. Sources of everyday life information seeking.

Sources	Mean	SD
Mobile Phonesphones	4.19	0.86
Internet (web search engines)	4.18	0.94
Friends/Seniors/Classmates	4.17	0.86
Family members/Relatives	4.14	0.89
Social networking sites	4.00	1.02
Teachers	4.00	0.83
Books/Magazine	3.81	1.09
Newspaper	3.69	1.12
Libraries	3.68	1.10
Television	3.63	1.15
Map	3.31	1.21
Hostel staff	3.25	1.118
Radio	3.05	1.14

Note. 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

5.3. Research Question 3: Obstacles in Seeking Everyday Life Information

The respondents were asked to state the obstacles they faced while trying to seek everyday life information. Findings revealed that the different obstacles faced by the respondents in seeking everyday life information included "cultural differences", "natural

hesitation", and "separation from near and dear ones" (mean value 3.76, 3.76, and 3.71). Table 4 also indicates that other obstacles included were "time-consuming to adjust in a new environment" and "new location/new environment", with similar mean values of 3.67, followed by "language barriers" and "difficult to identify reliable information" with a mean value of 3.63. It is worth mentioning that the respondents were least affected by "difficult to find information on web" (mean = 3.20) and "fear in seeking information" (mean = 3.42).

Table 4. Obstacles in seeking everyday life information.

Obstacles	Mean	SD
Cultural differences	3.76	1.07
Natural hesitation	3.76	0.92
Separation from near and dear ones	3.71	1.12
Time consuming to adjust in new environment at new location	3.67	1.02
New location/New environment	3.67	0.97
Language barriers	3.63	0.97
Difficult to identify reliable information	3.63	0.96
Unavailability of Internet	3.59	1.17
Fear/Horrors	3.42	1.12
Difficult to find information on web	3.20	1.12

Note. 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

6. Discussion

This section discusses the results of the study in light of the available research literature. A closer look at the results indicated that most of these female university students belonged to the age group 21–30 years, enrolled in undergraduate programs, and belonged to science disciplines and Punjab. The first research question of this study was "What type of information do the resident female university students need related to their everyday life?". The results suggest that information regarding academic institutions, safety needs, and self-help were the most significant types of everyday life information needed by the resident female university students. It can be postulated that the trend of educating females has grown among far-flung areas of the country, resulting in their having to travel and live away from their cities of birth for the purpose of education. It is very important for females to obtain information about their educational institutes and their safety concerns in order to survive outside their homes. In many areas of Pakistan, females are prohibited from travelling and living outside; therefore, a safe educational and living environment is of utmost importance for those students who are allowed to do so. Other types of ELIS such as (1) self-help information, (2) culture information, (3) social life/leisure activities, (4) personal life, and (5) entertainment/recreational places appeared as information needs of secondary importance. At their homes the students have the support of their family members, while at a hostel they are on their own and have to rely on different types of sources to seek everyday life information essential for their survival. This can be very stressful for some. These results appeared to be consistent with that of Naveed et al. [8], who also reported the everyday life information needs of resident university students at the University of the Punjab were related to their health, socio-economic, cultural, technological, and legal issues. Similar results were reported by Gómez-Galán et al. [42], who found that Latin American college students were interested in such everyday topics for open innovation.

The second research question was "What sources of information do the resident female university students approach in accessing everyday life information?". Mobile phones, internet, friends/family/relatives, social networking sites, and teachers appeared as the primary sources of everyday life information. Moreover, books/magazines, newspapers, libraries, and television were sources of secondary importance for these female university students. However, female hostel residents ranked maps, hostel staff, and radio as information sources of marginal importance. These results are in line with the existing

literature on ELIS. Agosto and Hassell [9], Jeong [37], Sin and Kim [11], and Williamson et al. [12] have previously highlighted students' demand for availability of a variety of sources for the purpose of ELIS at hostels. These sources contribute to satisfying their daily information needs and also help them in simplifying the process of embracing a different ethos. They also play a pivotal role in overcoming homesickness i.e., staying connected with their families back home. Similar results were reported by Gómez-Galán et al. [43], as college students are addicted to mobile phones and social networks. These results are partially in line with those of Naveed et al. [8], who reported inter-personal relationships, mass-media, and social media as the most reliable sources for everyday life information for resident university students (both males and females).

The respondents were asked a number of questions to answer the third research question, "What obstacles do these female students face in seeking information associated with the everyday life?". Their responses showed that they faced multiple obstacles such as cultural differences, natural hesitation, separation from near and dear ones, the time required to adjust in a new environment, new location, language barriers, reliable information, and others. Similarly, Sin at el. [38] also highlighted the challenges faced by international students when trying to survive in a new place away from their homes. However, it has also been reported that all of these challenges help students to polish their innate abilities, allowing them to survive in a diverse society and excel academically. They also make them more confident and adaptable, with strong management and leadership skills.

7. Limitation of the Study and Future Research Directions

There were certain limitations of this study. Firstly, the study is limited by its sample size. A total of 248 students enrolled in four universities and living in university and private hostels took part in the study. This has limited the generalisation of the research findings in the context of sample size. Secondly, there may a sampling bias, as the survey participants were recruited through a convenient sampling procedure due to the non-availability of lists for random selection. The convenient recruitment of the sample may bring under- or over-representation of the population. Therefore, these results may be biased and cannot be generalised to the whole population of hostel students. Thirdly, the data was collected from only four universities in the city of Lahore; this may restrict the implications of the findings as well. Fourthly, although the pre-determined response categories to ELIS were mutually exclusive, exhaustive, and prepared based on an extensive literature review, expert advice, and pilot-testing, they might affect the quality of results. Lastly, this study exclusively focused on the female students living in university and private hostels. It is recommended that future studies expand the geographical location, increase the sample size, and also include the male gender to further explore the different attributes of hostel life and its influence on the ELIS behaviour of students all over Pakistan.

8. Implications

The population of this study comprised resident university female students from smaller cities of Pakistan, a developing non-western country. Therefore, this research extends the ELIS scope by adding a new dimension of temporary migrants and providing a pragmatic insight into trans-national perspectives on ELIS. Moreover, the research adds to the knowledge base of ELIS by expanding the information source horizon framework developed by Savolainen [26] by adding the aspect of obstacles in everyday life. Future researchers may use the expanded framework to get a holistic picture of different population groups.

The results of this research offer different managerial implications for university and private hostel administrations to significantly assess their hostel students' needs regarding the delivery of resources and services at hostels, and to improve the performance of university hostels by providing a safe and quality living environment for students. The findings also provide valuable insights to university administrations, enabling them to establish new hostels to accommodate the growing number of female students in state-of-

the-art residential facilities on university premises. Given the number of students living in private accommodation, university administrations can also consider developing private partnerships with private hostels to accommodate the increased intake of female students in reliable, safe, and easily accessible private hostels. Library and information departments and university administrations can also consider establishing libraries in student hostels to cater to the everyday life information needs of students. Furthermore, the government of Pakistan should also consider allocating funds exclusively not only for designing a needs-based information delivery system for hostel students in general, so that the information needs of resident university students related to their everyday life might be catered to, but also for the provision of conducive, safe, and secure living environments for female students living away from their homes in particular, as these women are an asset for any nation and should be facilitated in every way possible.

The results also have practical implications for both hostel and library administrations. On-campus or hostel consultancy services can be planned for supporting students coming from smaller cities to overcome difficulties in light of their everyday life information needs and adjusting to university and big city life. Some American universities use a "host family" approach, whereby every foreign student is attached to a local family for regular contact, which makes the student's adjustment easier. Similar practices could be adopted by Pakistani universities. Library staff should design information services focusing on the everyday life of university students.

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

When students, especially females, move either from small cities or from rural areas to larger cities for higher education, they encounter many problems with regard to their adjustment to big city life during their studies. It is a very difficult process, especially for young women in relatively conservative societies like Pakistan, as they have to make socio-economic adjustments such as housing, food, health, and security. They need everyday information to resolve such issues, and this aspect has not received due attention so far in the literature. If these issues remain unresolved due to a lack of information and institutional support, they might affect their academic achievement and research productivity. Therefore, the present research investigated the everyday life information seeking behaviour of female students residing at universities and private hostels in Lahore, so that a needs-based information infrastructure might be designed for the efficient and effective delivery of everyday information to hostel residents. The results indicated that these female university students need everyday information with regard to their basic survival. The respondents use multiple information sources such as mobile phones, friends, roommates, social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.), and teachers. The cultural differences, natural hesitation, separation from near and dear ones, lack of familiarity with the new environment, language barriers, difficulty in adjusting to a new environment, difficulty to identify reliable information, and non-availability of the internet were the primary obstacles restricting their access to needed everyday life information. This research contributed to the existing literature by addressing the paucity of research focusing on the ELIS of resident university female students moving from smaller cities and rural areas in a developing country to study in urban universities. Although the results are context-bound, they are significant for future researchers. This study may encourage the timely intervention by university and library administrations, policy makers, and hostel wardens for the provision not only of a needs-based information delivery system for hostel residents, but also of a safe and conducive environment that will improve the quality of their everyday lives, bring sustainability to their personal and academic performance, and develop them as active life-long learners participating in the sustainable socio-economic and political development of Pakistan and other developing countries.

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