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## Use of Web Resources by the Postgraduate Students across Genders

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# **Use of Web Resources by the Postgraduate Students across Genders**

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## **Abstract**

*Purpose: The study seeks to elicit information on gender difference with regards to the familiarity with IT, Search Engines, Automated Library Services and Electronic Information Resources. It also aims to determine the frequency of use of various Automated Library Services and Electronic Information Resources and the influence of the Internet on the information seeking behavior of the postgraduate students.*

*Methodology: The study adopted a survey method administering the well-structured questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed with equal proportion based on gender among 208 PG students of science and social science faculty selected by stratified random sampling technique.*

*Findings: The study revealed that the Internet to a greater extent has influenced information seeking behaviour of more females (39.4%) than males (32.7%). Further, the study revealed that the numbers of search engines that are known to respondents are very few (Google & Yahoo). It was seen that both male and female postgraduate students are moderately aware of library services like Circulation, Reference, and Internet services rendered in the university library. Also, such services are being used by most of the respondents across both the genders. The results further show that there is an extremely low awareness level across the genders regarding the e-resources provided by the university library.*

*Implication: The study implies that it provides fresh data to the library management on the awareness and use of library services and e-resources by the postgraduate students. Besides, the study will be useful for policy-makers in the library and also it contributes to the literature.*

### **Keywords**

Information Seeking Behaviour, Internet Literacy, Information Technology Know-how, Search engines, Electronic Resources, Gender Differences

### **Introduction**

The inception of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is widely considered as the most important revolution humankind has ever experienced. It has a tremendous role in the transformation of social, economic, and political scenario globally. It has transformed the world into a knowledge economy, with knowledge as the key raw material and source of value for development. Even the nature of jobs and other services is changing rapidly; they are becoming increasingly dependent on information (Grillon, 1994).

The Internet has increasingly become a vital tool for business, education, governance, and entertainment, and it has become a crucial mechanism for success in these endeavors. As more and more technological innovations emerge, the format of information-bearing resources is changing rapidly. With the introduction of the Internet and the World Wide Web, information has become more accessible than it could have ever been in the print form, and it is now viewed as a key resource and asset in every sphere of life. According to Grillon (1994), the entrance into the information age has had many impacts on our way of life, most important of these impacts is the changes in information storage and retrieval, information access and dissemination. The advances in technology and e-publishing have made access to information on a local, regional, national and international level easier, by overcoming the traditional barriers of time and space. The amount of scholarly literature in the form of full-text journals, books, reports, etc., published in electronic medium has increased exponentially. All this has led to the information explosion, which has made it difficult for students, especially scholars to keep track of the developments in their field of interest.

With easy accessibility to the new information added and disseminated on the Internet every day, information needs and information behavior of users also keeps on changing. Different users have different information needs and thus different information seeking behavior. According to Catalano (2013), the information needs of students vary from discipline to discipline so their information needs are diverse. Gender is also one of the intervening variables in information seeking behavior (Wilson, 1997). Several studies conducted on the patterns of male and female use of ICT and electronic resources, access to the Internet, computer and Internet competencies have established gender inequalities (Oyeniya, 2013). Before 1990s women were considered to have less expertise with computers than Men (Wasserman and Richmond, 2005). But with the accelerated growth of new technologies, the gap between men and

women about Internet access and use had almost diminished with time (Nie and Erbring, 2000; Norris, 2001). Since then, numerous survey studies (Cummings and Krout, 2002) have shown women as the new age Internet users. Thus, the present study aims at evaluating information behavior of PG students of the University of Kashmir under the light of gender.

### **Literature Review**

Access to knowledge is an important asset for development to every human being. At the point when clients of a library are exposed to the information resources available in a specific library, they stand an opportunity of accessing them and using them wisely to fulfill their information needs. As a result, optimum utilization of information resources by users is possible only when they are aware of those resources provided by the library (Ankrah & Atuase 2018). While examining the Use and User Perception of Electronic Information Resources Chandran (2013) found that the majority of respondents (95.12%) were aware of electronic resources in the library and the types of electronic resources utilized generally by the respondents were e-journals and e-databases with usage rates of 26.01% and 24.39% respectively. On comparing the awareness of different e-resources between the users of science and social science faculties Nazir (2015) found that awareness level of social science faculty users is far less than users of science faculty. The reason behind the unawareness is less exposure to computers and the Internet. Other reasons were the lack of library professionals which will guide them and lack of departmental computer labs in almost all departments. Loan (2012) conducted a study to evaluate the online information literacy of social science research scholars. The results reveal that majority of the scholars are aware and make use of search engines and online public access catalogues (OPACs) but aren't aware of other search facilities like gateways (subject/regional), directories, meta-search engines and deep web search tools. The findings also depict that excluding phrase searching; all the scholars aren't aware and make use of other search techniques like keyword searching, Boolean operators and truncation methods. In a study related to the impact of automated library services and usage on student's academic performance in Nigerian Universities, Ossai-Ugbah (2010) found that students who made use of automated library serves were better exposed to academic materials and performed academically better than those who did not make use of the services of the automated library. Ilori (2019) investigated Library services and usage among Postgraduate Students in the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta and reported that the postgraduate students are aware of the various services provided by the library. With borrowing services being a major service that the postgraduate students patronize most. And among ICT services email and Internet services are the most used services. To analyze the satisfaction level of respondents with the library services Shukla, Gaud and Bharti (2019) found that the users of the library are quite satisfied with the services of a library like cataloging services, circulation services, reprographic services, reference services and Internet services. Ebijuwa (2018) also added that the major

constraints to electronic resources use by students were lack of knowledge of search techniques to retrieve information effectively, insufficient user training, lack of awareness, delay in downloading, and constant power failure.

Numerous researchers have discussed the issue of gender difference among students towards the use of e-resources, Internet and search engines. As indicated by Wasserman, Richmond and Abbott (2005), the web has become an integral part of the home and work environment, which has guided individuals to access the new technology. According to them the Internet knowledge altogether impacts the Internet use and those who are more knowledgeable use it more frequently. They also found that women use the Internet less frequently than men. Weiser (2000) in his study related to gender differences in the Internet use patterns and Internet application preferences observed that Internet usage styles of males' and females' differ. It was further found that female Internet use is driven primarily by interpersonal communication in contrast male use is driven chiefly by entertainment and leisure. In accordance to the research conducted by Steinerova and Susol (2007), women use the Internet slightly less than men and show a higher proportion of non-use and rare use of electronic resources and a lower proportion of frequent use. As per Oyeniyi (2013), there was no statistically significant difference in the use of electronic resources on the basis of gender. However, male professionals showed a slightly higher mean score on their use of electronic resources. Bassi and Camble (2011) conducted another study and revealed a statistical difference between male and female students' attitudes towards the use of e-resources, with the greater use of e-resources by male students than female students. The Internet has been a field of study for researchers since its inception. The academic community especially students use the Internet to satisfy their diverse needs. Loan (2011) identified gender variability in the Internet use of college students in Kashmir. The study confirms the existence of gender differences in the Internet use of the college students. However, the differences are slight for most uses and in comparison; more male students are frequent users of the Internet than females. The study further revealed that neither male nor female students record high use of the Internet sources like online libraries, databases, e-books, e-journals, wikis, and blogs. Manda and Mukangara (2007) carried out a study on the gender analysis of electronic information resource use and found that the use of electronic databases and electronic journals among postgraduate students is low. Also, the use of the Internet search engines such as Google, Yahoo and other free the Internet resources was found to be high and frequent. In a survey conducted by Rajendraprasath (2015), it was found that 38.30% of the respondents give preference to using Google search engine followed by 31.38% of the respondents give preference to Yahoo search engine which is further followed by 12.77% respondents which give preference to using Altavista search engine. Similarly, Nwosu and Anyira (2012), discovered Google as the preferred search service among Nigerians than yahoo. This is because with Google search engine, they can retrieve more relevant and adequate information resources and they are also able to retrieve information faster than Yahoo. A good

number of studies confirm the gender differences in the use of Internet and Web sources and services. However, the present study will examine whether the gap has been narrowed over the time or not.

### Objectives

The following are the objectives guiding the study:

1. To determine the influence of the Internet on Information Seeking Behavior of PG students across gender.
2. To know the familiarity of IT & Search engines among PG students.
3. To determine the awareness of various Electronic Information Resources & automated information services provided by the University Library.
4. To find out the frequency of use of Electronic Information Resources & automated information services provided by the University Library.

### Methodology

The present study is a primary study, mainly based on the first-hand data. The study aims to elicit information on Gender differences in familiarity and use of electronic resources and services of the PG students of the University of Kashmir. Data were collected by administering 208 questionnaires as the main research instrument distributed with equal proportion based on gender among PG students of science and social science faculty selected by stratified random sampling technique. The questionnaire composed of statements aimed at measuring the user's level of awareness and frequency of use of various e-resources and service provided by the university library. Some questions applied a five-point Likert scale, while others offered multiple and open responses. For data analyses and interpretation, the statistical package, SPSS, version 8.0, was used for frequency distributions, scaling and cross-tabulations.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

#### 1. Influence of the Internet on information seeking behaviour

Table 1: Influence of the Internet on Information Seeking Behaviour

Gender	Not at all	To some extent	Moderately	To a greater extent	Don't know
Male	2 (1.9)*	39 (37.5)	29 (27.9)	34 (32.7)	0 (0.0)
Female	2 (1.9)	29 (27.9)	29 (27.9)	41 (39.4)	3 (2.9)
Total	4 (1.9)	68 (32.7)	58 (27.9)	75 (36.1)	3 (1.4)

*\*Data in the parentheses indicate the percentage*

Table 1 elucidates the responses of students regarding the influence of Internet on their information seeking behavior. It is evident that the Internet ‘to a greater extent’ has influenced the information seeking behavior of more females (39.4%) than males (32.7%). On the other hand, it is seen that 37.5% of males and 27.9% of females are influenced ‘to some extent’ by the Internet. It is noteworthy that information seeking behavior of the least percentage (1.9%) of both the genders is ‘not at all’ influenced by the Internet.

## 2. Familiarity with IT

Table 2: Familiarity with IT

Gender	Very less	Less	Average	Much	Very much
Male	4 (3.8)*	6 (5.8)	45 (43.3)	39 (37.5)	10 (9.6)
Female	7 (6.7)	8 (7.7)	63 (60.6)	20 (19.2)	6 (5.8)
Total	11 (5.3)	14 (6.7)	108 (51.9)	59 (28.4)	16 (7.7)

*\*Data in the parentheses indicate the percentage*

Table 2 depicts the responses of male and female postgraduate students regarding familiarity with IT. The results show that the familiarity of both the genders is significantly different. While 9.6% and 37.5% of the male students show “very much” and “much” familiarity with IT, on the other hand, only 5.8% and 19.2% of the females’ students show “very much” and “much” familiarity. Also, among 104 male respondents, 43.3% are acquainted with IT on an “average” level, with only 3.8% among them “very less” acquainted. Likewise, among 104 female respondents, 60.6% know about IT on an “average” level and 6.7% among them are “very less” acquainted with IT. In general, the ‘average’ level of awareness is seen among most (51.9%) of the respondents.

## 3. Familiarity with search engines

Table 3: Familiarity with search engines

Search Engines	Gender	Not aware	Less aware	Moderately aware	Well aware	Fully aware
GOOGLE	Male	1 (.96)*	3 (2.9)	22 (21.2)	41 (39.4)	37 (35.6)
	Female	2 (1.9)	10 (9.6)	24 (23.07)	38 (36.5)	30 (28.8)
BING	Male	57 (54.8)	24 (23.07)	10 (9.6)	6 (5.75)	7 (6.74)
	Female	74	14	10	3	3

		(71.2)	(13.5)	(9.6)	(2.9)	(2.9)
HOTBOT	Male	78 (75.0)	15 (14.4)	6 (5.75)	2 (1.9)	3 (2.9)
	Female	89 (85.6)	12 (11.5)	2 (1.9)	1 (.96)	0 (0.0)
YAHOO	Male	13 (12.5)	17 (16.3)	35 (33.7)	22 (21.2)	17 (16.3)
	Female	20 (19.2)	32 (30.8)	24 (23.07)	12 (11.5)	16 (15.4)
MSN	Male	59 (56.7)	19 (18.3)	12 (11.5)	10 (9.6)	4 (3.8)
	Female	76 (73.1)	14 (13.5)	8 (7.7)	3 (2.9)	3 (2.9)

*\*Data in the parentheses indicate percentage.*

The data presented in the above table indicates the increasing rank order of familiarity with search engines on a five-point scale. The responses collected indicates that out of the total male respondents, 39.4% are “well aware” about Google, 35.6% are “fully aware” and only 1.0% is “not aware” of Google. On the other hand, 36.5% respondents among females are “well aware”, 28.8% are “fully aware” and only a meager proportion (1.9%) is “not aware” of Google. Out of the total male respondents, 54.8% are “not aware” of Bing and only 6.7% are “fully aware” of Bing. However, among the total female respondents, 71.2% of respondents are “not aware” and only meager proportion (2.9%) is “fully aware” of Bing. Similarly, 75.0% male and 85.6% female respondents are “not aware” of HotBot. It is further revealed that 16.3% of male and 15.4% of female respondents indicate their ‘full awareness’ with Yahoo. Like Bing, respondents are also not much aware of MSN, and only meager percent of males (3.8%) and females (2.9%) showed “full awareness” (Table 3).

#### **4. Awareness level with specific e-resources**

Table 4: Awareness level with specific e-resources

E-Resources	Gender	Not aware	Less aware	Moderately aware	Well aware	Fully aware
Royal Society of Chemistry	Male	81 (77.89)*	9 (8.66)	10 (9.62)	2 (1.9)	2 (1.9)
	Female	87 (83.66)	8 (7.7)	6 (5.75)	3 (2.9)	0 (0.0)
J-Gate@UGC-INFONET	Male	67 (64.43)	15 (14.43)	13 (12.5)	3 (2.9)	6 (5.75)
	Female	82 (78.85)	10 (9.62)	9 (8.66)	1 (0.96)	2 (1.9)
WOS	Male	70 (67.31)	20 (19.24)	6 (5.75)	3 (2.9)	5 (4.8)
	Female	83	12	6	3	0



		(79.81)	(11.54)	(5.75)	(2.9)	(0.0)
Emerald	Male	91 (87.51)	7 (6.74)	1 (0.96)	3 (2.9)	2 (1.9)
	Female	94 (90.39)	7 (6.74)	2 (1.9)	1 (0.96)	0 (0.0)
JSTOR	Male	90 (86.53)	5 (4.8)	2 (1.9)	3 (2.9)	4 (3.9)
	Female	91 (87.51)	6 (5.75)	5 (4.8)	1 (0.96)	1 (0.96)
ScienceDirect	Male	79 (75.97)	18 (17.31)	6 (5.75)	1 (.96)	0 (0.0)
	Female	88 (84.61)	5 (4.8)	7 (6.74)	3 (2.9)	1 (0.96)
Sage Journals	Male	89 (85.6)	8 (7.7)	3 (2.9)	3 (2.9)	1 (0.96)
	Female	97 (93.27)	3 (2.9)	2 (1.9)	0 (0.0)	2 (1.9)

*\*Data in the parentheses indicate percentage.*

It is clear that both the male and female respondents show almost similar response when questioned about their awareness level with specific e-resources provided by the university library. The maximum number of male and female respondents agree that they are 'not at all' aware of Royal Society Of Chemistry (M: 77.89 %, F: 83.66%), J-Gate@UGC-INFONET (M: 64.43%, F: 78.85%), WOS (M:67.31% & F: 79.81%), Emerald (M:87.51% & F:90.39%), JSTOR (M:86.53% & F:87.51%), ScienceDirect (M:75.97% & F:84.61%) and SAGE JOURNALS (M:85.6% & F:93.27%) respectively. while only a meager proportion of respondents from both the genders responded that they are 'fully aware' of Royal Society Of Chemistry (M: 1.9 %, F: 0%), J-Gate@UGC-INFONET (M: 5.75%, F: 1.9%) WOS (M:4.8% & F:0%), Emerald (M:1.9% & F:0%), JSTOR (M:3.9% & F:0.96%), ScienceDirect (M:0.0% & F:0.96%) and SAGE JOURNALS (M:0.96% & F:1.9%) respectively (where M depicts male and F depicts female) (Table 4).

### **5. Frequency of using specific e-resources**

Table 5: Frequency of using specific e-resources

E-Resources	Gender	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Always
Royal society of chemistry	Male	92 (88.5)*	12 (11.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
	Female	98 (94.24)	5 (4.8)	0 (0.0)	1 (.96)	0 (0.0)
J-	Male	73 (70.2)	25 (24.03)	2 (1.9)	4 (3.8)	0 (0.0)

Gate@UGC- INFONET	Female	87 (83.67)	10 (9.6)	6 (5.75)	0 (0.0)	1 (.96)
WOS	Male	79 (75.97)	17 (16.33)	3 (2.9)	1 (.96)	4 (3.8)
	Female	89 (85.6)	9 (8.69)	4 (3.8)	2 (1.9)	0 (0.0)
Emerald	Male	97 (93.24)	4 (3.8)	1 (.96)	2 (1.9)	0 (0.0)
	Female	99 (95.15)	4 (3.8)	1 (.96)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
JSTOR	Male	95 (91.34)	2 (1.9)	2 (1.9)	4 (3.8)	1 (.96)
	Female	93 (89.4)	6 (5.77)	4 (3.8)	0 (0.0)	1 (.96)
ScienceDirect	Male	84 (80.79)	16 (15.39)	2 (1.9)	1 (.96)	1 (.96)
	Female	92 (88.45)	4 (3.9)	3 (2.9)	3 (2.9)	2 (1.9)
Sage Journals	Male	96 (92.4)	3 (2.9)	2 (1.9)	2 (1.9)	1 (.96)
	Female	103 (99.04)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (.96)

*\*Data in the parentheses indicate percentage.*

When asked about the frequency of using e-resources provided by the University Library, the majority of the respondents from both the genders indicated that they ‘never’ use these specific e-resources ranging from 70.2% - 99.04% of students.

### **6. Awareness level with automated information services**

Data presented in the above table elucidates the awareness level of respondents with automated information services. The table reveals that the number of male and female respondents who are “fully aware” of Circulation services is same (14.43%). However, compared to the female respondents (14.43%) it is seen that meager proportion of the male respondents (9.6%) are “not aware” of the said services. Data further reveals that a large proportion of the male respondents (19.23%) are “well aware”, while just a meager proportion of the female respondents (6.74%) are “well aware” of the said service. It is also evident from the data that most of the male (81.73%) and female (87.5%) respondents are “not aware” of CAS/SDI. Similar is the case with Reprographic services, wherein most of the respondents from both the genders are “unaware”

of the services. However, in case of reference services, 36.54% of the male respondents are “moderately aware” and 24.04% are “not aware” of the same services. Among female respondents, 23.07% of the respondents are “moderately aware” of Reference services whereas 36.54% of them are “not aware” of the reference services. With regards to the awareness of Internet services, equal proportion (22.11%) of the respondents of both the genders indicate that they are “well aware” of the said services. However, only 16.35% of the male respondents and 17.31% female respondents revealed their “full awareness” with Internet Services.

Table 6: Awareness level with automated information services

Automated information services	Gender	Not aware	Less aware	Moderately aware	Well aware	Fully aware
Circulation	Male	10 (9.6)*	30 (28.85)	29 (27.88)	20 (19.23)	15 (14.43)
	Female	15 (14.43)	31 (29.81)	36 (34.62)	7 (6.74)	15 (14.43)
CAS/SDI	Male	85 (81.73)	11 (10.58)	8 (7.7)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)
	Female	91 (87.5)	11 (10.58)	1 (0.96)	1 (0.96)	0 (0.00)
Reprographic	Male	57 (54.81)	23 (22.12)	18 (17.31)	3 (2.9)	3 (2.9)
	Female	56 (53.85)	19 (18.27)	8 (7.7)	11 (10.58)	10 (9.6)
Reference	Male	25 (24.04)	23 (22.11)	38 (36.54)	8 (7.7)	10 (9.6)
	Female	38 (36.54)	25 (24.04)	24 (23.07)	7 (6.74)	10 (9.6)
Internet	Male	11 (10.58)	16 (15.38)	37 (35.58)	23 (22.11)	17 (16.35)
	Female	16 (15.38)	22 (21.2)	25 (24.04)	23 (22.11)	18 (17.31)

\*Data in the parentheses indicate percentage.

### 7. Frequency of using automated information services

The above table elucidates the responses of students regarding their frequency of using automated information services. From table 10, it is clear that the majority of students across both the genders (male-45.2% & female- 48.08) use Circulation service “sometimes”. However, 13.46% male respondents and 20.19% female respondents indicate that they “never” use circulation services. Data further highlights that the majority of students across both the genders (male-90.38 & female-99.04) “never” use services like CAS/SDI. Similar is the case with Reprographic services provided by University Library. Out of the total

male (104) and female (104) respondents, most of the respondents (male-36.54% & female-45.19) “never” use Reference services, however, a good proportion of respondents (male 30.77% & female-31.73%) admit using reference services ‘Sometimes’. Although 25% male and 29.81% female respondents admit using the Internet services sometimes, there is still a good number of students across both the genders (male-22.11 & female-31.73%) who have indicated they “never” use the Internet services.

Table 7: Frequency of using automated information services

Automated Information Services	Gender	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often	Always
Circulation	Male	14 (13.46)*	47 (45.2)	31 (29.81)	3 (2.9)	9 (8.65)
	Female	21 (20.19)	50 (48.08)	17 (16.35)	9 (8.65)	7 (6.73)
CAS/SDI	Male	94 (90.38)	9 (8.65)	0 (0.00)	1 (0.96)	0 (0.00)
	Female	103 (99.04)	1 (0.96)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)
Reprographic	Male	70 (67.31)	22 (21.15)	7 (6.74)	4 (3.85)	1 (0.96)
	Female	64 (61.54)	21 (20.19)	6 (5.77)	8 (7.7)	5 (4.8)
Reference	Male	38 (36.54)	32 (30.77)	20 (19.23)	7 (6.74)	7 (6.74)
	Female	47 (45.19)	33 (31.73)	16 (15.38)	3 (2.9)	5 (4.8)
Internet services	Male	23 (22.11)	26 (25)	24 (23.07)	15 (14.42)	16 (15.38)
	Female	33 (31.73)	31 (29.81)	19 (18.27)	9 (8.65)	12 (11.54)

\*Data in the parentheses indicate percentage.

## Findings

1. In electronic age, Information technology is driving everything and has reduced the whole world into a global village. It is playing an important role in information gathering and seeking behavior of the users particularly the academic community of universities. Earlier studies have shown that females knew less about information technology (Reinen & Plomp, 1997). However, the present study reveals that females are no less familiar with IT than males. It is seen that 60.6% of females & 43.3% males are acquainted with IT on an average level.
2. From the analyzed data it is evident that the majority of male (35.6%) and female (28.8%) respondents are “fully aware” of Google, followed by

Yahoo. The reason behind the greater awareness towards Google search engine could be it's easier to use plus its ability to retrieve the exact information at a higher speed (Nwosu & Anyira, 2012). As per the study conducted by Ogbole (2017), many students who are not very much exposed or even aware of various search engines available on the Internet. This result is in sync with results of the current study wherein most of respondents across both the genders are "not aware" of the search engines like BING, MSN and HotBot. As a result, they are not able to embrace the usefulness of search engines.

In conclusion, this study has shown that the numbers of search engines that are known to users are very few (GOOGLE & YAHOO). Low search engine literacy among the respondents is likely to hinder its use. As a result, such people lack awareness of the benefits that they can derive from the use of search engines.

3. Libraries are service-oriented organizations established for providing relevant information and quality services to meet the information needs of users. There is no doubt that a university system cannot accomplish its educational goals without providing sound library service to its students Ilori (2019). These services can be delivered manually or through a computerized process. Some of these services include Circulation services, Reference service, CAS/SCI, Reprographic services, Internet service, etc. The purpose of establishing a library is defeated if the users are not aware of these services. As a result, this study has been done to know the familiarity and use of automated library services across genders and it is revealed that most of the male and female postgraduate students are moderately aware of various services like Circulation, Reference, and Internet services rendered in the university library with an exception of Reprographic services and CAS/SDI. Also, Circulation services, Internet services and Reference services are being used by most of the respondents across both the genders. This study is in sync with the findings of Ilori (2019) which revealed that Internet, borrowing and circulation are services that are frequently used in university libraries.
4. In current years the Internet and web have dramatically changed our way of living. It has influenced every time and task of our life. Due to the contribution of information and communication technology and impact of the Internet that information processing, storing, searching, dissemination and use have become expeditious, easy and user-friendly and there are no barriers to access. The impacts of this wonderful technology trend on the information seeking behavior of users cannot be underestimated. Keeping in view the importance of Internet in our day to day life, PG students at the University of Kashmir were asked about the influence the Internet has had on their information seeking behavior and it is evident from the analyzed data that, Internet has influenced the information seeking behavior of maximum (98.1%) proportion of respondents. It is also noteworthy that the Internet "to a greater extent"

has influenced information seeking behavior of more females (39.4%) than males (32.7%).

5. From the analyzed data, it is evident that there is an extremely low awareness level across the genders regarding specific e-resources provided by the university library. The maximum number of male ( $\geq 64.43\%$ ), as well as female ( $\geq 78.85\%$ ) respondents agree that they are 'not at all' aware of the specific e-resources provided by the university library. While, only a meager proportion of respondents from both the genders (M:  $\leq 5.75\%$ , F:  $\leq 1.9\%$ ) responded that they are 'fully aware' of the specific e-resources provided by the university library. This is in contradiction to the finding of Azubuike's (2016) empirical study which points to the fact that users were 'highly aware' of the e-resources and services provided by the library.
6. The data divulges that there is a prominent similarity among respondents from both the genders regarding the frequency of use of specific e-resources provided by the university library. Majority of respondents ( $\geq 70.2\%$ ) from both the genders have 'never' used the specific e-resources provided by the university library, like Royal Society of Chemistry, J-Gate@UGC-INFONET, WOS, Emerald, JSTOR, ScienceDirect and SAGE JOURNALS. Only a meager proportion of male and female respondents acknowledged their 'always' using these specific e-resources, the highest percentage being that of 3.9% male using WOS. The frequency of use of these resources indicated that a lot needs to be done to increase e-resource use. The reason for the low usage of such e-resources by both the genders is lack of awareness and lack of computer literacy skills that ultimately become obstacle for their optimum use.

## **Conclusion**

With the advent of ICT, there has been a radical shift from print media towards the electronic media. The availability of electronic information resources in multiple formats, their unprecedented access and ease of use has tremendously affected the teaching, learning and research in academic institutions, particularly universities. Internet and e-resources has become an important tool among students for accessing current and convenient information for their academic endeavors. It is the responsibility of every academic library to provide their users with the latest information in desirable formats and ensure its potential usage. To access and utilize different e-resources and services, not only the libraries, but their users need to evolve as well. Users need to develop a particular set of skills to be able to access and use various e-resources and services. The present study reveals that most of the PG students at University of Kashmir are neither well aware of the e-resources and e-services provided by the library, nor utilize these resources and services that much. The reasons behind this low utilization of e-resources and e-services may be their low publicity, inadequate training and searching skills, restrictions of access such as passwords and usernames, poor Internet connectivity etc. The present study also evaluated information behaviour under

the light of gender because, gender as a variable can help us better understand cognitive and social frameworks of human information processing. From the findings of this study, it has become clear that there are no significant differences in gender manifestations, thus no ground for gender stereotype in University of Kashmir. Both the sexes (males and females) must be accorded the same opportunities for enhancement of capacity through ICT skill acquisition and training. Findings of the study can inform design of services and systems and information literacy policies.

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