

“Use Pattern of Competitive Examinations and Career Information Centres of Public Libraries in Karnataka”

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ABSTRACT:

[The study focuses on the use pattern of Competitive Examination and Career Information Centres (CE&CICs) of the Public Libraries in the state of Karnataka. The researcher has obtained responses from the users pertaining to the use various sources of information. Paper mainly focuses on the use pattern of information sources for taking competitive examinations, getting placement opportunities and appearing for national level eligibility tests. The study has also covered region-wise and qualification-wise responses of members for preparing examinations such as UPSC, KPSC, SSC and UGC-NET and Railway Recruit Board.]

Key Terms: Public Library, Competitive Examinations, Career Information Centres.

INTRODUCTION

Public Libraries in higher educational institutions are providing career information to the students but still there is a need to stretch out these services in libraries to reach out and guide the students in their career related needs. Competitive Examination and Career Information Centres provide a valuable resource to students faced with choosing a major, learning about different career fields, and securing internships and jobs. Career centres must provide an increasingly sophisticated array of one-on-one and virtual services in order to meet the needs of students and recruiters

According to the IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto (1994), the public library is the local centre of information, making all kinds of knowledge and information readily available to its users. The services of the public library are provided on the basis of equality of access for all, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status. Specific services and materials must be provided for those users who cannot, for whatever reason, use the regular services and materials, for example linguistic minorities, people with disabilities or people in hospital or prison.

OBJECTIVES

1. To know the region-wise responses of members for preparation of various competitive examinations.
2. To know the adequacy of information resources on general studies.
3. To know the use pattern of sources on Functional English and Grammar.
4. To know the use pattern of sources pertaining to general knowledge and mental ability tests.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher has structured questionnaire as a tool to collect the necessary primary data. The researcher in this study has distributed questionnaires to 1790 members of the competitive examination and career information centres and is able to get responses from 1278 members which account for 71.40% of response. The data received has been tabulated and analyzed using frequency, percentage and interpreted to arrive at the valid findings.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Table-1

Region-wise responses on the purpose of using Competitive Examinations and Career Information Centres

SL. NO.	Competitive examinations	Test statistics				
		Urban N=950	Rural N=328	Total N=1278	Overall X ² and P	Region CV and P
a.	Clerical (SDA, FDA and others.	711 (74.9%)	271 (82.6%)	982 (76.9%)	X ² =368.23; P=.000	CV=.081; P=.004
b.	Banking	617 (64.9%)	164 (50%)	781 (61.2%)	X ² =63.11; P=.000	CV=.134; P=.000
c.	Railway	540 (56.9%)	218 (66.5%)	758 (59.4%)	X ² =44.32; P=.000	CV=.086; P=.002
d.	Department examinations-Police, Postal, KSRTC, ZP and others.	726 (76.5%)	295 (89.9%)	1021 (79.9%)	X ² =456.726; P=.000	CV=.147; P=.000
e.	SSC	543 (57.2%)	161 (49.1%)	704 (55.1%)	X ² =13.22; P=.000	CV=.071; P=.000
f.	KPSC (KAS, KES, KSPS, etc.)	650 (68.5%)	286 (87.2%)	936 (73.3%)	X ² =276.09; P=.000	CV=.185; P=.000
g.	UPSC (IAS, IPS, IFS, etc.)	782 82.4%	119 (36.3%)	901 (70.6%)	X ² =214.85; P=.000	CV=.441; P=.000
h.	ESE(Engineering Services Examination	282 (29.7%)	38 (10.9%)	320 (25.1%)	X ² =318.50; P=.000	CV=.182; P=.000
i.	DRDO Examination	243 (25.6%)	36 (19.9%)	279 (21.9%)	X ² =405.63; P=.000	CV=.154; P=.000

Table 1 shows region-wise responses on using CE and CICs for getting prepared for various competitive examinations. Among the respondents, 711(74.9%) form urban region and 271(82.6%) form rural region prepare for various clerical posts such as SDA, FDA Office Assistants and the like. Further, 617(64.9%) from urban region and 164(50%) from rural region prepare for banking examinations. To get prepared for examinations of railway recruitment board, 540(56.9%) from urban region and 218(66.5%) from rural region avail the facilities and services of the CE and CICs. To get prepared for the entrance tests conducted by various department of State Government such as Police, KSRTC, Zillaparishat, including postal department of Central Government, 726(76.5%) from urban region and 295(89.9%) from rural region avail the facilities and services. For preparing themselves for the examinations of Staff Selection Commission of Central Government, 543(57.2%) form urban region and 161(49.1%) from rural region avail the facilities and services of CE and CICs. The users also avail the library facilities and services of CE and CICs to prepare for Karnataka Administrative Services examinations, which includes KES, KSPS, and such other competitive examinations that come under the

purview of the State Government. 650(68.5%) respondents from urban region and 286(87.2%) from rural region avail the services for this purpose. Further, 782(82.4%) from urban region and 119(36.3%) from rural region avail the facilities and services of CE and CICs to prepare for IAS, IPS, IFS and such other competitive examination conducted by the Central Government bodies. Some of the users of CE and CICs also prepare for the Engineering Services Examinations (ESE). Among the respondents, 282(29.7%) from urban region and 38(10.9%) from rural region opine that they avail the services getting prepared for ESE. The DRDO also conducts entrance examinations from time to time and 243(25.6%) respondents from rural region and 36(19.9%) from rural region avail CE and CICs facilities and services to appear for examination conducted by the DRDO.

This clearly indicates that large percentage of users as respondents from urban region in the present study avail the facilities and services of CE and CICs for getting prepared for banking examinations UPSC Examinations and engineering services examinations when compared to users form the rural region. However, on the other hand, respondents from rural region to a great extent avail the services to get prepared for the examinations conducted for clerical post, railway postal department, Zillaparishat, KSRTC, Police department. When compared to users from urban region.

Among the respondents, a large majority 982(76.9%) of them used CE and CICs which is found to be significant ($X^2=368.23$; $p=.000$). 781(61.2%) of them used CE and CICs for banking examinations ($X^2=63.11$; $p=.000$), 758(59.4%) of them used CE and CICs for railway examinations ($X^2=44.32$; $p=.000$), 1021(79.9%) of them used CE and CICs for department examinations ($X^2=456.726$; $p=.000$), 704(55.1%) of them used CE and CICs for SSC examinations ($X^2=13.22$; $p=.000$), 936(73.3%) of them used CE and CICs for KPSC examinations ($X^2=276.09$; $p=.000$), 901(70.6%) of them used CE and CICs for UPSC examinations ($X^2=214.85$; $p=.000$), very few of them used CE and CICs for ESE ($X^2=318.50$; $p=.000$) and DRDO examinations ($X^2=405.63$; $p=.000$).

Area wise comparison revealed that respondents from rural area used public libraries more for Clerical ($CV=.081$; $p=.004$), railway examinations ($CV=.086$; $p=.002$), department examinations ($CV=.147$; $p=.000$), and KPSC examinations ($CV=.185$; $p=.000$), where as urban respondents used CE and CICs more for banking examinations ($CV=.134$; $p=.000$), SSC ($CV=.071$; $p=.000$), UPSC ($CV=.441$; $p=.000$), ESE ($CV=.182$; $p=.000$) and DRDO examinations ($CV=.154$; $p=.000$).

Table-2

Region-wise respondents preparation for national level eligibility examinations

SL. NO	National level eligibility examinations	Test statistics				
		Urban N=950	Rural N=328	Total N=1278	Overall X ² and P	Region CV and P
a.	UGC-NET/SET/CSIR-NET etc.	382 (40.3%)	96 (29.3%)	478 (37.5%)	X ² =81.13; P=.000	CV=.056; P=.047

Table 2 reveals the extent of use of CE and CICs by the urban and rural members. It is clear from the table that among the users who avail the facilities and services of CE and CICs, 382 representing 40.3% from urban region and 96 representing 29.3% from rural region prepare themselves for appearing UGC-NET, K-SET, CSIR-NET and similar eligibility examinations for research fellowships and colleges.

On the whole 478(37.5%) of the respondents used CE and CICs for UGC-NET/SET/CSIR-NET etc., which is found be significantly low ($X^2=81.13$; $p=.000$). Area wise comparison revealed that respondents from rural area used CE and CICs more for getting prepared UGC-NET/SET/CSIR-NET etc. than respondents from urban area ($CV=.056$; $p=.047$).

Table -3
Frequency of the use of various career information sources
Qualification-wise responses on the use of General knowledge and mental ability test books and periodicals

Ratings	Non-graduates N=141	Graduates N=543	Post graduates N=375	Ph.D Pursuing N=136	Ph.D Completed N=83	Total N=1278
Most Frequency	38	383	319	62	17	819
	26.9%	70.6%	85.1%	45.6%	20.5%	64.1%
Frequency	79	144	46	70	60	399
	56.1%	26.6%	12.2%	51.5%	72.2%	31.2%
Moderately	14	2	5	4	6	31
	9.9%	0.3%	1.4%	2.9%	7.3%	2.4%
Rarely	8	9	3	0	0	20
	5.7%	1.6%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%
Never	2	5	2	0	0	9
	1.4%	0.9%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
Test statistics	CV=.327; p=.000					

Table 3 shows qualification-wise it is evident from the table that a large segment of users among graduates and post-graduate students rely upon general knowledge and mental ability test most frequently.

It is also evident that 60 doctorate degree holders representing 72.2% use these sources of general knowledge and mental abilities test frequently and 17(20.5%) of the Ph.D degree holders rely upon these sources most frequently. Among the research scholar, 70(51.5%) use frequently and 62(45.6%) of them use most frequently. Thus, it is deduced that the use of general knowledge and mental ability test is high among all the category of users, qualification-wise. However, the use by the graduate and post-graduate members is to the highest extent. When compared to non-graduates and research scholars.

Further, Cramer's V revealed a significant association between users with varied qualifications and extent of usage (CV=.327; p=.000), where we find that among the users 383(70.6%) graduate and 319(85.1%) post-graduate students use these sources most frequently compared to non graduates, Ph.D pursuing and Ph.D completed respondents.

Table-4
Qualification-wise responses on the use of personality development books and periodicals

Ratings	Non-graduates N=141	Graduates N=543	Post graduates N=375	Ph.D Pursuing N=136	Ph.D Completed N=83	Total N=1278
Most Frequency	26	88	96	55	16	281
	18.5%	16.3%	25.6%	40.5%	19.2%	21.9%
Frequency	67	391	235	30	11	734
	47.6%	72.0%	62.7%	22.1%	13.3%	57.5%
Moderately	11	44	19	31	33	138
	7.9%	8.2%	5.1%	22.8%	39.8%	10.8%
Rarely	28	16	23	16	15	98
	19.8%	1.6%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	7.6%
Never	9	4	2	4	8	27
	6.2%	0.8%	0.5%	2.9%	9.6%	2.2%
Test statistics	CV=.256; p=.000					

Table 4 While referring to the analysis of data qualification-wise, it is evident from the table that non-graduates, graduates, post-graduates, pursuing research scholars and doctorate degree holders use books and periodicals. 26(18.5%) of non-graduates, 88(16.3%) graduates, 96(25.6%) post-graduates, 55(40.5%) of pursuing research scholars and only 16(19.2%) of doctorate degree holders use most frequently. Further, association between qualifications and extent of usage was found to

be significant ($CV=.256$; $p=.000$), where we find that among the respondents, 391(72.0%) of graduates and 235(62.7%) of post graduates use personality development books and periodicals frequently which represents a large portion of the respondents than rest of the respondents in other qualification groups.

Table-5
Qualification-wise responses on the use of communication skill development books and periodicals

Ratings	Non-graduates N=141	Graduates N=543	Post graduates N=375	Ph.D Pursuing N=136	Ph.D Completed N=83	Total N=1278
Most Frequency	76	345	284	107	42	854
	53.9%	63.6%	75.8%	78.7%	50.7%	66.9%
Frequency	41	88	40	8	5	182
	29.1%	16.3%	10.7%	5.8%	6.1%	14.2%
Moderately	9	76	23	21	15	144
	6.4%	13.9%	6.1%	15.5%	18.0%	11.3%
Rarely	4	21	28	0	10	63
	2.8%	3.9%	7.4%	0.0%	12.0%	4.9%
Never	11	13	0	0	11	35
	7.8%	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	13.2%	2.7%
Test statistics	CV=.353; p=.000					

Table 5 depicts qualification-wise, it is clear that 76(53.9%) non-graduates and 345(63.6%) of the graduates use the sources on communication skill most frequently. However, 284(75.8%) post-graduates most frequently use these sources. Among the research students, 107(78.7%) use most frequently and 42(50.7%) doctorate degree holders use most frequently. Hence it can be deduced that majority of the users, irrespective of their qualification use the sources related to communication skill most frequently or to the highest extent.

It is also evident from the table that 854 respondents representing 66.9% use most frequently and further 182 respondents amounting to 14.2% use the sources frequently. Thus, a large segment of users rely on sources that deal with communication skill.

Cramer's V revealed a significant association between qualification and extent of usage ($CV=.353$; $p=.000$), where we find that post graduates and Ph.D pursuing respondents used more communication skill development books and periodicals than rest of the respondents with other qualifications.

Table-6
Qualification-wise responses on the use of functional English and grammar books and periodicals

Ratings	Non-graduates N=141	Graduates N=543	Post graduates N=375	Ph.D Pursuing N=136	Ph.D Completed N=83	Total N=1278
Most Frequency	118	388	297	58	37	898
	83.7%	71.5%	79.2%	42.7%	44.6%	70.3%
Frequency	9	96	68	42	31	246
	6.4%	17.7%	18.2%	30.9%	37.4%	19.2%
Moderately	4	31	4	14	5	58
	2.9%	5.7%	1.0%	10.2%	6.0%	4.5%
Rarely	3	12	6	20	6	47
	2.1%	2.2%	1.6%	14.8%	7.2%	3.7%
Never	7	16	0	2	4	29
	4.9%	2.9%	0.0%	1.4%	4.8%	2.3%
Test statistics	CV=.183; p=.000					

Table 6 depicts qualification-wise, it is evident that non-graduates use most frequently the sources which deal with functional English and grammar. 118 non-graduates representing 83.7% most frequently use. 388 graduates representing 71.5% and 297 post-graduates representing 79.2% most frequently rely upon the sources. Whereas 38(42.7%) research scholars and 37(46.6%) doctorate degree holders most frequently use the sources on functional English and English grammar. However, in a lesser degree (frequently) the research scholars and Ph.D degree holders use the sources. Therefore, it is deduced that all the category of users, qualification-wise use the sources that deal with functional English and grammar in the higher range.

On the whole it was found that a majority of 898(70.3%) of them used functional English and grammar books and periodicals most frequently, 246(19.2%) of them used frequently, and rest of them used for a minor extent. Cramer's V revealed a significant association between extent of usage and qualification ($CV=.183$; $p=.000$), revealing that non-graduates and post graduates use most frequently the sources which deal with functional English and grammar than others.

Table-7**Region-wise responses on the adequacy of information sources on general studies**

SL. NO.	Information sources	Urban N=950	Rural N=328	Total N=1278	Region CV & P	Test statistics Overall X^2 and P
1	General Knowledge	772 81.2%	260 79.3%	1032 80.8%	$CV=.022$; $p=.429$	$X^2=483.41$; $P=.000$
2	General aptitude and reasoning	602 63.4%	208 63.4%	810 63.4%	$CV=.000$; $p=.988$	$X^2=91.521$; $P=.000$
3	Numerical ability	606 63.8%	185 56.5%	791 61.9%	$CV=.066$; $p=.018$	$X^2=72.313$; $P=.000$
4	Verbal/Non verbal aptitude test general English	516 54.3%	236 72.0%	752 58.9%	$CV=.157$; $p=.000$	$X^2=39.966$; $P=.000$

Table 7 depicts region-wise responses of the regarding the adequacy of information sources on various general studies. It is clear from the table that 772(81.2%) from urban region and 260(79.3%) from rural region have expressed adequacy of information sources on general knowledge. Further, among the respondents, 602(63.4%) from urban region and 208(63.4%) from rural region have opined that the information sources on general aptitude and reasoning is adequate. As regards adequacy of information sources on numerical ability or arithmetics, 606(63.8%) students from urban region and 185(56.5%) from the rural region have given positive response. Again regarding the adequacy of information sources on general English, 516(54.3%) of respondents from urban region and 236(72%) from rural region have offered positive response, indicating adequacy of information sources on General English from the data it is evident that the sources of information regarding general knowledge, reasoning, arithmetics and general English is adequate according to the responses offered by the large majority of the respondents in the study.

On the whole 1032(80.8%) of the respondents indicated adequacy of general knowledge books ($X^2=483.41$; $p=.000$), 810(63.4%) of them indicated adequacy of General aptitude and reasoning ($X^2=91.521$; $p=.000$), 791(61.9%) of them indicated adequacy of numerical ability books and 752(58.9%) of them indicated adequacy of Verbal/Non verbal aptitude test general English books ($X^2=39.966$; $p=.000$). All the adequacies for various types of books were found to be significantly high.

When the association between area and adequacy were analysed, only in the case of numerical ability and Verbal/Non verbal aptitude test general English books significant associations were observed. In the case of numerical ability books ($CV=.066$; $p=.018$) we find urban respondents expressing higher adequacy, where as in the case of Verbal/Non verbal aptitude test general English books rural sample indicated higher adequacy ($CV.157$; $p=.000$).

Table-8
Region-wise responses on the use of the CE and CICs for Railway Recruitment Board Examinations

Ratings	Urban N=950	Rural N=328	Total N=1278
Most Frequency	312	241	553
	32.9%	73.5%	43.3%
Frequency	431	27	458
	45.4%	8.3%	35.8%
Moderately	87	42	129
	9.1%	12.8%	10.1%
Rarely	93	11	104
	9.7%	3.3%	8.1%
Never	27	7	34
	2.9%	2.1%	2.7%
Test statistics	CV=.398; p=.000		X^2 (overall) =851.053; P=.000

Table 8 depicts region-wise frequency of use of career information centres (information sources) preparing for placement at Railway Recruitment Board. It is evident that a large majority of the respondents from rural area are found to use most frequency. 241 respondents representing 73.5% most frequency from the rural area use sources most frequently for preparing railway department. On the other hand, 312 respondents representing 32.9% from urban region use most frequently for the same purpose.

Above all, considering the entire population of respondents, 553(43.3%) use most frequently another 458 respondents representing 35.8% use frequently, 129(10.1%) users rely moderately, 104(8.1%) of them used rarely and 34(2.7%) of them used never. Chi-square test revealed a significant difference between the groups of frequencies ($X^2=851.053$; $p=.000$), indicating that usage of CE and CICs for Railway Recruitment Board Examinations is significantly high. Further, Cramer's V revealed a significant association (CV=.398; $p=.000$), revealing that rural respondents used more books on CE and CICs for Railway Recruitment Board Examinations than urban respondents.

Table-9
Region-wise responses on the use of CE and CICs for Staff Selection Commission Examinations

Ratings	Urban N=950	Rural N=328	Total N=1278
Most Frequency	226	98	324
	23.8%	29.9%	25.4%
Frequency	543	142	685
	57.2%	43.3%	53.6%
Moderately	62	43	105
	6.5%	13.2%	8.3%
Rarely	38	28	66
	4.0%	8.5%	5.1%
Never	81	17	98
	8.5%	5.1%	7.6%
Test statistics	CV=.173; p=.000		$X^2=1066.233$; P=.000

Table 9 depicts the frequency of use of career information centres (information sources) for facing examinations of staff selection commission. Comparatively less number of respondents use the centres most frequently. 324(25.4%) respondents use most frequently and another 685(53.6%) respondents use frequently. Among the respondents, 226(23.8%) urban and 98(29.9%) rural respondents use most frequently.

Chi-square revealed a significant difference ($X^2=1066.233$; $p=.000$) between groups of frequencies. Further, area wise comparison revealed a significant association with extent of usage ($CV=.173$; $p=.000$), where we find that rural respondents used more books than urban respondents.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. Region-wise comparison of data shows that, out of 1278 respondents a large majority comprising of 1021(79.9%) users visit the centres to prepare themselves for various competitive examinations conducted by various departments such as Police, Postal, KSRTC, Zillaparishat and others, followed by 982(76.8%) users rely upon CE and CICs for preparing for clerical examinations such as SDA, FDA and others office assistants. Among the respondents, a large group of 271members representing 82.6% are from rural region and they prepare for KPSC (KAS, KES, KSPS, etc). Further, 901(70.6%) users prepare for IAS, IPS, IFS and such other competitive examination. Among the respondents, a large group of 782 respondents representing 82.4% are from urban region.
2. It is evident from the study that among 950 respondents from urban region, majority comprising of 382(40.3%) respondents use career information sources mainly for preparing for national level eligibility examinations such as UGC-NET/SET/CSIR-NET, while only 96(29.3%) respondents from rural region make use of the centre for preparing themselves for national level eligibility examinations.
3. Regarding qualification-wise analysis of responses, it is evident that non-graduates use most frequently the sources which deal with functional English and English grammar. Thus, 118 non-graduates representing 83.7% most frequently use the sources. Further, 388 graduates representing 71.5% and 297 post-graduates representing 79.2% most frequently rely upon the sources on functional English and grammar. Whereas 38(42.7%) research scholars and 37(46.6%) doctorate degree holders most frequently use the sources on functional English and English grammar. Therefore, it is inferred that all the category of users, qualification-wise use the sources that deal with functional English and grammar in the higher range
4. The analysis of the responses show that 772(81.2%) respondents from urban region and 260(79.3%) from rural region have expressed that the sources on general knowledge is adequate. Out of the entire population of respondents, 1032 representing 80.8% have opined that the information sources on general English is adequate. Region wise analysis depicts that 516(54.3%) of the respondents from the urban region and 236(72%) from the rural region have offered positive response, indicating adequacy of information sources on General English. Therefore, it is evident that the sources of information regarding general knowledge, reasoning, arithmetic and general English are adequate according to the responses offered by the large majority of the respondents in the study.
5. The study shows that out of 1278 respondents, 553 representing 43.3% use career information sources to prepare for placement by Railway Recruitment Board. The region wise responses depict that respondents from rural area use the sources most frequency. Out of 328 rural respondents, 241 representing 73.5% most frequency use sources for preparing examinations conducted by the Railway Recruitment Board. On the other hand, out of 950 respondents, 312 representing 32.9% from urban region use sources most frequently for the same purpose

CONCLUSION:

Public Libraries are now entrusted with the responsibilities of extending information services mainly to enrich knowledge and skills of youths so as to develop employability skills. The library on the one hand has to develop its resources collection so as to find employment opportunities and on the other to extend information resources to the users to enrich the required knowledge and skills in order to face the competitive examinations, various entrance tests and interviews. Thus, the public library system has to serve the youths who have completed various academic and professional

courses in the Universities/Schools. These institutions serve the educational needs of students and also extend services from their placement cells by conducting campus interview, Job mela and so forth. Such of these opportunities are restricted only to the students of the institutions. However, those who have completed education will have to depend on outside public agencies and voluntary organisations for finding employment and also to update the knowledge and employability skills.

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