A study on the Practices and Utility of Resources by the Aspirants of Competitive exams in Karaikal District (Puducherry U.T.)

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Abstract

This study was designed to examine the practices and utility of resources by the aspirants of competitive exams. A structured questionnaire was used to collect the data from 218 respondents comprising of pursuing and completed graduate students in Karaikal District (Puducherry U.T). Anova test and Chi-square test were applied on the processed data. The findings reveals that the motivating factor of the aspirants of competitive exams is self motivation than any other motivating factors, the procurement of resources by the aspirants of competitive exams is more from training centre than from all the other sources, and the resource utilized more by the aspirants of competitive exams is e-resource than that of other resources. In view of the findings, the recommendations were made to the college faculties and college librarian

Keywords

Aspirants of competitive exams; Training; E-resource; Level of Utility; Level of Satisfaction.
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Introduction

Career seekers need information at various stages of their career search. They need information to know about the proper education and training for getting a job, to know about the job market, to find suitable employers, to know vacancy positions, to gain knowledge about preparing application forms and resumes, to prepare for various competitive examinations and to acquire and to acquire interview/group discussion skills[1]. Competitive exams are conducted by the Central Government, State Government and Public Sectors. The competitive exams conducted in national level are UPSC, SSC, Bank exam, RRB, etc. The eligibility level for different type of competitive exams varies from secondary school level to post graduation level depending on the type of competitive exams. The aspirants of competitive exams have to access appropriate information sources to prepare for these competitive examinations. The aspirants of competitive exams find many ways of accessing resources for competitive exam preparation. They depend both on physical and electronic resources. These resources are available in Books, News papers, Magazines, Internet, Mobile applications, etc. The aspirants of competitive exams utilize these resources from the public library, college library, university library etc. This is an attempt to know the practices on preparing for competitive exams and utility of the resources by the aspirants of competitive exams.

Review of literature

Relevant studies in the area of information sources and services for competitive exams were reviewed for the study. Mariswamy, C., Somashekara, Y. L., & Nagasundara. (2014). The authors explains about brief view of Career Information Resource Centre and Portal services of Mysore University Library, usage statistics of student community, and supports of library. Dilli, K.T. (2010) in a study on the services extended to the students preparing for competitive examinations in government and private colleges. He found that the age group of 20-22 has fair well over the age group of 23-25 in the Civil Service Examinations conducted by UPSC. The attitude of facing competitive examination prevails among more in the under graduate students than in post-graduate students in all type of colleges. Also, he found that the students' attitude of spending an hour or more in libraries for the preparation towards competitive examinations is found more in private colleges than in the government colleges. Koovakkai,

D., & Jalaja, V. (2006) conducted a study on the information needs of career seekers at various stages of their career search. He made an attempt whether career seekers having different levels of qualification differ significantly in the level of requirement for information resources and services. Verma, N. (2000) in a study on sample of 230 pre-employment candidates of public sector banks found that the most popular information sources were competition books and magazines. Julien, H.E. (1999) in her survey on Canadian adolescents tried to investigate the helpfulness of various information sources and barriers faced by them in information seeking for career decision making. The data were collected from 399 adolescent using open ended questionnaire and interview. The study revealed that parents, siblings, and other family members, family friends, peers, guidance counselors, teachers, school and public library resources, mass media and government career centre were helpful in career decision making. The most important barrier faced by them for information seeking was information scatter. Availability of source, lack of knowledge about the sources and lack of confidence also hindered the adolescent career decision making.

Objectives of the study

The aim of the study is to examine the practices and utility of resources by the aspirants of competitive exams in Karaikal District (Puducherry U.T). Specific Objectives are:

- To examine the practices followed by the aspirants of competitive exams in preparation of competitive exams.
- To identify the sources used in procuring resources for competitive exams by the aspirants.
- To identify the level of utility of resources of the competitive exam aspirants.
- To identify the level of satisfaction on the resources of the competitive exam aspirants.

Hypotheses

On the basis of objectives of the study, an attempt has been made to test the following hypothesis:

H_1: There is no difference between the age group of the respondents and the level of utility of resources.

H_2: There is no difference between the educational qualification of the respondents and the level of utility of resources.

H_3: There is no difference between the current position of the respondents and the level of utility of resources.

H_4: There is no difference between the age group of the respondents and the level of satisfaction of resources.

H_5: There is no difference between the educational qualification of the respondents and the level of satisfaction of resources.

H_6: There is no difference between the current position of the respondents and the level of satisfaction of resources.

H_7: There is no association between the gender of the respondents and the level of utility of resources.

H_8: There is no association between the marital status of the respondents and the level of utility of resources.

H_9: There is no association between the residence of the respondents and the level of utility of resources.

H_{10}: There is no association between the gender of the respondents and the level of satisfaction of resources.

H_{11}: There is no association between the marital status of the respondents and level of satisfaction of resources.

H_{12}: There is no association between the residence of the respondents and the level of satisfaction of resources.

Methodology

An analytical study was conducted through a primary survey. The present study has covered selected competitive exam aspirants in Karaikal District (Puducherry U.T). The respondents comprising of pursuing and completed graduates in Karaikal were selected as sample for the study. A structured questionnaire was used as the research instrument which was divided into three parts. Section-A (Demographic data): This section was designed to collect general information on the aspirants of competitive exams. Section-B (Resource procurement): Question in this section is used to find the source of resource procurement by the respondents. Section-C (Utility and Satisfaction level): This section was designed to study the level of utility and level of satisfaction on resources of the respondents. A questionnaire was distributed to 250 aspirants of competitive exams. Out of the 250 copies administered, 32 were not returned. Hence, data were collected from 218 respondents giving 87.20% response rate. These collected data were processed and analyzed using statistical tools like Anova and Chi-square test with SPSS.

Analysis and Interpretation
Profile of the Respondents

The Profile of the respondents such as their Age, Gender, Marital status, Residence, Educational qualification, Current position is given in Table-1.

Table: 1 Respondents Profile

Profile	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Age		
16 to 20	10	4.59
21 to 25	142	65.14
26 to 30	45	20.63
31 to 35	19	8.72
36 and above	2	0.92
Gender		
Male	89	40.83
Female	129	59.17
Marital Status		
Married	24	11.00
Unmarried	194	89.00
Residence		
Urban	83	38.10
Rural	135	61.90
Educational Qualification		
UG(Pursuing)	22	10.09
PG(Pursuing)	7	3.21
UG	126	57.80
PG	63	28.90
Current position		
Employed	31	14.22
Not Employed	158	72.48
Studying	29	13.30

The Table-1 shows that out of 218 respondents, 65.14% aspirants of competitive exam are in the age group of 21 to 25, 59.17% respondents are female, 89.00% respondents are unmarried, 61.90% respondents are residing in rural areas, 57.80% respondents are UG qualified and 72.48% respondents are not employed.

Table-2 Motivating factors to prepare for Competitive Exams

Motivating Factor	Frequency of Respondent	Percentage to the total Respondent
Self Motivation	131	60.10
Parents	95	43.60
Peer group	63	28.90
College Faculties	33	15.10
College Librarian	2	0.90

It is seen from table 2 that 60.10% to the total respondents motivating factor are self motivation, 43.60% respondents motivating factor are parents, 28.90% respondents motivating factor is peer group, 15.10% respondents motivating factor was college faculties, 0.90% respondents motivating factor is college librarian.

Table-3 Training person on preparation of Competitive Exams

Training person	Frequency of Respondent	Percentage to the total Respondent
Coaching Centre	188	86.20
Self coaching	66	30.30
Peer group	33	15.10
Parents	10	4.60

Table 2 shows that 86.20% to the total respondents training is given by coaching centre, 30.30% respondents training is self coaching, 15.10% respondents training is given by peer group, 4.60% respondents training is given by their parents.

Table-4 Preference on the competitive exams

Competitive exams	Frequency of Respondent	Percentage to the total Respondent
Bank Exam	149	68.30
UDC	140	64.20
SSC	79	36.20
TNPSC	78	35.80
VAO	65	29.80
LDC	53	24.30
RRB	44	20.20
Deputy Tahsildhar	37	17.00
Other Competitive	20	9.20
UPSC	19	8.70

It is seen from table 4 that 68.30% to the total respondents are preparing for Bank exam, 64.20% respondents are preparing for Upper Division Clerk (UDC) exam conducted by Puducherry government, 36.20% respondents are preparing for Staff Selection Commission (SSC) exam, 35.80% respondents are preparing for Tamilnadu Public Service Commission (TNPSC) exam, 29.80% respondents are preparing for Village Administrative Officer (VAO) exam conducted by Puducherry government, 24.30% respondents are preparing for Lower Division Clerk (LDC) exam conducted by Puducherry government, 20.20% respondents are preparing for Railway Recruitment Board exam, 17.00% respondents are preparing for Deputy Tahsildhar exam conducted by Puducherry government, 9.20% respondents prepares for other competitive exams such as Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) and Sub-inspector of Police exam conducted by Puducherry government and 8.70% respondents are preparing for Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).

Table-5 Time spent for preparation of competitive exams

Time utilized per day for preparation	Frequency of Respondent	Percentage
Up to 1 hour	36	16.51
1 to 2 hour	44	20.18
2 to 3 hour	47	21.56
3 to 4 hour	42	19.27
More than 4 hour	49	22.48
Total	**218**	**100.00**

Table 5 that out of 218 respondents, 16.51% respondents are utilizing up to 1 hour per day for competitive exam preparation, 20.18% respondents are utilizing 1 to 2 hours per day, 21.56% respondents are utilizing 2 to 3 hours per day, 19.27% respondents are utilizing 3 to 4 hours per day and 22.48% respondents are utilizing more than 4 hours per day to prepare for competitive exams.

Section - B

Source for information for competitive exams

The sources used in procuring resources for preparation of competitive exams by the aspirants of competitive exams are public library, college library, coaching centre, internet, book store and peer group which is given in Table-6.

Table-6 Source of information for competitive exam preparation

Source of information	Frequency of Respondent	Percentage to the total Respondent
Coaching Centre	162	74.30
Internet	147	67.40
Book Store	63	28.90
Peer group	59	27.10
Public Library	48	22.00
College Library	12	5.50

It is seen from Fig-5 that 74.30% to the total respondents getting source of information from Coaching centre, 67.40% respondents getting from internet, 28.90% respondents getting from Book Store, 27.10% respondents getting from peer group, 22.00% respondents getting from Public Library, 5.50% respondents getting from the College Library.

Section - C

Utility of Resources for Competitive exams

The level of utility of competitive exam resources from the books, newspapers, magazines, e-resources and mobile applications by the aspirants of competitive exams is given in Table-7.

Table-7 Level of utility of resources by the aspirants of competitive exams

Resources	Number of Respondents					Mean Sc	Rank
	Very High	High	Neutral	Lo	Very		
E-	84	60	33	1	25	3.7	1
Books	73	53	40	1	37	3.5	2
Newspap	28	50	62	3	48	2.9	3
Mobile	38	48	45	2	65	2.8	4
Magazines	39	42	46	23	68	2.82	5

Table-7 shows the level of utility of resources of 218 respondents, majority of the respondents' level of utility of resources is e-resources (Rank-1) and the low utility level of resource is magazines (Rank-5).

The reasons for more utility of e-resource are i) easy access ii) time saving iii) multi location access iv) less expensive v) round the clock access vi) many Indian websites (college library, university library, coaching centre, etc.) provides free and paid access of competitive exam resources.

The reasons for low utility of magazines are i) generally the majority of magazines related to competitive exams may not be available in a single place either the public library or college library ii) It involves huge cost to subscribe more than one magazine for a single person iii) magazines from the library are reference only can be accessed in the library alone.

Satisfaction on resources for competitive exams

The satisfaction level of competitive exam resources from the books, newspapers, magazines, e-resources and mobile applications by the aspirants of competitive exams is given in Table-8.

Table-8 Level of Satisfaction on resources by the aspirants of competitive exams

Resources	Number of					Mean Sc	Rank
	Ve	High	Neutral	Lo	Ver		
E-	7	63	38	1	30	3.5	1
Books	5	54	50	1	39	3.3	2
Newspa	2	40	64	3	50	2.8	3
Mobile	3	44	45	3	67	2.7	4
Magazi	3	44	49	1	77	2.6	5

Table-8 shows the level of satisfaction on resources of 218 respondents, majority of the respondents' level of satisfaction on resources is e-resources (Rank-1) and the lowest level of satisfaction on resources is Magazines (Rank-5).

Hypotheses Testing

For hypotheses H_1 to H_6 Anova test was applied to test whether there is a significant difference between two selected variables. The hypotheses H_7 to H_{12} Chi-square test was applied to test whether there is a significant association between two selected variables.

Hypotheses Testing – Anova

To find out whether there exist any significant difference between the "Age", "Educational qualification" and "Current position" to the "Level of utility" and the "Level of satisfaction" on resources hypotheses, H_1 to H_6 is tested using Anova. The level of significance of the difference and the result is shown in Table-8.

Table -8.1 Hypotheses Testing – Anova

Hypothesis	Variable 1	Variable 2	p Value	Result
H_1	Age	Level of Utility	0.021	Significant
H_2	Educational Qualification	Level of Utility	0.116	Not Significant
H_3	Current position	Level of Utility	0.061	Not Significant
H_4	Age	Level of Satisfaction	0.004	Significant
H_5	Educational Qualification	Level of Satisfaction	0.124	Not Significant
H_6	Current position	Level of Satisfaction	0.057	Not Significant

Hypothesis One

H_1: ***There is a no difference between the age group of the respondents and the level of utility of resources.***

Table 8 shows that there is a significant difference (p=0.021) between the variables "Age" and "Level of Utility" and therefore the hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis Two

H_2: There is no difference between the educational qualification of the respondents and the level of utility of resources.

Table 8 shows that there is no significant difference (p=0.116) between the variables "Educational qualification" and "Level of Utility" and therefore the hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis Three

H_3: There is no difference between the current position of the respondents and the level of utility of resources.

Table 8 shows that there is no significant difference (p=0.061) between the variables "Current position" and "Level of Utility" and therefore the hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis Four

H_4: There is no difference between the age group of the respondents and the level of satisfaction of resources.

Table 8 shows that there is a significant difference (p=0.004) between the variables "Age" and "Level of Satisfaction" and therefore the hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis Five

H_5: There is no difference between the educational qualification of the respondents and the level of satisfaction of resources.

Table 8 shows that there is no significant difference (p=0.124) between the variables "Educational qualification" and "Level of Satisfaction" and therefore the hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis Six

H_6: There is no difference between the current position of the respondents and the level of satisfaction of resources.

Table 8 shows that there is no significant difference (p=0.057) between the variables "Current position" and "Level of Satisfaction" and therefore the hypothesis was accepted.

Hypotheses Testing – Chi-square

The Hypotheses H_7 to H_{12} is tested using chi-square to find out whether there exist any significant association between the "Gender", "Marital status" and "Residence" to the "Level of utility" and "Level of satisfaction" on resources. The level of significance of association and the result is shown in Table-8.

Table-9 Chi-Square Test

Hypothe	Variable 1	Variable 2	p Value	Result
H_7	Gender	Level of Utility	0.306	Not Significant
H_8	Marital Status	Level of Utility	0.72	Not Significant
H_9	Residence	Level of Utility	0.176	Not Significant
H_{10}	Gender	Level of Satisfaction	0.601	Not Significant
H_{11}	Marital Status	Level of Satisfaction	0.876	Not Significant
H_{12}	Residence	Level of Satisfaction	0.345	Not Significant

Hypothesis Seven

H_7: There is no association between the gender of the respondents and the level of utility of resources.

Table 9 shows that there is no significant association (p=0.306) between the variables "Gender" and "Level of Utility" and therefore the hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis Eight

H_8: There is no association between the marital status of the respondents and the level of utility of resources.

Table 9 shows that there is no significant association (p=0.720) between the variables "Marital Status" and "Level of Utility" and therefore the hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis Nine

H_9: There is no association between the residence of the respondents and the level of utility of resources.

Table 9 shows that there is no significant association (p=0.176) between the variables "Residence" and "Level of Utility" and therefore the hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis Ten

H_{10}: There is no association between the gender of the respondents and the level of satisfaction of resources.

Table 9 shows that there is no significant association (p=0.601) between the variables "Gender" and "Level of Satisfaction" and therefore the hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis Eleven

H_{11}: There is no association between the marital status of the respondents and level of satisfaction of resources.

Table 9 shows that there is no significant association (p=0.876) between the variables "Marital Status" and "Level of Satisfaction" and therefore the hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis Twelve

H_{12}: There is no association between the residence of the respondents and the level of satisfaction of resources.

Table 9 shows that there is no significant association (p=0.345) between the variables "Residence" and "Level of Satisfaction" and therefore the hypothesis was accepted.

Finding of the Study

From the above analysis of empirical evidence, the findings are stated hereunder:

1. The demographic variable "Age" on the variables "Level of utility" and "Level of satisfaction" is

significant since the p-value < 0.05 on using Anova test. Hence there is a difference between the "Age group" of the respondents and the "Level of utility" and "Level of satisfaction" of resources.

2. The demographic variables "Educational qualification" and "Current position" on the variables "Level of utility" and "Level of satisfaction" were not significant since the p-value>0.05 on using Anova test. Hence there is no difference between these variables.
3. The demographic variables "Gender", "Marital status" and "Residence" on the variables "Level of utility" and "Level of satisfaction" were not significant since the p-value>0.05 on using Chi-square test. Hence there is no association between these variables.
4. Majority of the aspirant's motivation to prepare for competitive exams is only self motivation than that of other motivating factors such as parent, peer group, college faculties and college librarian.
5. Majority of the aspirant's training person is coaching centre when compared to the other training persons such as peer group and parents.
6. Majority of the aspirant's were preparing for bank exams than other type of competitive exams.
7. Majority of the aspirants are utilizing more than 4 hours for competitive exam preparation.
8. The source of procuring the resources for competitive exams by the aspirants is more from coaching centre than from all the other sources such as public library, college library, internet, book store and peer group.
9. The resource utilized more by the aspirants of competitive exams is e-resource than that of other resources such as books, magazines, newspapers and mobile apps.
10. The respondent's satisfaction level on resources is highly correlated with utility level.

Conclusion

This study has provided some new insights on the aspirants of competitive exams, about their practices on competitive exam preparation, their utility and satisfaction level on the resources of competitive exams. In view of findings, it is recommended that:

1. The college faculties and college librarian should motivate the students to aspire for competitive exams since they play an important role in career guidance cell of the institution.
2. Though the Government is providing free coaching for civil service aspirants the number of aspirants is very low. Future studies may concentrate on the reason for this.
3. Lot of free resources is available in the form of mobile applications, but awareness of the aspirants is very low. Awareness and utility has to be increased.

Future studies could expand the research adopted in this study to a larger sample of aspirants of competitive exams at university level in state wise.

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